



# LIGHT

*Leslie A. Croutch*  
EDITOR  
and PUBLISHER

## CONVENTION

AUGUST 1948  
----- NO. 36-----

## ISSUE

### ART STAFF

Bob Gibson  
John Cockroft  
Don Hutchison

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Croutch, Box 121, Parry  
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CINCINNATI IN

1949 !

### TORCON MEMORIES

by Leslie A. Croutch

This is being written Sunday, July 11th. Several days have passed since the Torcon. Several days in which I have mentally savored the memories of that affair. Time in which I have evaluated my experiences. The first flush of excitement has worn off. What is left are the opinions which I think will be fairly stable from now on. Certain events that left little impression on me at the time are now pretty hazy, while other happenings have grown more clear. Some personalities have emerged stronger and more virile still.

This is not a report of the Convention. Factual resumes will no doubt appear elsewhere-- repeated many times. What statistics that do appear will be factual-- but everything else will be highly colored. This account is based on my own viewpoint-- what I saw-- what I felt-- what I experienced-- what I thought-- anything else would be false.

A spado will be called a spado and an atheist an atheist. I shall make no attempt to call a fan a good egg if he impressed me otherwise. I shall try to be honest in all my impressions, but please remember that those descriptions are colored. I likely saw every fan and every person from an angle no one else did. Just as Ackorman saw Bob Tucker's Report on Fandom from his angle, so I saw it from a different one.

In other words, this report is the Convention through MY eyes. I hope it proves amusing. I hope no feelings are hurt. If any fan thinks I wax too hard when mentioning him, please know that regardless of how derogatory my impressions may have been of anyone, I still have thoughts of that person that I cherish and enjoy. No one is all bad. No one is all good. I met no angels. I met no demons. I met real people with real faults, and real qualities. I liked everyone in varying degrees. I enjoyed the comp-



more than the company of others. Some I would have liked to have met more thoroughly but they were tied up in their little circle of close acquaintances.

However-- so be it.

Further on in this issue of LIGHT, you will find reprinted the two newspaper articles on the Convention, with their sources. This is so everyone without a copy will have one. The greatest of care has been taken to reproduce them without typographical error. Liberal use of correction fluid has been made. I feel sure that as they now stand they are 100% accurate. Any errors that remain appeared in the papers and are reproduced for your enlightenment.

--- --

What did the Convention mean to you? I don't know-- you are the only one who does. What did it mean to me?

The Convention meant a chance not to be a fan so much as a chance to meet those I had not before-- to meet those that were mere names to me-- and to meet those I had corresponded with. I was less interested in the fan business or the speeches than in the personalities involved.

It was with that in mind that I went to the Torcon.

I returned home with an entirely different viewpoint.

But let's try and be a little more chronological about it-- as chronological as I can be, that is.

The Toronto weekend began at 4:40 PM, Thursday, July 1st., for me when the CPR from Sudbury arrived at Union Station. The local runs between Sudbury and Toronto. Parry Sound is approximately half way between these two points.

There were no fan doings yet, but I had arrived early to make a bit of a holiday of the trip, and to see some friends outside of the Convention. I wanted to visit Ted White and Harold Wakefield in their homes. I did Ted-- but poor Harold got sidetracked somewhere and I only saw him a few minutes at the Con. I am truly sorry about that, Hal-- I'll do better next time down, which might possibly be again this year before the big snow comes and the bears all hibernate.

I had a room reserved at the Windsor Arms Hotel, so went up and checked in. Room 121. Ground floor-- right handy, and only three bucks a day, too! Then I went out to Ted's place where I had supper and visited til about 1:30 AM Friday morning.

Friday things began to hum.

My first fan act was to phone "Information-- Ma 6083". I thought this would be one of Taylor's addresses and expected a male voice to reply. But it was a female one, and a mighty nice, young sounding one too. She pumped me full of information of various kinds: Tucker was in and at the King Edward. A car load of Michigan fan were coming in and expected to arrive sometime that morning. I figured that would be Martin Algor and his Packard. He had informed me by post card that he would pull in Friday morning if all went well. It looked like he was going to be right on schedule.

I took a car and wandered down to 583½ Yonge where I went into Pylon Photo Supplies and got a carrying case for the movie camera and a reel of film for the projector. I checked, then, across the street, at 543 Yonge, but found Canadian Electrical Supply Co (wholesale to the radio trade only, said the sign in the window) closed for the long weekend. Most Toronto firms closed from Thursday until Monday.





# "FANTASY VIGNETTES" BY N. V. LAMB

NO 4

10

GEORGE GRIFFITH- "THE OUTLAWS OF THE AIR"  
Published by Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton,  
Kent & Co. Ltd., London, 1897. 376 pages,  
8½" x 6". 29 illustrations by Edwin S.  
Hope & Raymond Potter.

A group of leading scientists found a  
model civilization in the south Pacific

which they call Utopia. They develop many inventions including a warship far ahead of any other afloat and the first airship known to man. The latter is stolen by one of their chief engineers who is an Anarchist. He joins his compatriots who have invented a warship of tremendous power and speed. Using it and the stolen airship they terrorize the oceans of the world. They raid Utopia but find that the scientists have departed, taking with them a newer and more powerful warship than their own and they realize that death faces them if they ever meet.

War commences between England and Germany on one side and France and Russia on the other. The Utopians assist England in landing troops in Belgium. In the East the English fleet defeats the Russians and both sides wait for warmer weather in order to begin the land fighting in the West. Renault, the engineer who stole the airship, is captured in London and is sentenced to death for piracy. England uses the aeroplane which Hiram Maxim has developed and begins building 24 of them in order to combat the Terrorists. Renault is rescued by his fellow Anarchists and their airship bombs London in retaliation. England completes building one aeroplane and on its trial flight it is attacked by three Terrorist airships. It destroys one, sends another to the ground and chases the third which escapes and bombs Newcastle. After a lengthy chase it is captured by the English and is found to be the one stolen from Utopia. The crew are taken prisoner but manage to escape when the Terrorists send an airship to their aid and after bombing another town they evade all pursuit. The Russo-French fleet attacks the Anglo-German fleet near the Kiel Canal and the Anarchist air-fleet takes part in the battle. Tremendous damage is done both to the ships and the ground fortifications nearby. The English fleet is destroyed and the Anarchists aid the Russians in sinking the German ships. After they have been destroyed the Anarchists turn on the Russian fleet and sink most of them. The terrorists continue building more airships in widely scattered parts of the world and the English aeroplane seeks these locations and destroys them one by one. The Anarchist flagship is the scene of a mutiny and Renault is disposed of in London. His followers sabotage the entire Anarchist air fleet and it is captured complete by the English. Their super-warships capture the Anarchists' surface vessel and the Terrorists are completely destroyed. The English and the Germans use the captured airships along with their own and easily defeat France and Russia who possess none at all. Peace is signed and a huge indemnity is demanded from the losers. England and Germany share half of it and the remainder is given over to the Utopians. A year later a newer and even greater Utopia is well on the way to being formed and it becomes a sovereign state under the name of Oceana.

(How optimistic the pre-airplane writers were about the effectiveness of aerial warfare--NVL.)

TITLE: "The Star-Treader and Other Poems".  
AUTHOR: Clark Ashton Smith.  
PUBLISHER: A. M. Robertson, Stockton Street and Union Sq., San Francisco, Calif. 1912.  
Printed by the Philopolls Press.  
OTHER DATA: First Edition, Cr 8vo, bound in light blue paper, blind ruled. xii + 100 pp, 12.5 x 19 cm. Cover: THE STAR-TREADER AND OTHER POEMS, in black on a white

Editor Label, CLARK ASHTON SMITH.

COMPLATS In 1912 A. M. Robertson of San Francisco, who had published the poems of the great Californian poet George Sterling, brought out a slim blue volume of poems by a young Californian who was to become one of the greatest writers in the realms of the fantastic. Even in this, his first book, Clark Ashton Smith demonstrates the vivid style and beautiful choice of words that have made his writings the envy and despair of other fantasists. In addition to the title poem, which recalls Sterling's long "The Testimony of Suns", there are 54 other poems, ranging from four lines to several pages, and varying in subject from the commonplace to the cosmic. From descriptions such as

"As drear and barren as the glooms of Death,  
It lies, a windless land of livid dawns,  
Nude to a desolate firmament, with hills  
That seem the fleshless earth's outputting ribs,  
And plains whose face is crossed and rivelled deep  
With gullies twisting like a serpent's track."

(Medusa)

he turns to exquisite

bits like

"O wonderful and wing'd flow'r,  
That hoverest in the garden-close,  
Finding in mazes for the rose,  
The beauty of a Summer hour!

O symbol of Impermanence,  
Thou art a word of Beauty's tongue,  
A word that in her song is sung,  
Appealing to the inner sense!"

(The Butterfly)

and

"Sleep is a pathless labyrinth,  
Dark to the gaze of moons and suns,  
Through which the colored clue of dreams,  
A gossamer thread, obscurely runs."

(Maze of Sleep)

No matter what his subject, Smith brings to it the uncanny sense he possesses of knowing exactly the word to use for the effect he desires. Some have accused him of being unnecessarily verbose, but to me it seems that he is merely being precise and using the word that says exactly what he wishes to convey. This makes his poems have a definitiveness and yet an outre, unworldly atmosphere unequalled by other modern poets.

Among the most memorable poems are: "Nero", "Chart to Sirius", "The Star-Treader" (cosmic in its sweep), "Medusa" (Earth in the far distant future), "Ode to the Abyss", "The Butterfly", "The Price";

"Behind each thing a shadow lies;  
Beauty hath o'er its cost:  
Within the moonlight-flooded skies  
How many stars are lost."

"Lament of the Stars", "Nirvana",

"The Song of a Comet", "The Song of the Stars", and "Saturn".

This book is a landmark in the fantasy field, marking, as it does, the first appearance of Clark Ashton Smith between the covers of a book. It should be in every fantasy library; that is, if you can find a copy!

William H. Evans. (5-1-46.)

# THE WHITCON

*an anglofan Convention — May 1948*

REPORTED SPECIALLY FOR LIGHT BY

JOHN NEWMAN

COMPLETE WITH ACTUAL SIGNATURES OF THE ATTENDEES AT THE  
END OF THIS ARTICLE.

~~THE~~ The first fantasy and science fiction convention since the war was held in Great Britain at Whitsun. It was attended by about fifty fans, including many well known authors and editors. The plans for the convention were only prepared at Easter but in spite of the short period, the attendance and enthusiasm was amazing.

The Whitcon was held in London over the Saturday and Sunday, the main meeting being on Saturday evening. The first party met at Leicester Square Station, at 8:30, and London fans showed the out-of-town visitors around the bookshops in the Charing Cross Road. Another party went to the Science Museum.

The parties recombined outside Lyons Corner House at Tottenham Court Road, and were further reinforced by other fans at 5:00. After tea they went to the "White Horse Inn" where a room was reserved and a running buffet available.

The first half hour was spent by the fans getting to know one another and washing the dust out of their throats. At 6:30, the President, Wally Gillings, editor of the well known Fantasy Review, called the meeting to order. The Secretary, John Newman, read out a list of those who were unable to attend but had sent along their best wishes for the success of the Convention. Ted Carnell then spoke on the Big Pond Fund, the ban on American books and magazines, which has been recently tightened in Canada and Great Britain, and the collapse of New Worlds. He talked about the possibility of forming a publishing company to print a 4th edition of New Worlds, when it would be entitled to a paper quota.

Arthur C. Clark spoke on the influence of science fiction on astronautics, mentioning that excerpts from one of his stories had been reprinted in a technical book. Rutherford read Amazing but the Cavendish Laboratories are now sacred to Astounding. He gave examples showing that scientists use science fiction to spread their ideas.

The Secretary raised a number of points after Arthur's talk. By an overwhelming majority the Convention decided to donate the excess money from the auction to the Big Pond Fund. Reports on the Whitcon should appear in "LIGHT", "Fantasy Review", "Fantasy Advertiser", and "Operation Fantast". It was hoped to print a Convention Booklet containing a report on the Whitcon and a number of articles on fans and fandom.

Ken Slater, now in Germany, had sent us two pounds to buy everyone a round of drinks on him, so at the first opportunity the meeting broke up to drink Ken Slater's health. The running buffet was then attacked but even the fans could not completely demolish the piles of food which were available. After eating, the fans wandered around the room looking at the original covers from Tales of Wonder, the piles of books and magazines for the auction, and the exhibition of latest prozines and fanzines, including LIGHT.

At 8:30 the auctioneer, Ted Tubb, ably assisted by Landy and Plum, began his work. Books sent over from the States by Derleth and other fans for the Big Pond Fund were first auctioned. By 9:30 piles of magazines and books were still waiting to be auctioned and the auctioneer was beginning to show the strain. By selling them in threes the remainder was sold by 10:00. An original Tales of Wonder cover, put up



Walter C. Cline  
Moderator  
John S. Cline  
M. H. Cline

Wm. J. Doughty  
Cyrus J. Jones  
W. J. R. D. Cline  
Peter Knott  
Lyons J. B. Cline  
S. E. R. O. S. Field  
Wm. S. Cline  
L. C. Tubb

A. James B. Cline  
R. B. Buckmaster  
J. E. Doughty  
J. E. B. Cline  
Ronald J. Cline  
A. B. Cline  
H. E. W. Cline  
W. R. D. Cline  
A. B. Cline

W. J. Cline

W. C. Cline  
J. M. Cline

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W. C. Cline  
J. M. Cline  
Fred. E. Cline  
O. C. Cline  
B. C. Cline  
(C. C. Cline)

L. C. Cline  
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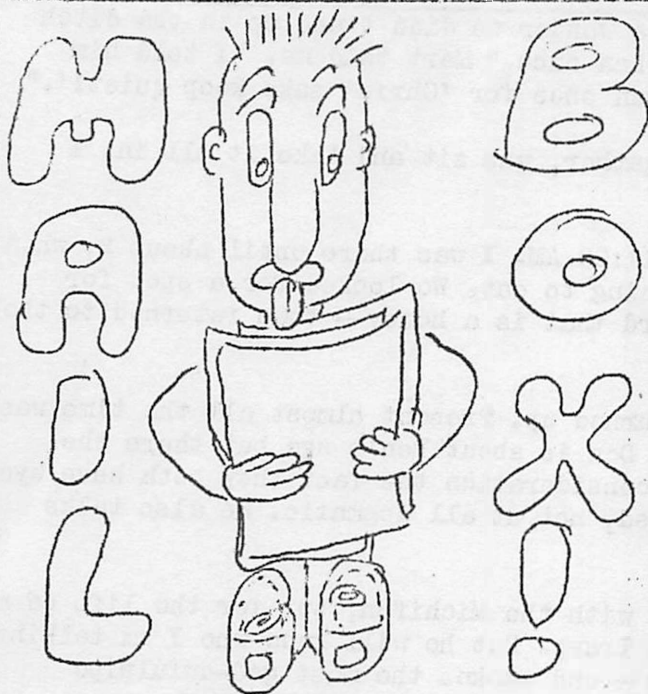
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Francis R. Cline  
George W. Cline









MOE DINER, 445 MT. PLEASANT AVE., WSET-MOUNT. QUEBEC. Yep, I do prefer LIGHT #34's cover to #35's. But that does not necessarily mean lithographed covers in general are inferior to those stencilled. A good lithographed cover is far better, to my mind, than a stencilled one. The only trouble is, lithographing shows up the faults in technique of the artist to a far greater extent than will stencilling. It is as much easier to stencil and illo than prepare one for lithographing, as to sketch something with a pencil than paint it (I trust my syntax is correct?) /How the devil should I know? I'm only the editor?—Ed/ Lithographing highlighted the weird and cluttered composition of #34's cover; stencilling glossed over such of #35's faults as managed to get by the sharp limitations of technique that the medium affords. Here ondoth Diner On Art. /How about Diner on the C.P.R.?—Ed/

Just finished reading van Vogt's "The Weapon Makers". It confirms an impression formed by reading "A" and "The Book of Ptath" (also the book versions). When van Vogt writes stuff for the mags, he craps it out. But when he revises it, pruning, padding, sharpening, and clarifying generally, he really improves it-- and then you can really begin to appreciate the excellence development of concepts and writing that go into the making of one of his yarns. I think he must have done that with his first full-length.

"Slam", before sending it in to Campbell. That one had a clarity and a clear story-- line missing in his subsequent ones. But you see it in his books in which he has worked over the stories. Incidentally, I suppose you have heard of his "Weapon Shpts of Isher", coming in TWS? That "Shopts" is open to debate--- it is printed as Moo spelled it--- s-h-o-p-t-s- Ed/

## Light Flashes

Ho hum! It is now 6 PM, Sunday, July 25th. I have been slaving over this hot type-writer ever since 1:30 this afternoon, except for 45 minutes off for supper, starting at 10 minutes to 5.

I intended this issue of LIGHT to have only 12 pages to the copy, but look what happened. The convention report and the two paper articles did that. I was going to take some of the stuff out and hold it over til the next issue, but then I started to think-- it might be some time before the next one is out-- run it all now and be done with it. So you are getting a complete edition. Hope you enjoy it.

The Canadian fans are pretty steamed up over that Bain thing in the GLOBE AND MAIL. However, it was to be expected. A paper that allies itself with the Conservative interests, politically, of the province, and our brown-mouthed premier, George Drew, in particular, isn't too particular as to how it reports anything anyway. Truth and accuracy as the GLOBE AND MAIL are strange bed fellows. The TORONTO STAR report was serious, but somewhat inaccurate. Our American friends will no doubt soothe because we were given the credit for all the conventions. I think what should be done in the future to prevent reoccurrences of such things, is to request the reporters to submit their copy to the Convention Officials so that errors can be corrected and misapprehensions scotched while in their infancy.

(you got to turn to page 8 if you want to finish this with me)

TORCON MEMORIES"  
by Leslie A. Croutch.

) "It's a wonder we didn't end up in the ditch  
) more than once," Mart told me. "I told him  
) more than once for 'Chris' sake keep quiet!."

All the Rabbi did, from what I could gather, was sit and take it all in. I wonder what his opinion of fen are now?

I got in at the Prince George around 11:00 AM. I was there until about 2, when Mart and I went out by ourselves for something to eat. We looked for a spot for him to store his car-- a 7-passenger Packard that is a honey-- then returned to the hotel.

During the afternoon various people turned up. Present almost all the time was Canada's MACABRE publisher, Don Hutchison. Don is about Ben's age but there the similarity ends, unless you can take into consideration the fact they both have eyes, legs and so on. Don is quiet, liberal-minded, not at all dogmatic. He also talks and acts more maturely than Singer.

Oh, yes-- there was a returned fellow with the Michifen, but for the life of me I can't be sure of his name, unless it was Trapp. But he will know who I am talking about when he reads this-- he wore glasses-- and smokes the most god-awful pipe you ever saw. He said little and for that he stands out in character. He was a good egg and I liked him.

Anyway, during the afternoon, various fen arrived and settled for gabfests. In fact, I guess the Torcon began, unofficially, many hours before 1:00 PM, Saturday.

Ackerman turned up. Ackerman! I for one didn't fall down and beat my forehead against the floor and say Allah! Allah! Forrie will be reading this and no doubt is highly interested to know what my impressions of his are.

After reading Laney's Memoirs, and hearing the myriads of stories out of the LAFS about what went on there, I had quite a conglomerated idea of what I would see. I know it would be human, but what else, I am not so sure. What I did meet surprised me very pleasantly. Ackerman didn't strike me, nor some others who met him for the first time, as being at all nearly as dynamic as we had supposed. He was quiet, softly spoken, ready to smile and listen, and to talk. When he gave a talk at the Torcon, he didn't rant and rave or wave his arms forcefully as I had half-expected. Ackerman went up in my judgement tremendously. I don't recall him spouting his atheism once. Of course, I met him only a short time at various intervals. That is too short a time to judge any man correctly. But what I did gather was entirely at variance to what I had heard and to what I had mentally pictured. He wasn't a complete refutation-- he wore the famous Ackerman glasses, and he looks almost exactly like his photographs.

Another chap who popped in was Chan Davis. I didn't get to do much talking with Chan, but I liked him. He is quiet, sincere, erudite, and speaks his mind forcefully, and yet doesn't appear to hold anything against anyone. This showed up in an argument he got in with Ben Singer. Ben would get rather personal at times and he tried pumping Chan about various "extremist" views attributed to him (Chan). It rubbed Chan on a raw spot, evidently, for quick as a flash he told Ben to "Shut Up!" He was sore. Ben backed down. Chan gave a short snap lecture. But he didn't stay angry, or if he did, he didn't allow it to show. He answered Ben when Ben switched subjects, and he did it as though nothing had happened. I think Forrie was amused at this little altercation for he looked at me and twitched his eyebrows.



Oh yes-- someone, I forget who, said that, during the morning, they had phoned Tucker at the King Edward, and a woman's voice answered and called, "It's for you, Tuck!"

Could be a Lady Zombic?

Friday evening, after partaking of eats, everyone sojourned to the famous Room 1685 in the King Edward.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. Or rather, I am-- in the lobby of the King Edward, I made my first mass acquaintances with fan. There was a goodly crowd of them there, shaking hands, introducing each other and themselves, and everyone talking six to a dozen.

But upstairs to 1685. Now, I become befuddled. Memories from here on for Friday are not crystal clear. Even today (July 25th) as I put this on stencil, they are no better. Too much happened. The first people introduced to me stick in my mind. But when you meet them at the rate of several each minute, minute after minute with few breaks, in a small room with about 50 milling about (that's just a very rough guess as to the number), coming and going, the phone ringing, everyone talking six to the dozen, and this goes on almost from 7 PM till after midnight, your old think-tank boggles down and coasts along in a pleasant sort of daze, allowing only certain craggy peaks to stick above the rapidly flowing stream. The lesser things become drowned, to be dredged up only with difficulty.

It wasn't until Monday that I started to get many people straightened out in my mind. Canadian fan Jack Bowie-Reed, Greg Cranston, Alistair Cameron, John Millard, Ned McKeown, remained sort of mixed up for some time. I eventually got them sorted out to my satisfaction. Paul Revey will be happy to know I never had him confused with anyone for even a split second. Paul Revey IS Paul Revey, and no mistaking that.

I think here I will ditch the chronological order for a time and indulge in some more personalities. These are scattered all over the place, and are presented without order or sequence.

First of all I'm not going to get myself in trouble and name the prettiest girl there. Not unless I can sort them into classes leaving each lady in undisputed possession of the place of honor in her class. I was pleasantly effected by them all.

First though, I must mention the MacInnes clan. Dave was the only female-owner there that I offered five mint first ASTOUNDINGS in swap for his wife! That is signal honor indeed. But he told me he had had better offers. Pam and Dave are a swell couple. I met them for the first time. Our only other contact had been through the exchange of our fan mags. But that magazine project of their reflects their personality wonderfully. They are, or certainly seem to be anyway, a perfectly married couple. Happy, laughing, handsome. And to my surprise, Pam told me both are Canadian born. Which means I can safely say she was the prettiest Canadian femme fan there! She told me once she would like to come back to Canada to live. The third member of the clan is Goldberg Soda, a low-slung, long wheel-base, narrow tread, pooch, that sings when Pam and Dave sing. I'll mention more of this when I come to the Monday evening fan entertainment.

Bob Tucker I know before we were introduced. Bob is one of those rare people who appear in person exactly as they do in their photographs. I can say little of

of Tucker because we didn't actually get together on any talk or anything. But he has a great sense of humor as everyone knows. He struck me as being quite devoted to Guess Who. At least, they always seemed together and chummy as two rabbits in a hallow leg, when it is storming outside.

Mari-Both Wheeler-- and it isn't coincidence that I put her after Tucker, is quite the pudgy gal. Not obese, but not exactly slim. An arm full, let us say. Neatly put together in the large economy size. I never saw her with anyone but Master Hoh, but I wasn't on the scene continuously so that is no criterion. I liked Mari-Both from many angles, and she had many angles to look at.

Then there was one Josie Bonderavage who is put together in such a manner as to make a mere mortal slaver. I didn't exactly drool down my chin but I didn't wear a coat of frost, either. I didn't more than meet Josie, but I can give you my impressions from giving her the once over and seeing her in the fan entertainment. Josie is small-- slim-- with a sort of pixie look about her, and either she wears a feminine assist to contour or God had fun putting the pieces in the right places, for Josie has a silhouette that Rita Hayworth or Jane Wyman wouldn't exactly sneer at. And in her part in the play during the fan entertainment, Josie also showed she could put heat in her voice and a mean wiggle in her hips. Yes, I approve of Miss Josie Bonderavage.

Dorothy Les Tina was on hand but I didn't get to meet her. Dottie is not too bad a lookin' wench, but, God, Dot, did you have to wear that screwy hat and those long skirts. They made you look hammered down. A flat hat and long skirts and no heels on the foot gear can make a person look mighty flat. Interesting faces though. Not bad ankles-- I couldn't see the legs because of the aforementioned reason. There oughta be a law!

Judy Morrill-- the same who wrote "That Only a Mother" in ASTOUNDING?-- is a brunette wench with a wonky look. I didn't meet Judy either-- so can't say I know her. She isn't tough to look at, though, and appeared to be enjoying things in an animated way. Nice smile-- knew how to dress. What relation is there in that statement, I wonder?

Jean Bogert was around and collected my autograph twice. Must have been love at first sight! First time I was forced to sign in pencil, not having a pen. Then Jean got a pen somewhere and was back to get me to sign in ink. Not a bad kid though I heard one male-- who shall remain anonymous-- say she looked "Kind of simple!" But to me she just looked terrifically enthused and excited. She was there in body and soul and having a swell time. She had a sort of wide-eyed amazement about it all. I wonder if this might have been her first Convention. The stacking was there with a pleasantness that didn't annoy.

Celia Keller-- Mrs. David H.-- was much in evidence. She is nice but had a tendency to be the confidential sort. She is Doc's press agent. She can tout Doc's wares terrifically and it is impossible to be annoyed. You can tell that she feels her husband is the only man on earth. It either must be loved or hero worship. Mrs. Keller is the motherly sort and would mother you if you didn't watch out, I am sure.

Dr. Keller IS Dr. Keller. Doc's a bit of an egotist all right. But not as bad as some had led me to believe. Doc is an egotist in which Doc figures Doc is a real red hot potato as an author, and when a man has proven he can write and sell I figure he had a right to boat his chest and do a bit of crowing. After all, if he doesn't tootle his own horn, who will? Doc feels every story should have at least



one beautiful thought in it and he quoted passages from "Live Everlasting" to prove his contention. I feel sure Keller likes that story about the best of all his works, for as he left me after quoting passages from it, he said, "Pure gold, man. Pure gold!" Personally, I like Doc Keller. I don't think a helluva lot of some of his work-- but neither does Mrs. Keller. She told me some of his stories leave her cold-- that he thought them wonderful but she couldn't read them at all. But then, no man had ever done everything just right. You can even criticize some of the Scriptures-- and Keller certainly isn't an Old Testament author. Doc has a profound respect for the Bible. To him, the King James version is one of the most beautiful books in the world.

Bob Bloch didn't look as I had him pictured at all. I don't know exactly what I had expected to see, but it wasn't what I did. He impressed me favorably-- slim, slightly saturnine, dark complected, with a marvelously weird sense of humor-- but we all know that. His talks and entertainment was terrific and his mimicry good. His Peter Lorre character was a high point to me.

Humor, I think, was the high point of the whole Convention. George O. Smith was on hand, and whether he was slightly pixilated the first time when he gave the talk on interplanetary communications, I don't know, but what he didn't do was as funny as what he did. Whether he was putting it on I don't care. I enjoyed him. I could have listened to him a lot longer. He master-of-ceremonied the fan entertainment, and I don't think a better person could have been picked. His pretending to duck down behind the speaker's stand to take a snifter brought down roars of laughter. Only trouble with George, he always seemed to be in too much of a hurry. He almost ran from the gathering at the last. I tried to corner the guy but he was like a cat on the famous hot bricks. I had some questions to put to him on electronics which might have led to a good gabfest. Maybe I'll drop him a letter someday and see what the outcome is.

Now we'll get back to the chronological sequence.

The Convention convened by the playing of Beethoven's Fifth-- the "ta ta taaaaa" part only, which was very appropriate. Ned McKeown made the welcoming address and got things rolling. You know from your Torcon program book that Bob Bloch was first man up. His address was based on an article by some doctor or other of psychology and attempted to analyse fandom and science fiction on Freudian principals. I don't agree with any of the symbolism that science fiction is sexual symbolism, though there isn't much doubt that most fan do go for sex. But so do most of the human race, for some strange reason.

After Bloch was finished there was a short intermission followed by a session taken up by messages from the book publishers. My main reaction to the news of all the books being published is we might as well toss our magazine collections out the windows for we'll soon have everything from them reprinted in book form. The second reaction was where the hell do we get all the money to buy all this stuff? It was suggested that our hobby need cost us about \$52. a year. But it seems to me the suggestion also carried the proposal that we not have any other hobby. Having only one hobby is dangerous, I think, as having none at all. We can't become loggy from not not enough varied activities. Another thing, the expense of any hobby in Canada is a good 50% or more higher than in the States. We just can't begin to buy everything we would want. Not if we also want to purchase books on other subjects: text books on various lines of thought and sciences, for instance.

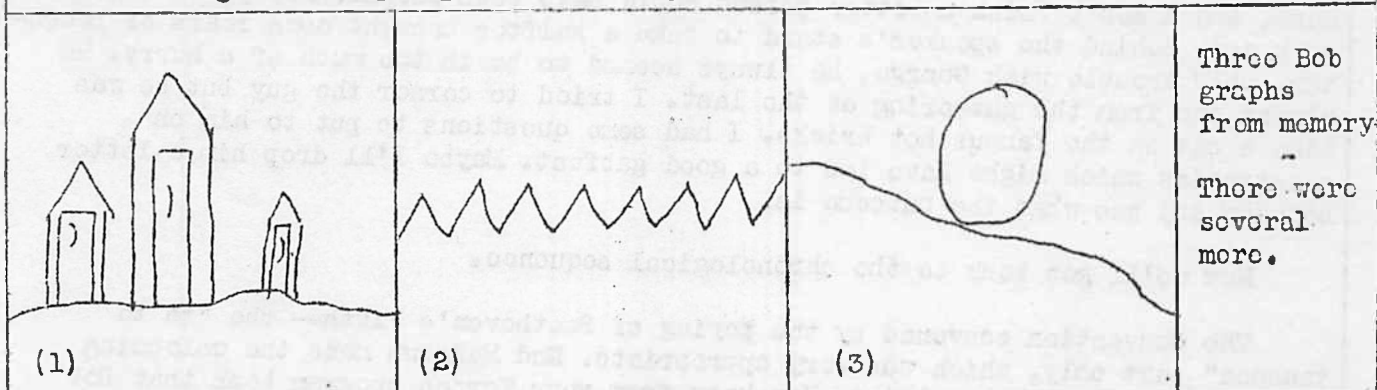
I fear my admission here will be taken as heretical. I didn't turn up all day Sunday! I wasn't interested in the auction as I couldn't for a minute see myself pay-

ing fancy prices for any item, no matter how badly wanted. I did intend to get in on Tucker's Fannish Survey but things prevented. All I know of this is second hand and what I shall read as it comes out. I did see the graphs sp well prepared by Mari-Beth and they were enjoyed.

I went up to the White's Sunday morning. When evening came we got to Talking and one thing led to another and I forgot all about the evening session until it was too late to go down to the Convention auditorium. It was an easy half an hour to three-quarter's of an hour ride at the best from Ted's to the Rai Purdy Studios.

However, I did pick up some information second hand when I went in at 1 PM Monday afternoon. It wasn't much but here is what I did hear. On Tucker's poll, among "occupations", some guy listed "male streetwalker". A femme listed "wrestling". Tucker also figured that of the literate fan only a small percentage could read or write! From the graphs pinned up, I see that among the professions and occupations, radio rates the highest. My age groupe, 33, is, I believe, the lowest. Certainly among the lowest.

During the fan entertainment, right after the buffet, Monday evening, Bob Bloch gave his own survey, complete with slightly ribald charts, commenting on Tucker's survey. If Tucker's was any funnier, maybe it is a good thing I wasn't there--- I might have sprung a couple of gaskets!



(1) This graph, according to Dr. Bloch, represents the three major publishing houses turning out science fiction. No attempt is made to analyse the type of output. (2) This, the final graph, is a design of a torture instrument for use on fans who subject fan to fan polls for some ulterior motive. (3) This shows the average intelligence of the average fan.

Pam and Dave MacInnes sang a song and Goldberg Soda sang his accompaniment. Pam has a high sweet voice. Maybe I am just impressionable, though. No attempt was made to say whether Goldberg Soda was actually singing or merely voicing his criticism of what was going on at that instant!

Milton Rothman gave a talk on semantics. Maybe he will print it in Plenum. I can't begin to repeat it here but it was a howler. If he sends me a copy I'll run it in the next LIGHT. He also played two pieces very capably on the piano. I was surprised to find Milty was so accomplished. I remember I forgot to comment on Milty back away so I'll do it now. I was glad to meet him. We had corresponded for some time and I had always enjoyed his letters. In person, I found him even nicer. There wasn't a bit of let down. He struck me as being a very democratic fellow, putting on no airs, somewhat easy going, well educated, yot an all round good Joe.

The fan entertainment started off with a hucky fellow's recitation of Poe's "The Raven". His rendition was among the bhe most forcible and effective I have ever heard. I wish to apologize to him here for being unable to recall his name. I will



always remember it. But that is a fault of mine: having difficulty at times tying names and faces together.

The final piece of entertainment was a soap opera, a take-off on "Portia Faces Life". Milt acted, supplied the music, and in general made himself useful. George O. Smith was the radio announcer. Josie wriggled and insinuated nameless things throughout and in general made herself taunting.

I have left this little bon mot until last. But it was by no means least. First item on the entertainment was George O. Smith, ably abetted by Tucker supplying sound effects, reading the two aforementioned articles from the GLOBE AND MAIL, and DAILY STAR. Tucker makes a better ray gun than a paper doll. Smith would ask him to "make like a ray gun" and Tuck would jump up and go "Zap! Zap!" Some wag would ask Tuck to make like a "man with three heads"-- another, "Make like a wax doll, Tucker!"

(I have just re-read what I have stencilled, and I see I have totally neglected the film shown-- a new British 16mm sound film entitled "Atomic Physics". It was fresh from the censorship board in Ottawa and hadn't been shown anywhere else yet, according to what I was told. It was very deep, but very educational, showing the search for atomic energy from the days of Hertz right down through the Curies and Einstein to the present. It divided the audience into two classes-- the older and more serious ones who stayed to see it, and the younger crowd who wandered in and out and milled about, apparently disappointed there were no ray runs or pyrotechnics. As Mart Alger said, "It showed who were the science fans and the Buck Rogers fans who expected ray guns to go zap! zap!" I wonder if it was his remark that might have been overheard and used by the reporter of the GLOBE AND MAIL when he made up the title for the article.)

Finally it was all over. Everyone stood up and sang "Auld Lang Sang" (I'm sure that name is misspelled) and we all went around shaking hands and saying goodbye and wishing like hell it was just starting instead of ending. I know that is what I felt anyway.

Next year it will be in Cincinnati. Doc. Barrett bid it in successfully and Ned McKeown immediately moved we call it the "Cinvention".

(During the day some wag suggested we should have a convention in Tampa, Florida. I leave the rest to your fertile, though slightly nasty, imaginations!)

Then there was the rush to Barrett with bucks to enrol in the 7th. Society. I am proud to say that I believe I got my buck in ahead of Forrest J. Ackerman!

I see I have forgotten some vignettes: better late than never, so here goes.

Ol' Man Evans. I was glad to see Everett but sorry Jonne couldn't be along. He gave me her address so she will be hearing from me before long. Evans was different to what I had pictured. I had pictured a smaller man, older looking, slimmer. Otherwise it was Evans and I know who it was before we were even introduced.

Evans fans will be delighted at the following exchange: Evans, slipping up beside me, "Where could a guy get a little fornication in this town?" I was forced to admit I was a stranger there myself-- that he would have to contact the Toronto Group, who, no doubt, would be able to supply street, house and number. I don't know if he was successful or not!

Other remembered remarks are:

"Milty: "This place is just like Philly?"

Anonymous: "We have a thief in the crowd. An item I bid on has disappeared."

Ben Singer, to 4e: "Is it true what they say about homosexuals in the LASTFS?"

Croutch, to Mari-Beth: "You certainly have Tucker well-trained."

Mari-Beth: "Oh yes, when he hollers, I jump!"

Grog Cranston, in restaurant when waitress was taking orders: "Have you milk shakes?"

Well, the Torcon is all done. It was my first Convention, and I came away with fond memories and a host of new friends. I have changed my mind on what Conventions mean to me. I see now that if I lived in a place where there were many fans, and a fan club, I would be much more active than I am now.

I made many new friends and renewed old ones. I think one of the most memorable things was seeing Fred Hurter again because of the miracle of science that he is a walking attestation to. Fred had always been lame, walking with canes and with braces on his legs. He had had little grip in his hand. But now he is almost well again. His treatments in Europe has made him whole once more. So whole that I had forgotten the hand and it had to be brought to my attention. He walks now with one cane and only when going up or down stairs. Otherwise he is as you and I.

Congratulations, Fred-- I think I am safe in saying all your friends are happy with you.

Will I be at the Convention? I don't know. It is too long away to know. I know I would like to be and I shall try to be-- but so far that is all.

But even if I am not I shall be, in spirit. And that is one thing I guess the atheist boys can never be-- they deny the existence of a spirit. . .

(((((THE END))))))

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REPRINTED FROM THE GLOBE AND MAIL, DATE LINE, JULY 5, 1948. (In case anyone wishes to write this paper, their address is Toronto, Ontario.)

### Zap! Zap!

#### ATOMIC RAY IS PASSE WITH FIENDS

by George Bain

Put down that ray-gun, Buck Rogers, I've got you cold. So I let him have it with my 25th century rocket-pistol (zap zap), hopped into my space-ship (zoom swish), and made off to the planet of the three-headed people. Minerva was waiting for me, a light sparkling in every one of her six television eyes.

Seen any machine-men of Zor lately? They have organic brains in metal cube-shaped bodies, you know. What's the word from Helen, the lovelorn robot, or the snail-lizard of Venus? How're interplanetary communications with you, kid?

Nothing wrong with me that a long rest-- and protection from another science-fiction convention-- won't cure. The sixth world convention of these publishers, writers and readers of fantastic tales is being held at 55 Queen St. E. Just take a firm grip on yourself, plunge right in, and it shouldn't be more than a couple of weeks before you can sleep again without nightmares.

Of course, you may have a few bad moments if you start worrying about the cosmic veil of meecoric dust which is going to cover the earth in a few years. Don't let it get you; it's just going to last for 40 years and after that the sun will shine through again.

The business about the cosmic veil is contained in one of the fanzines which are available for the fan attending the Torcon. A fanzine, among science-fictionists, is a fan magazine, fan is the plural of fan, and Torcon is Toronto Convention. Cunning, aren't they?

Those of the tender nerves should make a point of avoiding the drawings displayed at the convention. There are up for auction (if anyone wants a good portrait of a fiend for the bedroom wall, this is the place to get it) and are the originals of pictures which appeared in fantastic and astounding magazines and books.

There's one cosy little number, for instance, that shows a poor bloke being clutched to the breast of beast that had the body of an octopus and arms which are individual snakes. Any number of these pictures show people being done in with ray-guns (zap, zap. . . ough, you got me), space-ships flying through the mushrooming smoke of atom-bomb explosions, and lightly clad maidens being menaced by fiends of one sort or another.

On Saturday, before the formal goings-on of the convention started, the delegates were free to examine the fanzines, new books, and drawings on display, and to cut up touches about fiends they have met in their reading. Two men in one corner were earnestly discussing werewolves; a group of three was lost somewhere in outer space in a jaunt between Mars and the moon.

The fan are kept in touch with one another and the writers of their favorite type of literature mostly by the fanzines. One of the latest of these is a jolly little number called simply Macabre .

It is advertised: "Want to feel disgusted, scream in horror, beat your head, kill your mother-in-law? Read Macabre."

Science-fiction is years ahead of actual science, according to David A. Kylo, a far, literary agent, writer and publisher of Monticello, New York. "We had the atom bomb 15 years ago," he says, indicating that the atom is pretty much passe now. "We're on to new things."

At one time during the war, the FBI in the United States told one science-fiction magazine that it would have to drop an atom story because it might give away military secrets. The publisher said his magazine had been publishing atom stuff for 10 years and if it was to discontinue abruptly it might create suspicion. Atomic fiction marched victoriously on.

Author Robert Bloch analyzed the reasons why people write and read science and fantastic fiction and approved of them. Mr. Bloch told his audience he had a Jekyll and Hyde personality and also managed to use a creditable imitation of Peter Lorre at his creepiest in his address.

THE FOLLOWING IS REPRINTED FROM THE JULY 5, 1948, EDITION OF THE "TORONTO DAILY STAR". (The Star is usually a very accurate paper, but look at the mess they did on the Convention). ((No by line!)).

About 200 science fiction writers-- they are the guys who turn out this horror stuff that makes you wake up screaming in the night-- are in Toronto today attending the sixth annual convention of the Torcon society.

They don't look or dress like the characters from their books. In fact they look just what they are-- successful business men who write fiction as a hobby. They say it helps them relax. In the group are included advertising men, doctors, lawyers, a movie projectionist and just about any occupation you wish to name.

Robert Block, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is an advertising copy writer. In his spare time he turns out "chillers". As a boy, Mr. Block says he used to sit in graveyards to get an inspiration for his horror stories.

"I'm too old for that now. I'd get rheumatism; so I just sit home and wait for the ideas to come," he said.

Last night, Mr. Block awoke in his hotel room in the middle of the night and rushed for a pencil. He couldn't find one so he got out his typewriter. He had a plot for a story.

It concerned a man who murdered his wife, and then planted poinsettias on her grave. The flowers took root in her body and strangled him while he was standing on the grave.

Does he have nightmares? No. But he admits his wife sometimes does.

Started at 16

He writes short stories, novels and radio scripts. "Stay Tuned for Terror", one of his radio serials, was broadcast by the C.B.C. Mr. Block read horror books as a boy and decided he could as well as the author. When he was 16, he wrote his first



story and had been writing over since.

"It helps me relax after a hard day at the office," he said.

The Torcon society meets annually. This is their first convention in Canada. In addition to professional writers and publishers, many members write for a large number of amateur publications which have sprung up in the U.S.

Wilson Tucker of Bloomington, Illinois, runs a movie projector. In his spare time he writes detective stories. "The Chinese Doll," his best known book, is to be published as a pocket book after appearing as a serial in several newspapers.

He admits his job helps him get ideas for his stories.

"You can't see 200 movies a year without borrowing something from them," he explained.

Like most of his colleagues attending the convention, Mr. Tucker started by writing "chillers". However, he found they were pretty tough to sell so he switched to detective stories. He thinks detective stories are easier to write because of their looser construction.

The authors are quite proud of the scientific accuracy of their work. "Sure we use our imagination," one said. "but we rely on scientifically proven facts for the base of our story."

They like to tell about a story on an atom bomb published in one of the magazines while the Manhattan project was still in the hush-hush stage. As a result, the F.B.I. investigated Author John Camboll and wanted to know where he got his information. For a while they suspected he had a pipe-line to the project. As it turned out, he just used his imagination but his scientific training resulted in this fantasy being close to fact.

Fans of the horror fiction are really avid. They crowd around their favorite author with autograph books. Jerry Seigel and Joe Schuster used to be fans of the chillers before they rode to fortune on the coat-tails of Superman.

(((((THE END))))))

HEADLINE IN THE SAME ISSUE OF "TORONTO STAR":

PRICE OF METEORS STARTS AT \$1,908.

anyone want to buy a meteor, and if so, what in hell are you going to do with it? However the pay-off is as follows:

Windsor, July 5-- Ford of Canada today announced prices for its new line of passenger cars, the Meteor, which will be shown to the public for the first time tomorrow. Factory list prices, less taxes and delivery charges, range from \$1,500. to \$1,715. (Windsor prices are as follows)= De Luxe coupe, 1,500 (409)- \$1,908. Price in brackets is the luxury tax. De luxe tudor, 1,575(442)- 2,107. De luxe fordor, 1,645. (475)- 2,120. De luxe club coupe, 1,620(463)- 2,083. Custom tudor, 1,645(475)-2,120. Custom fordor, 1,715(507)- 2,222. Custom club coupe, 1,690(493)- 2,186.

AND TO THINK FORD USED TO BE THE LOW PRICES CAR! (IF YOU ARE WONDERING WHAT THIS IS DOING IN LIGHT-- AREN'T THOSE PRICES PURE MODERN FANTASY?)



CARTOONING BY

BOB GIBSON,

CALGARY,

ALBERTA,

CANADA.

