

FANDOM'S ONLY REPRINT
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FANTASY ASPECTS, a GFF Publication is issued Quarterly by Alan J. Lewis nearby Box 37, East Aurora, New York; the place to which we hopefully hope you will mail all subs which are 15¢ per and 80¢\$1.00.

In the event we go NFFF sponsored, let me state to all you NFFF haters that the ship won't sink because of said fact -- blame me if FA goes bad, not N3F. But in the meantime, will all o' you pleze stick around, that is, send a sub or a trade zine? tanks. (Eds this issue are Al Lewis, Kaymar Carlson, and Ralph M. Holland.)

15¢ G. P. P. 8/51

THE EDITOR'S JABBER



After a gap of quite a few years, fandom has a reprint zine back again. FANTASY ASPECTS, we would like to predict, will stay around for at least two years.

This maiden issue was cooked up by Ralph M. Holland, Kaymar Carlson, and myself..Alan J. Lewis. It was my idea, and these other two editors helped with contributions. Next issue, I hope, will not be put out in such a rush. I hope to have all margins justified. Next issue comes out about late October, '58.

In the coming issue, for certain, will be Sir Robert's "The Birth of a Notion", from PLOY #8, "HARMONY" (I remember Comic Books) from Jim Harmon's column in FANON #38, Joe Gibson's "The RIDGE" from The Pendulum #3, and other articles and stories.

The content of FA will be mainly serconnish articles. However, in every case this will not hold true. There are some examples of fannish "humor" that are too priceless to pass up -- such as the aforementioned "Birth of a Notion", as one out of many.

Material is, of course, a major problem. FA was begun with the purpose in mind of featuring material which is 10 years or more, old. I've found since, that altho I do have quite a few fanmags from this period, I have nowhere near enuf. Because of this, I've changed it to material within the last year, with the push on older material. The last year part, is for Guy Terwilliger. When I started I didn't know about his plans. It is now arranged with him that I keep "hands off" material of the last year until he decided what he'll put in and/or until BoF is sold out....like it is now. As a result, ALL FANMAGS

ARE WANTED NOW! I have ads elsewhere in this issue to that effect. Why, I'll even pay with the green stuff!

Ads will also be used in FA. There is a mention of one in this issue elsewhere. Forget it! The advertiser didn't get the ad made up soon enuf and so, you'll see it next issue. However, ads are being solicited for issue #2. The rates are :

pages	cost
1	\$5.00
2	8.00
3	10.50
4	13.00
5	15.00
6	17.00

Contributing Artists	
Ken Krueger	- 2
Art Wilson	- 2 1/3
Doug Payson	- 10
Earl Downey	- 20
Jewis (Tracing)	- 15

If these rates seem too high, remember we have one of the highest circulations in fandom. This issue is about 400 copies to fans. Next issue, I hope to be able to make it 500. Also, the rates will be reduced if the ad is already typed. very much reduced. Also, if you want you can always take a 6 page ad and spread it over 6 issues with one page. Half page ads, 1/2 page, etc. rates on request.

Also, we may go NFFF sponsored with the next issue. I'd like to state right here tho, that any NFFF sponsorship will not change the magazine except for perhaps 1 ad or maybe lesser rates for N3Fers.

You are getting this issue because you are in NFFF, ISFCC, OMPA, FAPA, SAPS, or maybe because I just saw your name somewhere. Tell me if you "On stencil that is, enjoy it, or if you didn't, why. The Editors

THE ELASTIC LIMIT

AL & ABBY-LU
ASHLEY

From

EN GARDE

March 1943

Number 5

It was sometime in February, 1926 that Hugo Gernsback sent us a print of the cover of the first *Amazing Stories*, with an announcement of this new magazine to be devoted entirely to Science-Fiction stories, printed on the back. How many of you can appreciate our feelings from then until the first copy appeared? We shall probably never again reach a peak of anticipation as high as that which we reached then.

That *Amazing* arrived. Nor were we disappointed. It merely whetted our appetite for more. . . . and more. When it appeared on the stands, we counted our twenty-five cents with trembling hands. Reverently we carried it home, and were soon pouring over it with avid eyes. But, alas, too soon it was read from cover to cover. Then we were faced with twenty-nine dismal days of torture, waiting for the next issue.

Most of that early science-fiction was pretty crude. But, even as this crudity began to force itself upon our consciousness, the quality of the stories commenced to undergo a slow but continuous change for the better. At first those simple, obvious plots and scientific ideas were enough to send our imagination soaring in the most gratifying fashion. Then, as the effect began to wear off, along came E. E. Smith and Campbell, with their epics of cosmic scope. Our slightly jaded fancy revived, took off like a rocket, and was soon bumping against the ceiling. The stupendous possibilities and concepts suggested by those stories stretched our imagination to a point where it seemed almost unbearable. Each story seemed to have reached the ultimate, yet each succeeding story surpassed the one before. Without doubt they came, as Doc insists, pure fairy stories. But they gave our mind and imagination a work-out such as they never had before.

Then, for a few years, science-fiction went into a slump. Perhaps it was only natural. Maybe it was a good thing in a way. One may build up one's muscles by exercise, but the exercise must be broken with periods of rest to be effective. So with the mind, and the imagination.

BIAS IN CRITICISM

ROBERT W. LOWNDES

FROM PEON, DECEMBER 1955, NUMBER THIRTY-SIX

I hear that at the 1955 World Science-Fiction Convention, Dr. E.E. Smith spoke on the results of a survey he had made amongst several science fiction critics, wherein he found that of all the professionals he had studied, P. Schuyler Miller showed the least bias, and Groff Conklin and Anthony Boucher the most. My informant did not mention whether Dr. Smith noted what the biases of the most biased were, or if he indicated whether he thought a critic ought to have any.

In any event, most of the talk and writing on the subject I have seen from fans, and from a good many authors, too, inclines toward the conclusion that "bias" is something a good critic should have very little of, or none at all, and the least biased critic is likely to be the best.

Let me put it in words of one syllable: this is false. It is sheer nonsense and displays ignorance of the basic function and meaning of criticism.

What is meant by "bias"? Rather than run to the dictionary, I'll give you a very lucid example. Nearly all of you who are reading this article are biased in favor of science fiction. This bias varies in intensity, but it exists; and the more inclined you are to read science fiction, or about science fiction, rather than some other sort of reading material, when some other material is available at the time, then the stronger this bias is in your case.

Thus, Dr. Smith to the contrary, Mr. Miller (whom I've commended elsewhere as a critic) is quite a biased individual; for despite his familiarity with other types of fiction, he chooses to concentrate most of the critical faculties upon science fiction and fantasy.

And to be an effective critic; to be able to read and make judgements upon what one has read; to make judgements that have meaning within the general standards of what is best, what is good, what is worth recommending to others -- as opposed to what is of less worth, or what should be pointed out as flawed, false, or downright worthless within the field -- all this requires a collection of biases which go to make up the critic's yardstick of values. Without such values, the critic may be a very interesting writer, may indeed like many of the things you like and dislike what you do not like, or may give an impression of wonderful objectivity; but he will not truly be a critic. Insofar as he has the ability correctly to report what an author said, how the plot-line and character-line goes, etc., such a "critic" will be a good reporter. And no more!

The critic's standards must be firm; yet, to be effective, he should have the quality of flexibility within these standards. This sentence has a nice sound to it no doubt, and I was duly impressed the first time I came across a dictum to the same effect. It took a bit of time to find out what it meant, however. Again, rather than quoting authority, I'll give an example: Raymond F. Jones, in "Son of the Stars" did not attempt, nor intend, to achieve the scope that Dr. Smith attempted and intended in his "Lensman" novels. It is among the first of the critic's duties to ascertain what the author is trying to do, along with an examination of how well he does it, how short he falls of the mark, and why. So, while a given reader or fan may not be interested in reading the Winston book because it is a juvenile, or may think that the Smith work must necessarily be superior science fiction because of its scope, a critic worth our time cannot judge on either basis.

Nor can the critic be concerned whether a given author or subject is popular; nor again should he be concerned with maintaining an air of urbanity and politeness. He must be merciless toward falsity, shoddy work, or visible evidence of commercial compromises on an author's part -- without forgetting that he who commits literary crimes is not a criminal. He must be personally offended and shocked when an author produces a work that is bad, flawed, or less than what previous evidence has shown the author was capable of. He cannot have friends while he is criticizing!!

The critic whose bias runs toward being a hail-fellow-well-met toward all (or most) authors, who likes everything (or everything except the work of persons to whom he has personal aversion) is of no use to those of his readers who want literary guidance. But this is not because the critic is biased (or, in the case of the nice-guy critic, apparently unbiased), but because his biases run in such directions as to make him no critic.

There will be personal biases within the overall bias which is the critic's stock in trade; this cannot be helped, and is all to the good, once we know what they are. However, and this is the crux of the matter, criticism is not merely a case of saying, "This is good", "This is less good," "This is bad", etc., but a case of tirelessly explaining why the object is such-and-such, bringing to light the reasons for the judgements made. Such critics are not universally popular; they are constantly in receipt of wrathful replies from readers and authors and friends of authors, and queries as to how they could possibly say a book or story was so when so-and-so gave it an "A" plus rating, or such-and-such is the hottest name in the field, and so on.

No critic, of course, is equally competent in all fields; and even in science fiction, the range is so wide that the best critic may fall into his own blind spot on occasion. No matter. For every story or novel unjustly condemned by a usually-perceptive critic, a thousand stories and novels are unjustly praised to the skies by critics who are no critics, and who, no doubt, enjoy the reputation of not being "biased".

Prejudice, of course, is another matter; but I'm sure that Dr. Smith would not use the term "bias" when he really means "prejudice".

Will Y O U get the next issue of FANTASY ASPECTS? Not if you haven't subscribed, or haven't let me know just where you stand with trades, reviews or otherwise. Let me know..TODAY!! And, when you do, drop a few lines about what you think of FANTASY ASPECTS too.

ESCAPE TO NOWHERE

SAM
MOSKOWITZ

ESCAPE TO REALITY

JACK
WILLIAMSON

These two articles, "Escape to Nowhere" by Sam Moskowitz and "Escape to Reality" by Jack Williamson appeared in SUNSPOTS, December 1941 and February 1942, respectively. They were in the form of a question, and a reply, which explains why we have chosen to run them side-by-side as we are doing. We hope you enjoy them as much as we did when we read them for the first time. -- (the editors)

The hobby of being a science-fiction fan is a fine one. It fosters a knowledge of literature, art, science, and the mechanics of publishing and editing. Through its club activities and perennial conferences, conventions, and confabs it develops social poise, and makes possible the cultivation of many fine friends.

Only a fool would deny that being a fantasy fan is a joyous thing. There is something about science fiction, some vitality, enjoyability, permanence that is present in few other things. It is a grand scale hobby if ever there were one. A vast, multiple-edged hobby that makes it possible for you to have close friends in every part of the world, though you may never have seen them.

But beware. Beware, because science fiction fandom can also be a vicious trap! Science fiction fandom a vicious trap? The hilarity of the conventions, the joy of accomplishment in publishing and writing for the fan magazines, the delirium of discovering rare items for your collection a vicious trap? Or the friends you make some of them people of influence. A trap?

This is intended to be a brief companion piece to the very interesting and challenging article by Sam Moskowitz, "Escape to Nowhere". That contains some pretty serious charges against science fiction fan activities. They are pretty well substantiated -- and I think the whole question he raises is a pretty important one for fans to face.

Myself, I've been a fan for a good many years -- I remember very well the wild thrill I got out of the Paul cover on my first "Amazing", back in 1926. I've known a good many other fans, by letter and in person, beginning with Ray Palmer and a few other members of a fan organization now practically forgotten -- and I want to agree very heartily that fans are fine people, interesting and intelligent. This question of fantasy versus reality is one I've thought about a good deal.

Science fiction is escape literature -- there's no protesting that. And the world of strictly fan activities, too, of correspondence and publications and conventions and other activities that keep the most prominent fans so busy that they don't even have time to read science fiction any more -- that is a happy little domain

It is a strong indictment to make of science fiction fanning and a charge that fairly shrieks for substantiation.

Most science fiction fans start when they are quite young. Shall we say between the ages of fourteen and sixteen? I dare say that with few exceptions they are, in mental scope and flexibility the equal, if not the superior of the average person of twenty one. They have to be for writing, illustrating, criticising, publishing, arranging clubs and conventions, beyond any question of a doubt calls for a high order of intelligence and organizing ability.

The new science-fiction fan finds that he has been introduced to a world of magic wonder. A world into which he can gradually immerse himself entirely, shutting himself off for long periods of time from reality outside.

And I speak not only as an observer, but from experience. I knew the fanaticism that made me devote every waking hour to science fiction. To collect, to hoard every scrap of fantasy I could lay my hands upon. To write, to publish, to hold conventions, attend meetings, to meet fans, writers, editors, and authors; to have a world set apart from the normal world. A world into which I could retreat at will. A world in which I was not just a struggling youngster, but a distinct personality.

So it is with most fans. People across the continent know them. They publish a fan magazine. One? A dozen would be more accurate. And on their subscription list will be a hundred-odd people. People who live in New Jersey, in New York, in Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver, Canada, Mexico, Australia, England, and New Zealand. People living thousands of miles away from them will know them by name, regard them as individuals of some importance, write to them, contribute to their magazines.

They hold conventions, and shake

that seems to be safely cut off from reality.

Admitting all that, however, I still believe there's another side to the picture. It may be true that the science fiction fans are less well adjusted to reality than other random groups -- I don't know about that and it might be pretty hard to prove. Granting that some fan enthusiasts follow their hobby to the point of neglecting things that seem more important to other people, isn't it possible that this mania is a result of incomplete adjustment rather than the cause of it?

Is it mentally injurious to read fantastic fiction? I don't think so. Besides all the pleasure that it can give the individual, by enriching his own worlds of fantasy, I believe that it can provide a mental road toward the fuller acceptance of reality. While memory doesn't permit an exact quotation, I recall an article in TIME, in which a psychiatrist reported the case of a young child that found itself able to face its problems by identifying itself with Superman.

Even while Sam Moskowitz is making his indictment of fan activities, his enthusiasm for them still seems to show through. I believe such enthusiasm is a good thing, whether it leads to a discussion of the possibility of rockets, or the publication of a new hectographed magazine. Perhaps the fan world isn't the real world, but still I imagine a successful career in it can contribute a good deal toward building up a starved ego.

There's nothing abnormal about fantasy. It's a phase of mental life through every individual must pass. I believe that good fantastic fiction can make it more enjoyable while it lasts -- without necessarily making it last longer -- and still help the individual to gain the solid rock of reality beyond. And it seems that most people find it refreshing to slip back into the relaxing current of pure imagination, from time to time, even after they've gained the rock. {end}

Escape to Nowherecontinued/

hands with authors, editors, and the fans they speak so much about.

They travel from city to city and everywhere they go there is always somebody who will open his door to them, to treat them as honored guests.

And so it is that they build up a false sense of values. To be number one fan is several times better than being president of the United States. To attend a conference in a far off city, or a local club meeting is more important to them than holding down a job.

The publishing of a fan magazine is more important than fixing their teeth, than taking care of their eyes.

The world we know, the horribly mundane world that has not even begun to catch up with our imaginations, that will never catch up to our imaginations makes its demands. But they are forgotten. Forgotten as soon as another 1926 "Amazing Stories" is added to the collection.

And what happens if one does unadverantly survive a case of walking pneumonia? Is that more important than putting on a convention?

I do not mean to offend in summing up the above. The fans as a whole are grand fellows, and fandom is as I once stated, "A mad world where every man may be a king and every other man his subject. A mad, desirable world where one may still cuss the hide off of a fellow fan and consider negotiations as if it had never happened. Mad to others, mad to us, but we eat it all up and come back for more."

But, haven't we a tendency to over-do things? The important thing to learn is that working on a convention is not more important than your health. That attending a club meeting is secondary to holding your job. That reading twenty-four science fiction magazines a month religiously is

not obligatory --- your eyes are more important.

Fans like H. C. Koenig, R. D. Swisher, C. I. Barrett, Ralph Milne Farley (I wish I could include myself but I am a worse sinner than the bunch of you) are just as enthusiastic, just as interested as the most avid, the most boisterous fan, but they have learned the lesson of moderation. They know that the real world, the world we live in, cannot be sublimated to the world of science fiction.

Science fictionists living in the city have no worry of their hobby turning them into extreme introverts. But fans in outlying districts, where they are the only one who thinks along certain lines have a tendency to stay away from the group. To live too much with themselves, to spend an unreasonable length of time on their hobby.

The problem of the harmful effects science fiction, as a hobby, can have upon its enthusiasts should be faced. Faced squarely and fairly without dodging the issue.

Is having the largest science fiction collection in the world more important than having a decent suit of clothes on your back?

Common sense and above all, moderation, should be the key-note of the science fiction fan. If more fantasy lovers threw their weight behind the few worthwhile projects that appear, and less squandered their energies, their monies, and their health in harum scarum pursuits, we would all be better off from every possible standpoint.

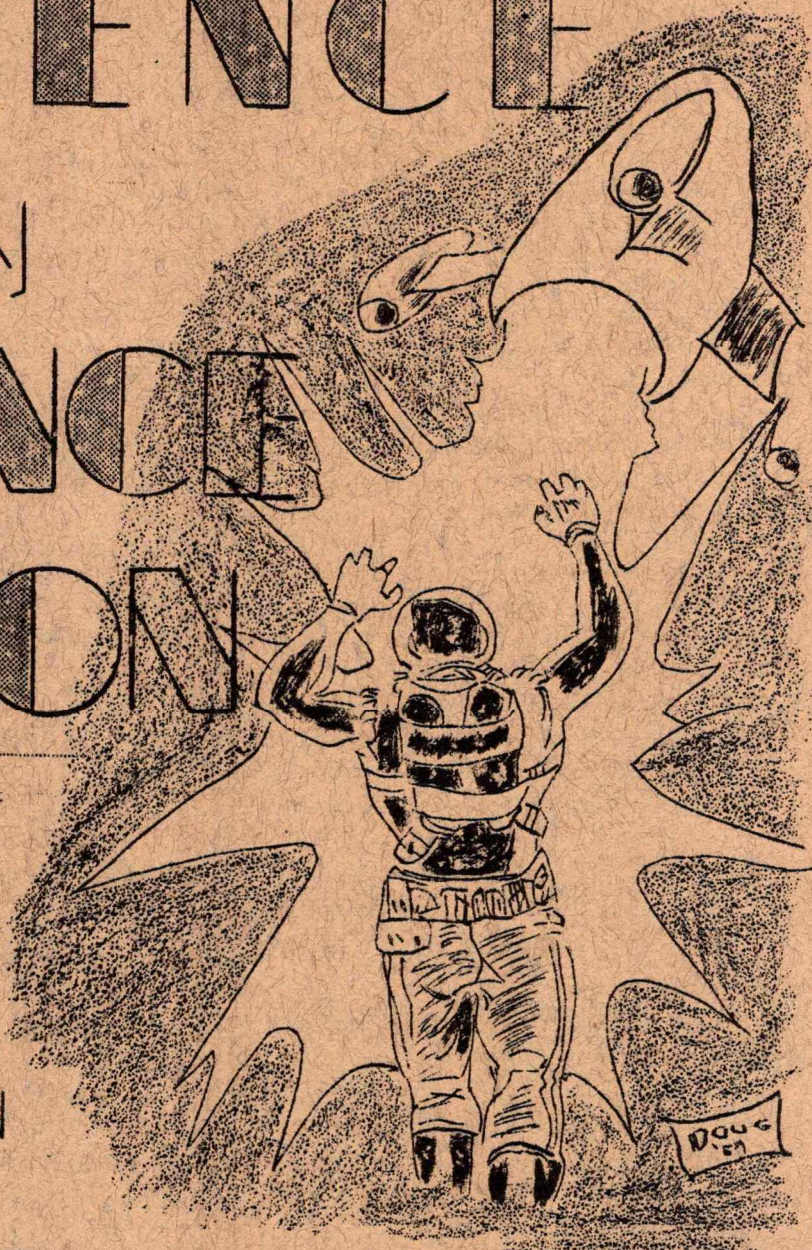
And, whatever we do, don't ever think that in science fiction you have discovered a new world, a new life, a complete escape. For you may find that you have escaped to nowhere.

--000--

DO YOU HAVE FANZINES YOU WILL SELL FOR THE POSTAGE PRICE? IF SO, CONTACT THE EDITOR. DO IT NOW!

THE SCIENCE IN SCIENCE FICTION

BY
IAN
WILLIAMSON



REPRINTED FROM "OPERATION FANTAST" December 1950, Vol. 1 #7

There is a problem which is peculiar to the writing of science-fiction. Indeed it is a basic, arising from its very nature. Not every S-F story poses this problem, however, but many do, and where it has met it is interesting to see how the author has tackled -- or failed to tackle -- the difficulty. The problem is simply stated: it is this: --

WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO STOP?

It is my belief that the contempt which much s-f justly earned (and still earns) is due to failure to recognize the need for limits. Some early authors just did not see any necessity to stop anywhere. The titles invented for the magazines in those days

show the trend clearly: "AMAZING STORIES," "ASTOUNDING STORIES," "WONDER STORIES," "The wonder is that these were not succeeded by "INCREDIBLE STORIES" and "ABSOLUTELY UNBELIEVABLE STORIES." If the author does not work out some limits he is tempted to continue pulling more and more miracles out of the hat, at random, until he ends his epic in a blaze of rods, cones, and planes of force, interlaced with X-rays, Y-rays, Z-rays, tractor beams, pressor beams, I-beams, and R.S.J.'s, all somewhere in intergalactic space, sub-space, super-space, ultra-hyper-extra-space, and so on ad infinitum. Alternatively, the hero goes a'roving into successively more exotic dimensions, meeting more and more 'supernatural' or 'cosmic' denizens -- or even entities -- whose appearance becomes zoologically more improbable as their powers become increasingly more indescribable, until the poor reader finds himself drowning in a morass of meaningless verbal extravagance. This stuff has neither the scientific discipline of science-fiction, nor the artistic discipline of the fairy-story. This is what s-f has yet to live down.

Let us see how the problem of limits has been solved by the writers who have recognized it. Any author who is worth his salt will carefully construct the scientific setting of his tales as a logical extrapolation of either present-day science or a new set of 'facts' whose truth is assumed a priori as the basis of the structure. If this is not done, the stuff has no claim to be called science-fiction. It is no more than an inferior grade of fairy-story.

Given this background, stories can be classified according to the amount of explanation offered to the reader. At one extreme there is no explanation at all, the background is presented as a fait accompli, and as such is taken for granted with perhaps an occasional device (not a principle) the explanation for which is necessary to the plot. This type has been, and still is, a very popular one, including some very good stories, usually short, as the type lends itself to economy. In 'DECISION ILLOGICAL' (N. B. Wilkinson, ASF July '48), 'BURNING BRIGHT' (J. S. Brown, ASF July '48,) and 'THE UNDECIDED' (E. F. Russell, ASF, April '49), the backgrounds -- interplanetary travel; robots, atomic piles, and telekinesis; and interstellar exploration, respectively -- are taken for granted, no explanation being offered, nor is any necessary, the stories consisting of interplay between the various creatures and the natural settings/forces involved in the settings as given. 'JUDGEMENT NIGHT' (C. L. Moore, ASF, Aug, and Sept. '43) is a novel in this class, being a romantic love story struggling in the shifts and devices of a crumbling stellar empire. Incidentally, it contains one of the finest pieces of atmospheric writing (the running fight in the disintegrating Cyrille) that I have ever read.

In all these stories, the powers and limits of the forces involved are not explicit; the authors have worked out the science and constructed the background to fit. Nearly always the success of the story depends upon the plausibility and self-consistency of this background and the amount of thought and care the author has put into its 'working out.'

A certain degree of arbitrariness in the limits of the super-science proposed is not necessarily bad, for it is a characteristic of the real thing. For instance, electrical science has never yet produced an efficient lethal weapon, or a flying machine. This 'arbitrariness' which keeps us from the slippery slope leading to rods, cones, planes etc., can however be explained in the story. This brings me to my other extreme type; the one in which the science is fully explained to the reader.

The author may begin with his basic hypotheses or experimental facts and build up his science from these 'before your very eyes.' George O. Smith struck this rich lode in his Venus Equilateral series, which consist of extrapolation of present-day electronics applied -- with a great deal of technical sounding jargon -- to the problems of interplanetary communications and little else besides. A great many people

seemed to like it. One of the things which spoilt them for me was the existence (here and there) of a simple little device called the photophone, which seemed to me to render most of the efforts of Channing's crew unnecessary. A classic example of this kind of development is that of 'similarity science' in A. E. Van Vogt's two 'NULL A' stories. He begins with the experimental fact that "when two objects have a ten-decimal-place similarity, the lesser will move to the greater as if the space between them does not exist," and proceeds to build up his science from that starting point -- and into an already well-crammed story he throws in, almost as an afterthought, as much of this as would serve many others for several complete epics. Another master (allow me my prejudices, please) in this field is Hal Clement. His method, however, is not to build his science up before you, course by course from the foundation, but to take you 'round the completed edifice and carefully explain the principles of construction. 'TECHNICAL ERROR' (ASF, Jan. '44) is a gem of this kind about the discovery of an alien space-vessel. Clement worked out a new technology for this, ranging from magneto-striction door-fastenings to molecularly flat surfaces in lieu of engine gaskets. The vessel was presented as the end-product of this technology. Another similar system is used by him in 'COLD FRONT' (ASF, July '46) in which a terrestrial meteorologist meets a rather fully developed meteorology on a planet with a somewhat peculiar sun.

There is an infinity of graduations between the two extremes I have described, with good and bad stories at all points. This scientific 'skeleton' which I am describing is merely the essential bones which qualify a story at s-f; after that it depends on the author's skill whether or not he can clothe it in flesh and animate it (i.e., the literary and artistic qualities of the story, with which I am not concerned here; they may, admittedly, be the more important), but until an author recognises the need of this framework with its attendant applied limits, he cannot claim to be writing science-fiction.

Some of the work of E. E. Smith is a curious anomaly here: his science of the Lens is carefully built up -- although his mental 'battles' are, perhaps inevitably, clothed in astonishingly concrete terms -- and his physical science begins similarly, but in moments of stress he descends to sheer 'rod and cone stuff.' Further, no sooner does he reach a limit than he must write another story to surpass it; his epic thus tends to become a mere exponential series, in which each term is the same as the one in the story before, raised to a higher power. However, he has Van Vogt's prodigality in giving six for the price of one, so perhaps he may be forgiven.

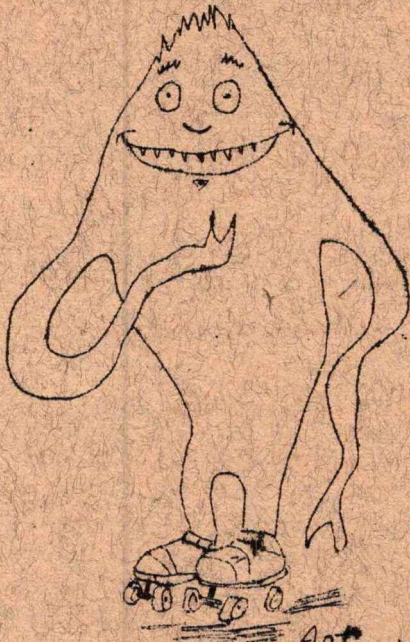
Another author who possessed this 'exponential' complex was Howard Phillips Lovecraft, albeit in a far worse form -- as 'AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS.' In this story, no sooner does he describe one set of horrors than he must go on to a further height (or depth) until finally he exhausts himself and is quite incapable of finding words for his ultimate horror, which is inferred only by its effect on his unfortunate characters. Enough of this digression; let us return.

Other stories which, like Clement's work are well constructed, are 'HOBBYIST' (E. F. Russell, ASF, Sept. '47), in which the habits of mind necessary to a space-man are thought out with uncommon sense, and 'PERIOD PIECE' (J. J. Coupling, ASF, Nov. '48), being an imaginative projection of the present trend in remote control toys from an unusual viewpoint, worked out by someone who should know of what he is talking.

The unchallenged leader in this field is still Robert A. Heinlein, any of whose tales is an object lesson in background building. The finest thing he has ever done in this respect, I feel, is 'SPACE CADET.' It is by far and away the most superb example of really conscientious scientific construction in existence. The mass of detail is astounding, and shows evidence of clear, concentrated thinking at every point. This IS SCIENCE-fiction, and by comparison 'THE CITY OF THE SINGING FLAME' (Clark Ashton Smith) and the aforementioned Lovecraft yarn appear as the unco-ordin-

ated gibberings of an unbalanced glandular system, a flux of 'totem-words,' unsullied by any intellectual process.

I am rather heated on this point because both of these stories have been presented as science-fiction, which fact I emphatically deny but for this I should not have mentioned them, being outside my frame of reference. 'THE UNPLEASANT PROFESSION OF JONATHAN HOAG' (John Riverside, UNKNOWN, Oct. '42), although not presented



Art
Wilson 157

as such, is much nearer the s-f theme than either of the previously mentioned tales, since the author commences with one assumption -- that our world is an artistic world -- and builds logically on that. Further, he does not froth at the mouth with misused adjectives in his climaxes. Next time you read Lovecraft stop at the word 'cosmic' and look it up in the dictionary. You might see what sense you can get from 'supernal' while you are about it.

Another series of intermediate type, part background, part explanation, is Rene Lafayette's 'OLD DOC METHUSELAH' run (ASF, Oct. '47 et seq.). Personally, I do not think the author has quite succeeded with his science in this series: there is an assumed background of science which is legitimate enough, and some development. My criticism is that the development does not give the appearance of being logically justified. For example, in 'PLAGUE' (ASF, Apr., '49) ODM solves his problem by a high-speed vaccine-growing process, but from the information given in the stories there seems to be no reason why he could not equally well

have tipped a sack of something into the drinking water, or set up a ray which would have killed all the measles germs . . . he has treated other cases in this way. Hence, this aspect of these stories failed to convince me, at least. Mind you, his stories are very readable -- the man can write (more power to his elbow), whereas Dr. Winter (ASF, Nov. '48, Jan. '49), whose medicine I am prepared to believe is unimpeachable, positively curdles my blood with his dialogue. 'THE END IS NOT YET' (Ron Hubbard, ASF, Aug.-Oct. '47) has similar faults to the ODM series: the miracles of 'viticity'-science were given no appearance of justifiability, or logical development. There was no apparent reason why viticity-science should make gold, or an air-exhausting bomb, or why it should not produce a death ray in the second installment and so save everybody a great deal of trouble.

When you are handing out new powers to your hero, you must also make convincing the limitations of those powers, the reason why he must go through the whole struggle you have planned for him. This was the one fault in ' . . . AND SEARCHING MIND' (ASF, March-May '48, book title THE HUMANOIDS). Claypool had to be set off on the wrong road by an initial misunderstanding. Ironsmith had to sound deliberately evasive without good reason, otherwise there would have been no story. 'Arbitrariness' is allowable in the background; it has no place in the development unless given justification. 'GATHER DARKNESS' (Fritz Leiber Jr., ASF, May-July '43), is a fine example of apparently arbitrary powers and limits which are, in the end, accounted for plausibly.

Note that I say 'plausibly' and 'the appearance of' being logically justified; the author is not required to produce a Euclidean chain of logic; it is sufficient that, at the moment, he convinces the reader that he could if it were required. Van Vogt, for instance, very successfully persuades me that only if there were time, he could stop and explain every detail quite easily. Furthermore, if you re-read his work,

you will find, it is largely so; he is very self-consistent.

In Jack Williamson's previously mentioned ' . . . AND SEARCHING MIND' he only just succeeded in making it plausible in its science-development; he went a little too far and too fast for my liking. But Williamson's characters are real human beings, for which I can forgive him much -- though that is another subject. I have been only concerned with the science in s-f.

There are other equally important problems, but at least one other problem which is peculiar to s-f, but they are outside my present scope. I have attempted to pose a problem, give examples of the answers to that problem, successful and otherwise. It is up to the writers of future stories to make their own answers to the problem, by some careful consideration before writing.

((Editor's note -- Hubbard and Lafayette are both Hubbard. John Riverside is Robert A. Heinlein. Hal Clement is Harry Clement Stubbs;))

Do you have any fanzines you will give away for the postage, or will sell? Below is a minor list of what I need, but if you have any others, please send a list with the prices...the editor.

Grue, Triod, Ploy, Slant, Tympani, The Gorgon, CanFan, Shangra La Affairs, Fanews, Spacewarp, Acolyte, Fantasy Commentator, The Time Traveler, Science-Fiction Digest (Both new and old ones) Lethe, Stefnews, Vom, Le Zombie, Fantasy Times, Nebula, The Comet, Speceways, Scienta-Snaps, Fantascience Digest, Polaris, Reader and Collector, Fantasia, Sciential, SF Checklist (Swisher's) LFA Review, Vampire, Sun Trails, Dream Quest, Fan Tods, Fan World, Tellus, The Sciencefictionist, Starlight, Fan World, Ban-shee, Allegory, Fanewscard, Milt's Mag, Fan Slants, Shangra-La, Golden Atom, Bonfire, The National Fantasy Fan, Damn Thing, Epilogue, Imagination, Nepenthe, Mikros, Stars, Nova, New Fandom, Sweetness and Light, Timebinder, Ad Astra, Futuria Fantasia, Pluto, FMZ Digest, Snide, Fantasy Digest, Stardust, Light, Stunung Scientifan, D&Journal, ALL FAN YEAR BOOKS, RSFS News, Mercury, Fantasy News, Science-Fiction Weekly, Le Vombiteur, Midwest News and Views, M.S.A. Bulletin, Sun Spots, Fanfare, Fantasy Fiction Field, Fanews Weekly, Fan News Card Weekly, Rosebud, Fantasy Fictioneer, ((Most those except the first 5 or so are over 10 years old)) Detours, Ultra, Cosmic Tales, Van Houten Says, Looking Ahead, Suchstuffery, Novacious, Sci-Fic Varsity, Sciential, Microcosmos, Horizons, The Futurian, The Alchemist, The Voice of the Imagination (VOM) and The Science Fiction Fan. ((The last are 18 years or more old))

Of course, I want newer ones, such as Quandry -- all the way up to the ones being published today. IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING, PLEASE NOTIFY THE EDITOR.

ALSO WANTED ARE A L L FAPA, VANGUARD, SAPS, and OMPA mailings.

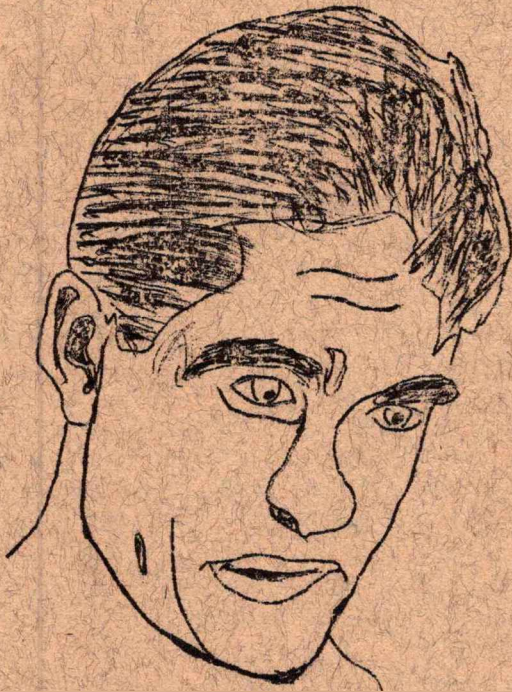
We also offer to trade with any fanmag being put out today.

--000--

Have you any suggestions for FANTASY ASPECTS? Any particular piece you want pubbed. (If we don't have the fanmag, we'll lose no time asking for it) But really, what do you want from FA? More ads? If you DO want more, then respond to ^{the one in this issue} this one so I can claim to prospective advertisers that a certain amount of people are interested. Do you want any columns? Just what DO you want? If we can, we'll supply it. *The Editor*

"CAPTAIN OF FUTURE"

GERMANY



BY

WILLY LEY

--ooOoo--

AMERICA'S CAPTAIN
FUTURE AS PICTURED
BY BERGEY

Mr. Ley, born in Berlin, a founder of the German Rocket Society, came to the US in 1935, and made his name as a writer of popular science articles for ASF. He is the author of "MISSILES, ROCKETS and SPACE TRAVEL" as well as many other works. Having studied astronomy and petheontology at university, he became a ^{recognized} specialist on all sciences. At the moment, he writes a monthly column for GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION.

In the early months of World War I, when I was still quite a young boy, the German Government issued a list of some 200 titles of "dime novels" which were verboten for the expressly stated reason of saving paper. On that list were the Captain Morg stories, which, if they aren't entirely forgotten by now, live only as a dim memory in the minds of a few Germans old enough to have made their acquaintance as young men. It is doubtful if a file of them exists anywhere; and since I have only my memory to rely on, I can give no precise details concerning their publication for those who may try to seek out any copies that have survived.

But the highest issue number of an almost complete set I once saw was No. 180, which, if they were issued weekly, would account for a run from 1911 to 1914. If it was a bi-monthly series, it would have started earlier, in 1908.; and from what I remember of the style and printing technique of the

FROM

SCIENCE - FANTASY REV -
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covers on the early issues I suspect the longer run. It is even possible that the publication began as a monthly and accelerated later.

I have also to admit that I don't know the name of the author of the stories; nor, I imagine, does anybody else who remembers them. They were published anonymously by a firm which had the name of Verlag Moderner Lektüre, which means "Publishing house for modern reading matter," and when, 'round 1930, I tried to look it up at the address given I found it did not exist anymore. Whether the whole series was written by one man or whether several writers contributed to it is another matter on which I much plea ignorance. Thinking back, I am inclined, however, to attribute most of the stories to one man.

Germany's periodical literature of that time ran the gamut from quality magazines -- mostly monthlies -- to weekly family magazines and newswEEKlies. There were also fashion magazines and popular science magazines, plus a host of professional journals. But all-fiction magazines, as far as my knowledge goes, did not exist, either in "slick" or "pulp" form. Substituting for pulp magazines, however, were two types of periodical. One was known as Kolportage, and usually consisted of endless love stories, in 200 or 400 weekly installments which dealers brought up the back steps to the maidservants.

The other type had no accepted name, and compared most closely to the American dime novel of the same period. In fact, many of these publications were straight imitations, if not translations of America's Nat Pinkerton, Nick Carter, Buffalo Bill, Texas Jack, etc. While they always had the same hero, each contained a complete story; and they were bought at stationary and candy stores. They were not handled by either the bookstores or the newstands; and although the government verboten did not kill off all of them, those titles which remained did not last long. To the surprise of sociologists, all attempts to revive them after the war ended in failure: one may assume that the political street brawl substituted for Nat Pinkerton and Texas Jack.

The bulk of this periodical literature was easily classifiable as detective or Wild West stuff, but the Captain Mors stories were outright science fiction. Probably they were not much better in literary style than the rest, but they showed evidence of wide reading and even research on the part of their author. The influence of some popular books on astronomy by Dr. M. Wilhelm Meyer, the director of the Urania Observatory in Berlin, was unmistakable. Each issue comprised 32 pages in the usual German small magazine size of about six by nine and a half inches. There were no illustrations inside, but colored covers front and back. The front cover always portrayed a scene from the story, while the back cover showed plans of Captain Mors' airship and spaceship, with a short explanation of the working principles. The plot of each story was as simple as possible, usually consisting of a task to be performed and the adventures inherent in the performance.

The person of Captain Mors was fashioned after Jules Verne's Captain Nemo, with some of the characteristics of Nana Sahib, the leader of a Hindu rebellion, about whom there existed a very improbable German novel of wide circulation. Captain Mors, it was hinted, was the son of a Hindu prince and a European mother. Like Captain Nemo, he led the life of a wanderer, with a South Sea island as a base of operations. Like Nemo, too, he was a highly educated man with a passion for science. Unlike Nemo, he was not anti-English, but merely "the enemy of certain British interests," especially the "Diamond Trust." He wore a captain's uniform and a black silk mask, and preferred a thin straight sabre to his other more potent weapons. The crews of his ships and his servants were invariably Indians from the northern mountain tribes who, after a few years in his service, returned to their native villages.

The Jules Verne influence also showed superficially in the fact that Captain Mors had

two principal assistants, engineers with the improbable code names of "Star" and "Terror." But whereas in Verne's stories the three musketeers always form a team, one of whom is used for comic relief, Mors' henchmen remained shadowy if capable assistants who neither made jokes nor displayed a humorous ignorance*.

By an interesting trick, the reader was never allowed to meet Captain Mors complete with full equipment -- airship, island base and spaceship. In the first stories he had only his airship, built secretly in the foothills of the Himalaya range. His early experiences compelled him to seek out an island base, an ancient volcano ringed by heavy surf, its interior accessible only by air, and there he began to plan his space-vessel. The author stated specifically that much machinery and equipment was bought from British and German firms, with the explanation that that it was to serve as ship repair yards. What he did not explain was how Mors and his men managed to cope with inches and centimetres sitting on a mixed pile of German and English equipment.

One story I remember dealt with a trip to Tibet to obtain the secret of a powerful high explosive. Another took Mors to Iceland to force an old and misanthropic scientist to divulge his knowledge of the neutralisation of gravity. A third involved a journey to Kimberley to steal a bag of large diamonds which were needed as bearings.

The airship which served for all these trips was an all-metal vessel of early Zeppelin design, with cabins strung out below the hull and a catwalk running all around and forward to the spur forming the nose. Six four-bladed propellers were attached to the hull above the catwalk. Probably due to the influence of Graf Zeppelin, Captain Mors had only derogatory sneers for heavier-than-air craft, with one exception. That exception was the propellerless plane piloted by Anita from New York to Chicago in two and a half hours, and designed by her father who died during the preliminary tests. "Tiny, large-eyed Anita" joined Captain Mors, fell in love with and married his astronomer, Professor van Halen, and thereafter served as hostess and sex-interest whenever the occasion arose.

The spaceship was a cylindrical steel hull with conical ends, at one end of which was a large, crescent-shaped magnet on universal bearings. The working principle was that the vessel, when gravity was neutralised, rose through the atmosphere on buoyancy, was thrown into space by centrifugal force and then steered in the magnetic field of the planets by the repulsion of equal poles. A trip to the moon took one and a half days (it must have been hyperbolic velocity), and it required "over five weeks" to Neptune.

The astronomical facts were in accord with popular science texts of the time. Both Venus and Mars were inhabited by native races, each of which knew space-travel. The ships of the Venusians were like large, silver fish and had heat-beams as weapons; they did not permit other ships to approach Venus if they could spot them, but they did not attack Earth themselves. The Martians' vessels were birdlike in shape, were painted black, and were always on the attack. Their weapon was the sudden release

This ship is also pictured on the back cover of a clumsy German science fiction novel by Oskar Hoffman which appeared in 1911. I wonder who stole from whom; but while the Mors stories made reference to the mechanism of the vessel, Mr. Hoffman's novel did not. -- W.L.

*His modern American counterpart, Captain Future (who monopolised a companion magazine to THRILLING WONDER STORIES between 1940-45 and finished up in STARTLING STORIES), went one better with three henchmen, collectively described as the Future-men. They consisted of "a rubbery white android" or synthetic man called Ortho, a seven foot metal robot called Grag, and Simon Wright, the Brain, a former scientist whose brain had been preserved after death. The whole series was written by Edmond Hamilton.

of accumulated solar energy, which manifested itself in the form of lightning bolts.

Captain Mors learned this secret early, and used it himself, but apparently the problem of the Venusian heat-beam was beyond him. At first the Martians only attacked other space ships, while defending their own planet; but later they went to Earth and, in a heavy fog, sank three British battleships, for which the Germans got the blame -- or the credit, if you wish. The reference was, of course, to the three light cruisers torpedoed in '14 by the German U-9.

As for the Moon, it was no longer inhabited, but in many places there were old fortresses, and several times Captain Mors' men suffered losses by running accidentally into abandoned defense mechanisms which still functioned. Eventually it was the British who tried to end the Captain's career once and for all. To accomplish this they equipped several warships with anti-aircraft rockets, the excuse being that rocket-launchers could be aimed faster than guns and that rockets provided a greater volume of fire!

This was in one of the later stories. In one of the earliest, the Russians attacked Captain Mors' ship by releasing from their own airship a number of rocket-propelled flying bombs with a homing device reacting on the metal hull of the target vessel. This, I think, should be considered a superior prototype of the Hs-293 of World War II. But Captain Mors had not thought of a degaussing belt; hence he could save his ship only by fast and frantic maneuvering. Nor did he foresee how his end would come. The British did get him after all -- by way of a paper shortage.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

ticle, I sent those rejects out to new markets, new editors. To my delight they began to bring checks. Some writers don't learn even during their second literary childhood! I like letters, even with rejects, as well as the next one, but never again will I let one of them influence me--except in my dealings with the individual writer of the individual letter!

16. I'm just as full of whatever it was that made me a writer in the first place, as I was then. Now, looking back, I wonder why, so many times, even in my twenties, I thought I was done, washed up, in a slump, ought to go back to book-keeping. Right after each new suicidal flurry of despair, something far nicer than I deserved happened to me. History has repeated itself in my second literary life. Everything, in the whole business of printers ink, is the best of all.

VOTE

CHICAGO

in

959

If

I

Could

Live

My

Life

Over

The Imaginative Collector
and Dawn

MARCH '51

Arthur J. Burks

--oOo--

I must be different! I've heard many people say that if they could re-live their lives they would do it all some other way. Of course they never get a chance as far as we know for certain. Except me! I'm on my second go-around and having the time of my life. I wouldn't even trade with my former self. And I'm setting it down here for a number of reasons -- as many reasons as young writers find for wishing they'd cut their own throats or their mothers had drowned them before they had the urge to write, or, having it, obeyed that impulse, got something on paper, in the mail, read avidly the first rejection slip, and were forever thereafter gone goslings.

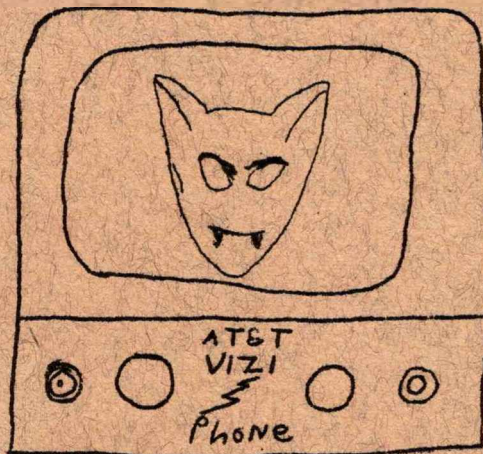
I started writing a long time ago. I was a success from the start. I sold over five dollars worth of material the first year! I wasn't writing much. I read something by Louise Rice, never dreaming she would become a dear friend to the effect, that would be writers should write two thousands words a day, rain or shine, before and after success arrives. Allowing for the well-known weakness of the weaker sex I doubled that for my first year; thus the five dollars and fifty-seven cents.

Spurred on by output considerably in the second year and again produced writing income, slightly less than two dollard, slightly more than a dollar and a half. I didn't frame those two checks, but I wish now that I had and still owned them. They taught me more than most of my rejects, and one story alone cost me eighteen dollard in postage! No, I didn't learn much, not until my second time around, which began in the latter half of 1948.

In my third year I had "arrived" and people were beginning to notice me as I passed on the highway; I took in, actually, one hundred and twenty five dollars, sixty dollars of it the price of a serial. In my fourth year I got into the upper brackets and lost all sense of proportion. I was ready to open a school for writers! My writing income was over five hundred dollars and I was beginning to sneak around to avoid internal revenue agents. No, I'm wrong about that; this was before us high-bracket gents in the writing "game" had to pay income tax, or anybody else had to either. You wouldn't remember when.

Then came Weird Tales which I still believe was one of the most literate of American magazines, pulp or slick, my opinion being in no wise influenced by the fact that I am again appearing in that magazine after a lapse of somewhere between two and three decades. Farnsworth Wright took a story from me, after which I did ten stories for him in ten days, he took eight of them, pay on publication, thus assuring me of an income from that magazine alone over a period of almost four years from those same eight stories! The magazine and I both had vicissitudes! Now only I have them!

I went formula shortly after "arriving" like that, and turned definitely porcine. Not only did I want all the magazine money I could lay my hands on, I wanted to see my name on as many magazines at any given time as was humanly possible. Being now in the class where I could dictate -- just try dictating to any of the editors I ever worked for -- I refused to do anything but novelettes and serials. I absolutely refused to do short stories -- unless an editor said he wanted a few! I once appeared in Times Square on eleven pulp covers at one time. In one of those magazines I had, however, five stories. I should have protested because my name didn't appear



Earl Downey

on the cover like this, "Arthur J. Burks (5)." Besides hitting a large proportion of the pulps, there were some I simply couldn't hit, I ghosted books and stories for "names" and had the dubious satisfaction of receiving nice money from my half-down-the-middle-on-everything for the books, and seeing five ghosted stories running in one of the world's top magazines while its editor was politely telling me, under my own name, that I would probably never get her slant. Three of the five stories, by the way, got nice mention in a famous yearly anthology. Each brought the "author" and myself five times as much as I received for a pulp novelette.

I collaborated with many "names" just before and during the depression, both on books and stories. Since the "ghost never talks" I did appear on publishing contracts, usually, and only one "author" ever honestly paid off down the line, only one. Some of them have since gone on to fame on their own, or maybe with other ghosts. This is merely to tell them I'm still not going to talk because their publishers, at least, were innocent -- and honest. I resolved, after about the tenth gypping, never again to collaborate -- which doubtless explains why I'm in the midst of one now that is little more than a constant wrangle, but is a lot of fun because I know just how it is going to work out. You see, when you live your life over again, you know how everything is going to work out.

Adolf Hitler and his pals gave me a job, unintentionally, but very welcome. I had got so fed up with writing I made faces at the typewriter. Fortunately for me, the week the typewriter started making faces back at me, the Japs attacked Pearl Harbor. A few novelettes later -- to pay for uniforms! -- I was back in the Marine Corps. For four solid years, with a monthly pay check reasonably certain, I refused any dealings with typewriters save via the first sergent or sergent major. I had had enough. I had written millions of words, sold not nearly as many millions of words, to over two hundred American magazines.

Even had the wild idea, after the war, of staying in the Marine Corps in which I had once held a permanent commission, but the Navy recognized the idea as being wild and I returned to Brooklyn Navy Yard to be ordered to inactive status, mileage guaranteed to Manhattan! I had to return to writing. I resolved I would never

again write for which I previously had written. I spent most of the next two years in Brazil. Altogether I was out of the writing business six years. I knew, naturally that I'd have no difficulty getting back anywhere I wished. Yeah! Yeah!

I found I had to begin again! I hadn't even wished to live my life over! I was beginning right where I had started decades before. Most editors were new. Old editors wanted "something fresh". Armed with clearcut memories of what the "writing decades had taught me, I attempted to re-earn my bitch in the magazines, whatever magazines would have me. I have never been so thankful of anything in my life! Not because of what the whole business, being lived over, is doing to me, but because it gives me a chance to pull away the veil of despair which so often nuzzles the writer in his or her early years. Here is what I have learned, not necessarily in the order of importance.

1. Your rejection slips are your most valuable contact with the editor. They make it quite clear to you that you are no menace to the classics, that if you're going anywhere at all, you've got to learn your trade. I'll never cease to be grateful that I did not sell my first story anywhere. I know one writer who sold his very first story, thirty years ago, to the first magazine to which he sent it, a magazine which was tops when my grandfather was a boy, and still is. That writer never sold that magazine again. But it happened to be an air story. He tried more air stories until he had a pile of rejects as high as himself. Some gent named Limbergh then flew the Atlantic and my friend sat back and lived for years on his rejects. Some editor saw his first yarn, hunted him down, asked him what he had, said he could use a dozen. My friend sent a dozen, got a check for a dozen, was awful glad he had the rejects.

2. Your next most valuable contact with an editor is a rejection slip in which appears a pencilled 'sorry' or 'not quite' or 'try us again' or as appeared on one of mine, 'this might be a story if it didn't stand on its head.' The word proves. let us at least hope that a reader, or an editor is beginning to think you might amount to something. BEAR DOWN and bear down harder than you ever did during the days of plain rejection slips.

3. Your next best contact is a letter of comment and the comment "enclosed find our check" is not the most useful to you as a writer. For if you are flighty, and if you aspire to be a writer, you couldn't be anything else, God bless you! you are going to take it that you have arrived, that the editor has just been waiting for you, and that thereafter anything you'll dash off he'll take. Nothing could be further from the truth. The hardest editor to hit is the one you've just sold. You must with him, forever thereafter, do a better job or at least "come up to your own standard", a phrase every experienced writer has read many times. Of course, you may sell in a sellers market if your yarn is par, but once you've hit, take it for granted that the editor will reject with a definite lack of warmth material that he'd buy from a beginner. Lock, this is my second time around!

4. Your next best contact is, of course, the check because it is tangible, edible proof of your acceptability. But receipt of more such depends on how you react and make use of items one to three above. Don't take my word for it, ask anybody. What I could say about checks! Well, why shouldn't I talk. No check is ever as big as you believe it should be, even if, especially if, it's for more than you know darned well in your heart that your story is worth. My advice is to take it, cash it quickly, and stash away ten per cent of it in something firm and solid like government bonds, against which you vow not to draw as long as you are able to sell something -- including pencils in a tin cup! I've had a hunch from all that I've seen that old age is no kinder to a writer "has-been" than to the regular kind. Look back on three decades of writing, even with indifferent success, and if you've sequestered ten percent of each check (Just an additional agencies fee after all) you can look you children and grandchildren in the eye and say: "No thanks kids, I won't make it, but drop in anyway." And I'm not joking. In common, with many other writers, I could have sat out the

depression in comfort, letting my typewriter rust, if I had invested ten percent of my writing income before it started.

5. Don't write letters to editors until they write you. Nothing you can say in a letter to a honest editor will influence his decision on your story in any way, and letters often seem to the recipient to say something far different than the writer intended. Letters have cost more sales in my experience than they have helped make. Let the yarn speak for itself, and often even that is too loud!

6. Don't argue with editors about prices. Withdraw your story if the price doesn't suit you. And be the first one in your case to take such action! Don't go to law if, for some reason, an editor breaks a verbal or even written agreement with you. Three times in my career I have compelled editors to buy stories they had ordered, at the prices they had promised. In each case stories were revised according to editorial wishes. In two of the three cases I never thereafter got anything from those editors but rejection slips. They were wrong, and I was right, but if I hadn't been so full of "principle" I could make a fortune from their magazines -- they're still editing. There's no satisfaction in knuckling under but "the principle of the thing" is editorially inedible. Don't sue the movies, radio, television, magazines, book publishers, newspapers -- anybody in the field, for even if you win, you lose. You may get one big check, but in the long run it will never balance the smaller checks you will never thereafter even smell.

7. Avoid "chatter." I once said, in the presence of another writer, that a certain editor was too finiky, wanted too many revisions. At that moment, that editor's house was paying me more than any house has since paid me. The writer, that day, casually repeated my words to said editor, perhaps with certain self-serving embellishments. I couldn't figure out what had gone wrong when I got twenty straight rejections without suggestion for one revision. I was still on a drawing account, too, up to the twentieth rejection. I still "chattered", and thus found out what had happened. The editor had said, "he'll never sell me another word as long as we both shall live!" I never have! Later, grinning, he told me he had indeed said that and he ~~had~~, indeed, meant every word! That was twenty years ago. We're both still in business. I quit chattering -- until this paragraph, which, I write frankly because I'd rather a lot of fresh beginners would get a straight steer than maintain a monastic silence solely for my benefit.

8. But, in this business of publishing, if you are ever sued, pay! But dicker! A bad settlement is always better than a successful lawsuit, and both are fairly common in a business which has so many ramifications.

9. Be careful about raising the shout of "plagiarism!" To prove plagiarism requires evidence of practically word by word, period by period, paragraph by paragraph copying. Twice in my career, editors have rejected my stories on the ground that they were like, for one example, "The Flying Yorkshireman," and I forgot the other one. I do know, however, that I have never read either of the stories I paralled so closely. I was once connected with a writers organization. An editor asked me to keep a certain writer out of the group because he was a plagiarist." I refused.

That writer is, and for fifteen years has been, one of the top writers of American slick fiction. I didn't know him, but the editor lost a previous job because a story he had "written" was a word by word; sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph -- but you finish it. It just happened that I had read the original and his copy of it, two days apart, by chance(?). The two parallels mentioned above were not regarded by the editors involved as even appressingly plagiarism, conscious or unconscious; editors know that the new thing is hard to find. Accuse a writer of plagiarism, and if he takes action, and you can't prove it, you're going to have to support him the rest of your live, legally.

10. If you think your stories or articles or books are the best you can do at the moment, don't let anybody, anybody, make you think they aren't. I once wrote a novelette for a half-cent-a-word on publication market. It was rejected. I sold it seven years later for three cents a word cash. I once did a long series of novelettes, some of which were rejected. In time I sold the rejects, one of them nine years after it was written. It was yellow with age and the clip was rusted to the manuscript, but the editor dug it out of my files and didn't ask me to touch it. Rejects, if they are your best at the time, are property. Run clear through all possible markets with them. Then, since there must have been an idea in them in the first place, hunt the idea and re-write.

11. Enjoy your work. I promise you that you are going to look back at your most desperate and trying times as the time of your greatest satisfaction with your profession. It's corny maybe, but the fight for attainment is more satisfying than the attainment itself, which is invariably a let-down. Checks are fine, necessary, and pleasing to the ego, but they don't build character, bring out the best in you like having to fight like a son-of-a-sea-cook for something despair tells you you'll never attain! You will, I promise you that, too, if you are reasonably literate and stick to your guns. Look! When I came up, starting with the juveniles, there were certain juveniles I simply could not hit; but I socked them in the eye my second go-around! The checks were not big, as far as money goes, but they were still the biggest in satisfaction. In the pulps there were certain dignified ones I could not hit. I ~~hit~~ hit them now! And I'm growing, not because of the checks, which are allright, too, but because I had to fight them so long.

12. Write what you please. Write what editors want, as nearly as you can, but write what you please somewhere, on the side, in your spare time, if you are going to be satisfied with success when it comes. I've written and published many books. I have written more than I have published, naturally, being me! I've published far more than people have bought. Books have never -- under my own name that is -- even threatened to pay me for my trouble, but I've always enjoyed writing books, some of the most satisfying of which I have known better even than to offer to publishers. Now, on my second "life", I sandwich a few pages of my current book effort into time set aside for my stories and articles. I give those pages the hours immediately after breakfast to express my love.

Maybe they won't sell. I'm not writing them with an eye to the market. They are books I want to write, always have wanted to write. Now I am writing them.

13. Cast your bread on the waters. Pick out a darity you can believe in and spend some of yourself on it, in all humility. The world must balance. Your returns will surprise you, especially returns which make the heart light. Never snoot anybody. It is also as much a crime to underestimate yourself as it is to overestimate yourself. I was about to say that humility pays off above all things except for one thing: I know a man whose ego requires three meals a day. His world revolves entirely around himself. Last time I heard he was managing to struggle along on five thousand a week, but just barely. But he's an exception, I'm sure.

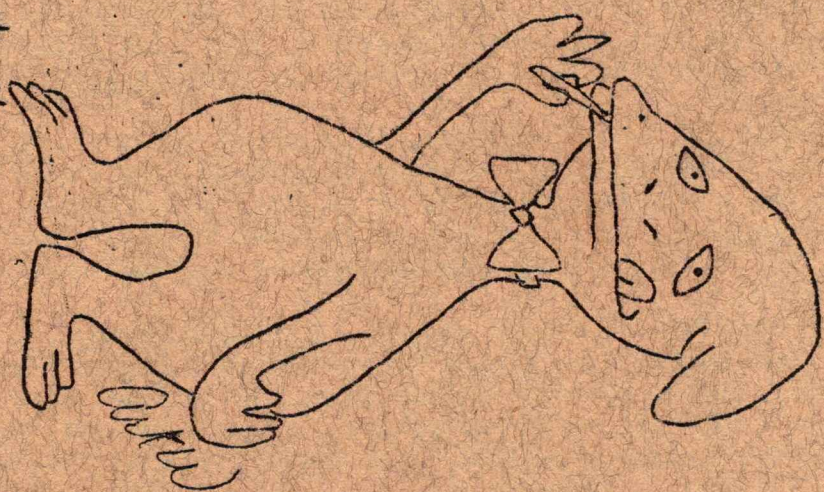
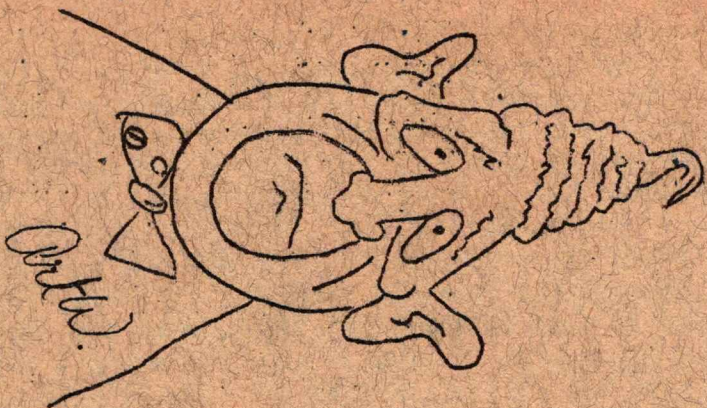
14. I'm having the time of my life, this one or the previous one, and both together, because everything that happens to me this time around has happened before, in spades, and I know just how it is going to work out. I overflow with glee when it does even if it is what is regarded as "bad" when I was young and ambitious. Now I know that in this business of writing there is nothing "bad" unless I make it.

15. In my first writing life I thought, I was almost sure, I could become a writer. In this second life I know that if I don't become a writer again, I'm fooling quite a lot of people. Boiled down, say it like this: I always did get rejections. I still do. Only recently I got a long string of turn downs from a house I've sold since 1930. Each rejection brought an editorial letter. Those letters seemed to indicate that I was through. Grimly I hung on, letting those rejects pile up. Then one day, when I couldn't squeeze out a story or ar-

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