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THE MENTOR

OCTOBER 1968

NUMBER TWELVE

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THE MENTOR Number 12, October 1968. Edited, printed and published by Ron L Clarke at 78 Redgrave Road, Normanhurst, N.S.W. 2076, Australia. Phone 48-5826. A25¢ per copy, A\$1.50 for six. THE MENTOR is also available for trade, contribution or letter of comment. The views expressed in this fanzine are not necessarily those of the editor. There will be a maximum of two issues sent out for a letter of comment, three for a contribution. There are some people receiving notices with this issue. If you wish to continue receiving THE MENTOR and do not wish to miss an issue, then I suggest that you act fast and write a letter of comment, a contribution or send me some cash. Advertisements also will be printed - for rates write to me. Next issue out sometime in late November.

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THE MENTOR : A SHORT HISTORY.

Judging by the amount of enquiries I've received I think it is time to give some information out about how THE MENTOR got its start, etc. The subtitle, A Short History, is fairly accurate. I will, in the course of this 'history' give the reasons for some of the statements I've made about the first issue : ie why I said it was probably the biggest fanzine in Australia.

The first issue of THE MENTOR is dated 3rd August, 1964. It is three pages and measures $9 \frac{1}{4} \times 16 \frac{1}{8}$. It was a 'Normanurst Boys' High School Production', being written, sponsored by and distributed (at the exorbitant price of threepence) to the unfortunate pupils of NBHS. It came out fortnightly - or so it claimed - and was edited by a committee of four Fifth Year pupils, by name Ken Hobson, Richard Moir, Chris Guy, and yours truly.

TM number 2 is dated 17th August 1964, is 4 pages (printed one side), measures $8 \frac{1}{8} \times 13 \frac{1}{8}$, priced 3d and now monthly. TM 3 is the same size, 4 one sided pages and dated 14 Sept. 1964. TM 4 is same size again, seven pages (one sided), dated 13 Oct. 1964 and actually sports a cover illo!

At this point we all finished Fifth Year and proposed to hand the reins of TM to the younger members of the NBHS SF Club. This fell through, and the next issue, dated April 1964 was brought out by Chris Guy and myself. It was quarto, 6 unreadable duplicated pages (printed on the Futurian Society's duplicator), and quoted the technical assistance of John Baxter, Graham Stone, John Foyster and encouragement by Bob Smith.

Number 6, dated May, 1965 was still 3d, had 8 pages (one sided) and used about three typewriters in its pages. The 'Editorial Committee' was back to three - Chris Guy, myself and Ken Hobson. Richard had departed to greener pastures. Which brings us up to the present run.

THE MENTOR No.7, dated May 1968 was a result of the Melbourne Conference. It was quarto, spirit duplicated (one side of page), 6 pages. The editorship had dropped to one. Me. Number 8, June 1968 was also there in the spirit, and was, along with No.7, given no monetary value (which figures, if you've seen them). Oh yes, it was 6 pages, double sided. It was put out as 'showing the flag'; and you don't tell people so when you do. That was the last of the crudzines. Although I labeled TM 9 a crudzine I never considered it one. It was 12 duplicated pages, 10¢ a copy and was dated July 1968 (inside, not as on the cover). Number 10, Aug. 1968 was priced at 20¢, quarto and 34 pages. Number 11 was Sept. 1968, quarto, 25¢ (where I am stabilizing it), 42 pages and approx. monthly.

Throughout its life THE MENTOR has been publishing fiction, from it's first issue up to this one. This is one of the main reasons I publish TM - to give stf fans the opportunity to see their stories in print and to hear what other people, stf readers like themselves, think of them and any improvements that could be made in the writer's style, etc.

Ok, there is the potted history - fiction anyone? -RLC.

THE REMARKABLE MISS ZEE.

by John Brosnan.

Nicholas (Nick to his friends) Nova entered the recreation room of the U.W.L. 'Tonto', a class F freight ship whose cargo usually consisted of unimportant odds and ends and passengers who couldn't afford anything better. Nick rotated a friendly smile which was totally ignored by everyone, then made for a vacant seat. He was halfway across the floor when suddenly he halted in mid-stride, his face ashen. Shuddering, he raised a limp arm and pointed at the opposite wall.

"Arghh!" he said.

"What ever is wrong?" asked one of his fellow passengers, intrigued by this strange behaviour.

"That vision-screen!" gasped Nova. "It's on, and we're passing through hyper-space!" He fell to the floor and began writhing on the carpet. "Arghh! Those mind consuming colours! Those soul twisting patterns! I can't stand it! My very id is being swallowed by the incomprehensible magnitude of the enclosed infinite! Turn it off, I implore you, quickly before I am left a mindless hulk, devoid of all sanity and reason!"

"That's not a vision-screen," said the other passenger calmly, "that's an abstract painting by the Martian artist Poopeee!"

"Oh," said Nova. He got up, dusting himself, found a seat and sat down. After a while he turned to the man sitting next to him.

"Hi!" he said, and thrust out his hand. "My name is Nicholas (Nick to my friends) Nova."

The man smiled and shook Nova's hand. "My name is Winvo Muss. Pleased to meet you." He was a slightly built man and appeared to be in his mid-forties. As Nova released his hand he noticed something strange.

"My word!" he exclaimed, "you have a hole in your hand." The man smiled again. "I have indeed. In fact ..." he held up his other hand, "I have a hole in both hands." Nova saw that this was true. In each of his palms there was a neat, round hole.

"How did you get them, if you don't mind me asking?"

"Not at all. I used to be a missionary, you see. Once, while on the planet Mooooossss, I told the story of Jesus Christ to a group of natives. They were so inspired by it that they immediately constructed a wooden cross and nailed me to it. I learned later that a strong, sadistic streak runs through the Mooooossssian race. Crucifying is now a major pastime there I believe."

"Why don't you have your hands regenerated?"

"Why? I don't mind them like this. They're rather unusual, in fact they serve as a conversation piece. Always help to break the ice with strangers."

"Were you a missionary for long?"

"Many years, and one of the best in the business if I do say so myself. Why, I was given an award for saving the most souls in one year once. It was a gold medallion with an engraving of God on one side and Billy Graham on the other. But I've given it

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up altogether now. No money in it anymore."

"True, very true," agreed Nova.

This was common knowledge. In the early days of human expansion across the galaxy, missionary work was a highly profitable occupation. As the church men themselves had no knowledge of operating spaceships or of surviving on new and unknown worlds they hired experienced men to do the job for them. As an incentive they added a commission on each alien soul saved. The years that followed are legendary, when space captain raced space captain to reach new worlds ripe with their populations of unsaved souls. Many were the bloody battles fought as the rivalry became more fierce.

Eventually the mission ships were always the first vessels to land on a newly discovered world, beating the ships of the scientists and even the merchants. Many was the man who waxed rich as a result of the 'Interplanetary Crusade' as it became known, but the period of prosperity was soon to end.

Religion, which had been losing strength on Earth for centuries, was dealt the death blow when in 2198 the Federation of Scientists conducted a massive enquiry into the feasibility of the concept of God. The conclusion of the enquiry, which lasted for years, was negative and Jehovah, Allah, The Holy Ghost and Jesus Christ (the other major religions had faded away before then) were relegated to join Odin, Zeus and Jupiter etc in Limbo.

After that the churches rapidly declined in influence and naturally the missionary business was affected in turn. These days there was only the odd one or two operating.

"I can't complain though," said Muss. "I raked in quite a bit during the early years, and one never got bored. Ah, some of the tales I could tell. Those were really wild days ...wild."

"Why don't you?" asked Nova. "You've got a listener here with nothing better to do." He lifted a drink from the tray of a passing steward. The steward was human but he was disguised as one of the androids that were popular on the more expensive shipping lines. Nova took a deep swallow and settled back on the meagre upholstery.

"Let's see, what shall I tell you?" murmured Muss to himself. "Hmmm...perhaps the time I was performing miracles on the planet Dost. You know of course that we missionaries used certain special effects to aid us in our jobs, When one was trying to convert a whole planet at a time it was permissible to cheat a little.

"Well there I was on Dost with a flowing beard and dressed in saintly robes. I had been wandering around the planet for several weeks and doing quite well. The Dostians, a near-human race, were responding to my preaching and I had a 'Saved Soul Tally' of over a million. As usual I made my finale with the Sermon on the Mount and planned to follow it with an Ascension Into Heaven. Everything went perfectly, I finished speaking and a hushed silence fell upon the thousands who surrounded me. All of a sudden down floated this white cloud. It touched the ground directly before me. I stepped slowly into it and it began to rise. A sigh of awe came from the multitude. It was a great moment.

"I must explain at this point that the cloud was in actual fact a disguised gravity sled operated by a remote control device which I kept in my pocket. All went well until I reached a height of about a hundred feet, then one of the gravity nullifiers cut out. The sled abruptly sagged to one side and I lost my footing. As I started to fall I was fortunate enough to grab hold of one edge of the sled and so save myself. My troubles, though, were far from finished. There I was, suspended high above the gaping multitude, seemingly hanging by one hand from a white, fluffy cloud, and yelling my head off too, I must admit. To make matters worse, beneath my austere robes I was wearing a style of underwear in vogue at that time."

"Not the luminous green ones?" exclaimed Nova. Muss nodded.

"They were quite visible to everyone."

"Good grief!"

"But that's not all. In an attempt to save myself I activated a flying android in my ship that was hovering invisible overhead. This android was in the shape of the Virgin Mary and I had planned to use it if the natives had shown any stubborn resistance to my preaching. Sort of an ace up the sleeve, so to speak. Well, I was controlling it with the control device I had in my pocket when damn me if I didn't drop it. Next thing down hurtles the Virgin Mary at full power with all jets blazing. Straight past me she plummets and ends up burying herself in about fifty feet of bedrock. Scared hell out of the natives. I haven't been back there since."

"I don't blame you."

"Then there was the time I was preaching to an asexual race on the planet K5332. I spent months before I could get them to comprehend a bisexual species, then I tried to tell them about the Virgin Birth. I had to shoot my way out of one of their insane asylums."

Muss talked on for some time until Nova yawned and looked at his chronometer (watch). "Its been very interesting, Mr Muss, but I think I should go and get some sleep."

"Of course," said Muss, "perhaps I'll see you later again. Oh, before you go, would you like something to read? Help you to get to sleep." He reached into his pocket and produced a peculiar looking object. It appeared to be some sort of irregular hexagon.

"What is it?" asked Nova.

"A book, of course."

"You're joking."

"I am not," protested Muss. "It's a novel by a rising young writer called Hon Nansorb. He's one of the leading advocates of the Ballodian school of writing. Its the IN thing these days."

"What's a ballodian?"

"Good groin man!" exclaimed Muss, slightly shocked. "Where have you been all your life? Haven't you ever heard of G.G. Ballod?"

"Frankly no. Who was he?"

"Just one of the greatest writers who has ever lived,

that's all. He lived during the twentieth century and was one of the first writers to realise that the geometric shapes that fill our environment have common images within our mind. In Ballod's own historic words - "At what point does the plane of intersection between two cones become more sexually stimulating than the cleavage of a well-endowed woman?"

Nova thought this over. Finally he said, "Frankly I can't recall ever being stimulated sexually by two cones, no matter at what point their planes intersected."

"Ah, perhaps not consciously, but you were subconsciously. Your subconscious reeks lust every time it sees two intersecting cones."

"No wonder I feel tired all the time."

"You see," continued Muss, "printed words are inefficient symbols that attempt to translate our surroundings. What the Ballodians have done is reduce reality to the purest mathematic symbols, then given these symbols three-dimensional form. This object is the result." He held out his hand so that Nova could see it more clearly. "Do you realise that this can convey in an instant all that would take a printed book five hundred pages to do?"

"Very interesting," muttered Nova. He looked hard at the object then shook his head. "Sorry, but it doesn't look like anything to me."

"Don't worry, it will take time for you to discard your old fashion ideas and inhibitions."

"What's this one all about?"

"It's a love story." Muss rotated the object in his hand. As he turned it his face became flushed and he began to breathe heavily. "Omigod," he whispered hoarsely, "and what a love story! Nothing is left to the imagination."

Nova looked at the object with renewed interest but still saw nothing that was in the slightest way arousing. Muss thrust it under his nose.

"See that angle there," Nova automatically flinched as Muss's stubby forefinger almost entered his left nostril, "The one beside the eight-sided pyramid and the round projection?"

Nova nodded. Muss leaned forward.

"Its supposed to be obscene," he whispered. "Its been censored out on fifteen planets. Silly fools."

"Well," said Nova, "I really must be going now." He half rose out of his seat then sank back down.

"You can keep your intersecting cones," he muttered, his eyes gleaming, "I'll take one of those."

Muss followed the direction of Nova's fevered gaze and saw a tall, extremely good-looking girl sit down almost opposite to them.

"Oh, that's Miss Zee. She boarded the ship at our last planet of call. Rather attractive, isn't she?"

"Grrrrrrrr," replied Nova. He started to twitch.

"And apparently," added Muss with a smile, "you're not the only one who feels that way." He pointed to a man who

sat a few seats away from the girl. He was watching the girl with the expression of a hungry shark. Even from where they sat they could see the rapid rise and fall of his chest due to his increased breathing. His knuckles showed white as he gripped the arms of his chair.

At that moment the U.W.L. "Tonto" popped from hyper into normal space. This resulted in a certain amount of concern within the out-dated engine room.

"Oh no!" cried Scotty who was of Irish descent.

"What's up?" enquired Fred, his assistant, who was a Martian.

"The bloody main coil has packed up again! Blast this blasted cheap war surplus machinery!"

An angry buzz filled the air. Scotty strode over to the intercom and slammed down the switch. "Engine room," he growled and jumped back as the bristly voice of the captain bawled forth.

"What the hell is going on down there??!! Tell me before I come down and kick your manhood up between your ears!!"

Scotty wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of his oil-stained hand. The oil came from a small can he kept in his cabin. None of the machinery in a space ship, even one as old as the 'Tonto', used liquid lubricants, but the captain insisted that Scotty be oily. This was for the benefit of the passengers, he said, who expected a chief engineer to be oil-stained.

"It's the main coil," said Scotty, "it's gone completely. I think"

"The main coil? That explains it then." Sarcasm trickled out of the intercom.

"Explains what?" asked Scotty, warily.

"Why we are ninety kilometers away from the planet Saar's No.2 fuelling satellite!"

"But we can't be!" protested Scotty. "We left the satellite five hours ago. We couldn't have travelled only ninety kilometers after five hours in hyper-space."

"We didn't," the captain's voice dropped to an ominous level, "we are ninety kilometers in the opposite direction from No.2 satellite. Which means that after five hours in hyper-space we have, in actual fact, travelled one hundred and eighty kilometers backwards!!" The captain's voice had risen gradually up the scale during the last sentence and the final word came out as a scream.

"Oh," said Scotty.

"Oh your bloody self! What kind of an engineer are you? You can't even get this blanked out ship moving in the right direction!!"

"Now just a minute," protested Scotty, "if this damn ship was outfitted with modern engines instead of being filled with parts out of a cereal packet we wouldn't be in this fix! And if I was you, I'd start thinking about what you're going to tell the passengers."

There was a long silence from the other and then a

loud click.

In the recreation room Nova was about to try his luck with the beautiful Miss Zee when a loud-speaker spluttered into life. He was rising from his seat when the captain began to speak.

"This is the captain speaking. There is no cause for alarm but I have to announce that our main coil has malfunctioned. I repeat that that there is no cause for alarm as ..." The remainder of his speech was drowned out by the other man who had been ogling Miss Zee. He leapt to his feet and shouted,

"Arghhhhhh! We are lost, lost in space ... drifting in infinity, doomed to float aimlessly about for all eternity with no hope of rescue, cut off forever from our former lives, our families, our friends, but let us not lose hope, let us be rational and calm and think clearly about the situation we are in, we are a separate segment of humanity in a universe of our own and we have a duty to ourselves we must survive and continue on but we must first adopt an adult attitude towards our life together so I propose we split into pairs with the partners of our choice and reproduce I bags this one."

With that he grabbed Miss Zee and dragged her out into the corridor. Nova leapt up, intending to follow, but Muss got hold of his arm.

"Wait," he said, "and listen to what the captain is saying."

"... and I repeat, there is no cause for alarm. We are not far from a fuelling satellite and assistance is on the way. We will soon be underway again. I regret this inconvenience. Thank you."

"That settles it," muttered Nova. "See you later Mr Muss." He ran out of the recreation room into the corridor. It was lined on both sides with doors leading into cabins. Some were open but most were closed. Nova tried each door as he made his way along, opening the ones that weren't locked and locking briefly in. This had interesting results in some cases but he wasn't successful until he reached the end of the corridor. He flung open the last door and gasped at the sight that met his eyes. Miss Zee stood near the bed with the upper half of her one piece synthetic gold suit hanging in threads around her hips. Her face was devoid of expression.

Despite the violent chemical reaction occurring within his body, Nova was able to avert his gaze from the wondrous anatomy of Miss Zee to the bed. Sprawled on it, with a neat round hole in his forehead, was the ogler.

"He's dead!" exclaimed Nova.

"Yes," said Miss Zee. Her voice was strangely flat.

Nova walked over to the bed and examined the body.

Around the wound, he saw, the flesh was scorched black. He glanced around for a weapon but couldn't see one. He looked at Miss Zee but her hands were empty and the chances of concealing anything upon her person were nil.

"How did you kill him?" he asked finally. She didn't answer. He started towards her, a frown on his face.

"Stay back!" snapped Miss Zee. "One step nearer and

you die."

Nova came to an abrupt halt. "Wha...?" he said, then laughed. "Forgive me dear, but I fail to see how you could possibly carry out your threat."

Miss Zee's left breast moved slightly then the nipple began to glow. There was a flash of red and a thin beam burnt a hole through Nova's right ear lobe. He fainted.

When he regained consciousness Miss Zee was standing over him, her left nipple still glowing. He got shakily to his feet and attempted a nonchalant laugh that came out more as a near-hysterical giggle.

"Some trick!" he said, "What is it, syntho-surgery?"

"We don't want to harm you," said Miss Zee, "we killed the other one because he alarmed us with his strange actions. Please be calm and listen. We are not what you think we are ... what you see before you is not a human girl but a Steginian Battle Cruiser. To be completely accurate, a class 1X Battle Cruiser."

Nova laughed again and was about to unleash a snappy retort when a little door on the side of Miss Zee's neck opened and a tiny creature stepped out onto her shoulder. Nova winced with pain as his jaw dropped an incredible distance.

"Do not come any closer, I warn you." This time it was not Miss Zee's voice but a faint squeak that appeared to originate from the creature. He was holding what looked to be a miniature mega-phone. "One sign of aggression and I will order No.2 turrent to open fire."

Nova glanced at No.2 turrent and twitched. What a terribly cruel way it would be to die.

"Amazing," he muttered weakly.

"Not really," said the little man, or little something, Nova wasn't sure just what it was. "We've been using such vehicles for centuries, ever since we first became aware of your existence in this galaxy. Your ever expanding culture has not yet reached our world, and we are taking steps to prevent such an occurrence. By the use of vehicles such as this synthetic girl we are gradually infiltrating into your society and securing key positions. By the time you discover our planet we will be able to launch a counter-attack."

"All very interesting," said Nova, squirming as large droplets of body fluid oozed down his back. "But what are you going to do now? Or more to the point, what are you going to do with me?"

"It's regrettable but you will have to be destroyed. We can't let you tell others about us, of course. But we couldn't let you die without knowing the reason why. That's not the Steginian way."

"You have my overpowering gratitude," said Nova, "but how are you going to explain the two dead bodies to the captain?"

"Simple. You two men killed yourselves in a fight over the girl. Knowing how barbaric you humans are in your personal relationships I'm positive this will be perfectly feasible. Not

on my world, of course, for we Steginians are"

The Steginian was interrupted at this point by another little creature emerging from the neck hatchway and jumping on him. Nova watched mystified as the two fought violently upon the artificial Miss Zee's shoulder. As they were so small it was rather difficult to see what was happening but neither of them seemed to be winning. The fight had moved round to the collar bone when they apparently lost their footing and fell. Still clinging to each other they skidded down the realistic-looking flesh and onto the left breast, or as it was officially called - turrent No.2, where they parted company. One bounced to the right and finished up wedged in the ample cleavage, but the other rolled right off the turrent and plunged downwards. Nova heard a faint, high pitched squeal before the tiny shape hit the floor beside Miss Zee's left foot.

Nova was momentarily confused but decided to try and placate somebody, whoever it might be. He extended his right forefinger and carefully placed it between the turrents, enabling the little creature to grab hold of it. Then he lifted it and placed it gently upon the shoulder. The creature scrambled over to the previously discarded mega-phone and picked it up.

"Thank you, O'big one, for your assistance."

"What was all that about?" asked Nova. "Are you the same person I was speaking with before?"

"Oh no! That was our commander. There's been a mutiny, you see, led by me. I am now in control of our ship."

"Why?"

"Our world is not a pleasant place, O'big one. It is ruled by a group of militaristic men who are very cruel and strict. From birth to death we are completely controlled by them and personal freedom doesn't exist. We would do anything not to return."

Nova's heart immediately went out to the poor little devils and their plight. "What are you going to do now?"

"I'm not sure. Our plans never went any further than the taking over of the ship. I suppose we'll abandon it once we reach a planet and hide, both from your people and ours. The punishment on our world for mutiny is disembowlement."

"An unpleasant fate," said Nova.

"Yes, especially the way it is carried out on Stegin, through the throat."

As Nova gazed at the flawlessly beautiful Miss Zee (if one can overlook an open neck hatch) an audacious, perhaps shocking, idea occurred to him.

"I have an idea ..." he announced slowly, "that may solve all your problems." He then proceeded to outline his plan to them. When he had finished the Steginians declared with enthusiasm that it was a marvellous idea.

"Good," said Nova, "that's settled. Now we'll have to go and give the captain a story about what happened to the ogler."

The Steginian climbed back inside and Miss Zee started

to move. Nova followed her to the door then stopped.

"Hang on a sec, will you?" he asked, "I've got to wipe your late commander of the sole of my boot."

.....

That all happened years ago, but if you should ever visit Nicholas (Nick to his friends) Nova at his home you will be amazed at the stunning beauty of his wife. Then you will wonder how such a one dimensional looking nobody like Nova ever managed to attract such a woman.

Yes, my friend, you guessed it. His wife is none other than the former Miss Zee, the Steginian battle cruiser, but Nova is very happy. He has the most beautiful wife on Earth and is the envy of all his friends and acquaintances. There is only one thing that annoys him, and only minor irritation at that. Its just that whenever he makes love to his wife there comes from deep within this faint, infernal giggling.

The End.

- John Brosnan.

When someone asks you to write your autobiography the hardest part is to resist being 'funny'. Therefore I shall stick to the basic, scanty facts.

I was born in 1947 in the civilised portion of Australia called West Australia. Since then nothing much has happened to equal that event. My life and I could be summed up in one word - mediocre. Realising this at an early age I decided there was only one profession open to me - writer.

As you may expect I am upholding my previous standard in this field of endeavour too. My first attempt was a serial in a school magazine 10 years ago. It was called 'The Mystery of the Flying Saucers'. It was quite good, in fact its better than the stuff I'm turning out those days.

Apart from currently having short stories rejected from U.S. magazines, I am rewriting for the third time a novel called 'An Echo of Jackboots'. Its about oh, it doesn't matter. Buy a copy when its published. Probably in about 1970 ..., or 1985, ... or....

Oh yes, Ron says to mention that I am no longer in W.A. I am a clerk, residing in Sydney, having gone down in the world.

- John Brosnan.

** I am not quite sure whether the above story is a science fiction satire, or a satire on science fiction. Whatever it is, comments are welcomed on it. Especially the author is interested in what you think of it.- RLC **

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND THE COMPUTER AGE.

- Ronald E. Graham.

It's a beautiful Spring day in 1980. The wife and kids want to go down to the beach house at Currarong for the week's holiday, so you load them into your new Holden Hovercar, and in a few minutes you are on the new 8 lane Coastal Hoverway making south from Sydney.

The traffic is quite thin and nary a police car in sight, and unthinkingly you edge the speed over the 150 kilometres per hour limit. Soon you are doing 160, then 170 and finally settle down at 175 km/hr. Soon the Berry cloverleaf appears and you slow down somewhat for the Nowra cloverleaf where you leave the Hoverway and take the Currarong road.

The next day you are notified by the police that the car you were driving was involved in a traffic violation, having travelled the distance between Waterfall and Berry at an average speed of 168.752 km/hr with a maximum speed of 176 km/hr. Your record had been scanner by the Traffic Court Computer, your fine assessed at 175 dollars, and your bank credit balance docked accordingly. You have also been assessed a further 17.5 points on your driving licence violation record which now totals 52.5 points and were again reminded that an automatic one year's cancellation of licence would occur if you accumulated 100 points before March 7th next when your licence was due for renewal.

You cursed and realized that you had overlooked the fact that your car was being monitored by the electronic sensing strips built into the new Hoverway and continuously feeding information to the police traffic computer. The sensing strips had read the information from the licence box fitted to the car, into which your driving licence (an electronic printed circuit plate completely identifying ypu) had to be inserted before the car could be driven. Thus, the police traffic computer knew whose car was being driven, who was driving it, where it entered the Hoverway, where it left it, and the average and maximum speeds the car did while it was on the Hoverway.

Certainly this is fast, efficient, just and accurate law enforcement! Farfetched? No! It is entirely within the realm of present technical feasibility.

Following upon the article "Computer Technology" in The Mentor No.9 and David Grey's remarks in The Mentor No.10, asking for an article on the effect of computers on real life people and the social changes the computer will bring about, the writer has been tempted to prepare this article, for he too, like many thousands of others throughout the world, is vitally interested in this problem.

Answers to these questions are beginning to appear - not vague generalizations, but solid fact based on studies, research, and experiment being carried out today and using techniques presently known or almost within our grasp.

The forecasts dealt with in this article are not original concepts of this writer but have been borrowed from a few of

the many books now being published on the subject. They represent facets of the life we will undoubtedly know in the future and which some of the best brains of the present day consider to be projections of near certainty.

Computers are multiplying at a rapid rate. Figures are available for the United States for past, present and projected usage and these show that in 1956 there were fewer than 1,000. By 1967 over 30,000 were in operation. It is predicted that the total will reach 85,000 by 1975; 150,000 by 1985, and 220,000 by the turn of the century.

The great advantage possessed by computers over human brains or simple calculating machines lies in their enormous capacity for storage of information and in their ability to process masses of data at speeds measured in billionths of a second.

To date one of the drawbacks of the use of the computer has been the necessity to specially code the information fed to them. This is presently the area in which the greatest advances are being made. Optical scanning or reading machines that can translate various styles of print into electrical pulses a computer can understand are already in use. Utilities for example are using them to transfer data from invoices into a computer.

On the near horizon are scanning machines that will be able to read any kind of printing or legible script. It is confidently expected that these computers will be capable of instantaneous language translation, a capacity that scientists, engineers and others who must keep abreast of foreign publications would find invaluable.

It is forecast that by the late 1970's input devices that can understand the human voice will be ready. (Open Sesame)!

The present day space programme is benefiting computer design to a degree which is almost incredible. This is mainly due to the accent on miniaturization. Computers that only a couple of years ago filled rooms can now be placed on a desk top. As an example one model by a foremost maker in 1956 occupied a space of 153 cubic feet. Today the same amount of computer capacity will fit into 3 cubic feet! The reduction in space occupied is accompanied by a vast reduction of cost also. It has been estimated in the USA that the total amount spent on the space programme to date will be more than saved by the reduction in the cost of computers alone each year from 1970 onwards.

Will everyone have his own computer? No! It is agreed that this will be most unlikely. The prospect is that one will subscribe to various types of computer networks linked by coaxial cable or microwave.

Without question, computers will bring many benefits. They will increase factory and office productivity. They will signal new economic trends more quickly. They will store vast amounts of information about law, medicine, science, business, the arts and other fields with instant access to any bit of needed data available to any one of the scattered thousands of subscribers.

Now what about some specific forecasts? Right! Number

one is the initial forecast of this article some variation of which is sure to eventuate. Can you imagine trying to explain to a computer that you were speeding because one of the kids had taken ill and you were hurrying to the doctor at Nowra?

NUMBER 2 is the elimination of the school system as we know it today. Robert Fano of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology envisions a system whereby school computers are linked to the students homes! The student would work at a scanner desk, where the teacher's image and voice would instruct him. He would be given assignments and transmit answers to the computer, which would check them and either repeat troublesome points or move on to the next assignment if answers were satisfactory. Thus each student could proceed at his own pace. The very best of teachers, equipment, and teaching methods could be used in the preparation of the original tapes.

Gone - the necessity for huge staffs of teachers and expensive schools. Gone too the need for transport to and from school.

(Digressing here for a moment away from computers, we would mention that being experimented right now, and certainly within the realms of possibility, is a method of transmitting memory by brain injections. Can you imagine desiring to learn Italian, having a brain injection for it, and an hour later speaking perfect Italian? Alternatively, consider the possibility of a spaceship crew of three injected with the skills of 40 or so engineers, technicians and scientists! We may yet live to see it!)

NUMBER 3 is a world wide banking and credit system. The initial moves here have already been made. The Bank of Delaware and a chain of shops are experimenting with a system whereby whatever a purchase is made by the holder of a bank credit card his card is slipped into a machine which debits his account appropriately. In its final form operating world wide each individual would have a credit card or key which would be offered for every purchase or service and his account debited or credited accordingly. One's salary or wages would no longer be paid weekly or monthly. The employer's account would be debited and the employee's account credited say every minute (time is of no account to a computer - the number of operations it can carry out is almost unlimited). Paperwork for payment and collection of accounts would be eliminated. Once a computer was programmed for instance, the complete payroll of a huge factory would be automatically taken care of. No staff of clerks, no forms, no filing cabinets. Everything in the computer memory ready for instant recall if needed.

NUMBER 4 : Voting: Every individual at birth would be issued with an electronic ID card (this same card could be used in the credit system mentioned above). This card would cover all pertinent details about the individual, age, sex, fingerprint coding, footprint coding and retina coding etc. (Shades of The Lens!), thus rendering easy a check at any time credit was being used

by placing, say, a thumb on the appropriate place on the machine in which the card was inserted.

Voting in municipal, state, federal and world elections would be carried out, from the individual's home to the computer, using the ID card. Results of elections would be known immediately the Voting time had expired. Referendums would be tremendously facilitated and would doubtless be more freely used to determine the country's opinion on matters of national interest.

NUMBER 5 : Medical Data. A Federal Government Study Group in the U.S.A. sees a strong likelihood that computer networks for the storage and transmission of medical data will be in operation within a decade or two. The system would be built around computers at regional Government Health Centres. In these would be stored the individual medical histories of all citizens, along with exhaustive general medical information, such as patterns of symptoms for various ailments. These computers would be linked to all doctors' offices and to all hospitals.

Doctors could obtain instantly the complete medical history of a patient and this would aid diagnosis. The doctor would feed this information and present symptoms into a computer which would promptly list the most likely illness or cause etc.

"The computer will detect patterns that may not be apparent to the doctor" says Dr. Evan C. Greanias, who is guiding development of such a medical information scheme at International Business Machines Corporation. "It won't make decisions for the doctor, but it will analyse information and save the valuable time of the doctor".

NUMBER 6 : Simulating Reality. All computer experts agree that the use of computers to simulate reality will grow rapidly. This technique involves construction of a mathematical 'model' of real behaviour or conditions in a computer. It permits engineers or researchers to investigate matters that would be impossible, tedious or too costly to study in actuality. Already computers have simulated the flights of spacecraft and nuclear attacks.

Getting closer to home, this writer's business now uses computers to solve intricate problems such as the stresses in complicated pipelines and in multiframe buildings, which only a few years ago required weeks of laborious calculations with the ever present possibility of error in the finished work.

In this same area, computers are likely to find uses in tackling social problems, such as air and water pollution, inadequate mass transport and traffic congestion. The advantage of a computer here is that it can juggle many interrelated variables and evaluate the effect of various causes of action in a fraction of the time it would take human beings.

For example, to help plan a road, a computer could weigh the influences of such factors as present traffic patterns, the impact of future residential and business development on traffic, public preferences for private cars as against public transport, the deterrent effect of tolls and the effect of fare cuts etc.

NUMBER 7 : Uses in Business. Computers will be used more and more in business. They will for instance give in graphic form the day to day state of the company. Information about incoming orders, sales, inventories, staff, expenses and production schedules will be fed into a computer from scattered offices throughout the country (imagine Coles or Woolworths) and relayed direct to the chief executives' offices. Decisions on both detail and overall policies will be able to be made immediately.

Market surveys will likewise be carried out by computers with information on population trends etc. determining where new stores etc. will be sited.

NUMBER 8 : Uses in Manufacturing. Here the computer is already making tremendous headway and here will be some of the most spectacular gains by the computers. Already machines by the thousand are computerized, at any local engineering show you can attend right now and see drilling, shaping, planing machines etc. working to programmed instructions and without operators. Already, too, factories exist completely operated by a master computer. The IBM plant at Endicott, New York, is run by a computer and IBM officials say that the completely automated assembly lines reduce scrappage, improve quality and lower cost.

Other fields of use for computers are opening up and some of these will be dealt with in a future article.

Will the computers be an unmixed blessing? No! say many; Yes! say others. The Pros and Cons of this question will also be dealt with in the next article.

- Ronald E. Graham.

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Editor's Note :- The work below came to me through many devious channels and I do not profess to know the origin of the article. However I do think that its publication will bring to light to readers more knowledgeable than the editor of this magazine, some idea of the motives and motivations of the writer. I would welcome comments from readers about what they think of it - its origins and perhaps some of their ideas of the writer.

L/ZD:41.1 REPORT ON THE TERRAN SITUATION.

There is a strange dichotomy in life on Earth - sensuality and self-awareness. The one is present in all living organisms to the degree necessary for their survival, because those inadequately equipped in this regard have long since disappeared. Earth is relatively old in comparison with the evolutionary periods of its present inhabitants. But self-awareness has seldom gotten off the ground. A psychic evolutionary period is unspecified; various organisms are approaching their psychic take-off points but there are evolutionary factors retrograding their development of self-awareness. Thus it is probable that the same cyclical tendencies noted in other sectors of this particular universe are already in evidence on Earth or will soon be shown there.

Some amplification of my premises, and justification of the tentative conclusion above are necessary. 'Evolution' on Earth has not so much yielded a dominant life-form as it has dominant or surviving life-forms. Their systems range from simple life-forms such as amoebae to complex forms such as the bee, which has a ganglion nerve net, the human whose forebrain more or less autonomously maintains homeostasis thus leaving his brain's major area free, and certain other highly developed creatures such as the dolphin, the chimpanzee and domesticated animals such as the cat, whose self-awareness relative to that of the other life-forms is on the whole increasing. The bee and similar organisms are limited, especially so in view of the basic changes throughout their life-span as previously detailed. In sum, the self-awareness shown is minimal, is due to the sensual process, as would be expected, and appears only during a short period in which the organism is transformed wholly into a specific role. The human on the other hand would have the capacity in great degree for self-awareness except for the socially conditioned dominance of the sensual over his entire brain. A previous report covered the social environment of the human in detail, suffice it to say that self-awareness is obscured in its initial development. Dolphins etc are notably limited by their environment but also by their lack of both a sufficient intelligence and an effective mode of communication.

It is possible that the evolutionary process may yield up at a later stage a life-form capable of higher self-awareness but in the meantime the human will have entered into the cyclical

tendency of which I spoke earlier. Rather than postulate future trends I shall here limit myself to detailing the present human condition as it suggests my tentative conclusion regarding self-awareness, (my previous report was despatched prior to my consideration in detail of the latter aspect, the observations on which I have based my conclusion were however included in it. Nevertheless I shall repeat salient details below when necessary, to indicate my altered view of them).

Man is relatively dependent at birth and for a long period thereafter in comparison to other animals (on a chronological basis). Furthermore man, unlike the other animals, generally requires human society throughout his entire life-span. The other life-forms are dominated largely if not wholly by their sensual equipage and in the view of the humans, motivated solely by 'instinct'. A characteristic of the humans is a muddleness such that the very definition of terms is ignored in their use. This instinct literally means that the nature of the life-form and of its environment dictates its behaviour. Under such a definition everything obviously falls. Not so for humans! The term is used as a sack into which unexplained activity is relegated pending a more 'rational' (ie acceptable) explanation (There is a limitation upon the unexplainable covered by 'instinct' which itself concerns the 'acceptability' of the data. Thus a man will regard one piece of evidence as 'instinctual' and another 'supernatural' or perhaps 'nonsense'. His psychic state as determined by his environment is the separator of facts according to these and other criteria. This alone would serve to severely limit the self-awareness attained). However there are other more effective limitations still.

Like the dolphin, man has yet to develop a sufficient mode of communication. Speech further obscures the development of self-awareness by limiting the nature of thought to a rigid language. Conceptualisation is unaffected in those whose psychic mode employs gestalts but communication of these is impossible with speech. Others among the humans have been prevented from even the level of self-awareness gestaltism implies by their introduction to rigid conceptualisation early in their life-span. The conceptualisation and thought-process effect is to severely limit the individual's grasp of his nature. Such few glimpses as are allowed him of this have become known as 'insights' (a term whose full implication typically is ignored). These insights extend the rigid human attitude and have the effect of 'plugging' the camouflage which the humans have erected in their thought-system over their environment. This is so because their rigid language employs ambiguity in a remarkably creative way. Slight differences in individual viewpoints cooperate to cloud issues in almost all human endeavours thus perpetuating the monumental short-sightedness of this organism. The few individuals whose insights are less clouded are soon discovered, eliminated, recalled later as martyrs (when the insights can be effectively accommodated in the now more effective camouflage) and serve ultimately to 'plug' another gap in this fabric.

A most interesting aspect of the process is a bogus

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self-awareness which the humans try to inculcate in their young. This is a fairly complex image of the self which has two distinct natures. Superficially there is the stage or level concept. There is an active existent 'me' doing what 'I' do. Then there is the directing 'me' which controls this actual or physical 'me'. A judicial or 'conscience-me' regards the other two as distinct from and below itself, judging their actions and thoughts as though they were independent of it. This superficial system alone might be considered the ultimate in limitations upon self-awareness, but there is still the remaining nature of bogus self-awareness to consider. This truly remarkable concept has no peer as a psychic restriction! The personality or drive-system of the psyche is a vast reservoir of unquenchable desire which is forced by its environment to develop adequate response patterns in order to satisfy its desires in so far as it may, and forced by social conditioning (a major part of its environment separated out for special treatment) to limit the nature of these response patterns and the degree of satisfaction obtained thereby.

It goes without saying that the further limitation applied by the methodological error involved in such deduction (ignoring evidence and eschewing deduction therefrom) is inconsequential in comparison.

There is only the matter of developing cyclical tendencies to authenticate. The cycle which led to the destruction of the shield the Martians had constructed to insulate their planet whilst they dabbled in hydroponics is well-known history. Their demise as a people was more or less inevitable. Earth however has a more viable composition of elements due to its orbital position and the type of star central to the system. Thus the present failure of self-awareness sufficiently to appear may not signify an ultimate failure as noted above. The human species may itself evolve further and physical changes may yet overcome the present psychic bounds upon it. Nevertheless time is running out because the central star itself is gradually evolving into a stage where its attendant planets will be engulfed in its transient transformation into a giant. Beside this the cyclical tendencies of the present terran life-forms are trivial and in effect irrelevant. There is most certainly no possibility of conflictual self-awareness developing on Earth and the suggestion that we could face competition originated there is unfounded.

** It is at this point that the manuscript ends. At present another part of the document found is being decoded, though difficulty is being found in transcribing it into English that is understandable to readers of THE MENTOR. It is hoped that by the time the next issue is due out (sometime in November) the further translation will be at hand. -RLC **

- John Foyster.

Science fiction poetry does not exist. Or rather, the world would be much simpler were this so. The themes of love and death which dominate poetry have been undermined slowly since the early 19th century (and earlier) by second-rate poets who so diversified the permitted subjects that this love/death origin is scarcely perceptible. So it is not surprising that 'poetry' along the same lines as science fiction should eventually appear.

Of course this has been happening for many years : few fanzines have avoided the stigma of presenting a 'poem', generally about space flight, invariably bad. Space flight, in fact, is a dead easy theme for this kind of writing. For example, the obvious sexual connotations of the rocket might lead one to expect a rather obscene poem about a rocket taking off : it exists, it was written by Rowell Hoff, it appeared in EVERGREEN REVIEW 15 (November-December 1960), and its first line is

"Length in feet : soixante-neuf".

This 'poem', REDSTONE, continues along just the lines you might extrapolate from that beginning.

On the other hand, there is the serious writer who wants to reveal the glory of space travel and so on. Former fan Fred Chapell does this in a poem called TIROS 11, which starts

"From where I watched, the shiny satellite
Almost occluded summer Sirius."

No, it isn't very good either, even though its original appearance was in THE PARIS REVIEW number 30 (Summer-Fall 1963).

No doubt other poems of the same kind have appeared in many places : these two are to hand. But they are not science fiction poetry, but poems about science, just as some of Robert Conquest's poems are about science (rather than science fiction).

If we consider the professional magazines we again have a rough division : this time into more workable parts, verse and poetry, making only relatively small requirements of the poetry. Most science fiction magazines have published verse from time to time : UNKNOWN published rather a lot, as did WEIRD TALES, but in the realm of fantasy. Whether ASTOUNDING ever published a poem I know not. But THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION certainly did, largely, I think it is fair to say, whilst either Boucher-McComas or Davidson were editing.

Some of the poetry was just frivolous, such as the three poems which appeared in the January 1954 issue, by Sherwood Springer, Leonard Wolf and Norman R. Jaffray. This lightness of touch prevailed through much of the earlier issues, with nasty moments for readers in November 1953 and October 1954 when Boucher published versions of G&S. This later became a feature of the Columbia magazines, and as such was quite enjoyable.

This frivolity extended to the stage where Robert P. Mills published some of Randall Garrett's Little Willies and limericks (e.g., May 1960, January 1963). At the same time there were serious poems about science.

"The probing eye of Palomar
Peers skyward to reveal"

is how Rosser Reeves' poem in F&SF for December 1960 reads - and hands up all those who thought it would be titled INFINITY! John Updike, though inspired by a piece of science was more interested in poetry, and I can recommend his COSMIC GALL in F&SF November 1961.

But there were also those who wrote science fiction verse. Doris Pitkin Buck and Karen Anderson have had large amounts published over the years, and typical examples are to be found in the March 1963 issue, with Mrs. Anderson's THE SKY OF SPACE, and the May 1963 issue, where a long poem by Doris Pitkin Buck (NO TRADING VOYAGE) manages to read like a science fiction story, rather than a poem.

Less regular contributors in this vein would be, say, Philip Jose Farmer, whose THE PTERODACTYL appeared in the July 1965 issue, or Archibald MacLeish, whose longer poem in the October 1963 F&SF is not wholly bad.

Though these poems have been described as 'science fiction' simply because I wished to distinguish from the pure science poems which were mentioned earlier, they are not 'science fiction' in the sense that the poems of D.M. Thomas are.

D.M. Thomas occupies a modest third of PENGUIN MODERN POETS 11, and his work represents, or so it seems to me, the first poetry which is genuinely close to science fiction, and also the first science fiction verse to be anywhere near poetry. And here, having as I said I would, used the words loosely, I shall change my tune and begin to be more rigorous. Because now it makes some sense to do so.

Some of Thomas's poems go so far as to be based on science fiction stories. MISSIONARY is based on Asimov's NIGHTFALL; LIMBO on Godwin's THE COLD EQUATIONS; HERA'S SPRING on Clarke's THE CITY AND THE STARS; THE STRAIT on Bradbury's MARIONETTES INC. and ELEGY FOR AN ANDROID on M'Intosh's MADE IN USA. Since Damon Knight and James H. Schmitz are also thanked for their inspiration, I guess I've missed a couple. All of these stories, as you will well know, 'lend' themselves to a poet's hand.

But despite this, or perhaps because of the very familiarity of the themes, I found myself enjoying far more the 'originals', in particular poems like CYGNIS A, which although at first glance seemed to fit more closely the 'pure science' classification was in fact moved by the spirit of science fiction, like SYMBIOSIS, which overcomes its artificiality with considerable ease, and like THE STRAIT, which although it is inspired by the Bradbury story is certainly also a remarkably original poem.

This work is so far in advance of the majority of poems indicated above that comparison would serve no useful purpose: besides having the poet's eye and ear, Thomas has a steady hand, and although he is not perfect, he is very good.

Oh, there are some things which could have been improved. Conceits like "A harsh entry I had of it, Grasud;" (in MISSIONARY) or "Yet I loved you, / Vanessa, passing the love of / women." (in ELEGY FOR AN ANDROID), and the unfortunate choice of

'sonnet' form for non-sonnets are things which can be overcome. Most importantly of all, these are not poems which are embarrassing, as are so many of those in F&SF, say.

A short poem of Thomas's appeared in NEW WORLDS 180, a longer one is due to appear in NEW WORLDS 182. His LEIF THE LUCKY in ENCOUNTER (January 1967) seems to indicate that although his non-stfnal poetry is not without merit, neither is it as good as his works in our microcosm.

Many of these poems are just simple enjoyable reading, which is more than you can say for fiction sometimes. And there is no truth to the rumour that D.M. Thomas and Thomas M. Disch are one and the same.

- John Foyster.

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THE EINSTEIN INTERSECTION - SAMUEL R. DELANY. * Frank Blamey *

Ace Books. First Printing December 1967. US40¢

There is such a wealth of Science Fiction Writers that I must confess that this is my first encounter with Samuel R. He is of this generation, being all of 26. He published his first sf at age 19.

I was impressed with this novel of his and intend to tackle his other novels at first opportunity (that means probably never).

In the far distant future we find Earth has changed inconceivably. Mankind, bound by Einstein's Laws which limit his (Man's) perception, has crossed another set of laws which has no perceptible limits and so Mankind has reached a stage of evolution where he has deserted his human shell, cities and world and departed for regions unknown and an alien form of life has taken up residence and by cross breeding are trying to achieve human form. The monsters that result are kept locked in a Kage and those that resemble approximately normalcy continue the cross breeding and are accorded the title of 'Lo' for the male, 'La' for the female and 'Le' for the Hermaphrodite who are able to breed themselves without the benefit of a copulatory partner.

The story itself concerns Lo Lobey, described in the book as an alien Orpheus, and his adventures closely parallel the Theseus and Orpheus mythologies.

Lobey leaves his village in search of Friza, a mute telekinetic female who has died under mysterious circumstances, and who he hopes to bring back from the dead with the help of Kid Death - a red-headed 'Enfant Terrible' who whilst having the power of life and death is incapable of compassion, emotion and appreciation of the arts.

Lobey (Theseus) enters an underground cave and slays a half-man half-bull (literal) and consults a computer, PHAEDRA (Theseus's wife). Armed with his singing sword he joins a dragon-

drive (the alien equivalent of 'Rawhide') which is headed by Spider who gives him the g-g on the whole business. He finds Friza only to promptly lose her again and then finally arrives at Branning-on-Sea (the big smoke), a savage city whose inhabitants follow the old human trait of destroying anything and anyone who is 'different' merely because they are different both physical and mental.

After various battles Mr. Delany leaves our hero still in quest of Friza.

- Frank Blamey.

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The R & R Dept.

Gary Woodman
Science Fiction Ass'n., Monash Uni., Clayton 3168.

Dear Ron,

John Foyster's mentioning of the 'Normanhurst High School' days of THE MENTOR set me wondering. I was sort of under the impression that you were an 'oldie' ie more than thirty or so. However if you were at NHS only ten issues ago, you must be pretty young - hey! Unless you were a teacher!

All this highlights my lack of information of your past (ne'er mind the sordid details). The only things I have in my file regarding biography of Ronl Clarke is that you were once at N(B)HS and you have a wife, sister or mother who draws pretty good illos. So without sounding as if I am trying to blackmail (or at least greymail) you, could you please give me a potted biog. of yourself. (** I might think about it. After that crack in TM 11 about 'using older fen as we can' and the apparent fact that you think that I am 'about 30'..... Please note that TM was in suspended animation for a couple of years (unspecified), I could be any age. See the lead article this issue re TM's past history. -RLC **)

Cover illo - takes a little concentration to appreciate it but once SEEN it is damn good.'

Phoenix is more my type of meat - rare (blood running out, etc., etc.,). Or even raw. However, your phraseology is unreal as applied to archaeologists (presumably Aussie) bunged in the 'middle of the bloody Dead 'Eart'. Fortunately, it is at least as good as the first three pages of Michael Black's last effort. The fiction in THE MENTOR has uptil. No.11 not impressed me (although it did not make me chunder, which is something) and I am glad to see you introducing some STF instead of SP(ew)F.

Although I am not (openly) a comic fan, it is heartening to see an Australian industry (albeit miniscule) being built from a group very close to fandom. Maybe one day Austfen will have a say in professional SF.

Michael Black's story seems to concern a bloke waking up with a hangover (or was that just Michael?) and falling off a ferry (whatever that is - MB is obviously a Syd fan). Tony Boucher

dead! By Ghu, they are going like flies! How long will it be before obituaries of Disch, Moorcock and co. come in?

I have a mischievous suspicion that short story anthologies are as popular as they are because they make less demands on the reader. One quibble: 'Out of My Mind' is, I am pretty sure, the offspring of John Brunner, not Bremner.

Leah Strahle (are you absolutely sure she is she?) is a neofan - obvious from her reference to Stephen Cook as an unknown quantity, (tell her gently, willyu?) and her valiant efforts to stir fen from their bed of apathy, make Australia a Great Country for Fen to live in, etc., etc.,. Well, tell her for me that it just can't be done! Bitter experience will teach her so, unless she takes the advice of more learned stirrers such as Bernie Bernhouse and myself. She may also be interested in the fate of the Currawong series and countless Australian editions of various prozines, dare I mention f'rinstance Venture and F&SF.

THE MENTOR is fulla TV this issue - what's happening just outside those Big Eyes? It's wonderful to see R & R Dept. more or less taking over the zine; here fen have their say and I just love to lay into them.

Change of address : Alex Robb c/o 'Arena', Macquarie University, Sydney. Brian Richards sure seems to have fallen afoul of the 'righteously - indignant-letter-to-the-editor' crowd. Now I am not going to put my big feet in my mouth, as Brian can take care of himself perfectly well, but I would point out that it is extremely unlikely that Germany was at war in 1945 when Brian was there, as Ron Graham suggests. I went looking for THE MENTOR 9 but could not find any mention of the piece John Ryan found so distasteful. Were there two different issues of n.9? (** No, only one. The piece John refers to is on page 11 under the SSFF's section of CLUBS'NEWS.-RLC **)

Rather stunned to see A.M. McBurnie's letter. Sadly enough, there exists another fan who can baffle me with science. However he seems to ignore the fact (no doubt well known to him but rather hidden from average fen) that a computer can do anything up to and including dancing can-can at the Folies Bergere in a lineup of Queensland cane toads if it is programmed correctly and if it has effective 'organs' to carry out its programming.

APASTRON as such is not coming out again. A combination issue with AFT will probably be produced. John Zube has the right idea when he suggests that there is no hope of ten Sydney clubs being formed now because the present clubs are not well known, but for club-splitting to be a success fandom in general rather than clubs in particular must be far more well-known.

As you say, people and STF are two entirely different concepts, but the way Leigh Edmonds puts it, I think he means STFans and STF, which are comparable. No, STF should not come first, but it does exist in conjunction with fandom for faneds. Life would be much less interesting without either of these, and almost unbearable without both. STF does form the basis for any contact - but only between fans. Fans talk about the weather too, just as mundane people talk about STF. Nevertheless, STF is probably an excuse rather than a reason for contacting other fans,

if one's mentality is inclined that way. SF, though, need not come before any club - after all, the clubs were formed from SF loving people. Then again, if anyone can follow that or see just what I mean, write to me and tell me.

"A leading city theatre of excellent decor"! By Ghu, anyone would think the QSFFC went to look at the wallpaper! The film itself was a hundred-mile run, rather than a step, in the right direction. As for subject matter, I wouldn't give a pint of booze for either plot or acting, but the photography and effects are worth seeing while sitting in a half-full garbage tin with half a dozen mangy cats for an audience and the film projected by a birthday candle through a milk bottle full of water onto next-door's little house.

"For us it is good public relations..." Yes, no doubt it is, but this seems to be the QSFFC's major interest in the film (or DG's, anyway). Can it be that "a section of fans" do not like ANALOG because ANALOG costs half as much again as any other prozine? I don't dislike JWC, nor do I like him. I have no opinion regarding him; I never buy ANALOG so I cannot in all intellectual honesty condemn him.

It is nice to hear some sanity for once. The letters Mr. Gray speaks of, suggesting that the majority of SF authors are not really moralizing etc. finally Uncovered Truths. However the letters seemed too scared to suggest why, so I'll tell you. The majority of SF authors, one might even say all SF authors, are not really moralizing because they are out to make money. Man does not live by bread alone; he needs champagne and caviar and esargots and Fontainebleu; in other words SF authors like to eat occasionally. So what do they do, being as they are SF authors? By Ghu, they write some SF! Now this SF must be good, because our SF authors got a bit hungry while writing, and they want to sell ten million copies in the first printing to buy a little bread. So to make his magnum opus sell ten million copies, our SF author makes his SF good for a change. Wow! What was that about Man and his atavistic desire to destroy? Put that in! Who mentioned Man's urge to the stars? Put that in! I hear tell that S-E-X is big these days. Put S-E-X in! By Ghu, this will be my best! A million dollars if a cent. Boy, bread and butter tonight.

And, Mr. Gray, that's it. Anyone who writes SF with the intent of moralizing is not an SF author, he is a philosopher with the wrong label. I would love to see our Queensland good and wise constructive politico/sociologist fill THE MENTOR from cover to cover. "THE MENTOR was filled from cover to cover with good and wise constructive politico/social ideas, and reduced every poor long suffering reader to gibberings, and sometimes even tears". (** As if they aren't already. -RLC **)

Maybe he could, maybe he couldn't. To anyone who got past the first page other than to see if it ever finished I would award the 'Donk', for all suffering obstinancy. Next question - can I obtain the forementioned stills of 2001? If so, how? If not, why not? (Cost is no object - within reason). (** Yes, as - said before, you can get them. From Metro, who run the Hoyts Theatres. The SSFF, with a bit of talking, got about 10 - free, too. I would

say that if you contacted the Metro rep where you are and told him you represent the Monash Uni SF Assn., you would probably be able to get some stills and posters. -RLC **)

Anothermouse?! You're joking.

I wonder, after Brian's comments, how many people have been frightened off SF by a diet of Ballard after the palate has grown accustomed to Richness.

- Gary Woodman.

John Blattman
14 Andreas St., Petersham 2049.

Dear Ron,

I have intended to write this letter for the past three months, but several things intervened, including a holiday trip to Japan. I think every sf fan, editor, etc, is writing to me and getting no response, so I have begun to do something about it.

I like your idea of a number of sf groups, with not many members in each, but this has its limitations too. A group with only a few members turns into a mutual admiration society, and one with too many members becomes hard to manage, and it is difficult to arrange a suitable meeting time. The happy medium is hard to find, and I hope your enthusiasm rubs off to some more people.

Sf films are coming in a rush. I thought 2001 was magnificent technically, but am still confused about the ending, like everyone else. But I enjoyed Planet of the Apes much more because it had the saving grace of humour. I like sf best when it has a touch of tongue-in-cheek. I saw only one person leave while the film was on. The rest of the audience was engrossed. Remember the scene in which Heston is trapped in the net and tells the ape to keep his Great paws off him. These were the first words he had spoken to the apes and everyone cheered. In my vast experience, most audiences sit dum. And embarrass me by turning around when I am the only person laughing at some subtle point.

Have you seen the Bulletin review of John Baxter's anthology (Sept.7 issue)? Very good and may sell a few copies and suck in a few more people. In the same issue is mention of Jim Thorburn's new Pocket Bookshop in King Street. (** See page 16. -RLC **) He says that his safest stock is serious science fiction which is in consistent demand. It would be interesting to find out which books are his best sellers. When I last visited his shop, he had the complete Skylark series and Lensman series, but that was before his last move.

As I have typed myself to a stop, congratulations on the last few issues, and keep up the good work.

- John Blattman.

Thought For Today : "The Earth is the cradle of Mankind, but you cannot live in a cradle forever." - Tsiolkovsky.

John Foyster
12 Glengariff Drive, Springvale North, Victoria 3170.

Dear Ron,

Despite its larger size, THE MENTOR 11 doesn't hit me with the impact of No.10. Perhaps I was then in a state of shock, but even making allowance for that I don't think this latest issue is a step upwards. The contents are similar in quality, I suppose; ah well, let's look into the issue.

I don't think I've ever seen a fanzine, apart from ASFR, which exhibits less of its editor's personality, despite your contrary claim on page 2. You talk a good deal about expressing your personality - so much so that you have no space for personal material. And there's also your annoying habit of leading up to a point and then shying away from it, though your editorial in THE MENTOR10 might be a better example of this.

Fiction, Fully Foyle - no reaction, I'm afraid. The foldout was nice, even pleasant, but enough.

Ron Graham's piece on Tony Boucher was a useful collection of reprints, with a few flaws which undoubtedly result from the matchless typer of Ron Clarke. 'Scriberdegibit' is spelled thus, not as you spell it twice, and 'Robinc' is another correction of a similar type. The misspelling of 'Inauguration' I assume is a similar slip, but one easily recognized. (** Yes teacher. The things you let yourself in for when you publish a fanzine. -RLC **)

The reviews are Not. Brian Richards is really writing about some general notions concerning stf, the review of the PACIFIC BOOK OF AUSTRALIAN SF could have been written without opening the book (beyond the index) - and probably was - while Mike O'Brien just rattled on pleasantly about TV. I suspect that you would do much better to label this column 'chitter-chatter'.

My single mention of the fan who gets excited about Joe Poyer's short stories seems to have impressed Brian Richards to a greater extent than I intended originally. However, none of the qualities of SF to which Brian refers in his second paragraph are to be found in the stories of Joe Poyer. Brian is arguing in favour of presenting all material at the lowest common denominator, and I'm sure he doesn't really mean this. Poor Brian was on the receiving end of a large amount of unearned abuse in the letter-column. Ron Graham presents an excellent picture of poor Walter Ernsting who was so belittled by B.R. However, no matter how much Walter Ernsting did for or to science fiction and science fiction fandom in Germany it is still possible for him to be a pompous ass as well. Brian makes the point that the flat statement "I founded German Fandom" at least needs some modification, in which light it could well be that the description Brian used is appropriate. The claim is not one of a modest man. Readers of ASFR 14 may have garnered the impression (from Franz Rottensteiner's article) that 'Perry Rhodan' is not quite the greatest sf in the world and that, in fact, to use Ron Graham's examples, his (Ernsting's) writings are possibly less skilled than any of those of 'Forry Ackerman, John W. Campbell and Doc Smith'.

But again the basic point should be made that Walter Ernsting can be all the things Ron Graham says and still be a

pompous ass. Ron's attitude is not an un-common one, of course, and David Gray's letter betrays the same kind of thing : 'it is in print, and therefore must be both right and good'. Gray's quotations from THE PAWNS OF NULL-A simply show that Van Vogt had no objection to quoting from SCIENCE AND SANITY - but not, surely, that vV was a source of 'valuable philoosphical material'. Other letters in this issue show the same kind of thinking : tough.

Messrs. Olmstead, Hord and Stenhouse, whose works you kindly printed contiguously, are the three I had in mind. Morton Stenhouse might be pleased to learn that he is a greater fan of Damien Broderick's THE DISPOSAL MAN than Damien is himself.

I don't know anyone who dislikes John Campbell, so David Gray will possibly be disappointed. Nor do I see how such a person could be destroyed, unless Mr. Gray has some scientological method in mind, On the other hand, I do think that some issues of ASTOUNDING/ANALOG are better than others, which is not an unreasonable view, I trust, and would even go so far as to say that the issues of 1962 were not as good as those for 1952 : has Mr. Gray seen the latter? If Mr. Gray is unwilling to rave about John Campbell's capabilities in public then I am not, and in fact have done so (ASFR 13, I think). That there was not an issue of ASFR dedicated to Campbell's achievements earlier this year has been solely due to a pressure of work on those who would have written it (LeeHarding and myself). I doubt that anyone has a greater admiration of what Campbell has done for science fiction than I have : but I will not accept everything he says - nor would Campbell have it so, Mr. Gray - read one of his many editorials on the subject.

I felt rather strange reading my own letter - the last line, that is. I mentioned the Australian apa, and you make no comment either there or in your editorial. Suddenly I feel guilty, as though I have divulged a secret.

- John Foyster.

(** Since everyone who receives TM also got a copy of EOS, in which news of the (Y)apa has been discussed by me, and by the fact that Leigh Edmonds had discussed it in RATAPLAN, I did not think it needed further comment on my part as everyone by now should know that I am in support of the whole idea of fanzines, Communistic or individual. Since the first mailing is being done apparently by Leigh Edmonds on October 10, if you wish to join up I suggest you contact him (see MSFC address in CLUBS' NEWS). Sizes are quarto and the quantity 30 copies, to be sent to him before Oct 10. -RLC**)

Frank Blamey
1118 Princes Highway, Engadine 2233, NSW.

Dear Ron,

I felt I must make some comment on THE MENTOR 11. Standard is excellent. However, who swiped page 26, or did you get the hiccoughs around page 28? Re my initial contribution - review of Nova Express - hurt me more than the other readers the first time I

read it, I had to tackle it four times before I got into step with Burroughs' style of writing. If you want to do it in one reading, I suggest (but don't recommend) one of the hallucinatory drugs; then it will appear like poetry. Anyway, enough about Burroughs.

Whilst most SF contributors when expressing themselves on paper like to explain at great length and with much digression - I would suggest that the reader half would get more pleasure out of articles if they could be condensed somewhat.

- Frank Blamey.

PAT'S PAGES.

-PAT TERRY.

Regarding THE MENTOR, I don't care what anyone else says, it's improving with every issue, improving by leaps and bounds. In your editorial in TM 11 you are asking what constitutes a fanzine. Well, as you say, the only thing that you can really say is that it's not a prozine. You could add to that it's not a newszine. A fanzine is anything that the editor likes to make it. As regards contents of TM 11, I think they are pretty good, with perhaps one or two small exceptions.

Now you've a fellow named Ronald E. Graham who is writing for you. I don't know the gentleman, never heard of him before till I saw his name in THE MENTOR 11 and in the issue before, which would be number 10. But I'm afraid he's not too accurate with his facts. As for his flying to the defense of this Mr. Ernsting, I don't know I've never heard of the man before, and I've been reading sf a hell of a lot longer than Mr. Graham has, I'll venture to say. I've not read anything written by him and, by the sound of things, I don't think I ever want to. As for Brian Richards. Well, in my book, Brian is one of the finest men that ever walked and what he says goes double for me. Every word of it. And if Mr. Graham thinks he's a 'pompous old ass', well, he'll probably say the same about myself; probably I am. Still, who cares? Every man is entitled to his own opinion and every one is entitled to express it, in moderation, of course.

The rest of your stuff - now, the R & R Dept, I think, is about the best part of the magazine - because of the varied and interesting comments in the letters you've received. But as regards the other part of it - you have The History of the Gully Foyle Project by Gary Mason. In it he mentions several people, but I notice there is no mention at all made of John Brosnan. I know John Brosnan did a heck of a lot of work on that Project, as if you saw, as I hope you did when you were down in Melbourne, the big folder that John Brosnan had with him of artwork in connection with the Gully Foyle strip, I think you'll appreciate the fact that John Brosnan had a lot to do with it; why he receives no credit at all, not even a mention of his name, I don't quite understand. Anyway, that's again Mr. Mason's own opinion. I'm not one to try and impress my own opinions on other folk - I like to let everyone have their own say - if they can convince me that I'm

wrong I'll admit it straight away, but until they do convince me, they have a tough job ahead of them.

Brian Richards is a very satirical, humorous writer - in his letter he has satirical humour that a lot of people don't or can't recognise. Some of the folk in Melbourne complain about his letter - well they just don't realise that Brian is just having a shot, and he certainly achieved his object, as I understand him, with the reply Ron Graham has made to him in your issue of THE MENTOR. Huh, he certainly drew the fire. Well, all I can say is that they must be men without any sense of humour whatsoever, and cannot recognise it in any shape or form.

I would like to say a few words about this new monstrosity we've just seen from Melbourne, called RATAPLAN. Well, the title is indicative of the comments of the contents of it. You've only to look inside the first cover and you see that a single copy sells at 50 cents, but if you want to buy two it costs you 60 cents each and the same for three copies. Why, in God Almighty's Name, why should it be 10 cents a copy dearer by buying a quantity than by buying single issues? I notice on one page that there is a list of reasons why people are receiving this ...thing, and among them one that says 'you were a subscriber to ETHERLINE, would you like to have your money refunded or receive copies of RATAPLAN in place of it?' I paid my subscription in January, so why didn't I receive a copy of RATAPLAN? (** The copy Pat is talking about is one I lent him. At the time he made the tape from which this is transcribed, he had not received a copy of RATAPLAN. -RLC **). But I don't know, maybe someone in Melbourne has decided that they just don't like me anymore. I can't help their troubles anyway; I'm too old, and too weary to be bothered with them anyway, in any case.

I notice Mr. Graham is also prominent in RATAPLAN, with his Vale! Harl Vincent. I'm appreciative of the fact that he has drawn the attention of folk to the existence of Harl Vincent, and the bibliography that he sent with it is certainly of great value. Provided, of course, as I said before, that his facts are correct. But Harl Vincent, under whatever name he chose to write - and I can think of at least two more besides those that Mr. Graham quotes - was a very interesting writer, almost as good as Henry Kuttner and the like of him. Apart from that article, the booklist, of course, and Norma Williams's article on Dowsing, well, the rest of it - not worth much, in my opinion.

I see John Bangsund has a crack at me and tells us that I'm trying to introduce certain things into the ASFs through the back door. Well, all I can say is that the wording I put in the article you printed was the exact wording of the Motion that John Foyster read out, perpetrating to be written and handed to him by Lee Harding, but which Mr. Foyster copied from my notes sitting along-side me just before the meeting, word for word, and if John Bangsund still has a copy of that monstrosity he sent out, and compares them he'll find considerable differences.

I'm not at all surprised at Mr. Edmonds for having a crack at me over the article in the SCIENCE FICTION TIMES. I fully expected it. I would point out, however, that I have never at any time claimed to be Australia's Number One Fan - nor do I

make any such claim. The only thing I would point out is that if Mr. Edmonds has ever kept copies of my letters, he would notice that repeatedly I have referred to Mervyn Binns as the No. One science fiction fan in Australia. In fact, I christened him "Mr. Science Fiction" in two or three of my letters. So what other people choose to write about me, well, I can't help it. It was not submitted to me for approval before it was printed - therefore I have no opinion but to just take it as it goes and let it lay.

I hope that some of you will be able to get over and see me in the near future. I shall be home nights, Saturday afternoons and Sundays until I move, which will now be about the end of October. After that it'll be God only knows when I'll be able to get down - it's about a three hour journey I understand - to get from there to Mosman, so I'll not be coming too often.

- Patrick A.M. Terry

Flat 4,
13 Wyong Road,
Mosman 2088

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CLUBS' NEWS

N.S.W.

SYDNEY SCIENCE FICTION FOUNDATION.

The item of news this issue is the granting to Pat Terry of an Honorary Membership "for an unlimited period". The whole SSFF membership at the Formal Meeting voted to give Mr. Terry the Honorary Membership.

The SSFF meets weekly, at Campsie on Friday nights and Bellevue Hill the following Thursday. For further information write to the Secretary at the editorial address of TM. The club mag., FORERUNNER gives news of Foundation meetings and costs 5¢ an issue - which pays for the stamp, in case Melbourne wants to know. Editorial address :- (Mrs) Debbie Dowden, 12/13 Second Ave., Campsie 2194.

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY.

Still no news from this club. The address has been changed though, of the contact there :-

Alex Robb
c/o 'Arena',
Macquarie University,
Sydney

FUTURIAN SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

Is still, as far as I know, planning to meet monthly at Randwick and Ryde. I seem to be off Graham Stone's list of news outlets. Ryde address is :-

6 Anderson Ave.,
Ryde 2112.

for further information

32.

contact the ASFA.

VICTORIA

MELBOURNE SCIENCE FICTION CLUB.

This is where I have a slight quibble. I have been sending a copy of each issue of THE MENTOR and of FORERUNNER as it comes out to the Secretary of the MSFC for their reading. When ETHERLINE 11 was coming out I received copies of it as a trade. However, since it folded I have not received anything - not even a copy of the MSFC newsheet - of which I saw a copy at Pat Terry's. Neither did the Foundation receive one, as a matter of Club courtesy. And I thought that relations were supposed to be improving between the clubs.

SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION, MONASH UNIVERSITY.

I'm sorry I missed this one out last issue. One of the head bods there is Gary Woodman who has told me that a group meets there, but gave me no further clues. Address is :-

The President,
Science Fiction Ass'n,
Monash University
Clayton 3168.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY.

AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION.

No news from this club yet. Is H.Q. for the FSS and the ASFA. Mainly a bibliographical group. Postal address is :-

Box 852, P.O.,
Canberra City,
ACT 2601.

QUEENSLAND.

QUEENSLAND SCIENCE FICTION/FACT CLUB.

Meets whenever the feeling comes over them, usually monthly or so. Postal Address :-

Box 174 , P.O. .
Broadway,
Qld. 4001.

VICTORIA.

MELBOURNE SCIENCE FICTION CLUB.

One of the oldest and most active SF clubs in Australia. Postal Address :-

c/o (Mrs) Diane Bangsund
1/166 Glen Eria Road
Ripponlea, Victoria 3182.

Another issue out. Comments, subs. and comments welcomed. Fanzines received: RATAPLAN, VECTOR, CARANDAITH, ½ A COUGH & JOTHJAS. -RLC.