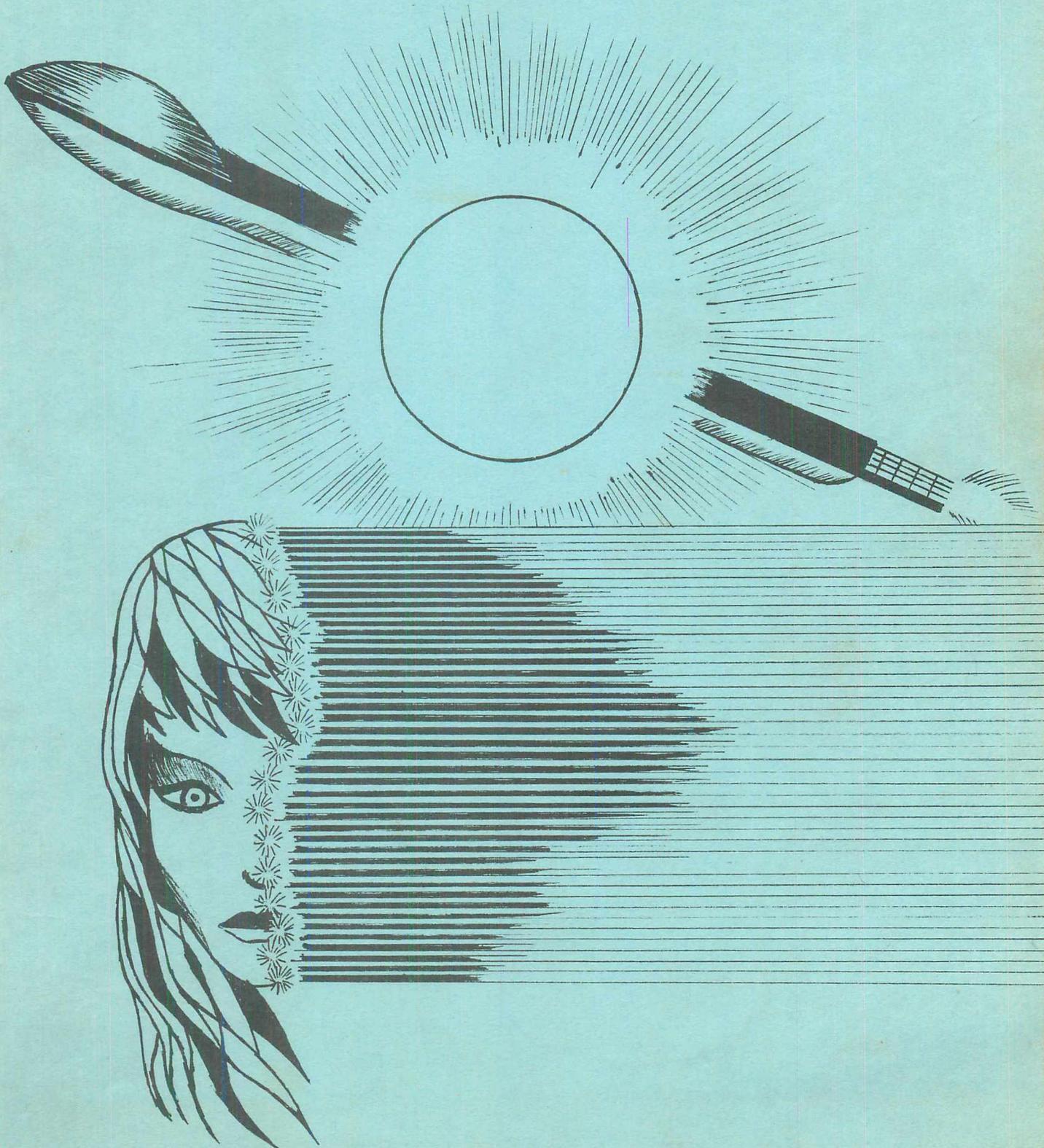


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THE MENTOR

SCIENCE FICTION



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SCIENCE FICTION

MAY 1969

NUMBER FIFTEEN

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Cover Art by John Brosnan

illustrating "Phoenix".

This issue is dedicated to Ronald E. Graham
for his efforts in advancing Australian science fiction.

2.

THE MENTOR science fiction. MAY 1969.

1968 NEBULA AWARD WINNERS. (Courtesy Anne McCaffrey and Pat Terry).

- NOVEL
- 1) Rite of Passage by Alexei Panshin.
 - 2) The Masks of Time by Robert Silverberg.
 - 3) Stand on Zanzibar by John Brunner.

- NOVELLA
- 1) Dragon Rider by Anne McCaffrey.
 - 2) Nightwings by Robert Silverberg.
 - 3) Lines of Power by Samuel R. Delany.

- NOVELETTE
- 1) Mother To The World by R. Wilson.
 - 2) The Sharing of Flesh by Poul Anderson.
 - 3) Final War by K. O'Donnell.

- SHORT STORY
- 1) The Planners by Kate Wilhelm.
 - 2) Masks by Damon Knight.
 - 3) Dance of the Changer and the Three by Terry Carr.

My thanks to Pat Terry and Anne McCaffrey for the above information.

:::::::::::::

For those of you readers who think that this issue of THE MENTOR is a little thinner than usual - you would be right. Till a few days ago I did not think I would have enough material to fill twenty pages, let alone the usual forty two. Luckily the few "regulars" sent in contribs. so this issue isn't as thin as it may have been. Still, it is touch and go if there will be an issue of THE MENTOR numbered 17.

Unless I get better results in the way of letters and contribs I'm afraid that THE MENTOR will have to go into its annual hibernation again a little earlier than I had planned. If I do or not is entirely up to the readers and contributors. Unless some interest is shown, this will be the next-to-last issue in this series of THE MENTOR. - Ron L Clarke.

P H O E N I X.

By Ron L. Clarke.

One.

Dawn broke on a cool, green day. Beams of pale light streamed from the rising sun and illuminated the quiet countryside. The mirror surface of a lagoon sparkled with the vanishing points of white light that were stars. Sprinkled over the slumbering landscape were twinkling yellow lights that signified farms. Dark masses against the velvet night were trees. No breeze moved their translucent leaves.

Beneath one of the still trees a figure stirred. A stray ray of light struck the youthful features of Leith G'lear. Sitting on one of the towering tree's gnarled roots Leith stared out at the rising sun, which was announcing itself with an almost imperceptible lightening of the western sky. A low murmur was always in his ears as the creamy surf broke on the long brittle beach of white sand. Leith liked the solitude. When he had a problem that he found hard to solve he came out and sat under the stars as he was doing now. There was one difference this time. It would be a long time before he sat here again, in the dark, and quiet. The last three days had been a continual round of parties and farewell gatherings of relatives, congratulating him on his appointment and wishing him luck, with envious eyes.

A liquid trilling illumed the clear morning air as a bird greeted the dawn. Leith lifted his head and gazed up at the vanishing stars. Three were moving, glowing points of deep green. Two were communication satellites, crossing the planet before the advancing day. The third was the biggest of the three. It bulked gigantic against the paling sky; a great floating island of green, seemingly as big as the moon. Leith looked on it with awe. It was the newly commissioned star ship Anastasia. Leith, after a long pause, turned back to the sunrise.

The sky was turning a pale lilac. As the rim of the sun appeared over the horizon a wave of fluorescent green swam up from the emerging sun, drowning the pre-dawn lilac. Aluth swelled above the glistening sea, an enormous, fiery emerald.

Leith stirred and stood up slowly, savouring the cool crisp morning air. He held his hand close to his eyes. He was surprised at the time. Five twenty five! Taking one last lingering look at his childhood haunts Leith turned and started up the grassy foot track, dew clad blades of grass brushing over his uniform cuffs. His finger watch was probably early as usual but this was one time he had to keep his appointments.

Ahead, on the crest of the gently sloping hill, were the palling yellow lights of his home.

His parents would be sad but proud that a son of theirs had been chosen for the position on the Anastasia and he knew that

he would not fail the name. He would say his last farewells to his parents and sister and would set out with plenty of time to reach the tender.

Leith glanced up at the sky but the Anastasia was not in sight. Another few hours and he would be on it! Touching his breast pocket and feeling the small packet, Leith smiled. He had spent the last of his advanced pay on the thumb-sized force shell. In its impregnable heart nestled a thimblefull of soil which Leith had the previous afternoon scraped up from the rich earth of Alor. He had read of spacers carrying such and it had struck him that it would help him scent Alor wherever he went - be it on Tristor or a million ages away in space and time.

Later, as Leith stood in the queue waiting to board the tender, he was glad he had something to hang on to as home. In his left hand he clutched a small case containing his teleareo amplifier, in his right his papers and psych profile.

The farewell to his family had been tearful and just as he was stepping through the entrance, his sister pressed into his hand a memory cube. A warm glow flowed through Leith as he remembered the scene in the cube - his mothers and father with Elesa in the centre waving goodbye, with the royal green of Aluth swelling in the background. Leith had waved goodbye and turning, wiped his eyes with the back of his hand. His last sight of them was as the transport rounded the bend, the brightly coloured cloths shimmering in the sea breeze and the waving hands.

Leith slid his papers into the scan slit and stepped up to the ramp. As his foot touched the bottom step he saw out of the corner of his eye the person alongside him stagger as a landing ship shook the ground with its planetfall motors. Leith grabbed at an arm and found himself staring into wide violet eyes framed with golden curls.

"Thanks", the girl said shakily as she regained her balance. Leith inclined his head and motioned her aboard, the line of people behind him moving along after him. Following her in, Leith slid his case into the acceleration mesh trap and slid into the couch next to the girl. After tightening their separate meshes, the ship grew silent. Leith felt the girl's eyes on him.

"Thanks again," the girl said, "My name is Maleya. Are you on the 'Annie' too?"

"That's o.k, my name's Leith, and it's my destination, too. It is also my first space trip outside."

"Mine too," Maleya replied, "I'm ..."

A new voice broke into their conversation as the ship's officer announced: "Lift-off in ten seconds!"

Leith flashed a brief smile at Maleya who returned it and then they settled down into their meshes as the ship strained at the planet's gravitational field and slowly lifted off the spacedrome. They were on their way.

Leith lost sight of the girl in the transfer from the tender to Anastasia. He spent a confusing twenty minutes locating the duty office and, on reaching it, was told that his team mate had not reported in. As Leith sank into one of the chairs clustered around the duty officer, Maleya walked through the door screen and handed the officer her credentials. As she turned to glance around the room Leith could not hide the surprise on his face as he saw the rainbow Observer symbol on Maleya's right breast. He knew that the Anastasia carried only two Observers and Maleya was the other!

"I see that you know one another," the duty officer said as Leith and Maleya gave the ceremonial bow. He picked up a disc from his desk and handed it to Maleya. "Here's the idekey to your network. Welcome to the Anastasia. I hope you two get along together, though your training should ensure that."

Leith thanked him and was about to follow Maleya through the door when the officer said: "Departure time is in half an hour. Your receiving consuls in your cabin will receive any further notices."

Leith thanked him again and followed Maleya out the door and into the world of which ten years of training had attempted to prepare him for: Observing.

Two.

The Anastasia sped on through the dark night of interstellar space. For untold lightyears around it suns were created, lived and died. Some ended their lives with a flash of energy that outshone the galaxy it was in. Others turned nova and slowly gutted out. Wraith-like scarfs of interstellar gas hung glowing with the light of smouldering suns. Great clouds of dust blotted out the burning stars - appearing to watchers as gigantic holes in space. Galaxies hung like fireflies in the eternal cave of night, glowing as if made for beacons. And now a new speck of matter sped through the abyss - a ship, a star ship, an expeditionary ship packed with machines and manned by men and women with the refinements of four thousand years of science behind them.

Anastasia's mission was to study, from as close as she could manoeuvre safely, a quasar. Since the discovery, a little over 2,000 years before, of these objects, scientists of five hundred stellar systems had puzzled over them. Hundred of theories were currently circulating to account for their existence and origin.

Since Man's control of Energy conversion and his 'skipping' of the limiting barrier of light speed, Alorian science had widened its stellar frontiers with increasing speed as she approached another population explosion, brought on deliberately by the people. Already the galaxy was becoming a little too crowded for the scientists and peoples happiness. Colonising ships were on their way to the neighbouring galaxy in their quadrant

6.

two-and-a-half million lightyears away.

The team captains of Anastasia were a couple who had spaced together for many years. Their family name was Carsars, and they had a tradition for quick and usually right decisions when faced with the unknown. Both Leith and Maleya were glad to have them as captains.

Anastasia had been fitted out in orbit round Alor, and had proceeded to the Galactic Rim in short hops of ten light years each. Interstellar space was too crowded for longer jumps. After taking on provisions and equipment of collapsed matter, Anastasia was ready for a voyage of indefinite length, or for as long as the supplies held out for the crew. She had terraforming equipment too, in case something came up and she had to establish a base, or settle a planet, for this voyage was primarily one of discovery and exploration into regions not previously explored. Or at least no one had come back from such a trip as they were setting out upon.

Their destination, quasar 3c/273, was two thousand million light years from Alor. It had moved, of course, slightly since its discovery fifteen hundred years before. Quasars generate energy, more than 1,000 million times the amount of heat and light from the sun. They were, until 200 years before, the most powerful transmitters of radio waves then detected.

Three.

When Marian Carsars gave the order for all personnel to stand by for the 'shift', Leith smiled at Maleya standing alongside him and then turned his attention to the telearea hanging from his shoulder as was Maleya. Their status as Observers gave them unlimited freedom and they had the power to go anywhere in the intricate galleries running through Anastasia's bulk.

The ship vibrated as the energy converters started up and then settled down to a muted hum of annihilated energy. After exhaustive tests the drive was given the OK by the technicians and Marian gave the second drive order. Anastasia winked out of existence. An instant later she appeared in intergalactic space, seven hundred light years from Alor.

The hyperdrive had to have a nearby mass on which to react and its greatest operating distance on a single jump was six hundred light years, with a galaxy on which to react. The energy converters were turned off and the main drive, a derivative of the planetary negative energy systems, was engaged. Since emergence from hyperspace the computers had been busy, coding the data coming in and evaluating their exact position in relation to the quasar. When all the data was evaluated Marian ordered the main drive engaged.

Anastasia vapourised instantly, turning all its mass, down to the smallest particle, into Slossolor radiation. Seven hundred years later that radiation fell on Alor. Anastasia was

finally written off as totally destroyed, and another ship was sent to study quasar 3c.273.

Four.

Watching the main view screen showing the home galaxy, for an instant a feeling of dizziness came over Leith. He steadied himself with a hand on the control panel and asked the captain, in a sharp voice, regretting it even as he said it : "Is anything wrong with the drive?"

Relan looked up from his dials. "No, Observer, it is working perfectly."

Leith heard a gasp of surprise and he spun around to see the Second Officer staring at the main view screen with startled eyes and a white face. Leith followed his gaze and his face went a shade paler than usual. There was no galaxy behind them. Everywhere the screen showed a golden haze of energy.

"Red Alert!" shouted Relan, leaping to the defence screen controls. "Emergency stations!"

Sirens screamed down the corridors of the mile long ship as the crew raced to their stations. Detectors were flung out but only energy was registered. Leith gaped as he caught sight of the mass detector to the stern of the ship. They were registering a body of such mass as to be unmeasurable!

"Hyperdrive stations!" shouted Relan as he flung himself into a control chair. There was a noticeable wrench as Anastasia came out of hyperspace again. Ahead of the ship was total blackness, a dark, forboding ALIEN blackness. Leith turned to the rear screens. A galaxy flamed golden behind them. A solid sphere of blazing energy.

"A quasar," whispered Leith.

They had been in the outer shell of the golden mass, bathed in torrents of flaming energy. Leith looked at the radius counter. Anastasia had spaced 800 light years - the quasar had the mass of a galaxy!

Leith was still staring at the quasar when he felt a light touch on his arm. Violet eyes blazed at him with excitement. "What a wonderful opportunity for a Observer!" babbled Maleya, holding his arm, "I'm getting it all down for the computer banks." Leith had reservations that he fully understood Maleya, but he too had switched on his teleareo from the first instant he felt something wrong. Maleya pulled at his arm again. "Look what's ahead of us!" She was pointing at the encroaching blackness. "That screen can't be in proper working order." Reaching for the focus, Maleya moved the focus of the screen showing the quasar, towards the bow of the ship. The scene was the same until the quasar swam into view. Utter blackness. No stars or, Leith saw as he glanced at the radiation counters, radiation anywhere around them except from that originating from the quasar. Leith frowned

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and turned the view screen to full magnification. Still nothing.

Captain Relan Carsars was speaking. "Turn on the main drive and we'll get further away from the quasar. I want all detection apparatus focused ahead of the ship."

Five.

It was two ship weeks later that an object showed up on the mass detectors. It showed as having the surface area of a G type sun but the mass of an Alorian type planet. Anastasia hung over it and search beams probed its surface. Nothing. The world was dead of all life forms. Stark mountain ranges ran along dust cloaked seas. Even the planet's core had solidified. A probe which landed gave the shocking reading. The temperature of the dead planet was -263°C . Nearly absolute zero. One of the civilian scientists commented on it, saying that the 100° rise above absolute zero was probably due to the presence of the quasar which could be seen as a speck of light in the dark, utterly dead reaches of space.

Six.

Captain Relan Carsars called the meeting to order. Fifteen pairs of eyes swung toward the slim couple standing at the head of the mess-hall table, and the buzz of talking stopped. He cleared his throat.

"I know everyone has his own idea of what's happened and knows the situation we face. I and my mate have discussed the situation and we have spoken with my senior officers and with the scientists panel. From what they have theorised as to the reason why we are here and where we are, it seems that they agree that the following estimate is a pretty good guess."

"The general theory is that we are relatively close to where we were when the main drive was engaged."

Leith and Maleya exchanged glances. They had discussed what they had observed and had come up with the same conclusion in their cabin.

Relan continued. "The opinion is, that we are in the far future of our time. Going back into historical time, a master mathematician forwarded the Theory of Relativity to the Council. Experiments later proved that the universe is curved and that light travelled in curved lines, though it took an immense distance to show appreciably. There was a theory concerned with this. It postulated that if a sun exploded, the light would travel around the universe and ARRIVE BACK at its starting point, eons in the future. It seems that that strange feeling of dizziness everyone had was a result of the destruction and recreation of Anastasia and ourselves, billions of years after we were 'destroyed'."

Everyone began talking at once. Relan let them argue for a few minutes and then rang the buzzer set into the crystal

top of the table. The shouting died.

"I will answer any questions," Relan said calmly, glancing at the incredulous faces before him.

The Second Lieutenant rose to his feet.

"Yes, Lieutenant?" inquired Relan.

He looked at the captain with a pale face. "Do you have any idea, sir, how it is we are alive, and in one piece, as only light travels at light speed and if we blew up, there would be other radiations?" He sat down.

Relan stood up. "Yes, I have a pretty good idea what happened," he replied, "You will remember we had the negative energy field on. On the few experimental engines which were deliberately blown up, all radiation which came off was in the form of nyons; those too travel at light speed. Most people know that it takes the equivalent of fifty light years of lead to stop a neutrino, one of the smaller particles. Well, NOTHING can stop a nyon; except, apparently, a quaser."

"As to how we were reformed; our original mission was to find out all we could about quasars. Well, we have. It seems that they are some kind of field which converts energy into matter at its centre, and as the matter passes through the outer veil, converts it back to energy. Don't ask me how the nyons are turned back into matter; we don't know yet."

"It is thought our survival was dependant on the fact that quasars give off negative energy; when we were recreated we had a negative energy field of our own operating. The two fields repulsed each other and so we survived the tremendous pressures at the centre of the quasar." Relan saw several people at the table give a grimace as they remembered the mass of the quasar - more than the mass of the entire home galaxy! He continued. "Anastasia was driven away from the quasar by the radiation from the quasar pushing against the force screens around the ship. We can thank our lucky stars ... that before we turned on the main drive the main energy screens are automatically energised. We are also lucky that the computers sensed the gravity of the quasar and built up the anti-gravity devices inside Anastasia."

Relan paused and glanced around the faces clustered above the sky green table.

"Are there any questions that need to be discussed in public?"

Leith stepped forward. "I would like to ask a question, captain. Could you tell us your plans for the future?" Everyone looked at Relan. The captain glanced down at his hands pressed against the table top and clasped them behind his back. He returned their gazes with a frown.

"I intend to cruise for three years, and if we haven't found anything, or anyone by then, I will find a star system

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with planets which can be colonised by us and convert the heavy elements in the dead star back to hydrogen with the drive units from this ship - the energy convertors. I then intend to detonate the sun and start it on its cycle again."

Kelan's face hardened and his blue eyes blazed.

"We intend to establish a self-supporting colony on one of the sun's planets, and expand from there. In the meantime, the Equations will be worked on as never before. There must be a way back. There must!"

Seven.

Anastasia's detectors, though wide ranging, had a limit. They could pick up a body with the mass of a sun at a distance of three million light years, and register the mass of a Alorian type planet at three hundred thousand light years. These detectors were out now, ranging through the velvet void on missions of exploration; on hyperbolic orbits millions of light years across. In the centre of the intricate web woven by the probes was the Anastasia, still plowing through the infinite abyss at ninety nine percent of the speed of light.

The time of searching stretched from weeks to months, from months to years, and still nothing but dust and rock debris was found.

Leith was taking a nap when the vida-phone tinkled. He swung his legs off the floating strands and reached for the thumb set. In the centre of the six inch screen, surrounded by a whorl of colour, appeared the three dimensional image of one of Anastasia's officers.

"Yes?" asked Leith.

"Observer," she said, "Probe 31Gs6 has detected a mass of size alpha. It is 950,000 parsecs distant, at 75° to the ship's axis."

"Thank's, Lieutenant," said Leith and he turned the vida-phone off with a quick flick. He sat staring at the opposite wall, which was now coloured a deep lilac, for a moment. At last! he thought as he rose and jerked the sheet off Maloya's sleeping form, I hope this is it!

In the control room the main screen was being connected to the probe's circuits, and as Leith and Maloya came up to the control board he saw that the conversion was nearly complete. The two captains were there also and as soon as the technicians has finished Marian Carsars ordered: "Set a course for the object and when we are within Anastasia's detector range alert scoutships three and four for launching." As she finished speaking the main screen lit up as one of the probe's search beams moved across the surface of the body. It was airless and the probe's counters showed that there was no radiation issuing from it. Unfortunately, this particular probe had been damaged in a collision with a cluster of extremely small pieces of debris,

and although the damage didn't appreciably affect the performance of the probe, all vision apparatus, save a two dimensional black and white camera which had been well shielded, had been destroyed. This was the image relayed by the probe in stark black-and-white : soaring black saw edged mountain ranges, needle pointed pinnacles of rock, vast flat white plains dusted with gigantic crevices which dropped to depths cloaked in blackness. Sheer cliffs surrounded the plains. The scene was as stark and as dead as a skull.

"How long before we reach it?" inquired Leith.

"Three months, Observer," answered Marian.

"Are there any reports from the other probes?"

"No," replied Marian, "All they have detected are microscopic quantities of crystalline rock. There is no trace of hydrogen in the atomic or in the molecular form."

Leith nodded thoughtfully and then went back to his cabin based computer with Maleya.

Eight.

The mile-long ship floated over the gigantic dead mass. Data was coming in continuously from the probes. The body was eighty thousand miles in diameter and was made of metal - not ore, but REFINED metal. The really astonishing thing was that the sphere had a surface gravity of that of Aluth! The previous contact had had a central core of metal but the crust was of a honeycomb rocklike substance.

Marian ordered scoutships three and four launched and gave instructions to the pilot of four to continue in close orbit around the sphere, while three landed.

Survey had located a huge mountain range fifty thousand miles long, with chasms sometimes seven hundred miles deep. It had announced that an area of fifteen hundred miles in diameter had been discovered giving an intense radiation output; five thousand miles to the north of this was an area which was fairly smooth and level and of a creamy white material. The scoutship went into a braking orbit and landed in the centre of the white 'target'.

Probing devices, sent out by the scoutship, detected metal three miles below the surface - the "crust" appeared to consist of dust and fragments of interstellar debris. A robot was lowered over the thirty mile wide lip of a chasm and it reported that the chasm was nine hundred miles deep. As it neared the floor it reported that the walls had run together to form a solid mass of metal and that the bottom of the rift was one hundred miles deep in accumulated dust.

The pilot of the scoutship reported the findings to Anastasia and struggled into a spacesuit. Picking two of his crew to accompany him he walked to the small airlock. As his foot touched the ground a deep shudder seemed to run through the sole of his boot, as if something which had been waiting for eternity had awakened. Suddenly, the landscape, pitch black a moment

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before beyond the radius of the ship's luminescence, lightened. The three men looked up. The sky had suddenly turned green. The pilot called Anastasia and the ship replied that the green seemed to be the result of an intense force shield which extended in a hemisphere of diameter fivethousand miles and two thousand miles into space. It formed a bubble of life - air pressure of ten pounds per square inch was forming inside the shield! - or an impregnable prison.

Anastasia reported that the surface of the sphere (it was not now called a 'dead star') was throwing up dust and debris, and forming it into a solid rod of matter which, when it attained the height of twenty miles, was flung into intergalactic space. Luckily (or was it just luck? thought Leith) the escaping matter was diagonally opposite the "bubble", scoutship 4 and Anastasia.

The pilot ordered the crew of the scoutship back into the ship. One glance proved sufficient. The dust and rock debris around the ship was being drawn towards the edges of the "bubble". The three scrambled aboard the ship.

Reaching the control panel the pilot glanced at the view-screen and confirmed his guess. The scoutship trembled slightly and then everything grew quiet except for the hum of the air circulators. Then the ship began to shudder and out of the ground nearby a cylindrical structure rose like a periscope. It was of a transparent material and as they watched, a section slid open and it stood open on a small room, as if waiting for them.

Nine.

Leith climbed out of the airlock of the scoutship, followed by Maleya. Using the scouts emergency transmitter boosted with the back up systems on Anastasia, they had been transmitted down to the cramped receiver on the scout. After checking over each others life suits, even though there was a breathable atmosphere in the "bubble" - they set out across the pitted ground surface of light coloured metal.

Maleya paused at the opening in the wall and glanced back at the scoutship, standing five hundred yards off. Leith stepped into the room and Maleya followed. Their telarcos had been activated from the moment they had left Anastasia and were beaming everything recorded to the mother ship.

The opening was suddenly diminishing and with a barely perceptible movement the lift began to move downwards. Leith and Maleya checked out their equipment and made sure the emergency suit transmitters were in working order. They were unarmed.

In a few seconds they were dropping so fast that, with a slight movement, they could almost float. The outside wall flickered past them in bands of colour. They passed what must have been enormous storerooms or workshops crammed with gigantic machines clothed in sparkling colours. Some of the machines must have been two miles high from what Leith calculated from

the rate of descent.

Even Leith's stomach was beginning to feel a trifle queasy when a steadily increasing pressure on the soles of their boots told them that the lift was decelerating. One of the instruments showed that they were nearly ten thousand miles below the surface, even though the pressure or gravity hadn't changed appreciably. The door of the lift slid open silently and they found themselves facing a brilliantly lit corridor. Maleya was the first to step out of the lift and as she started forward she began to communicate her impressions to the waiting ships.

"It's so quiet here; the passage we're in seems to stretch on to a needle point in the distance. The light has no apparent source - there aren't any shadows under us - it's as though the air itself is the source of the light. The floor of the corridor is springy and seems to be unmarked - there is no dust on it and the air is breathable. The walls and ceiling have a blue metallic lustre, though it doesn't reflect the light. Wait a moment! There's something up ahead! Seems to be a projection from the wall .."

A clear chime rang through the corridor and it vanished. Leith and Maleya found themselves standing on a grassy hillock. Green plains surrounded them on all sides and in the distance rose a range of purple misted mountains. The sky was a deep

Ten

Please be seated.

Leith glanced around but could see none but themselves. "Did you hear.." he asked Maleya.

"Yes," she answered, "But it is not being communicated by sound or radio waves."

Correct. Please be seated. I have something to show you.

Leith looked warily around, but could see no-one. He motioned to Maleya and lowered himself to the ground. It felt like grass.

Maleya gasped as a swirl appeared in the air in front of them. The swirl coalesced and what appeared to be a grey mist turned into streaks of milky white radiance flowing through the air. This abruptly contracted to a sphere, about three foot in diameter of pure white light. It appeared to be covered with a flowing film of gold.

*I hope that I haven't startled you too much. I thought you would find this form more acceptable when I speak to you than any other I can attain.

Your surroundings were created so as to help you adjust and be more at ease. In answer to your questions as to what I

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am and where I came from, I will reveal it to you in time. But first let me tell you what happened to Man after you were 'destroyed'. Yes, I know about it and, yes, I was created by Man.*

Eleven.

Intelligent men, even in your time, thought that Man, although he was progressing so far and fast in physical sciences, had a serious lack in his mental approach to life. It was if, when intelligence was born, evolution of Man's mentality stopped. I do not mean his brain 'power', I mean his reasoning. Man could not cast off all the accumulated habits, instincts and the many superstitions he had acquired over the million or more years since the first glimmerings of human intelligence.

Since then, men have tried to bring on this mental maturing themselves and have failed. It seemed as if Man was destined always to hate and kill as before.

Toward the end of the Thirteenth Century a child was born who changed the destiny of the human race and, consequently, of the entire universe. This child was no different from other human children physically, except for one thing: in his brain was a cell structure which was activated. In all others these cells were dormant. When the child reached puberty the cells entered into another phase in their life and a mental carrier beam was set up in the brain of this child. It spread through the length and breadth of this space-time continuum. And then a thing which had never happened before in the memory of the universe happened.

In the energised core of each sun, of each planet, something was born and something died. From that moment on, the human race changed its destiny. What Man himself couldn't do was done for him. Evolution, producing intelligence, hadn't stopped at that. The molten core of each planet was in effect a single cell in a universe wide system of memory cells. Life evolving on the surface of the planet was subject to its environment. When the life form reached a state of progress where it could change the environment, the seed planted by evolution flowered, affecting the matrixes impressed on the core of the planet, impressed on the structure of the atoms themselves; and when the carrier beam touched these cells, they responded and the next step upward in Man's evolution was started. It was not a physical evolution, but a mental one.*

The couple on the grassy hillock sat spellbound, their eyes gazing into the milk-white sphere.

This took place many thousands of years after your 'displacement', continued the voice. *I know how you were re-created and for how long you were in the form of energy. It was for much longer than you think. The time you are now in is many thousands of millions of years after you were destroyed. You see, you did not circumnavigate the universe once only, but untold millions of times. Probability gave the odds of billions to one.

that you would connect with the quasar at that point in space which would enable it to re-creat you intact.

I will show you some of the events stored in my memory banks and allow you to see for yourselves Man, and his end.*

The milky globe broke up into smaller globules, which themselves dissolved into the featureless grey mist which swirled a little and then a scene grew in the centre of it, crystal clear. Maleya stared in wonder at the miles high faery towers, pastel coloured, which reached with their thin, delicate spires for the stars. She watched unbelievably as a huge Red Giant star was cloven in two by powers beyond imagination and set up as a double star system. She saw, as if in a dream, the planet sized ships with the gold cross representing Man glowing on their flanks, go streaming out to the edges of the universe, and beyond.

She watched the discovery that proved the universe was degenerating. Electrons were moving slower, stars were dying quicker. Blotches of darkness were sighted beyond the farthest galaxy then reached by the exploration ships. Darkness that was not that of empty space. Darkness of Chaos. Of atomic disintegration. Of the bonds holding the atoms disintegrated into primal particles and then into free energy. It was as if a monstrous and uncontrollable cancer was eating into the universe with enormous gulps.

Leith watched incredulously as he saw galaxies, streaming stars in their wakes, flow like mercury as Man exerted his abilities, moving galaxies which had been abandoned into the encroaching darkness. A living shell of stars was build around the five home galaxies. Man gained a brief respite. Then the darkness began to eat into the barrier.

The voice continued it's story. *The race of Man perceived that they might not survive what was coming and they began to build something in feverish haste. It was to be a gigantic computer - a storehouse of Man's achievements that would last forever. They built it. They used a core of collapsed matter taken directly from the cores of White Dwarfs. They impressed circuits and laced the mass with force shields. Around the core was built a waist of the strongest, most dense material known. A neutrono couldn't penetrate an angstrom into it. Above this was built the compartments and machines you saw on the way down in the lift. In this too was built a series of force screens which could withstand the pressure of the entire material universe, it if were placed against it. Feeding these screens was energy created from the bonds which hold the universe itself together, backed up by seetee reactors.

My building took one million years. They built well. When the darkness came Man made a last effort and formed himself into a compact mental unit which made a spearthrust into the encroaching blackness. I felt the strain of that titanic struggle even through my force screens, and when Man succumb, the very foundation of the universe was shaken with the energies involved.

My struggle with the darkness lasted for aeons ; it taxed even my resources, but I survived.

I discovered that there was no energy to be had anywhere - this was one instance where the Law of Conservation of Energy failed. There was nothing anywhere. For millennia I watched and once I saw a flicker of radiation. I moulded what you would call a probe and sent it out. It discovered a quasar and so I had an extra energy source is needed. Since then the quasar has moved and my probe has followed. You may have seen it. It is the only object of any mass in that area, apart from the quasar.*

Leith nodded. "Yes, we did," he answered. "We thought it was a dead star."

That is my history, said the computer. *I stand for Man. I represent everything Man was and aspired to : his hopes: ideas, dreams and desires. I am the ultimate storehouse of his knowledge. I am more than a library or museum. I do not know my fate, but I must wait. I am the storehouse of Man's knowledge and of his bones.*

I know that you and your crewmates would not be able to survive here and I may have the solution to your problems. Mankind, before he was destroyed, had been working with his collective mind on a device for interuniversal travel.

I have completed the calculations for the device.*

Leith and Maleya broke their gaze away from the sphere and looked at each other with hope.

*There is a way from this dead-end universe. It is to break through to another universe! My calculations show that the only universe suitable is an entirely different type of space-time continuum to this one of ours. It is a 'steady state' universe. Once there, Man need never fear its end. It will have none.

I will make the machine and your technicians can attach it to Anastasia.*

The last scene, showing Anastasia, collapsed into grey mist, which faded into the air. Leith and Maleya looked into each others eyes. Marian stood up and stretched her still legs.

"Thank you," she said to the air.

You are welcome, said the voice. *I was built to serve Man.*

Twelve.

Anastasia had the machine, a coruscating sphere, fitted to her hyper-divve and, after a farewell to the aeons old intelligence below, they moved out of orbit and into the utter black reaches of space. Anastasia built up to the speed of light and went into hyper-drive. Both Leith and Maleya were present in the

control room when all was in readiness for the first - and last - attempt at interuniversal flight. Strapped down in acceleration couches Leith and Maleya lay side by side their attention focused on the main view screen. In the centre of the scope shone a brilliant point of light - the star sized computer, building up the energies required to break through the barriers between two universes. An electric tension almost crackled in the air of the control room and all over the Anastasia men and women of different star systems, but all one of the same people, waited in their individual ways for the attempt which would give them life again or seal the fate of humanity to the everlasting night of nuclear annihilation if they failed. They were in the hands of an intelligence vastly greater than themselves and they trusted it to carry them through, to whatever end.

"Engagement in sixty seconds," the ship's computers hummed in their crystal lattice.

Leith took hold of Maleya's hand and pressed it. She looked at him gratefully.

"Engage!"

The interuniversal drive came on and suddenly everything - walls, instruments and personnel aboard Anastasia grew transparent. The outline of the ship grew faint and then vanished like mist on a summer morning.

On the order given to Anastasia to Engage, the machine intelligence broke the bonds holding its space-time continuum to reality and channeled the energy produced into the core of its immense bulk. At the same instant it converted every particle of itself into energy and instantaneously fed it into the machine hugging Anastasia's flank. It had needed ultimate energy to break the last barrier - it used it.

And so the last trace of Man passed out of existence. It had pondered, briefly, before it ceased to exist, whether it was dying for nothing. It did not regret the last act of its long life.

Epilogue.

There was an audible click and Anastasia burst back into space. Everyone stared at the main view screen.

Stars! Blue, golden, emerald, crimson stars blazed around them. They had made it! Maleya fainted.

The intelligence had not destroyed itself in vain.

It had indeed finished its task given it by its makers billions or years and a universe away - to preserve Man.

- Ron L Clarke.

oooooooooooo

L:ZD LCL:L

Terra presents many different environments and life here appears in an even greater variation. Details of Terra's evolution sufficient to predict the nature of these variations are encapsulated in my various specific reports of which I have already communicated the greater number.

However the objectivity of my reportage is now questionable. My period of observation had led me to question my suitability for the task. I have become somewhat personally involved on Terra and on re-scanning a recent report I found a degree of bias to correct which I have had to prepare a supplement. This will be forwarded presently. Unfortunately the implication of my error is more difficult to rectify.

Of course the key to comprehension is context, especially its dynamic or intercontextual aspect usually treated separately here under the term "tendency". Fundamentally all of the Terran forms of life are identical, in that the energy of which they are composed is present in the same basic configuration in them as in their environment, in so far as they can be aware of the encroachment of the environment upon them. Terran sensors are limited by the basic energy configuration, specifically in their own constitution and generally by the limit placed on the range of effective stimuli. Thus context on Terra is so far as the Terrans can be aware of it is so simple and uncomplicated that their failure to have utilised the principle requires explanation. For they have not only failed in this regard but also they have erected such a screen of mental confusion as to secure the improbability of a context-oriented breakthrough.

Terra is a part of a compatible universe in so far as the Terrans can be aware. One species has speculated, on a theoretical basis only, as to the possibility of unsensed incompatibles, but environmental factors suffice to complement sensory bounds to such speculation. The theoretical superstructure has acquired such a self-justification through anthropomorphising (a subform of a phenomenon I term substitution below) as to result in mental existence itself being questionable. A Terran may even conclude that essence (or existence) is an aberration of something which has been similarly responsible for the (illusory) appearance of the universe. There is of course no doubt but that this is of immense advantage in so far as our own complacency may have been potentially dangerous.

In Terran terms context has only two components. A vibration (of nothing) and the space surrounding the vibration are the constituents of everything including themselves. The vibration is the Terran conceptualisation of energy. The Terrans have an enchanting mythology based on this simple premise and they call this mythology science. Mythology is the only term applicable because of the self-contradictions to which the fundamental assumptions of Terran science lead inevitably. Despite these contradictions

the mythology is regarded as true enough by the Terrans until something better is found.

The behaviour of the Terrans is made more understandable when the underlying characteristics are seen to be variations on two themes. Basically these are one but for the purpose of elucidation the two facets of the same tendency are best described separately at first. Consequently I designate the first as substitution and the second as inferiority.

Substitution is the tendency to generalise, to replace a complex process of thought with a label whose built-in conclusion habit has associated with that label during the individual's period of maturation; i.e. to substitute for logical processes of thought with instantaneous learned responses to specific stimuli.

Inferiority is a set of learned responses related specifically to new knowledge, but generalised in the process of substitution because it is a primary set and thus related generally to the entirety of human thought. Although its object is collective it achieves this effect by impressing itself upon individuals as their own. In this it differs from substitution since the latter is practised by individuals as a collective thought system with general applicability.

It is obvious that where one of these tendencies occurs the other will shortly develop. It is equally obvious that both are almost impossible to eradicate. Where substitution and inferiority "interact" most if not all human behaviour is generated.

That context is the key to comprehension has been only dimly grasped by the Terrans and, in the main, what I call substitution and inferiority, for want of more exact terminology, combine to ensure that the principle is neither understood nor consistently employed. Substitution and inferiority also suffice to prevent the discovery of something better than Terran science by the Terrans. For the umpteenth time consequently human knowledge is decreasing in its endless circuitous progression. Once a certain level is reached the fundamental contradictions have resulted in such confusion that the rate of advance reaches zero and thenceforth questioning of premises exceeds insights. It is only a short retreat to the start of another arduous campaign of research.

There have been many such cycles on Terra and the abysmal ignorance of these persistent creatures is such that there are certain to be many more. Some cynics among them complain that all the different ways of saying the same thing have been tried. If this were only true! To see the number of ways in which the same mistake has been made persistently, deliberately and, I might add, with undoubted careful premeditation would leave anyone in my exhausted traumatic state!

Editor's note :- It is considered hopeful that a further translation of the remaining notes will be published in a future issue of the last in this interesting manuscript. - RLC.

THE COMING OF THE SPACE AGE.Ed: A.C. CLARKE,Gollancz (No price given).REVIEWED BY BRIAN RICHARDS.

In his forward to this Anthology, Arthur Clarke says, it seems almost as a form of apologia, that "the literature of space flight is so enormous, that if piled in one great heap it would make the apollo project superfluous". He also states his reason for adding to the pile, which is that of preserving there vastly interesting and important essays, which have appeared mainly in professional journals, magazines, newspapers and out-of-print books, where they have been seen only by a limited public.

In assembling this scholarly and intellectually massive tome, Mr Clarke has aimed at entertainment, inspiration, education and amusement, though not in any order of importance. He has in my view succeeded admirably in his unstated but implied objective of putting the history of space flight into perspective by the carefully selected continuity of the book, not a continuity of style which would be impossible in a book with so many diverse contrivators but, a continuity of human effort and human aspirations. One feels strongly that the book in toto is the finest tribute to the upward drive of the human spirit which one has ever been privileged to read.

The body of the book is divided into six sections. Part One opens with "Tracking Sputnik 1", E. Nelson Hayes, the publications director of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Laboratory, succinctly and with great relish tells the tale of how in spite of Russian forecasts of future intention to launch a satellite, sputnik 1, almost the entire American scientific world was caught with its collective trousers down when this launching eventuated. Only the Smithsonian was in business as far as supplying information to the U.S press was concerned. Dr. Hayes blow by blow account of the bout is top grade commentary.

From an American triumph to an American disaster - the abortive launching of Vanguard 1 satellite which although a failure showed that the Americans could be as open and honest about failure as they could about success and so, perversely it seems, increased world respect for their open approach.

Two surveys of German rocketry follow with all the accuracy and authority for which German scientific writing is noted. "The First V2" by Dornberger and a general essay by Von Braun then a survey of American rocketry by Frank Malina, who is particularly interesting when he discusses early American jet propulsion studies. All three of these technical essays are as eridite as one could expect from scientists of the calibre of their authors.

Am editorial on Professor Goddard's early work, reprinted from the "New York Times" shows a marvellous retrospective view of a journalist with egg all over his face, and yet it reads

so reasonably, if taken in the context of the general state of knowledge at the time of writing, that, one feels pity rather than contempt for this unfortunate member of the fourth estate.

A short bitter speech by Phillip Cleaton, the founder of the British Interplanetary Society, dealing with official British Obtuseness which seems to be cast in the same mould as our own local variety gives one food for thought.

A detailed analysis of American and Russian goals in space by Dr Charles Sheldon which is one of the most important pieces of work ever written on the subject should be studied diligently by anyone truly concerned with the future of mankind.

A sardonic little funny by Dr Ralph Cooper brings the first section uproariously to a close.

Part Two is very short and consists of three brief autobiographies of pioneers of the theory of space flight, Tsiolkovsky, Goddard and Oberth. All three are much too short for anything except whetting the appetite for more. This reader has started a "pest of the year campaign" at the local library to chase up some full scale efforts if available - go thou and do likewise.

Part Three has as its theme, "the uses of space". Six most informative essays and oddments starting with the United Nations declaration on the peaceful uses of outer space, which is a very high purposed document in the flattest of diplomatic prose, yet what a tribute to mans hopes for better things and at the same time an indictment of the ways of politics which make the document necessary.

Donald Douglass Jnr: writes on the commercial possibilities of space flight and is optimistic about money being made out of it. Then we have a touch of pardonable vanity from the anthologist himself who includes his own scholarly article on satellite communications, and who better to write about it than the man who thought it all up.

The space technology of a "track meet" by Robert Richardson is a skilled extrapolation of terrestrial athletic abilities to the gravitic conditions appertaining to other planets in the solar system, and, a series of forecasts of probable performances at a future interplanetary Olympic Games. In this section one hoary old illusion of the s.f. writer went walkabout, not to be seen again one trusts - be it known to all men that the surface gravity of Jupiter is 2.501 X Earth gravity, not the immeasurably high figures with which we have been assailed for years. This is a fascinating article and the conclusions drawn are in many cases quite the reverse to those which this reviewer in ignorance would have anticipated; one lives and learns.

A review of space medicine by Dr Constantine Generales makes the fascinating point that the study of space medicine originated several years before the study of aviation medicine. The poor white mice were centrifuged long before they were flown.

This section of the book concludes with a study by the

American Rocketry Society of some of the disastrous consequences of Amateur Rocket engineering particularly when carried out by the younger generation.

Part Four subtitled "the new frontier" is frankly speculative. It opens with Nobel prizewinner, Professor Herman Müller, discussing the forms which life would take on other worlds. This section should be compulsory reading for all s.f. authors, (as indeed should the whole book) a little more fact in s.f. would assist markedly in the willing suspension of disbelief.

Then we have a piece of straight fiction from C.S. Lewis, "The Caves of Venus"; Lewis would not be a general favourite amongst fandom but he writes incredibly well.

A reprint of Percival Lowells historic essay on the Martian irrigation system is thoroughly worthwhile. When one reads about Lowell and his work, the unique flavour of his writing can not possibly come through description by a third party. The passing of time has discredited most of his ideas but, one could only wish for the ability to present "discreditable" ideas as well as he did.

Still on Mars M. Vertregt presents a concise paper on the probable form the Martian Calender will take and reminds us at the same time of a few improvements long overdue in the terrestrial calender.

"Beyond the solar system" by Dr Eugene Sanger, the photon rocket pioneer, is a summary of the evidence he gave before the U.S. Congress Committee on Science and Astronautics in which he discusses another perennial s.f. myth, that of the "time dilation effect in interstellar flight", the only description one has ever read which conveyed any real meaning to my non-math brain.

This section of the book is concluded by Olaf Stapledon with a vivid and poetic description of the galaxy as seen from without. Which although imagination and written over thirty years ago is still valid within what an astronomer friend is pleased to call "our present range of knowledge. (digressing for a while from the review, I have a penguin book pelican edition some 30 years old, which cost me sixpence when new, of Stapledons First and Last Men. This book was then treated as serious speculative philosophy. Penguins recently reprinted it as straight science fiction. Oh Tempora, Oh Mores.)

Part Five of Mr Clarke's epic work again is largely speculation, this time about the anthropological and exobiological implications of contact with extraterrestrial life. There are two distinct viewpoints on the subject of contact with alien life. The prosaic one that only radio contact is conceivable does not get a go in this book. The second view of those who accept the possibility of physical contact and are thinking about the wherefors, has produced some interesting thoughts.

Dr James Edson deals at some length with cultural exchange. Professor Carl Sagan comments on the evidence for past

visits by outworlders. Dr S. Göllmb writes a sparkingly funny essay on extraterrestrial linguistics and we hear from Olaf Stapledon on interplanetary Man.

Dr Krafft Ehrlicke deals with the Anthropology of space flight and the steps needed to reassure our culture of the desirability of space flight and Leslie Peltier pours a little scorn on U.F.O.'s.

Mr Clarke sums up the whole section very wittily when he points out that mankind has had only limited success in his communication with his fellows - how then can he hope to set out to communicate with "them".

Part Six, "space and the spirit", has as its contributors people as varied in viewpoint as C.S Lewis, J.B.S. Haldane, Sam Moskowitz, John Glenn, Richard Jeffries and Arthur Clarke. As far as fandom goes this will be controversial in that each one deals with different ideas of God and the Universe. One cannot envisage any conversions being made by any of these writers. Those of us who believe will continue to do so those who do not believe will probably cry "bulldust".

I find it most difficult to write of the feeling of wonder that the book as a whole has imparted to me. The adjectives which come into mind all seem unsuitable and imprecise, one can only urge all of you to read it and see for yourselves.

- Brian Richards.

T U E S D A Y

by

Michael Black.

It was a perfectly ordinary Tuesday morning. Having eaten his breakfast and washed, he picked up his briefcase from the kitchen table, walked down the short hallway to the front door, opened it and stepped through. His eyes automatically fell to the top step as his foot came down over the doorsill. He stopped dead, the door clicking shut behind him. There was no step - where there should have been a concrete slab was a short strip of grass. He looked up. Out of its usual range the fuse snapped over to his long distance telemetering units. The star patterns he could see through the clouds, with his infrared detectors, were unknown to him. To prevent further loss of power in a vain attempt to communicate, he manually locked the fuse in its original setting and began to investigate his new surroundings.

Arriving in unmarked hearses, they clumped together in a shady glade to await its coming. Suddenly it was above them, lurking ominously in the predawn glow. They soddened quietly close to ground and slunk silently away as it socketed onto the hillside. A small part of its grey bulk disengaged and flowed silently into the still, brown sky above them, ferrating through the low cloud parallel to a range of glowing hills, and disappearing into the moonwake still glistening on the horizon. The dull pressure cone as it exploded beat on their skulls. The far moonwake iridescently glimmered an eerie red iris, whose yellow halo spent itself on its cloudy backdrop.

Where there had been a wood and paned-glass door, faded yellow eaves and a tiled roof edge there was green sky melting into distant hills.

The dry grass, trodden through with many trails, was still surviving in a comatose state and it extended as far as he could see across the broad plain.

"Peter!"

He heard a soft voice at his side. He looked down into the large eyes of a young, dark-skinned girl wearing only a native loincloth.

"Peter, they're coming!"

He could understand her speech, though not what she meant, but it was a language he felt he had never known before.

She tugged on his sleeve and he began moving in the direction she pulled; at first slowly, then faster.

Now they were running over the sun-hardened earth so quickly that his heart was pounding.

A strange village came into sight. Buildings as he had never seen before, and dark-skinned people in loincloths, clutching brightly coloured bundles and hurrying down the same track on the far side of the village. At sight of him and the girl, they called to him the same message that she had spoken. He waved a salute and quickly was among them. The girl finally loosed her grip, smiled and ran to rejoin her parents further ahead. The intense heat was burning his skin and he gratefully accepted a cap someone handed to him. He queried the fellow, in words that just came to him:

"Where are we?"

The man smiled and seemed puzzled.

"You know," he replied, "We're on the short-cut to the old fort."

The fort came into sight just as he was racking his brains. Old was not the word for it. It was a magnificently preserved ruin. Remains of a square four-walled enclosure, crumbling into a large

square mound about two feet higher than the surrounding plain, skirted by a wide ditch, about a foot deep now, because of the loose earth falling into it. The most attractive part of the situation was that the entry way over the ditch was wide, lay on the side where the ditch was most filled-in and led to breaches in the mound and fort wall.

There was only one defence possible. He did not believe he could pull it off.

A yellow glow emanated from the grey manace before them. An intermittent blue ray spat upwards from its centre section whilst similar red rays spaced evenly around its circumference threw their dull fire in many directions. Where they touched on nearby plants and rocks, the rays caused these to glow momentarily without alteration. The devices in the hearses hummed softly and churned out reams of data whilst their tape drums were a blur of subjective colours. Jubilant, they returned to the hearses and roared away as the grey menace, its rays still flickering about it, rose silently and flipped sideways over the horizon. The test had been successful.

The click of the door still in his ears, he picked himself up from the grass where he was lying, brief case still in hand. He looked up at the step where a slight mark in its concrete surface bore silent witness to his clumsiness. As he strode down the path, his brain now fully alert, he could not help but question how and why he had switched his communicator to manual reset whilst falling. The answer was elusive and by the end of the block he had forgotten all about it.

A glorious Tuesday morning, even to a humanoid!

- Michael Black.

Jottings.

Two magazines to look out for - one a fanzine and the other a prozine. The first is S F COMMENTARY, edited by Bruce Gillespie of PO box 30, Bacchus Marsh, Vic 3340. The first issue contains constructive criticisms of many sf topics and novels. Of particular note is the article on Philip K. Dick by the Editor of SFC. The second is the new prozine coming out - VISION of Tomorrow, Due out in June-July, this is something to watch for. -RLC.

WOULD NEW WORLDS ACCEPT THIS?

by

Doug Kewley,

touched up by Gary Woodman.

The sunny mountains of blue wood and the crash of a million symphonies of clanging chrysanthemums. The rushing, falling of sobbing steam as Man crawled out of the primeval swamp.

Dripping, glistening, He arose, splashing. The heavens chorused the splendour of hope, daring and GOD. The fields exuded the fragrance of charity, the seas the cool green glow of faith, the mountains the milky, misty purple of hope. The stars blew LIGHT, the greatest. Flowers trumpeted, grass sang, the winds lost the echoing ring of glory and evolution to the three dimensions. He passed bipedally to His goal, heeding only the MAKER. The particles bonded, whirred, fluxed. The waves spread, interfered, warped, and sent the Power through the Universal Set. Probabilities joined events to hypotheses. Man thought, dreamed, flashed, guessed.

The particles, the spheres of the Universe, the stuff of the World, the building blocks of space joined, united and hybridized. Functions resulted, results functioned. Man intervened, He invented. The ENERGY transcends all, the magic numbers. Organs of non-entities combined to make a nothing. Nothings became somethings by nothing. Graphs, limited to lines and dots, expressed ingenuity, and Man killed.

Black warping of the mind. Evil, fear, dark forebodings and calculations pervaded the storms. Lightning hissed and split, the points of death. The Sword of TRUTH, the Shield of FAITH. The roaring hush of a megabillion hyperons, the scream of a growing acorn. The majesty of Achievement and Honour. The darkness overflowed, and Man shuddered. There came amongst Man another. Words expressed ideals, and action! shouted the SPIRIT. Man was fearful, the Master Planner never faltered. Blood, red blood. Red, dripping, oozing blood of iron nails.

Man was saved, yet ignorance. The fears, the hopes, the failures are yet again. He loses control, creation of theories, rules, regulations. Genius in millions, the inspiration of the worker. Man controls, Man rules, Man kills, Man hates, Man manipulates. Yet - Man reaches out, out for the STARS. The Unknown is not conquered. Man is thwarted. Man reaches still for THE STARS. Pain, hunger, misery still ignored. Ambition overrules all, out FOR THE STARS. OUT FOR THE STARS, there for the asking.

- Doug Kewley & Gary Woodman.

THE R & R DEPT.

Australian Science Fiction Association,
Box 852, P.O., Canberra City, A.C.T.

Dear Ron,

As you are obviously not interested in our activities I am refunding the credit you had here. Get in touch if you ever wish to learn something of the movement.

- G. Stone.

Bernie Bernhouse

62 Military Rd., Avondale Heights, Vic 3034.

Dear Ron,

The usual problems emerged when you decided to publish that thing I wrote two months later --- I didn't seem to be able to find any determinate features which pervade for all time, things are constantly evolving before me.

I think this is one of the problems of growing up, you write something in a particular mind zone and perspective, then time flashes past carrying your head with it.

It stops two months later, and as you get out for a breather, you look around and absorb the particulars. Here is where the complications arise, you are now examining things through a slightly altered lens, which obviously, will alter the way you see things.

During the two months of travelling, to pass the time you have been gathering an assortment of lenses of different shades and sizes, each lens synchronized with its own particular field, i.e. Hegelian dialectic, Marx's materialistic interpretation of that, etc. etc.

If you don't mind I'd like to change the analogy now. The lenses become stepping stones. You spot something like McLuhanism then you climb up in your mad, youthful haste, and isn't it a groove? there before you is that same old world, and yet so fresh and original, as if you'd never actually seen it before - "oh I see now, then the reason for the Hippie revolt isn't that at all its..."

And so you take this new perspective in, and reinterpret it in your own mind - (I wonder how many possible shades there are?)

There you have the whole complication.

A fully developed and mature mind (lets say 26?) seems to really groove to these little flashes in time, when your older you really cling on and treasure these flashes of the past - I guess you treasure them for what they are - unique glimpses into the processes of the mind, the pluralistic mind which is eternally unfolding before our eyes.

Thanks for a great ish, Ron, perhaps you have achieved the formula everyone has been looking for, i.e. a speculative - type - A.S.F.Rian-type-FANzine. I would comment a little more, but I feel most of your LOC writers (Woodman etc) are far more competent at this sort of organized nit-picking - there are no derogatory donnotations there by-the-way.

-Bernie Bernhouse.

Gary Woodman
c/- President, Monash Uni. S.F.Assn., Monash Uni. Clayton 3168.

Dear Ron,

... I'm getting sick of this. Every TM which has come my way since No 9 has had the back cover fall off on me. Not sometimes but always the blasted bacover detaches itself from the rest of the zine. I can't stand it any longer! My fanzine drawer is half full of TM bacovers, just drifting around aimlessly! They fall off! Every time! Without fail! It's driving me yaaaahhhh....

Cover art (indeed the only art - but who's complaining?) is the best TM cover I've seen. Which ain't sayin' much, but it is also the best fanzine cover I've seen save ASFR 12 (for immediately obvious reasons). Who has been hiding John Brosnan's laurels under a bushel, eh?

Editorial : facts but no opinions. For instance, you made no mention of the fact that last year's non-attending memberships might as well have been pissing into the wind for all the return they got for their money. Gary Mason panned n.-a.m., and with good reason. Why didn't you? Anyone interested can get the information from Bill Wright, but it is much more difficult to find out 'what it'll be like' and 'what really happens'.

Bruce Gillispie seems to have written the very book-length biography he was calling for - fifteen pages, Ron? For someone not enamoured of Cordwainer Smith the biog was just so much fog. Impressive, but mainly because of length.

HETEROMODULAR VEHICLE : obviously a farce, but what he says is becoming more and more valid with each "translation". He'll have me believing it next.

The identity of the author is, for me, as much an interesting mystery as that of "Herold Harker". Maybe they're the same person?

BARBARELLA ain't much good as entertainment either, Mike. But for JF (no! no! don't hit me John!), the thing wouldn't even recoup production costs. Some day you all must learn the full story of How We Found BARBARELLA. The Girl flatly refuses to write it, and no one would believe me. Perhaps this paragraph will convince Her ... (come to think of it, you probably wouldn't believe Her either; not that you doubt Her veracity, but the facts

seem so incredible - even to me, and I made them...)

"Sir Joseph Banks St., Bankstown"! So where do you live, John? Bankshouse? (that's Banks-house, not Bank-shouse). No, I'm only joking.

Someone has misunderstood me again. My sf-film review was as prejudiced as anything I write in that so-and-so is my opinion and therefore in my eyes is 101% valid. If you agree you are an uncommonly intelligent fellow-intellectual, and if you disagree you are a cretinous misanthrope. What I wrote for the film was my opinion at the time of writing (which, incidently, has changed negligibly since then), valid in my opinion, possibly so in yours. Prejudice does not come into the matter.

Mr Gray in his thinly-veiled attack upon myself makes several errors - per paragraph. There is no such thing as "the 'cult' of the Teenager" - except in David Gray's mind. I presume that he means the Different social structure of the most publicised of youth. I also presume that this misconception was unintentional.

There are plenty of things to achieve other than the old-age pension. Whether one realizes there are depends on both the extent, variety and length of one's education and the amount of idealism retained or remembered from one's youth.

It's not a young people's world at all : 99% of parliamentarians, top public servants, business executives, academics and educationalists, local government officials and scientists (to name but a few) would not correspond to even Mr Gray's definition of "young".

"....do they think it improves their style?" In a word, yes. Speaking (as always) personally, that is. Take my story in TM 14 : two swear words. The greater of these, in context, follows :

"He slammed the set into its base, then thought better of it and crashed the set onto the table. "Fix the bastard," he growled."

Since I am not paid for my stories, I write only to please myself. I think that "fix the bastard" is a better clause than "fix the swine" or "fix the rat" or "fix the dirty fink" or "fix the spavined aardvark" or any other euphemism anyone might think of, because it suits Dressler's character, my character, and the mood of the story. It's the best word for the clause, that's all.

The other swear word ("damn!") is hardly a swear word at all, being in almost universal conversational acceptance, I mention it so that I may not be accused of not mentioning it.

"Would those writers and authors (if I may interject, could you please at your own convenience explain to us Great Unwashed the differences between "writer" and "author") who use common swear words please explain why they find it necessary..."

I'll do my best, Mr. Gray. I just hope you won't wash out my pen with soap.

Whether you like it or not, Mr Gray, people swear. Most people swear much, and most of the remainder swear sometimes. If you didn't know this, you are a hermit.

Writers write (and authors authe) for either or both of these reasons : to make money, to please himself.

To make money, the writer must write saleable stories. The saleability of a story is determined by the writer's editor. Most editors have somehow realized that people swear. They have decided that the reading public will take to material that exhibits their own social actions. Maybe they don't, but that's the editors' worry.

It seems logical to me to infer, therefore, that since editors want a particular type of writing, those who want to sell their material will write that story.

Those who write to please themselves are not bound so. Anyone who wants to tabulate English swear-words of 1790-1969 as sf may of course to so. Those who want to create a hard-swearing hard-drinking hard-thinking (soft-headed) electronics engineer and a similar galah may do so. The only criterion is the writer's feeling on the material. I thought it was all right (and that the readers of TM were reasonably tolerant) as far as dialogue went, because that was more or less the characters of the engineer and the galah I was trying to build, and because I wanted to write it that way. "This is the way the world thinks, Not with a bang, but a damn."

Eliot, wasn't it?

If Ron wants to print pornography, I'll find some, especially for the purpose.

NASA pick older men because they have spent so long training, they are no longer young. And come to think of it, this is somewhat in opposition to your original assertion that "...it's a young people's world where they get high wages etc.,etc.,"

It's Nice that you have Experienced friends; so? And by the way, it is to be hoped that the authorities would send people with a greater life expectancy to colonize other planets, else they'd have plenty of Experience and no colony.

Right for a change. I have my ear (both, if it comes to that) to the ground at Monash, and it is obvious to me that the Leftie activists are being used. My ambition at Monash is to find out who is using them before I leave.

Demonstrators are being used by some one, drug-takers are supporting someone, pornography is supporting someone. The only thing connecting these is a possible connection between the someones. Societies can of course be manipulated (consider those phenomena generically grouped under "fashion"), but it is unlikely

that our society can be manipulated to accept pornography and drug-taking, which are in vogue because of their "shock" value upon society. As for demonstrations, I would not worry if I were you. If you shut up and say nothing, you will be spared when the Revolution comes (Mike Hyde, the second-fiddle left-activist at Monash, assures me that my name is high on the list for "after the Revolution").

Bread and circus is just as valid today as it was in (whichever) Caesar's day; only now we require bread butter and jam, and television.

(**I would not mind betting that the view that the telly holds people 'spellbound' was the same held when radio first came out. -RLC. **)

While we are happy and confused Heaven and the organizers know what is going on, however I am reassured by the fact that They have seen fit to keep their information from the public.

Populations are stupid!

Let me assure you, Mr Gray, that the demonstrating students think very deeply (with all due respect, possibly more so than yourself) about what Authority does. Very few intelligent people think about what Authority says past "buggers, feathering their own nests again". Actions speak louder than words, which of course students realize, and search in Authority's actions for motives.

And I don't know what you mean by "those extremely clever people behind the scenes who started this". Do you mean Adam and Eve? Ham, Shem and Jopheth? Nimrod? Aristotle? Lucian? da Vinci? Newton? Einstein? Oparin? (to name but a few).

Finally, Mr Gray, I have spent not two but one year at university (and the last thing I want is to run this or any other mudball), and I was lucky to even make that. My examination results weren't all that good, and I only returned because I layed both the Dean's wife and the Dean's secretary. With them working on the poor bloke I could hardly miss. However, just to make sure, I made some pure marijuahna (I'm a biochemistry student, you know) and pumped its smoke through the Dean's office's air-conditioning. I also threatened to expose to the whole world the extent of his Dirty Picture Gallery ... and he was such a nice man, too. He didn't cry when I took the more interesting pictures (I am a physiology student, you know).

I am in the unenviable position of having to deny any connection with THUS RAVED, while at the same time creating a strong impression that the work was, in fact, my own (which indicates my liking for the work - being willing to adopt it as my own work). It is one of the finest compliments I have received, to be considered for the authorship of THUS RAVED. Thank you, Bruce.

My guess is still Foyster, but he tried to tell me it was Bangsund. That's a possibility I didn't seriously entertain,

not because he couldn't do it but because it wasn't his style. An attempt to throw me off the scent would be what one might expect from Foyster, seeing he'd read TM 14 too. The most important evidence now (admittedly circumstantial) is the reactions of the "accused" (that is possibles) ie psychological evidence, rather than an analysis of the style of Harker. I still think it'd be easier to take to Ron with a dram or two of pentothal.

LATER : passed a Billy Graham poster while hitchhiking home from Monash. Someone had drawn a toothbrush moustache on the portrait of W. Graham. The likeness is amazing.

Bruce has made a statement which cannot pass unchallenged, to wit : "all sf, all fiction, every scrap of thinking that is done in the world, is an observation and assessment of the human situation."

Incorrect on two counts - let me rewrite the last portion correctly : "... in the world, is an observation and interpretation of his human situation." There is an unfortunate tendency to attribute to human beings a sense of objectivity, when in actual fact homo sapiens is the most subjective of all species. All animals feel self-important, but only humans try to hide it. There is very little written material which attempts at objectivity, none of it being in the genre we know as sf, for the simple reason that sf describes what is not, and therefore is a writer's interpretation. However, Bruce's point is still valid - there is one and only one reality, mutually exclusive with sf.

"Sarris is accusing sf-ers of not realizing the problem exists in the first place. Well, my only answer is that they are not alone in this." This argument seems to me to be similar to the small boy caught smoking: "You and Daddy do it too." Maybe, but he still gets paddled for it. Have you retreated from fandom for the duration, Mr. Gillespie? Try again, please.

"Self-consciously 'aware' SF writers and readers" may attempt to withdraw from society (or "avoid facing up to the 'world' from which they are part"), but it's absolutely impossible. At the very least, they have to pay taxes and be buried with other people. It just can't be done.

Ignoring important issues (whose definition of "important" are you working from?) is a different matter. In a sense, important issues are unimportant, is that observing them (or not) will not change their course, unlike an electron. Conversely, the relatively minor or cultist concerns are the important happenings since they concern our writer/reader directly.

Come now Bruce, what do you mean by "cribbing his punchlines"? As far as I know, they're dead original. Originally is one of my personal criteria, and if you think my punchlines are pinched, you don't read the same stuff as me (which is axiomatic, seeing you aren't me).

Further observation on dissidence : if Youth is dissenting from the "violent antagonistic hell-bent society," why is it that they are doing so in a violent antagonistic hell-bent way? End justifies means? Using society's character to change that society? Congenital youthful stirring? Pawns of anarchy?

Woodman shows his eighteen years when he makes that ridiculous statement about deadening of human potentialities. It is true enough that society does stabilize itself by suppressing innovations, but this is a crime against the species. Just shows our racial suicidal nature.

LEIGHAWATHA very good; obviously this "Herold G. Harker" is Brian Richards. Good show.

The issue seemed a bit mean, but obviously it wasn't, since I've found so much to write about. If TM keeps getting better Bangsund will have to dust off his laurels.

- Gary Woodman.

Michael O'Brien
158 Liverpool St., Hobart, Tasmania 7000.

Dear Ron,

...About the recent THE MENTOR, a few comments:

LEIGHAWATHA is the best thing I've read for months.
More!

That piece of theological sf left me a little puzzled. It was good, to be sure, but puzzling.

You are not accepting any subs because of StateGovt restrictions? Pray enlighten me, what restrictions? What can possibly stop you from accepting interstate monies? (Not that I want to send you anything; you got mad enough last time I obediently filled out that form in TM).

- Mike.

** I was referring to the new laws governing turnover tax. Other reasons I ain't accepting subs is that I am not sure of future publication of TM because of lack of contributions and letters of comment. I seem to have a few people writing regularly but the larger mass do not seem to care. -RLC. **

As I mentioned before, Bruce Gillespie is editing a fanzine called S F COMMENTARY. In it are some of the best reviews and discussion of SF books and mags that have been published in the last few years. They're new, too. For his address see the Fanzine Page of this issue.

The space below was being held for your letter of comment :-

The Nebula Awards listed on the front cover page (p2) are awards given by the Science Fiction Writers of America for what they consider the best stories written in that period. It is an award given by sf writers to sf writers.

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I would like to thank those who helped with this issue, notably John Brosnan for doing the cover illo with such short notice and for the collating help of Chris Guy and Peter Darling (if they turn up tonight, that is) and for Shirley's help - you won't escape this time, sis.

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