

RONS
ROOST

SCIENCE FICTION : FANDOM

Now before anyone starts screaming, let me make clearer the above heading. It covers (lightly, I admit), science fiction/fandom in Australia. To go on: the remarks made by Ian McDowell in the R & R Dept this issue set me thinking - just what is the relationship of sf "readers", sf "fans" and "faans", and where in this hodpodge am I?

To start at the beginning, I was a purely (nice phrase) sf reader. That is, I was at High School (4th Year) and I met another pupil who was reading a tattered copy of AMAZING. Having read in the School Library the hardcover sf books - "Best SF" ed by Edmund Crispin, and various others, I was surprised to see that there were sf magazines. This was the 'awakening' (or the beginning of the Dark Ages, whatever way you want to look at it). I went down to the local newsagent and looked over the magazines; lo and behold, there, between Man and Playboy was the August 1961 copy of GALAXY. I bought it. (Which would have made me 15, by the way.). That was the start of 10 years when I read almost nothing but sf. Paperbacks, hardcovers, prozines, everything I could lay my hands on. It even included copies of Man and Man Junior with the stuff by the fifties authors. Which were not at all bad, for the source.

Ghod, when I look back on that period now...

It must have been around 1962/3 that I noticed in an old copy of New Worlds the add for the Futurian Society of Sydney. I wrote in - and met sf fandom, in the guise of Graham Stone and Kevin Dillon. (see the Editorial in TM 16 for events along this line - also for my attitude in TM re sex, etc).

I would say the majority of sf "readers" are probably not all that interested in science fiction. They pick up a book to while away a few hours. They are the vast majority and may be dismissed as the people who actually keep the mags going (and buy most of the paperbacks) but are of no further interest. If you see someone browsing through sf in a bookshop and you go up to him/her and ask them, say, if they are interested in joining an sf club, what you will get is a muttered, "sorry, I only

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buy these every so often." That is, if you do get an answer. These are the "readers", then. There may be uncontacted sf fans among them, which is why I keep on asking people do they like sf. The more interested amongst the "readers" subscribe to the fanzines, but are not active in them. I am not knocking these "readers". They do help fandom to the best of their time and money. But they are not fans.

It was around April, 1964 that I discovered sf fandom. through John Baxter, I met John Foyster, who was publishing SATURA. Which wasn't quite a science fiction fanzine, but it was that which started me thinking, and it was in August 1964. So, I was an active sf Reader for three years, and an active sf fan from then on. That is, the fanzine I published, The Mentor, had about 90% of its contents devoted to sf. And still does, though with it this issue you should find a copy of WOMBAT, a fan zine. Note - no sf.

It is almost impossible to stop reading sf. The rot has set in. I still buy GALAXY, IF, WOT, AMAZING regularly, and F&SF, ANALOG and others when there is something that has caught my eye. And I buy new or reprinted sf paperbacks that I haven't seen, though now I don't buy them indiscriminantly. For one thing my shelves won't stand it.

I went to my first Convention in 1966 (the first one for some years in Australia). And it is, John, still the best one I can remember. As I mentioned above, I have slowed down in my reading of sf (material, not speed) and I am reading more widely now. It is astonishing how much one can get out of PARADISE LOST, compared with, say, DORSAI! though they both rate first class as entertainment.

So, where do I stand now? Well, I am still an sf reader, as I still read sf and enjoy it, I am an sf fan, as can be seen by TM, and I like faans too, as can be seen by WOMBAT.

How about the others in Australian Fandom? Well, to tell the truth, most of the acitive ones : John Foyster, John Bangsund, Shayne McCormack, Brian Richards, Peter Darling,*are all three - as comes out in their fanzines. For you see, science fiction brought us together, and Fandom is the social function of sf literatire; and we all love, I'm sure, both sides of it. Even when we chose not to admit it. (*etc. Whoops, almost missed that.)

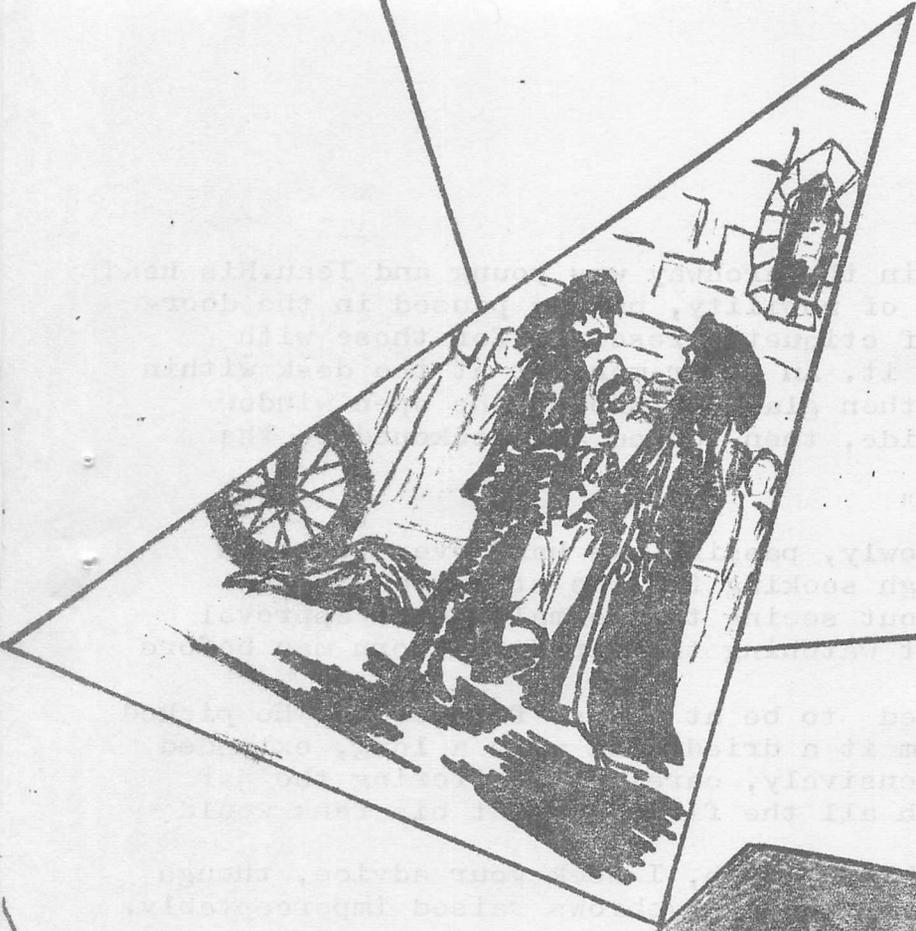
And the overall picture? I do not know how the sale of hardcore sf is going (ie prozines and books) but the proliferation of fanzines is fantastic. Clubs in almost every capital city and fans publishing zines from out of no-where. It is now five years now since the 1966 Con and the progress of Australian fandom is unbelievable. For: the Hugo nomination of ASFR and the statad. bid in 1975 is really something. Five years!

It is now a safe thing to say that sf (and fandom) is Alive and Well in Australia. Lets keep it so!

- Ron L Clarke.

MOSAIC

BY DAVID GRIGG.



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The Sons of Adam

The man standing in the archway was young and lean. His head was held high in the aspect of nobility, but he paused in the doorway, waiting upon a point of etiquette reserved for those with sufficient power to enforce it. An older man sat at the desk within the room. He looked up and then glanced through the open window at the surrounding countryside, then turned and beckoned to the youth.

"Come in, Gareth."

Gareth entered slowly, passing his hand over the cold roughness of stone, as though seeking for the strength of the structure. He sat down without seeing the formal nod of approval that the Baron gave, and sat watching the tired and worn man before him.

Baron Mannen seemed to be at a loss for words. He picked up a small jar and took from it a dried weed with a long, extended root and began to chew it pensively, carelessly offering the jar to Gareth, who declined with all the firmness that his rank would permit.

"Very well. Frankly, Gareth, I seek your advice, though I hesitate to admit it..." The boy's eyebrows raised imperceptibly. "...the King has contacted me by his royal messenger... yes, you know as well as I the scale of importance the King attaches to his service.. that he is sending me, or rather, sending to me, a most honoured magician : Hai Meradil, Bachelor of Thaumaturgy, Member of the Royal Necromantic Society, all that sort of thing... in order that this magician may perform a most unusual experiment in witchcraft, in the safety of our own Dark Forest. Evidently the King fears for the safety and security of his capital. Tell me..." The Baron paused, uncertain of his tact... "Since, well, since you have the background you do... I mean, I know nothing of the arcane arts, but you..."

Gareth smiled wearily : "What you mean, my dear Baron, is that since this idyllic barony of yours saw fit to burn my mother at the stake as a witch, I ought to know enough to explain a little of our visitor-to-be's powers; is that not so?"

The Baron flared a violent red, and leapt to his feet.

"Gareth! You forget yourself : did I not bring you up in my own household after that incident? Besides, I happen to know that you have researched the appropriate text-books in thaumaturgy: you have the prerequisite basics to understand them. I have never been able to do so. Agriculture and political science, those are my forte, no college degree, but I manage... enough of this - your opinion!"

Gareth grinned, breaking the tension between the two men. His smile faded just a little as he spoke.

"Sir. I think that since the king does not want the man to experiment near the capital, and since it is to us that he sends him, then I believe that the fellow must be trying to gather

as much demonic power as he can in a single spot, and unleash it, say, in the form of a destructive storm, a hurricane such as seen at sea, perhaps. The reason for the King's interest is then obvious..."

Baron Mannen stopped his pacing, and sat down heavily, staring concernedly out of the window. Gareth picked up a lodestone from the desk and began toying with it. Some signs of compassion for the people slaving in the fields beneath the mountain must have crossed his face, for Gareth smiled wistfully and spoke advisedly.

"It would be best, sir, if we can persuade Hai Meradil to place his experiment as far out into the wastes as possible."

The Baron remained silent for a long time, gazing fixedly outside at the mountain. He pulled his cloak closer around himself.

"By the Half-Spirit, it is cold up here! Thank the Powers that winter is yet a month away." He turned to Gareth. "Yes, yes, you are right: we'll convince him to go a few mountains away, ah?" He leapt to his feet once more, and slapped the young man hard upon the back. "Blast the King, eh?" Gareth grinned and nodded heavily. They walked down the cold stone corridor, arm in arm.

The Dwarves of Earth

The aeroplane flying over Russia was filled to capacity with top scientists and politicians from all over the world. Had that plane crashed, the escalation of the arms race would have ceased then and there, and peace might have descended upon the world. Had that plane crashed, perhaps the events that subsequently occurred might not have, and two worlds might have remained in more coherent hells. However, the plane droned on in safety, and things occurred as they did. This is the misery of our world: the future is so uncertain, and the past so concrete firm. The plane flew on.

Inside the plane, conversation was sparse. The listening ear picked up fragments, here and there. Two scientists were talking: They had been colleagues during the last major war.

"Your politicians, Peter, tell us that we are invited to this test to show us its awesome potential: to put a scare into us, in other words. Is that not a little melodramatic?" This from a Doctor Kuifferrn, an American by naturalisation. The other man nodded.

"That is perhaps because that is the nature of the weapon: melodramatic it is. But do not be a raid; I see in this weapon a true and lasting peace. I have even heard that papers for its manufacture are to be given to your country, so that either side can threaten the other with the use of it in the case of a transgression..."

Kuiffen suppressed the laughter that rose within him.

"I feel, my old friend, that you are the victim of your own propaganda. Still, we must see the weapon yet."

Farther down the plane, two military officers of opposite factions faced each other.

"I assure you, Colonel, that this long trip will be worth your time. Just wait until you see the device. I am sorry to show such zeal in front of you, Colonel, but I have justification for it..."

The colonel smiled an icy smile colder than the thin air rushing by them. "Why so far out into the waste?"

"Well, to tell the truth, we are not quite sure of the weapon's power. This, you see, is only a very small device compared with the one we are keeping... in the Arctic. A demonstration model, you might say..." The eyes sought for appreciation, but in vain. "... and also, to avoid scaring the peasants : radiation fallout may be heavy, too. We intend blasting away a mountain, and destroying a few kilometres of forest. The spot lies between two mountain peaks, in a natural canyon, shaped somewhat like a three-pronged fork...."

At the very back of the plane was the sharp rattle of a typewriter. Using it was the single reporter who had been granted permission to view the test. His inclusion was unusual, since Paul Berak had been a bitter antagonist of the arms race from the beginning of his career. Of British and French ancestry, he had achieved a measure of fame for his political criticisms. He typed quickly and decisively:

'... the thing most analogous to our times is the story of Frankenstein: the things which we, Man, have created have outgrown us. This applies both to that horror, scientific warfare, and to that age-old invention, the government. In a 'democratic' society, the government is supposed to act in the best interests of the people, and many believe that to be so: it is not so; the Government acts in the best interests of the Government. Political rule, like scientific war, is self-perpetrating. Perhaps the only answer is, as some science-fiction writers believe, to turn everything over to the machines : we no longer deserve a share in our own destiny. If we go on controlling ourselves, our end will be destruction. The next few centuries will be the most crucial for Man since he stepped down from the trees. Our self-made gargantuans will topple. That is certain. The doubt lies in whether or not we will be crushed beneath their fall.'

The plane flew on through the night.

The Grey Owl

The firelight cast animated shadows on the walls of the wooden shack. Black pools ebbed and flowed in a pulse-fast tide

across the room. Gareth spoke softly to the girl beside him on the bed:

"Tomorrow, my sweet, tomorrow there comes to our land a terrible man. My mother always said that I had second sight: I do not know about that, but still... I feel that this practitioner of thaumaturgy brings evil to the land." He stopped at the puzzled expression of the girl.

"Thema... what, Gareth?" she asked, stroking his hair. Her face was soft and quiet, but a fierce light burnt behind her eyes.

"Magician to you, girl. Hex-doctor, you know?"

The girl nodded: "Is he black, Gareth?"

"A black wizard? Aye, that I think he is, though I cannot prove it. They say he's sold his soul to the Devil..." He ceased to speak as the girl shuddered. "But enough of this." He kissed her softly, then rose and began to dress. Meradil would arrive early in the morning; cock's crow, no doubt. As he buttoned the leather tunic that he always wore on these visits, he sat before the fire and watched the girl. A lithe cat shape, she stirred and stretched and began to clothe herself. From a chair she lifted an elongated silver cross on a chain, and looped it over her head, dark and long hair swinging aside, to let it dangle between her breasts. Gareth frowned for a moment. She turned, noticing his expression.

"It is the cross upon which our Lord died, Gareth."

He smiled, and began to string up his knee-length boots. "I did not know that the Jewish myths extended this far north."

Since the leaders of Israel had acclaimed the outlaw, Christ as the Messiah in fact, a few decades after his execution, the religion had tended to stay with those of Jewish origin. Many of the Roman soldiers that had spread across the continent proclaiming the Coming, had been scourged as Jews. Even now, in this enlightened age, the Christian religion did not find a sympathetic audience, except in those who used it as a pretence to lay their hands upon some of the ancient texts of the Hebrews, who some said had great magical powers.

Gareth grinned at the girl, and left. He walked out into the street, smiling at the protective symbol painted on the door in a red ochre dye. That indeed was representative of the uses the peasants had for magic: for protection from blackmagic, wolves, bad weather, and their own fears of the supernatural. He smiled once again, and then began to run along the rutted road to the castle. The Baron must not know that he had been sleeping with a peasant girl - Mannen was sorely anachronistic in his ideas about bloodlines. One day Gareth might be made heir to these lands.

There was a glow in the East. Gareth heard the flutter of retreating bat's wings. A dim shadow flicked by, and he glanced up at the brightening sky. A dark shape disappeared towards the hills. Witch, no doubt. He ran on. He had heard rumours of a

local coven established in the Forest, but this was the first he had seen of them. The sky was glowing light blue now, but his feet were on the cobbled road that ended within the courtyard of the castle. He installed himself within the walls as the first fiery wedge of the sun showed itself above the forested hills. Panting hard, he pounded up the stone stairs to his room. He leant against his bed, regaining his lost breath. He had barely done so when a cock crowed, and the crashing of hooves resounded on the stone outside. Hai Meradil, BTh, MRNS, had arrived at Forestmont. Gareth hurriedly began to change his clothes, cursing the travelling habits of the new visitor, but smiling at the accuracy of his prediction.

A formal breakfast was held, with the magician in the place of honour next to the Baron. Meradil was dressed in surprisingly conservative clothes : grey silk, with a pentagram inscribed in gold upon the left breast. Indeed, most of Hai Meradil was grey: grey hair with beard and moustache to match. Even his skin had a greyish cast. A gold and silver cane rested against the table. Its handle was a ferret's skull, with the Star of David carved in a sapphires set in its forehead. He ate little, but his eyes, grey, wandered rapidly across the faces of those present : analysing, searching. The Baron rambled on in an inane conversation, but few if any attended to it; their thoughts were upon the wizard and the arcane arts.

Gareth broke the stifling formality by coming directly, but politely, to the point at hand. "Sir, could you tell us why it is that you come to this... well, this unprepossessing land?" The wizard's brow wrinkled. He toyed with a piece of veal for a moment, and then looked up into the eyes of Gareth. A piercing, spearing glance.

"To tell the truth, I am here to develop a weapon of sorcery for the King." Powdered nobles smothered gasps of astonishment, but made them less obvious by a concert of coughs and throat-clearing. Gareth merely nodded grimly and spoke softly.

"I thought so. When and where do you plan this experiment, if that is what I assume it is?" It was Meradil's turn to nod. He spoke as before, in a quiet, but intensely controlled voice.

"As far from this castle as is possible." Mennen smiled. "Deep in the forest - the Key of Solomon expressly describes forests and crossroads as most suitable for necromancy." Gareth agreed, thus shaping himself will in the eyes of the magician. He went further:

"If I may suggest, sir, I can think of an excellent place; near a canyon between two mountain peaks. The peasants call it Neptune's Trident, because of its shape..."

The Workshop of the Titans

The day was bright, making the thin cold wind brisk, rather than freezing. The forest's green spread down and around

the canyon like a thick piled carpet. Inside the observation box, a massive white block removed twenty miles from the canyon, yet with a commanding view due to the soaring height of a mountain, the technicians stood, strangely tense, as though the possibilities of this new weapon had actually begun to leak through to their watertight minds. The head technician, a stout bearded man in a white gown, reminiscent of a Hebrew priest, stepped forward and began to plot points on a large graph upon one wall, taking readings from the instruments before him. Berak wiped his hands and studied the faces of these intense people. The military men from both sides of the world seemed to be those most concerned. Perhaps it was they who were realising that the age of war was past and now the only issue at stake worth considering was the destruction of the world.

A younger technician wandered around the room, stopping at every console and flicking a switch. As he did so, a red light blinked ominously above each panel. The graph that the bearded man was plotting levelled off, and he turned and talked to one of the Russian military among the observation group. The officer twisted around and pointed to a small roped-off area away from the many instruments and computer outlets. The group gathered itself behind the ropes, and seated itself as a single body. The activity in the room became faster, and it was soon obvious why visitors could not be allowed to interfere with the normal running of the control room.

A low muttering began in Russian, coming from an invisible loudspeaker. To Berak and the American, it was just a regular gabble, until the journalist recognised it for what it was: a countdown, droning away the long minutes. Berak had been present during the French nuclear tests in the Pacific, but this procedure was utterly alien to him. This was certainly no ordinary fission or even fusion bomb. As if in answer to his mental questions, the Russian scientist who had accompanied them began to explain the principle of the device.

"Sirs, the essence of our new invention is the discovery that anti-matter, or as some of you know it, contraterrene matter, can be produced in quite large quantities and stored within a strong magnetic field. In the same manner we have been producing ordinary matter from anti-matter particles for some years now... oh yes, gentlemen, I know that is a revelation to some of you... anti-matter, as you may or may not know, is a kind directly opposed to 'normal' matter. When they are brought together, they destroy each other with the release of enormous amounts of energy: matter, you see, is just crystallised energy... our weapon is merely a piece of anti-matter suspended in a perfect vacuum, or as near as we can get - heat produced by collisions with stray gas molecules is drawn off in a manner analogous to that used in cooling nuclear reactors.

"All this requires a great deal of machinery, hence the elaborate procedure you see going on about you. This machinery must function continuously, so that the piece of anti-matter remains

separate from ordinary matter. To detonate the device, all we have to do is turn off our electrical system to the machines that support the material in a magnetic field. The demonstration device is but a few milligrams of anti-matter. But, gentlemen, now we come to the true nature of our power with such a machine. On an island in the north, a much larger device is being maintained, its electrical requirements fed from the heat of the molten interior of the Earth... as is quite well known, we have been developing robot boring mechanisms for a long time.. this weapon is quite capable of doing a great deal of damage to the surface and atmosphere of the Earth. It is, if you like, a Doomsday machine.

"Every twelve hours a signal is sent to the station : there are a great number of communication methods used to reach the island, to the automatic and manual staff of the station. Only if all these methods were to fail at once would any action occur. even then, the crew would wait for a second, and then a third expected signal, that is, thirty-six hours after the first signal was missed. Then, the power shuts down automatically. If it does not, then the humans destroy the power cables by dynamite. Needless to say, a missile hit upon this weapon would only result in its detonation..."

There was an absolute stunned silence in the room. Then, as the Russian voice began counting in monosyllables, all eyes turned to watch the canyon far off across the forests.

The Rings of Hell

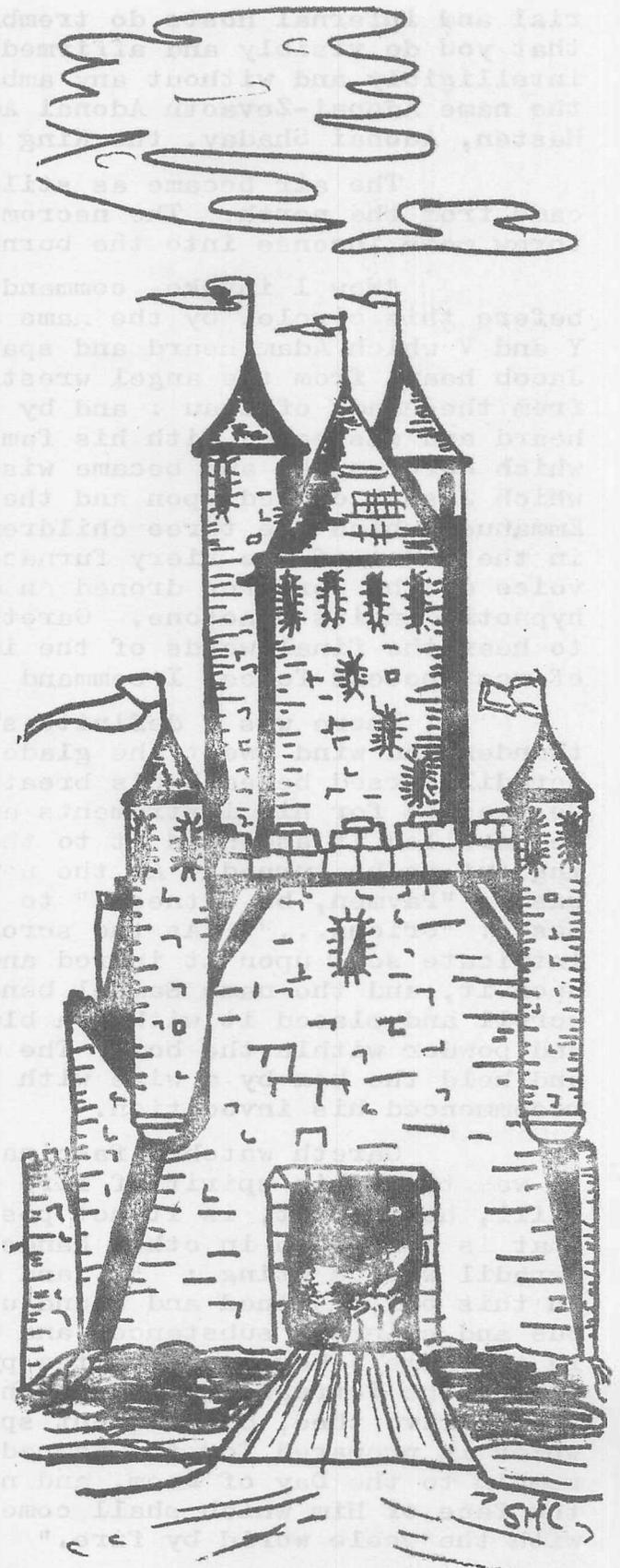
The night was pitch : the moon full, and the stars few. A chilling wind blew varyingly through the forest. Moonlight filtered through leaves, a white silence patterning the mossy floor of the clearing. The utter calmness of the night softened the natural noises that did exist, and the light made statuary of the trees. Standing sharply out from the stillness of the night was the group assembled in the clearing. Four of the five persons present shivered both from the cold and from fear. The fifth took a foot-long silver wand from an inner pocket, and began to draw in the soft earth of the clearing.

Gareth wrapped his cloak around him tightly as he watched the wizard construct his intricate magical circles. He scanned the faces of the others. Meradil had insisted upon an old number being present : Gareth, Mannen and himself, and two others. Of these, one was a member of the wizard's retinue, a dwarf, and the other a peasant from the village. Meradil had been drawing furiously, until now the diagram was complete : a square circumscribed about a series of concentric circles, with smaller circles at the corners of the square. Hebrew symbols abounded, both in the central circle and in the minor ones. Hai Meradil took from the dwarf several charcoal burners, and lit them carefully. Dull-red glows cast an eldritch light throughout the clearing. A burner to every

circle, and the ceremony moved towards a beginning. Meradil opened the circles one by one, and let in his assistants, closing the circle once more with an intricate looping. Finally, he moved into the prime circle, and gathered his instruments around him. He cast his eyes upward and began to mutter unintelligibly. Gareth felt an unreasoning fear come upon him, and he blushed a violent red; he looked around, and took comfort in the fact that Mannen and the peasant seemed even more awestricken than himself. He looked towards the inner circle, as Meradil's words began decipherable :

"... give this rite your favour, O lord of this day, Becarde, let this night be filled with success..." Meradil knelt and began to pray, somehow incongruous now. Incense began to fill the air with a soapy mist. Meradil was evidently praying to the God of the Jews, thought Gareth. His magic was thus based upon the Solomonic cycle. He thought of the girl, and her Messianic rites, derived from the Hebrew culture. He shrugged, and listened once more, as Meradil commenced his invocation :

"I conjure and abjure thee, Samael, great Prince of fire, in all the names of God, that ye forthwith appear and show yourself unto me, Hai Meradil, before this circle in a fair and human shape and without delay. I conjure you by this ineffable name, the Tetragrammaton, Jehovah, which being heard the Elements are overturned, the air is shaken, the sea runneth back, the Earth trembles, the fire is quenched, and all the celestial, terrest-



rial and infernal hosts do tremble and are troubled and confounded; that you do visibly and affirmedly speak unto me with a clear voice, intelligibly and without any ambiguity : therefore come you in the name Adonai-Zevaoth Adonai Amoriem. Come! Come, why stay you? Hasten, Adonai Shaday, the King of kings commands you!"

The air became as still as death, and a rumbling sound came from the north. The necromancer cast about his eyes, and threw more incense into the burner.

"Now I invoke, command and conjure thee Samael to appear before this circle, by the name of On, by the name and in the name Y and V which Adam heard and spake, and by the name Joth which Jacob heard from the angel wrestling with him, and was delivered from the hands of Esau : and by the name of God, Agla which Lot heard and was saved with his family, and by the name Anephenton, which Aaron spoke and became wise, and by the name Schemasamathia which Joshua called upon and the sun stood still, and by the name Emmanuel which the three children, Shadrah, Meshech, Abednego sang in the midst of the fiery furnace and were delivered,..." The voice of the sorcerer droned on and on in the still air, almost hypnotic in its monotone. Gareth forced his mind back into focus to hear the final words of the invocation : "...by all these names of most potent force, I command thee, come!"

There was a definite shaking of the ground, and a bestial thunder and wind swept the glade, but nothing was to be seen. Meradil cursed beneath his breath. Sweat beaded on his forehead. He reached for his instruments and withdrew a scroll of parchment. He unrolled it and held it to the four points of the compass, calling out as he turned. At the north : "Egyn, be witness!" to the west : "Paymen, be witness!" to the south : "Amayon..." to the east : "Uriens..." As the scroll passed Gareth, he noted an intricate seal upon it in red and black, with the symbol of fire upon it, and the name Samael beneath it. Meradil rerolled the scroll and placed it within a black box. Gareth glimpsed leaf and powder within the box. The wizard took his consecrated sword and held the box by a wire with it over his charcoal fire, and recommenced his invocation.

Gareth watched fascinated. Secretly, he wondered how it was that this spirit of fire could be bound by his own element. Still, he thought, is it not possible that we can fear the power that is ours when in other hands? He began to listen once more. Meradil was chanting : "...and as thy name and seal is contained in this box, chained and bound up, and shall be choked in sulphurous and stinking substance, and burnt in this material fire, so in the name Jehovah and by the power and dignity of those three names, the Tetragrammaton, Anephenton and Primeumaton may all these drive thee, disobedient spirit Samael, into the lake of fire, which is prepared for the damned and cursed spirits and there to remain to the Day of Doom, and never more to be remembered before the face of Him which shall come to judge the quick and the dead with the whole world by fire."

There was a glow in the outer circle, and a gibbering

and a flickering light in the air. There was a whispering, like the shifting of leaves on an autumn day, gradually becoming a muted mutter, changing into an unearthly chanting, There was a sudden crack, as of a whip, and a pillar of fire burst into the circle, lighting the forest as if by daylight. The flames turned blue and red and yellow, and roared like a lion. Meradil held the box containing the seal closer to the fire.

"Transform, damn you!"

There was silence. A silence so absolute compared to the thunderous roar of the fire, it struck the ears like a solid blow. A silence into which the sounds of the forest crept but slowly back into the clearing. Eyes turned back to where the pillar of flame had been. A youth stood in the circle, legs apart, hands on hips : defiant, petulant. He spat from his circle into that of the sorcerer. Meradil nodded and removed the box from the fire. The youth relaxed somewhat. He spoke in a half-purr like a cat given voice : "What now, wizard?" Meradil wiped sweat once more from his brow.

"Dost thou see yonder mountain?" He pointed into the darkness. The demon grinned and nodded. "I wish thee to consume all this land within a radius of two leagues of it by fire." He stopped. The demon cocked an eyebrow.

"That's all?" He smiled.

A little emotion showed on Meradil's face. "Excepting that I and my assistants gathered here shall be removed unto a place of safety..." There was a sudden jerking, and the whistle of cold, icy air, and the assembly found itself transported, together with the surrounding ground and foliage, to a mountain-top, from which they could view the mountains and crevasse in the distance. The peasant, terrified, made a move to leave his circle. Meradil hissed like a snake : "Stay, on your life - this ground is the only safety that you will find this side of Paradise!" The peasant paled, and trembled in the centre of his circle. Gareth felt himself begin to shake. The magician gestured. "Look you now." All five pairs of eyes stared in abrupt fascination at the canyon.

In Russian : "Five, four, three, two, one, systems terminated..." Silence before the storm. Ticking of electronic machines, impassive.

The air itself moving up from the clearing and becoming like glass. The fearful cry of a wolf instilled with a horror it could not conceive. Flicker of charcoal burners.

FIRESTORM.

The Watching Eagle

The base on the moon had been established half a decade since. Poised amidst the ruins of a natural world a million times as old as it, Camp Armstrong lay beneath a blue and white vision of far-off Eden. Like a group of Grecian philosophers removed to distant Thule, scientists pondered there upon the mysteries of myriad aeons.

But even amongst the grandeur of the moon, there must be mediocrity and the work of men must go on. Upon that day, one of that number set about the mundane task of waste disposal. Working half a kilometre from the base, lugging heavy containers from a low slung vehicle, he glanced up at the depthless sky. His eyes sought out the stars, singularities of light in the pit-black of space. Then, for no reason at all except the hunger for his native land, he shifted his gaze to the globe that lit the moon throughout its nights.

There was a fragile, spider-webbed flower of flame upon the face of the Earth. As that man amongst the tragedy of the moon watched, the flower blossomed and grew, and cut the blue and white with a tracery of red. The globe was shattered in a red-traced jigsaw, yet whole. The man turned as white as the desolation around him, and began the slow, loping run back to the base.

IN THE END, AS IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS CHAOS AND NIGHT, AND THE VOID, AND THE STRUGGLING OF MEN FIGHTING AGAINST THEIR PRIVATE CATASTROPHE. AND MEN WERE SCATTERED UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH, AND THEY UNDERSTOOD NOT EACH OTHERS TONGUE....

Thunder tore the air, and the lightning of sun on metal split the calm of nature. A dozen spinning wheels heralded the stampede of chrome and steel wildebeest, taking grip of the bitumen and passing it beneath their rubber hooves. Air rushed madly past, vainly trying to withhold their passage, beating against polished leather with its turbulences, swinging past and whipping blue smoke from the tails of the beasts.

Maxwell Davis sucked glory from the battering of the wind, and the firmness of the grip that encircled him. He looked around, past the fluttering standard of Jenny's blond hair, and at his five underlings. He swung back his head and grinned into the torrent of air. He laughed and gripped with his mind the hammering of the engine beneath him, and twisted at the throttle. The cycle surged forward, followed by five shadows, eager to keep pace with the leader.

As they raced along the road, if they could have heard, there was a thunder vaster than theirs, and the ground came up and slapped once, but in their flight they could not notice. The

wind changed direction, and a gust of heat came by upon the change, but those helmeted warriors could not know, They rode on through the wind, and then unheralded before them, the concrete and bitumen ended, welded into packed earth. A yellow-dirt road led before them, little more than a donkey track.

Davis allowed himself a puzzled frown, and then shrugged as well as he was able, and raced onto the track. The pack formed into single file, and tore along at only slightly less than their original speed. The landscape around them had changed : the hills were more thickly forested, and the air was clearer. The rider behind Davis yelled across the space between them -

"Hey Max! I don't know where we are, but is sure ain't Highway 61!" Davis grinned, and signalled with his hand. The pack sped on.

They rounded a curve, and then came to a complete halt. In the distance, at the end of the track, was a collection of huts, and beyond that, a massive stone structure with turrets and towers. Jenny laughed : a tinkling silver water sound.

"Camelot:" she said.

"Gormengast." said Davis.

The rider next to Davis was Deathshead. He twisted a smile into his scarred face. He slapped the empty pillion behind him. Davis nodded and spoke with only the slightest tinge of laughter.

"Let's go!"

Panther cough of engines became a 'lion-roar. Dust kicked up, and the pride moved off.

The village came up before them, an image of medieval squalor. A huddled group of wooden huts, open sewers and midden heaps. This in a low-throttle rush through the centre street. Goats and children scattered, and women screamed. A few hundred yards from the village the motorcycles rattled over cobbled stone, and headed towards the castle.

There was a moat and a portcullis and a drawbridge, all passed in a flashing bouncing rush into the central square of the castle. A hard, swinging, screeching stop.

There was a crowd in the courtyard, around a raised wooden platform. The gabble from the crowd drowned all noise, but Davis began to hear the crying of a woman. He slammed his hand again and again onto his horn, blaring into life a sound unheard before in this place. The scene became a tableau.

The crowd retreated in a semi-circle away from the pack. Davis looked onto the platform, placed centrally in the square. A dark hooded figure stood, holding in his hand a heavy whip. There was a wheel on the platform, axis vertical. On it, Davis at first could see only a blur of red. Then the image resolved, and it was a woman, red hair along her back mingled with red stripes of blood.

She lay face down, and cried. He let Jenny hold the cycle, and stood, facing the hooded figure. He pointed towards the woman. "What has she done?"

The figure coiled his whip, and slapped it carelessly against his flank. "She is a witch. She has killed her husband by sorcery. She must die." The woman looked up. Davis realised with an illogical shock that she could be barely twenty-five. She shook her head with all the energy she could summon. Davis was about to speak when Deathshhead walked forward. He turned and spoke to Davis.

"Okay Max, this is my fight, man." He looked up at the Mask. "You baby, let her go." The masked man uncoiled his whip. Deathshhead glanced back at the pack and took from his leather jacket a long metal chain. He walked up the steps to the platform and faced the holder of the whip.

The man stood for a moment, his whip at his side. Behind the concealing mask, no expression was visible, but suddenly, his arm jerked. The whip sang and crashed down on leather. Deathshhead grimaced and swung at the masked man's legs. The Mask yelped and retreated. Deathshhead whipped his chain at the other's throat, but missed. The Mask stepped back and stood quietly for a moment. He trailed his whip on the wood and then with deceptive speed cracked at his opponent's face. Deathshhead paled and wiped blood from a new scar. He waited until Mask brought his whip down once more on his leathers, then grabbed quickly for it, and swung his chain with all his strength at the mask itself. There was a dull thud, and Mask collapsed to the wood. The crowd moved even further back from the platform. Deathshhead turned to the wheel and unstrapped the woman. She attempted to stand, but could not. She was naked and badly cut. Davis marched into the crowd and tore a cloak from a whitened noble. He tossed it to Deathshhead who wrapped it around the woman, carried her down the steps and placed her on his pillion. He kicked at his engine, and initiated five other roars. The woman clung to him. He turned and looked at Davis: "Well, Max?"

Davis nodded, and led the pack back along the way that they had come. Under the portcullis, over the drawbridge, through the village, and onto the track. The noble who had lost his cloak stood looking after the retreat of the machines. A girl at his side shivered and asked in a shaken voice: "By the Powers; who were they?" The noble was quiet for a long, long time, then turned and looked at the girl, and spoke with more wisdom than he knew:

"They were the angels of Hell..."

The discoteque pulsed. The air was thick with sound and wild movement. Sound was a hellish, rythmic chaos, none the less stirring for its sheer physical power. The light was a flickering, flashing, fluttering red that danced with the people in the great room. The music was felt through the soles of the feet, and through

the flesh and bone of the listeners, rather than through the ears. Those seated puffed clouds of smoke that was not only that of the leaf of the tobacco plant. Small men dressed incongruously sat in the shadows - whether they were drug sellers or police, only they knew, and few cared.

There was a tanseness in the air, despite and amidst all the carefree looseness of the dancers. This was the altar of a new generation, desperately plunging into the physical world, because the spiritual held no hope : their music was physical, their dancing was physical, and to them, sex was the most intensely physical act of all. Here was what string-pluckers and minstrels and great composers had sought throughout the centuries - the absolute involvement of the audience in the music being played to it. Here was the technique that they had searched for, but the use to which it was put turned away from the ethereal romance that they had tried to put across, and turned into the darkening pit. This was Hell itself, and the souls of the damned danced before the twin Hades and Peresponse of the amplifiers.

Then there was change, as there always is. Above the roar of the music, there was a deeper sound, and the room shook with more than the frenzied beat of dancing feet. There was smoke and light in the centre of the room, and a large irregular patch of starlight appeared where there had been ceiling. There was a smell in the air, a mixture and a conglomerate, a twisting together of the hellish and the sweet, of brimstone and honey, corruption and perfume. Framed by the unearthly light, there danced a man-goat. And all around pranced the figures of young and old women, naked and hypnotised.

The youths in the room danced on to the sound of pan-pipes and electric guitars.

Flashing colour, metal gleam, horse-sweat. Flickering banners and the clanging of steel against steel. Across the open field, past daisies reaching like white and yellow dwarves for the sky, the same scene repeated. Restless snort of horses, stamp of hooves, shuffling of dirty sackcloth-covered feet.

Armies amassed.

Blazon: sable, a fleur-de-lis or between two lightnings argent; per pale, in dexter or, a dragon rampant gules, in sinister azure, a tudor rose. Opposing, across the field: gules, a chevron or between three griffin's heads erased argent; or, gouty de sang, a wyvern proper.

Trumpet call, and riders mounted, lift arms. Peasants on foot heft pikes. Horses begin a restless trot forward. Second trumpet call. Horses begin to move.

Charge.

The heavens trumpeted a louder fanfare, and the horses

stumbled. Then above the thunder of hooves and the cries of war, a new sound was heard. The sound of voices singing, accompanied by the ripple of a folk guitar. A choir of people clad in flowered clothes spilled out onto the field. They sat crosslegged or walked carrying armfuls of flowers or ran, beads swinging around their necks.

Their leader stepped forward: he was bearded and long-haired, and wore around his neck, hanging heavily on his chest, a pentant. It in the form of an iron circle, with central spokes. If the circle had been a clock, the spokes would have been hands at 12, 4, 6, and 8. He glared through his wild hair at the arrays of knights and footmen, then held up his hand and signalled. The crowd of young people broke up and headed for the ranks. They had been prepared to meet chemical mace and nightsticks with flowers and food dosed with LSD; they did not hesitate when faced with bewildered peasants carrying pikes. They circulated among the footmen, talking to them, kissing them, offering them flowers.

The knights watched in helpless dismay. They had been prepared to send their footmen to fight the enemy's footmen, and indulge in a little tilting at the opposition's knights, being protected from serious harm due to their heavy armour. They could not understand the new situation. Nor it seemed could the peasants, but they were enjoying it nevertheless. One man, drugged with a hallucinogenic chemical, wandered around, his eyes rolling in his head, staring fascinatedly at the sky and the coloured standards.

Gradually, as the peasants began to understand what the flower-people were telling them, they threw down their pikes, and stared curiously at the knights. The hippie leader stood in the centre of the field, his arms outstretched, and shouted to the winds :

"Make love, not war!"

The air was an icy torrent rushing in careless tumult by. Beneath, oh far, far below was the distant, little-remembered earth, covered now by a thick carpet of jungle. The full moon shone upon it, changing the green to a tarnished silver. Beneath also was a sharp tap-dance without rhythm, and occasionally a white flash, and the cries of those in pain, but at this height, the coven could hear but little. Maria led the coven in the coloured first position in their formation, and beside her on the broom flew Satan, almost invisible in his black fur. They hit an air pocket, and he spat ungraciously at Maria, who clucked with her tongue, and reached back to stroke him. He purred deceptively and then bit her. She cursed.

Behind her flew twelve other witches. Where they were flying, Maria did not know, but a while back, the air had heaved, and the light had changed, and she was sure that that had portended something. But Satan, her familiar, had been particularly incomm- unativ\$. Ignorant, even baffled, though she would not say so to him.

There was a steadily growing buzz in the wind, that wavered only slightly with its movement. In front of the coven formed a series of pinpricks in the darkness, like a new constellation of stars. They grew rapidly, and soon resolved into red, green and white lights, coming closer. The buzz grew louder, and suddenly there were five metal monsters smashing through the air, and scattering the witches. They were past in an instant, but Maria made a sign at the angry coven, and the brooms fled in pursuit, rising above the machines. One witch, a novice, cried out as she saw the form of the Cross patterned in coloured lights, but Maria spat at her, and she flew on. Satan stood shakily, and arched his back. Maria dived her broom, muttering an incantation, and threw a small packet of powder at the flying machine. There was a blinding flash, and a sun temporarily flared nova, and then was no more.

Four planes scattered and regrouped to attack, barely able to make out the coven in the moonlight. There was a stuttering sound, and the witch who had cried out spun helplessly toward the earth below, her familiar a tangle of blood and fur. The witches drove relentlessly at the planes, twisting and turning through the air. Hellish energies were being released, and the pilots of the machines soared, seeking refuge in altitude. One of them intercepted a bag of powder as he curved upwards, and lost both a wing and control. Soon the landscape was lit up by a fireball, casting weird shadows through the night. The remaining three aircraft fled in baffled fear.

The coven, minus one member, regrouped. Slowly they spiralled downward to this new and fascinating oriental land, where soon they would seek a thirteenth for their company.

And find new sorcery in this war-torn world.

The New Heaven and the New Earth

The solid pillbox was cleaved in two: great spaces of concrete were missing, and the very hillside was patched like a quilt with areas of trees that had experienced different seasons. Not ten yards from the perimeter of the ruins of the observation centre was a large circular piece of ground that appeared to have been cut smoothly from its roots and placed upon the existing ground. There were five figures on the circle.

Paul Berak pushed aside the wreck of a piece of electronic apparatus that had trapped him, and stood shakily. He found himself pierced by the grey eyes that he faced, and was forced to avert his gaze. He glanced at the people in the circle. One, dressed in little more than rags, had collapsed, and another, a fat portly man clothed in well-dressed leather, was on his knees in supplication. Berak glanced at the magician and away as he studied the features of the dwarf, and then the young noble behind. He turned and looked across the forests. From the observation post,

a scientist emerged, and walked forward. He said something in his native tongue, and then shook his head:

"What happened?" Berak turned to him.

"My God, man, I should have thought you of all people would know. A theory, man, give us a theory!" he cried bitterly, sweeping a hand so as to indicate the far horizons. He sat down heavily on a piece of concrete.

Hai Meradil stroked his beard in contemplation. He stepped down off the magically transported area of earth, and walked forward. "Gentlemen, can I be of service?" He aided his question with a slight bow. Berak looked up at him, trying to avoid those eyes, and flapped a hand at the horizon.

"How..." he began, and then shook his head in dismay. Meradil looked at the scientist, and at the ruins of the observation post.

"Perhaps if you could explain what you were doing at the time of this disaster. I see that your devices were amulets and tokens of a sophisticated wizardry. You were perhaps engaged on summoning one of the four diabolic kings, and found your defences not sufficient. Still, that can hardly be so..." He ceased as he was greeted by the blank stares of the two survivors. The scientist spoke:

"I am sorry, sir, but I do not understand you. We have.. we were testing a new atomic weapon of unprecedented power. Very unprecedented... which, since it can be no secret now, involved the annihilation of antimatter and matter..."

Meradil smiled a grey smile.

"Some of your words are strange, but I gather you mean you unleashed the destructive forces of the opposing earth-spirits." He waved their objections aside. "As for myself and my assistants, we were embarked upon summoning the prince Samael from his abode and binding him to our power. I must say, however, that it seems that my constraints were not enough, and his treachery has ruined us. But my excitement has overcome my manners - I am Hai Meradil, chief sorcerer to his majesty King Alfred of the Middle European Empire."

The scientist acknowledged the gesture. "Peter Wasserman. From what you say, I gather you are a wizard, a sorcerer, and you believe me to be one too? I suppose I am at that, or are you a scientist?" Berak groaned :

"Hell, it doesn't matter now." The two colleagues - in the broad sense - began to talk.

Gareth had meanwhile climbed the crest of the hill to improve his view. Reaching the top, he peered around, and then stopped abruptly. He turned and looked down at the people below.

"Baron! Come and see!" Mennen got up and fairly ran up the slope. He was shaking as he reached Gareth, and sweat trickled from his face. His breath shuddered in and out. He looked

down past Gareth's pointing hand. On a flat strip of white rock was a cruciform assembly that stood on three wheels from the rock. Mennen looked puzzledly at the youth, who shrugged, and turning, started down the slope back to the others. Mennen remained looking at the strangely curved surfaces of the arms of the cross, the blunted top, and the strange, fish-like fin at the bottom. A vehicle of some sort? The wheels were suggestive, but what number of horses would be needed to pull the contraption? Perhaps something akin to that device using steam, invented thousands of years before, by that Greek fellow, what was his name? Hero, that was it. Mennen frowned, gave up the mental effort involved, and followed Gareth down the hill.

Below, the two intellectuals had reached at last the core of their problem. Meradil was speaking:

"There were thus, two co-existing Creations side by side as it were, governed by different spirits; as I see it. The two simultaneous releases of demonic energy so confounded the two spirit worlds, that some of them interchanged positions, and thus transferred parts of our world side by side with parts of yours - thus the pattern of trees around us."

Wasserman nodded. "In my terms, I would consider that what we had were two parallel but divergent time-tracks that were intertwined by the explosive release of vast quantities of energy, which deformed the respective space-time matrices. When I say parallel, I mean that our two worlds had different pasts, though originally they were the same. From what I gather from you, I would say that the point of divergence hinges upon the acceptance of Christianity, by the world at large..."

Meradil held up a hand. "The Jewish faith? To the majority of the world, the idea belongs to a cultural enclave in the East. It has, however, been accepted by those who dabble in magic, which I suppose made it even more distasteful to the common man. Basically, though, being a Jewish religion, it did not spread. For some reason, the Jews have never been very popular, due perhaps to their legendary meanness, and the eccentricity of their customs. I would say, though, that our two histories did not separate at any one point, but rather at a series of points... but what occupies my mind is that there must now be two worlds similarly intermixed, existing where our two separate worlds originally did: another world where the areas that have been replaced in my creation, have replaced the corresponding areas in your world. And... God in Heaven!" Meradil leapt to his feet. Wasserman stared at him, startled; Meradil was pale beneath his greyness. The magician clenched his fists and began to explain.

"You must forgive me, I... there is a monastery in my world, whose inhabitants claim that they have imprisoned the Archfiend himself, bound by the most powerful constraints and seals and prayers and with the aid of several angels, where he has remained for thousands of years. Many attempts have been made by the diabolic hierarchy to free Him, but so far all have fortunately failed. But with this disaster, God only knows..."

The scientist looked sceptical. He was about to speak when Berak, who had been listening, interrupted.

"Something worse, even. What about the Doomsday Bomb?"

It was Wasserman's turn to pale. "Yes! It will be highly unlikely that the communications have remained unbroken. But Moscow, they will send a plane... but what if they are not in the same world as the island?"

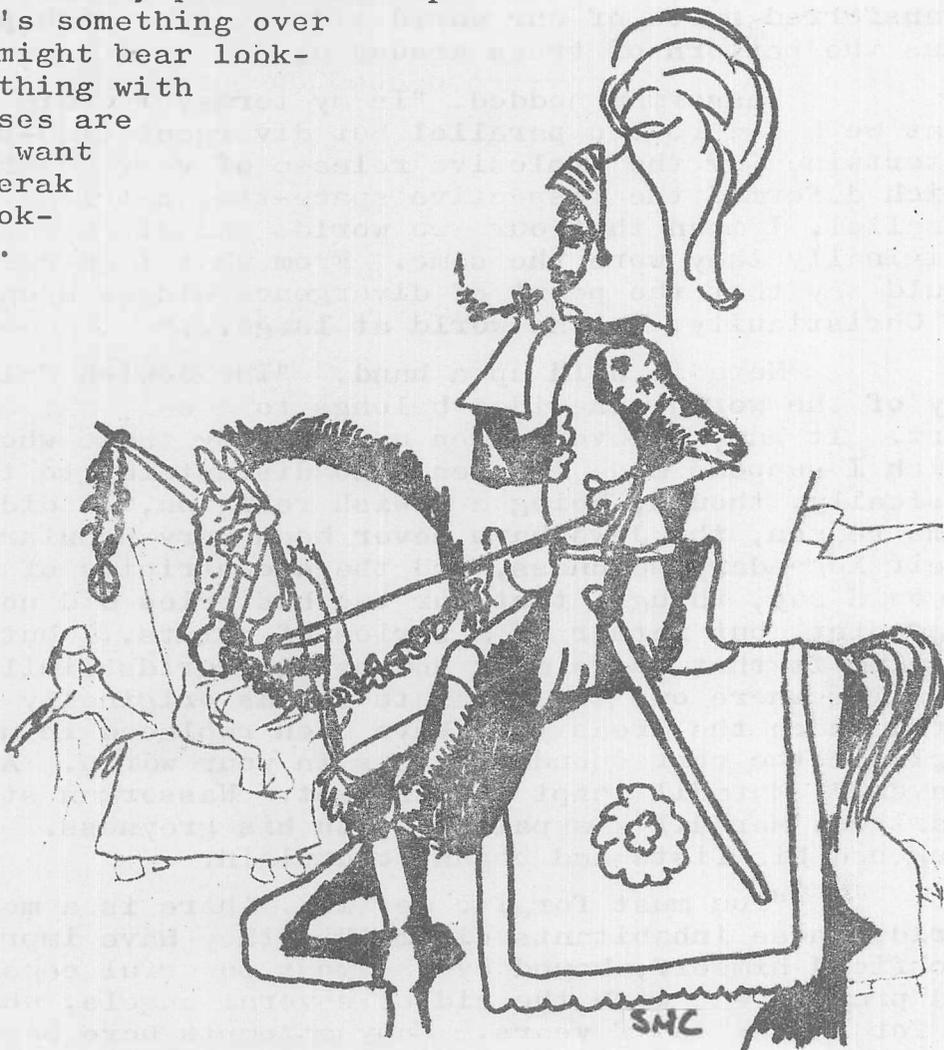
Meradil cocked an inquisitive eyebrow. "If I understood you, there are two menaces loose? So there are three possible situations, or really four : either they are both in this world, or they are both in the other world, or there is one in each world. That gives us only one favourable chance in four. And what is going to happen if the Devil and your machine meet? Will they neutralise each other, or will they combine to destroy?"

At this point, Gareth and Mennen returned to hear the pronouncement of disaster. Mennen wrung his hands, but Gareth merely pursed his lips and said: "There's something over that hill which might bear looking at; a metal thing with wheels. Our horses are in sight, if you want to move it..." Berak and Wasserman looked at each other.

"The plane." said the latter softly. Berak started to walk towards the ridge. He turned as he walked:

"If I can get to that bomb, perhaps I can convince them to leave it alone..." Wasserman shook his head firmly.

"Even if you are in the right world, and can fly that far, they will shoot you down if you cannot give the code signal. Meradil: how



far is it to that monastery? Why, I don't know, but I trust your science now as much as mine. Perhaps it is mine that is based on false assumptions. Stop Satan before he can get free!"

The magician nodded sagely. He walked with the others up the slope. Gareth stood watching them make the climb. He looked at the Baron, and then began to run for the horses. Disaster or no, right world or not, noble or peasant, he had finally found something that was constant in this changing world. He caught a horse, mounted it, and started the long gallop back to the castle. Behind him, an unnatural quiet was split by a roar and a drone, and something black swept through the air. He allowed himself a brief smile as he recalled his earlier run, that time from that which he now sought.

He galloped faster.

- David R Grigg.

ooooooooo00oooooooo

"He is trampling out the vintage where
the grapes of wrath are stored;"



Brian Richards.

THE INTERFEROMETER.

Two monsters live in a cathedral
in Narrabri, New South Wales.
Benign & beautiful monsters
though they do not have teeth, toes or tails
for they're not really regular monsters
though they roar & are thirty foot high
for the boffins who coldly designed them
built them only to measure the sky.

They are made out of mirrors & motors
and each has a very long nose
which houses the photodetectors
and makes a good perch for the crows.
When they venture out into the sunlight
which is really quite seldom and rare,
for the light hurts their photodetectors
so they sleep all the day in their lair,

Which is not quite a real cathedral.
It does not have altars to zion
but is made up of giant steel girders
and corrugated sheets of old iron.
But in evening when nighttime approaches
and the sun sinks into the plains
the boffins go to their control room
and start to play curious games.

The monsters bestir themselves slowly,
and trundle outside on their track.
They stretch and yawn into position
as the sky becomes velvety black.
And the boffins back in the control room
draw their graphs with a line and a bar,
all the night with their numbers computing
the distance and size of each star.

But outside in darkness and starlight
two beautiful monsters do croon,
With long noses pointed to heaven
sent high by celestial perfume.

IDENTITY.

by Michael Black.

Deep glowing eyes : dark, pearly; centuries lost in their limpid depths. Emotions played in the infinity beyond, awaiting their cues to appear. Soulless, selfless; reflecting innocently their surroundings, seeking only to exist. Asking at all, they asked only for peace. Soft-lidded, they closed sealing an untroubled calm into itself.

Now the quiet breathing of the cat was its only sign of life.

Jon's thoughts were wandering from the problem he faced; forcing himself to attend prevented him from reaching the solution now so near. The neural energy he needed so desperately flooded into his brain.

Refreshed, he faced a problem now new, stark and urgent. The solution began to approach. His mind sought the means to penetrate its fog; suddenly boiling into clear consciousness came the idea sought for centuries. Mind to mind it electroneuronically leapt the void. Jon's task was over. That of his solution had only just begun.. Now he was free within an unknown creature so callously forcing him to unwillingly solve such a problem.

He was alone. A mind apart. Reality flowed around as air about a wing, leaving him in the vacuum; apathetic, pointless, dying. He imagined himself to be above everyone, gift of the gods, invincible.

An imaginative child, he had been till he was twenty as if he were an observation outpost; a camera manipulated in another time. Treating his young wife with lordly disdain he gaily masqueraded his next twenty years as a coloniser of an alien planet, indoctrinating his offspring to be fitting lords of their earthly fellows.

Now suddenly alone, divorced from wife and sons, laden with debt and gazing forlornly at a roomful of battered science fiction novels, he wondered whether his incinerator could hold the lot. He was a fool - it couldn't. He sank into a chair.

Closing eyes forced him helplessly down a black pit; sickeningly, losing all sense of reality. Brightnesses flickered through his mental vision as his physical self writhed only to fall limp to the floor.

Without opening his eyes he knew he was in another time plane. The

air was cool and wet with the sweet smell of earth. His world was darker now, though warm and still; as though no breezes blew. His mind felt free, unburdened by care or the fetters of his physical body. He had hoped that death would be like this; an untroubled world.

The uncovered coffin, cheap wood with rubbish packing, was lowered carelessly into the grave. The two or three thin, aging mourners, their faces gravely disquieting, dropped the ropes to the ground and stood at attention. The minister intoned disinterestedly the only prayer he could recall.

He and his fellow mourners would soon be as dead as the ground they now trod. Suddenly the world was a shallow well, like a goldfish bowl, surmounted by statues accurate beyond belief. As though in slow motion, rain began to fall; drops as large as hailstones falling heavily onto his face. The statues melted into the darkness as he shielded his eyes from the rain.

Within its coffin the cadaver moved. An arm and dirt covered hand reached up as they were laboriously scraping dirt into the grave. They watched transfixed. The statues had some to life! Threateningly they loomed above him, grasping weapons defiantly. His mind seethed with schemes of defence and retribution, of hatred toward these lesser creatures, of destruction and of death. But he was alone and there was nothing in his well-world with which to defend himself. The coolness of fear washed over him, submerging him in grateful unconsciousness.

Its last convulsions subsided, the body fell limply onto the loose earth. The four terrified onlookers cautiously approached the grave-mouth, reached it and gazed on the corpse.

"Dead?" said one to the desert emptiness.

"Looks as though," said another quietly.

"Leave him there, uncovered. We haven't the strength."

"It's hot. We'll have to get back to the shelter."

Four thin old men limped painfully across the barren plain. Not one looked back. They had already forgotten the one they had just buried when they filed into their dugout.

The sun sank complainingly on a silent world.

Deep, mournful, the fear would slowly rise as he sank by stages into a light sleep; always threatening, almost overpowering. His dreams were caught in it as his conscious strained through the membrane gulf, his waking memory holding only those fitful reveries of his last moments of light sleep. He would never know the horrors of those long hours under its camouflaging presence. Not that this worried him. In fact he hardly ever thought at all anymore - his job suited him, the pay was good, he liked where he was living, his wife and kids were gone now - she with some brickie

and they with that pair of lousy love-birds. He was, he often complimented himself, independent and better off for it.

Some days he'd be coping with the work in a kind of trance - day-dreaming he'd call it - and suddenly he'd think : maybe she was right - I'm not really a whole man, or a whole anything. Then he'd go out and wash his face with cold water, rub it down hard with a rough towel, think of just the kind of jealous fool he was. This didn't always work.

His independence gave him time to fill and his imaginative mind filled his time with ideas he would spend hours recording as stories short and long.

He had also taken up stamp collecting.

The house was littered with half-completed projects - radios, engines, devices of various kinds. He was alone.

The world was strangely and suddenly overflowing with remembered, harsh rattling. He turned to see its source and awakened.

Elizabeth was there, the lines of her beautiful figure glowing dully in the pre-dawn light. His stirrings had awakened her and she whispered softly, "I love you."

He was sad. His wife would be back home today.

Venus shone dully despite the hard sunlight, as though marking a spot just behind the horizon. Seeming not to feel the near-zero temperature, Jesus strode over the snow-covered ice at a comfortable, easy pace, unworried by the still-falling snow. His movements were automatic, his mind concerned with passionate worlds far from physical reality.

Seeking humanity, finding only hatred, his being rapidly fading into blind, purposeless hate, this would be his last attempt to glean community.

Buildings were tall against the lightening sky now. He strode bravely down the centre of the main street, sweat oiling his brown-black skin.

No faces behind grey windows, no eyes peering through slitted walls, no steaming tubs of boiling black. No stark trees, well-worn and dropping rotten hemp. He relaxed.

"N-----!"

He was held in an unseen, unrelenting grip. Swung high over the snow, he was dropped with distaste onto the flat roof of the nearest building.

Deserted; open; the space spoke :

"String the dago up!"

Jesus was wafted swiftly to a rough wooden cross atop an odd adobe

church. An old rope draped loosely about the icon snaked toward him.

"Senores, I am no n----- . I am a Mexican!" His lips had finally parted and he gasped out the words.

"I say hang the dago anyway. A mex or a n-----, what difference?" the voice rasped disgustedly.

Another voice, more disquieting than the first : "He's not worth the trouble. Let him go!"

Jesus fell fifteen or so feet into mud and ran into the church. Outside nothing was moving, inside all was dust and small heaps of debris. He kneeled before the approximate position of the vanished altar and lifted his eyes to the darkness under the ceiling.

As his eyes adapted, an opening in the far wall became visible. He walked reverently across the floor and looked carefully through the opening. He slipped out and ran across to the neighbouring building, apparently the town hall. The double doors were closed but through a window he could see many people inside.

They seemed frightened but his knocking opened the unlocked door.

The crowd backed away as he entered, then huddled together in the shadowy corner. He had risen bodily into the air to the cross, hung there by a rope about his neck, and now he came through the doors as though nothing had been done to him.

He said his name was Jesus.

Memories long dormant, of ancient worlds where social mores were less rigid, enforced by unconscious taboos and not by violence, were called forth by the sound of his name. In the fear of the mysterious and lure of the unknown, his brown skin was submerged, forgotten.

Still, they were uncertain. The devilment outside and this strange creature before them, opposed though they might appear, could in fact be linked in partnership or servitude. The taint of superstition and black magic was as clear in memory as were the qualities more peculiar to whatever Jesus might represent.

No longer was his appearance unaffected by his experience. Seeing his audience to be apathetic rather than aggressive, he had released his mental grip on himself and collapsed onto the floor, unconscious.

Believing him to have finally died after his hanging, the crowd was slow to approach the corpse. Grasping his clothes to avoid touching his skin, being terrified by death, they proceeded to carry him out into the street, when his eyes finally began to re-open.

Now the import of those forgotten memories was clearer to his watchers. Here was the being to herald their doom. It was he who would appear when their world was to end in damnation.

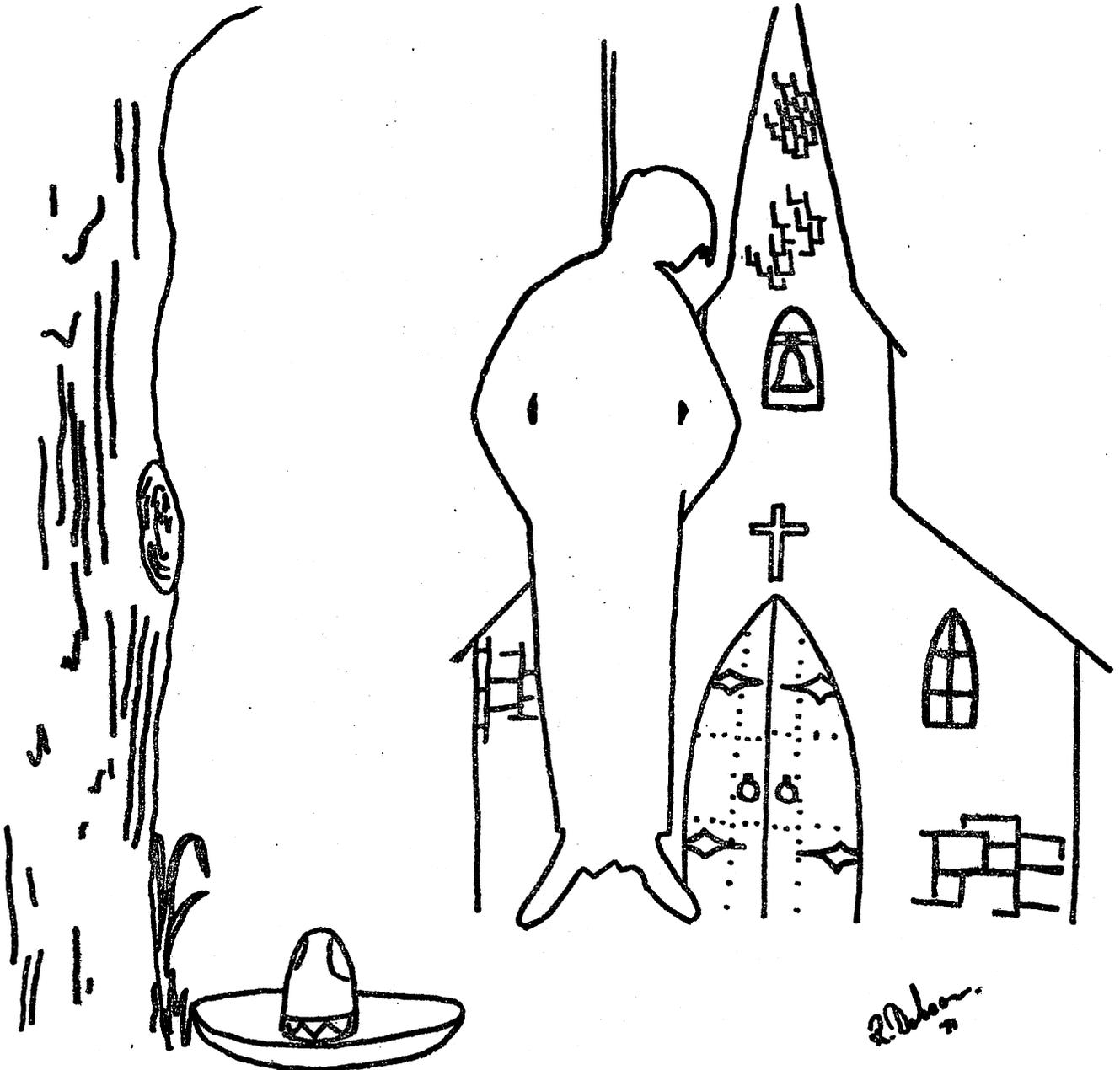
Now at last their choice was inevitable. Screaming with rage and pent -up frustrations, they threw him bodily into the street.

"I thought they wouldn't stand for a mex - if they're going to kill him, then I say we get him first!"

Jesus Maria San Andalusia screamed hysterically as he was lifted high in the crushing grip and the rope snaked toward his quivering throat.

It was the twenty fifth of December in an otherwise quiet town. Only the vultures were interested in the corpse dangling from a cross in the crisp morning air.

- Michael Black.



REVIEWS.

Iceworld

Reviewed by Paul Anderson

by Hal Clement

Lancer 75128-095 : \$1.15

217 pages copyright 1953.

This novel has been out of print for quite some time and here for the first time in paperback it has made a welcome return. Hal Clement is wellknown for his impressive novel 'Mission of Gravity', which has also been reprinted recently by Pyramid. His books are few and far between but they are usually worth waiting for. This one is no exception although it could almost be classed as a juvenile, because of the cast of characters chosen.

The aliens are said to have come from a planet circling a blue/white star some distance from Earth and are adapted to a much higher temperature than that which we would consider to be normal. The science used by Clement in developing his story appears to hold together and is sufficiently logical to satisfy most of his potential readers. Indeed he is noted for the 'hard science' that is given as an added bonus in his fiction. While the basic premise of the novel is given away on the back cover in an unusually lucid blurb, Clement still manages to add a few extra twists to his plot. My only quibble with his science is that why should the aliens be susceptible to an extreme form of addiction to tobacco. Why should such dissimilar races be subject to the same weaknesses?

However for all of the differences in backgrounds the aliens are not very alien by human standards and all of the usual human characteristics expected in a science fiction novel are present. It is very easy to identify with the alien hero, a scientist who has been seconded by his government to act as a spy on a suspected drug-runner. The other alien people also readily fall into the set group of stereotypes. But in spite of what this may sound his characterisation is not that bad and he does manage to retain the reader's interest.

The human family on the other hand is the lesser of the two groups of people and this shows to a certain extent in Clement's drawing of their individual characteristics. We are told about them rather than being shown and this serves as a counter foil to the Sarrians. In a neat manner Clement brings in another contrast between the hot and cold species, as they could be designated.

The cover is tastefully done in a cold shade of blue which serves to set the mood of the story to follow. Unfortunately Lancer did not see fit to give the name of the artist, but I would

like to give him credit for a good job. It is quite restrained in these days of the gaudy hard sell on the suspicious browser. I classify this as a very well done juvenile that should be read by a large number of older fans. It belongs to the type of science fiction that is dependent on an idea but, all the same, it is still better than a large number of other books that are supposedly better balanced in the handling of the various elements of the plot. The sentence structure is relatively sharp and crisp with little time wasted on unnecessary frills.

ooo ooo ooo ooo

Dragons And Nightmares

Reviewed by Paul Anderson

by Robert Bloch

Belmont B75-1060 : November 1969

155 pages + a 4 page backward \$0.75 (US)

This book has had rather an unfortunate publishing history due to a misunderstanding concerning the publishing rights to it. In spite of Bloch's backward which refers to one of the stories appearing in the great Unknown Worlds, Belmont have still listed the only publication date as : "A Belmont Book - November 1969". The story in question, "A Good Knight's Work", appeared in the British edition of Unknown dated Spring 1949. The other two stories were published in Weird Tales quite some time ago.

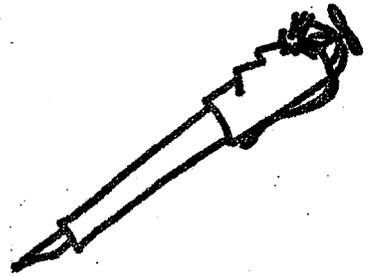
Naturally enough the writing style of these entertaining stories is rather dated by now but the atmosphere of the Unknown Worlds type of bizarre humour still manages to come across quite effectively. These show the pre-Psycho Bloch at close to his best. Frankly the plot of the two novelettes is ludicrous but the reader is soon swept away into the action as it unfolds at a leisurely pace to get the most out of each laugh-provoking scene. Still, though Bloch does retain control of his comedies and he refrains from padding the stories to the extent that a reader may grow over-tired of a particular theme. (I wish that some writers could learn the same virtue!)

The packaging of this book is far better than the usual fare that we have come to expect from Belmont. The front cover blurb is also reasonably accurate, even with the great claims made for it :- "The weirdest, wildest, most fantastic book this world famous author has ever produced. Bloch at his best." The back cover is also fairly accurate even if they do spoil their record by referring to his completely different horror novel, Psycho. The front cover illustration is effective, even if it has been kept fairly simple. However no credit is given to the artist, as usual.

The major proportion of the book is taken up by the short novel; "Nursemaid To Nightmares", a peculiar piece of fantasy which is written in a more serious manner. Although its basic premise is less than satisfactory and deals with the collection of a large

(cont. on penultimate page)

the R & R dept.



Gary Woodman
6/27 Hartpury Ave., Elwood, 3184. 21/3/71.

Dear Ron,

your editorial (in TM 17) I take to be a comment on the current state of fandom (all right, call it what you will) in Sydney, and though I suppose (expect might be a better word) that you're (mostly) joking, I for one am happily impressed that 'they' are enthusiastic. I know it's only about STAR TREK, but 'they' will mature as STAR TREK merely grows older, and then - I'll give them - us - a couple of years, and I hope to be able to say "I told you so"....

Wodhams must be cracking up - 'Volk de Stroya' is pretty obvious, and the story so well-travelled as to be unimpressive, even unoriginal. That Wodhams should have the latter charge directed against him!

The fight against extraterrestrial environments will not be won by the science-fiction writers (and it is a little unfortunate that you have used such dated quotes), but it's a pretty safe prediction that it will not be waged by the diplomats, politicians, militarists, or their like. Perhaps the out-of-work aerospace personnel could stage a coup, and hands up those who just knew I was advocating a technocracy....

John Brosnan has ignored the place of evolution in his scheme of things, and though it could assume (and, I'm sure, has already done so) the place of a Creator, it has a greatly different direction to the practical-jokery of Brosnan's Deity, to wit: a thing is where it is because it's the best place for it to be, with regard to survival. The association of excretion and reproduction may well be an evolutionary tactic directed towards the greater survival of the species, in that when there weren't many men, a fuck was as harmless as a shit, and in fact more useful (though not quite as necessary), but now that we've got quite as many people as we can handle, more in fact, it is anti-evolutionary to have lotsa kids. It might be pretty difficult to cause people to give up copulation on an evolutionary scale, just like that, so reproduction becomes 'dirty'... though perhaps this is a self-induced brake on population expansion, unconscious of course (can people be that smart?).

I thought it was pretty obvious that the armed conflict between driver and pedestrian is a simple (though, granted, far-fetched) extrapolation of the conflict (largely verbal) I see every day between these two. I tried to place particular emphasis on the setting, implying a large US city, simply because polarizations between social groups seems far more obvious there. And, of course,

everyone has a gun.

There is no reason why pedestrians and drivers should try to kill each other, no more reason that why they hurl abuse at each other as often as they do. In my extrapolation, hot words are replaced by hot lead, as the cliché has it. How useful clichés are.

- Gary Woodman.

E.B. Lindsay
6 Hillcrest Ave., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776. 28/3/71.

Dear Ron,

What a way to start a fanzine. Cover art by Dimitri Razuvaev, offset yet, good interior illustrations, a long penetrating and very amusing article by Jack Wodhams, with illos by the author. I don't suppose any of the markets open to Jack buy that sort of thing, but the articles in Parkinsons Law are no better. It was beautiful. I find those monsters round my own door, this may explain why this letter is typed on duplicating paper.

Not satisfied with that you have a story-play "SS Watching" by Cy Chauvin, a bit slow starting and seemingly a conventional story, then that double ending. The sense of individuals defying a dictatorship grows, then defeat but with hope for some future, a propaganda film, you turn the page and enter a reality where there is no hope, no future - as Orwell said : A boot stamping on a human face, forever.

"Solitude" by Michael Black is another well done piece with a twisted ending, but coming after "SS..." is rather cast in the shade.

I am glad to see some book reviews in The Mentor 18, but would rather see reviews of more recent books.

"Reality F" was a little different from the usual run of fanzine articles, but not entirely unexpected after John Brosnan's article in TM 17. It should be interesting to see where the series will go from here. There are not all that many controversial subjects - sex, censorship, religion, political systems, man the animal vs man the superior being, come to mind for future articles.

Again I enjoyed the SF Fans section, and look forward to seeing the one by Jack Wodhams.

Like Paul Anderson I have found the last two issues of The Mentor in my letterbox on Saturday. This is even more unusual because our postoffice often leave second class mail for delivery through the week. You must tell how you manage it. (** Simple, really. In the Post Office General Orders there is a section which reads : "The fanzine The Mentor, from Ron L Clarke of..... must be delivered at the earliest opportunity." Good of them, eh, Eric?-Ron**)

I am enclosing a subscription (only a dollar - I am about to get a house built and it will be many months before I can afford to subscribe again, so I hope you don't mind real poor letters of

comment to s-t-r-e-t-c-h my subscription.) (** If by 'poor' you mean the likes of this one, Eric, you can give up your sub and continue writing LoCs. This is what I want, mate! - Ron.**)

Those lines of poetry in Noel Kerr's letter strike a chord of memory - however it is obvious that during my school days I paid too much attention to the class clowns, and not enough to the teacher as the version I remember starts

I must go down to the city dump,
To the lonely dumping ground.
And all I ask is a garbage truck
And a place to tip it by.

Seriously, I just have never been able to understand poetry, so I always skip it when I encounter it in a magazine. I must admit that it helps to give a neat layout however.

Naturally you had to publish your little piece on how to go broke producing a fanzine. Just when I was getting all enthusiastic about the idea of doing one myself. (** Actually, it was the best way I could think of at the time of reducing future competition.... - Ron.**)

After picking myself up off the floor, I stretched a trembling hand to where The Mentor had fallen from my nerveless fingers. Himm, let's see. I can get the staples from work, one by one, that will save -05 cents, if I use nail polish in place of correcting fluid that's a bit more saved. Now paper, you are using a real nice blue one, if I use the cheap white one I write my letters on I can get that for \$2.40 a thousand. Stencils now, can't save much there, Mortype are -08 each (**OH?**) that's -02 cents a page. If I keep the pages under about 26 postage will be -06 cents; you know, I might just be able to afford it, but you gave me a nasty turn there with those figures, Ron.

No, I will be bringing out a fanzine sometime soon. I have about 15 stencils cut, and will be doing the rest as soon as I do some artwork and headings and get them ready for electrostenciling. Now I just have to persuade one of the local schools to give me a lend of their duplicator for a while. You should get a copy sometime in the next ~~month~~ year, I hope.

Regards,
Eric.

John Tipper
74 Sir Joseph Banks St., Bankstown 2200. 30/3/71.

Dear Ron,

Many thanks for no 18 of The Mentor and sincerest apologies for my "lack of response". I always enjoy reading your zine but forget that someone has to pay for printing and postage!

Being one of few words I can't think of much to say except that the care which you lavish on the printing, cutting and setting

and setting out of THE MENTOR astounds me!

Please find enclosed \$3 postal note towards costs incurred. (** Both the above "note" and the sub much appreciated, John. - Ron.**)

Yours sincerely
John Tipper

David R Grigg
1556 Main Rd., Research, Vic. 3095. 29/3/71.

Dear Ron,

Surprise! A LoC. Reason being I felt guilty enough not commenting on THE MENTOR 17. Your editorial struck home, you see. To this humble person, the thing to do about that awesome 40% who don't respond at all is drop 'em. And fast. (** I did. - Ron.**)

In the third issue of THE FANARCHIST, I put a little spot that said : you have received all three issues of this now. If no response, OUT. And I mean it, too. Nearly twenty people will be removed from my lists before I post no 4, and about another ten after, if no response is obtained. Sadly, it is the only way.

Down to brass tacks. Cover of 18 very good, how did you blackmail Dimitri?? I've tried, heaven knows. Artwork is murder...

You are struggling for contributions? Forty-two pages isn't bad. To me, the only thing to do if you don't get enough contribs, is write it yourself : eg TF 2 & 3. No 4, when I get a job and therefore enough money, should run at least thirty pages, though, and very little of my material. (** Do you really think you could read a zine of mine written like I write the mailing comments in EOS, David? - Ron.**)

I liked the Cy Chauvin piece. It strikes a chord, or something. Like 1984 inside-out. (** I've heard that somewhere before..... - Ron.**)

"Reality F". Yes. Well. I guess I agree...

Letters. How come Kev Dillon mentions writing a letter to me which I never got? You haven't been ripping up the mail to test for LSD-impregnated envelope-sticky, have you Clarke?? (**Who, Me? -Ron.**)

Shayne McCormack. Hmmmmm. I must admit I didn't realise Shayne's head was so flat. Perhaps it's a recent addition, due to bouncing form the roof inside Montgomery Volkswagen? We're just good friends, is all. (**Ha! - Ron.**). Keep it up, please!

David.

(Mrs.) Cy Hord
Box 53, P.O., Revesby, NSW 2212. 29/3/71.

Dear Ron,

Although I am one of the quiet ones I thoroughly enjoy

THE MENTOR and would hate to think that you have to cross me off the mailing list, so I am enclosing cheque for the sum of \$2 which will, I hope, cover postages of the magazine for some further period.

I am a pretty busy person, not perhaps quite so much as yourself, but I have a strong link with science fiction and liking for it. (**Business, is I think, really relative : thanks for the letter and cheque; your interest in both TM and sf is reason enough for continued posting of TM to you. - Ron.**)

Sincerely,
(Mrs.) Cy Hord.

PS. The most important thing I want to say is that I enjoy THE MENTOR immensely and glad to see that you have roped Jack Wodhams into giving you a story.-C

Michael O'Brien
158 Liverpool St., Hobart, Tas. 7000. 31/3/71.

Dear Ron,

The first thing that flashed through my mind when I picked THE MENTOR 18 out of the post was "O Ghawd, did I LoC the last issue?" Apparently I didn't. Sorry about that, but I have had this problem before with you; you're too frequent, you swine!! Why can't you be more relaxed - publish every five months like me.

I don't see ERA listed in your fmz list. Didn't I give you a copy at the Convention? (** Nyet, I am pretty sure of it.-Ron*) Shall I send you a copy of the December ish or leave it & send you the April (or May?) ish? (**Ghod! all these new fmz! - Ron.**)

TM 18 : Cy Chauvin's story was a freaky little fragment, good but rather van Vogtian in the number of unexplained points. Michael Black's short was more orthodox and predictable while being entertaining at the same time.

Paul Anderson's reviews are always worth reading and I recommend any fanzine that features him regularly! (Modest cough from yours truly).

Jack Wodhams "Tourney Questor" takes a bit of getting into, but is quite hilarious and logical when one concentrates on it. Even the drawings are amusing. One cannot say the same for the sad statistics on the bottom of p.20; if it's any comfort, I got a one-half of one percent LoC return on the first ish of ERA.

"Reality F" is rather staggering. While I'm accustomed to such opinions in mainstream periodicals, it's startling to run across such an article by a femmefan. (** Actually Sheila isn't a femmefan; though Christine may like to answer that, ah, jibe?? - Ron.**)

In the letters, E.B. Lindsay is close to the mark; TM is one of the best duplicated fanzines, but I won't stick my neck out by trying to pick the best. Alex Robb does a neat little

hatchet job from the exile of gafia, but I'm afraid that Paj's present address is definitely 1690 E. 26 Ave., Eugene, Oregon.

I feel that you may be right in suggesting Melbourne for the '75 Worldcon. It is better known to many overseas fans because of its continuous fan-club activity and might draw more. (And it's handier for me, true.)

Enjoyed the Shayne ~~McStar Trek~~ McCormack episode of HOOZOO IN FNNDM. Better pic than Peter.

Sad to hear that SF REVIEW may fold. Mainstays of fandom have a way of doing that though, I suppose. Oh, and I hope to have an issue of TOLKIEN BULLETIN out Real Soon.

Sciencereally,

Mike O'Brien
the Tasmanian Terror.

Ronald E. Graham
P.O. Box 57, Yagoona, NSW 2199. 31/3/71.

Dear Ron,

Thanks very much for TM 18. Definitely your best to date and something to be proud of. Beautifully typed and printed with every word legible, it was a pleasure to read. (** I only hope this issue comes out as good. - Ron.**)

At the Melbourne Con. recently I bought a colossal pile of fanzines and recently I have been looking them over and reading them - wherever it was possible - for quite a number were absolutely unreadable - and these included quite a few Australian ones prepared for ANZAPA. Although not a member of ANZAPA, I've purchased a copy of every mailing so far and it is my firm belief that the ANZAPA Constitution should contain a clause requiring contributions to be legibly printed - if I were a member I'd consider it an insult to be offered some of the eye-straining efforts included.

Stacked up against fanzines in general, yours comes out well. As far as legibility is concerned nothing beats it. Some equal it perhaps but even where 'zines are typeset I find that the publisher tends to be too economical and uses too small a type-face.

To my taste, and let us face it - everyone's taste differs - for which we can be truly thankful, your zine is a bit light on in content - not in quantity but in quality. I'd like to see a few meaty efforts. Nothing near as much as ASFR which collapsed under their very weight. You never want to drive the young fans out of your pages no matter how many BNF's write to you or how many solid articles you get. (** It's funny, Ron, but the "meaty" articles tend to come from young fans who aren't as yet BNF's. And it all falls down to the old story - I can't print what I haven't got. - Ron.**)

Harry Warner Jnr's 'Horizons' is a respected fanzine and probably worthily so but to me it is intensely boring reading -

solid pages of unrelieved typewriting - no headings no sketches - nothing to relieve the eye whatsoever.

One I did like was J Michael Rosenblum's 'New Futurian'. That to me was an ideal 'zine. A few good meaty articles, fan news, photographs of fans we knew by name only till then, illustrations, humour, a letter col, fanzine reviews, book reviews and surveys of the current publishing scene. Quite a good formula, I think. Your's closely approaches it. It only requires the meaty articles to give it balance.

I loved Wodham's illustrated "Tourney Questor" but then I love everything Wodhams writes! I hope you can get something from Jack every so often. (** So do I, Ron, so do I. - Ron.**)

Yours sincerely,
Ron Graham.

Christine McGowan
40 Williams Rd., Blackburn 3130. 2/4/71.

Dear Ron,

You must forgive the paper. I am seized by a MœCuhanesque passion for instant communication, but since I am at this moment choking on potato salad in the Union the only medium open to me is a foolscap lecture pad.

Yes, well....

"The Mentor" 18, which I have borrowed from that arch-fan, Carey Handfield, is very impressive. This is not schmaltz, by a genuine impression. At the risk of sounding unoriginal, the layout is great, the type completely legible, and the contents well balanced. (** If people keep on saying this, I'll start to believe it! - Ron.**)

Which isn't to say that I liked every page. After ploughing through "Solitude" it took some time to eradicate the icky taste in my mouth. It seemed to me a perfect example of "fan fiction", (in the derogatory sense of the term). I have this theory, see - we all start off as adolescent writers. Adolescent writing has certain hallmarks, tied up I suppose with the natural hang-ups of that time of life. I edited the old school magazine some years ago, and I was little short of snowed under by turgid, impressionistic exhibitions of verbiage about battered babies and Beisen victims and suicides dying with the sunset. Very gruesome, and you have to load the magazine with cheery (if less technically competent) efforts from the pre-pubescent first-formers in order to achieve a balance. Well, it appears to me that after this stage people either become mature writers or stop writing. (** See Budrys' article in GALAXY BOOKSHELF in the January '71 issue of GALAXY re writers. - Ron.**) The exception are fans, who, long after their adolescent struggles with the realities of life, are still chained to the adolescent style of writing. Their "fiction" consists of verbally involved, overlong ramblings that labour

painfully to sudden and unsatisfying ends. Needless to say, I do not like fan fiction, and I did not like "Solitude". Everyone has a right to work off their neuroses in fictionalised writings. But to have them published. (** Someone published the Bible, didn't they? - Ron.**). (Hmm... I hope Michael Black doesn't take offence at that last bit. Having the regard for the laws of libel I speak in generalities, and I hope it will be all taken as fair comment..)

What is all this "femmfan" rot? For Ghod's sake, a fan is a fan is a fan. Next you will be having shortfans and tallfans. Contrary to popular opinion, women are only people. It is patently obvious that anyone with the name Donna or Shayne is female - why add the distinguishing tag as if they were rare and exotic beasts? (** But they are, woman, they are! I can see that you haven't read my editorial in TM 17; I can also see the rot setting in as fandom is 'liberalised'. Even now you are talking of throwing away one of the traditions of Fandom! Gahh, lucky you are in Victoria, Christine... - Ron.**). I am not a women's lib. supporter, I wouldn't dream of burning my bra (not at the current retail prices, oh no!), but I wish to give notice that if anyone ever refers to me as a "femmfan" I shall call down upon them all the orcs of Mordor, and refer to them in future as "menfan". So be it. (** You don't seem to realise that "fan" is male, and "femmfan" is female; the same as "man" - or Man - and "woman". - Ron.**)

If you now see me as a hatchetfaced harpy, I am greatly distressed. I'm really a sweet-natured charming person, but I only write LoC's when I'm annoyed. Righteous anger is great for arousing the muse....

I trust my handwriting is not too cryptic. (** I did have a couple of bad moments, Christine. - Ron.**)

Yours sincerely,

Christine McGowan.

Ian McDowell

P.O. Box 234, Epping, NSW 2121. 2/4/71.

Dear Ron,

Thank you for sending me issues 17 and 18 of "The Mentor".

I read mostly "classical" science fiction - prefer space adventure against a detailed background of coherent science written by an optimist - get it by exchanging paper backs rather than by purchase unless I want to keep it. People like I am probably outnumber what you call "fans" - consider the sustained popularity of Dr.E.E. Smith's "Lensman" and "Skylark" series. (** See my editorial this ish re this subject. Naughty, I used "re".... - Ron.**)

Why not include these items in "The Mentor" for wider appeal?

(a) Pages in which readers answer other readers' questions - e.g. who wrote what, when, where? How to obtain a hard-to-get

science fiction item?

(b) A list of science fiction books and magazines with prices, for sale or exchange by yourself and/or by your subscribers. This might help pay your publishing costs, particularly if other vendors paid a commission or listing fee. Why pay the profit of a city shop which offers scrappy service of this sort?

These may lead in turn to a link with some "fan" magazine in North America which offers similar services, and to importing your own titles on subscribers' behalf. Bookshops in Aust. stock a poor range of science fiction.

(** Something like the above has been tried; at least I have offered ad space, but after a person or two took it up the thing died a natural death. Dick Witter, a book dealer in New York, offers a 20% discount off purchases over \$20, based on the US cover price, and is the best deal around at the moment, as far as I know. Most of the sf clubs in the major Aust cities have libraries and I know of at least two bookshops in Sydney which, between them, stock a very wide range of sf - Abbeys and the one in King st, ah, The Pocket Bookshop (137a King St.,). See the editorial this ish for further views about sf and fans. - Ron.**)

Why not leave unevaluated sex or violence to existentialist crusaders? It can be distasteful to the "straight" science fiction reader. (** "Unevaluated?? Judging by the use some of the top writers (Silverberg, Heinlein, Farmer, Sturgeon, etc) are using in their stories for sex - especially Heinlein in I WILL BEAR NO EVIL - I am beginning to wonder about the attitude of sf readers who say NO sex in sf.... especially if they are over 21.... though you did say "unevaluated"; just what do you mean by that, Ian? - Ron.**)(** of course, it all boils down to what you mean by sex, doesn't it?? -Ron.**)

Best wishes in a difficult publishing venture.

Sincerely,

Ian McDowell.

Paul Anderson
21 Mulga Rd., Hawthorndene, SA 5051. 5/4/71.

Dear Ron,

Thanks for sending The Mentor 18 and using my material so promptly. I loved Dimitri's cover ~~even~~ if I had to spend quite a long time getting the crease out of its middle.

You should be more cheerful in your editorials as in the last one you were starting to sound a little like Buck Coulson in ~~the old~~ days when they were trying to discourage all reviews etc. of the well known Yandro - the worlds best 2nd rate fanzine as it is called some times. In any case you have it easy because Dick Geis has a circulation of 1500 and spends about a month just producing the thing. My loc for TM 17 would have been a little

quicker but, as usual, the fast, efficient PO took 5 days to get it to me and probably a similar time was leisurely taken for the letter itself. Anyway I am enclosing another couple of reviews for TM. I note from my rapidly diminishing pile of reviews that I will have to take the time from letters and other things to write some or I may not be able to keep in practice.

The film script from Cy Chauvin was very interesting but no doubt I missed a few of the puns casually tossed in. The one that I did find was a reference to the novel that should have won this year's Ditmar. eg "the towers of glass... Silver in the sunlight, like bergs of ice".

Oh lucky you having Jack Wodhams on your list of, dare I say it, regular contributors. His "economic survey" was highly amusing and equal to his best but perhaps there was a gentle hint in the tail of his article. All this talk of dragons from Jack the Wod reminded me of that old dragon known to all old time readers of SF prozines, Joan the Wad - I too like horrible puns at times.

The Women's Liberation propaganda piece filled up a couple of pages even if it is mainly notable for its lack of logic. In case she has not realised it yet she has a lot more than she could gain in losing her virginity. Maybe a male may not worry unduly in marrying a girl that is not a virgin but I am sure that they still think twice about marrying into a readymade family and all of the automatic restrictions on activity and entertainment. Also if there is one thing that we do not need it is accidents that push the birth rate up with the population problem that the world has now.

I would appreciate it if you could tell me if you know of any other SA science fiction fans as we are trying to get a SF club off the ground at the Adelaide Uni. (** Sorry, but I don't!t. About 90% of the sf fans I know usually end up being published in the R & R Dept of TM anyway. - Ron.**).

Yours,
Paul.

Van Ikin
4 McDonald Cres., Strathfield 2135. 6/4/71.

Dear Ron,

Thanks for the letter & the sample copies - they're great.

I/want to centre my comments upon Robert Bowden's "Voyage", but perhaps one or two generalised observations should come first. Jack Wodhams' two stories, "Ire, Ump & Vamp" & "Tourney Questor" are the usual Wodhams fare : masterpieces of originality written in a style perfectly suited to the subject matter. With "Tourney Questor", I can't help feeling the story would have been even better if it had been more dramatised, & more subtle in its satire. It's an ingenious story, & very well handled within the form the author has chosen, but I feel it could have been ever so much better

if he had approached it in a different manner.

Sheila Suttie's article seems both superficial & out of place in an sf-type publication. (** Hmmm. That The Mentor is a 'fanzine' covers the "sf-type pub." bit; and the article, which by the way, was specifically asked for, was successful in that it did the two things I wanted of it. - Ron.**). Her point of view (which I disagree with anyway) is argued without any serious attempt to deal with Christian principles, & she spits out unsupported statements & rhetorical questions with the non-intellectual naivete of many western politicians.

The cover of number 18 also merits comment. Strange, isn't it, the way a simple picture like that (plus caption, of course), can tease the sf fan's imagination until he has created a whole imaginary world of existence in which "Derlics of the Burning Gaze" run rampant? (** Dimitri..?? - Ron.**)

And now, Bowden -

"Voyage", to me, is a story of great potential, though there are faults. It's a lot more "meaty" than either of the two Wodhams pieces (though "Tourney Questor", if its satire were more subtle, would be a close rival), for whereas Wodhams at times seems frivolous (though it's well-crafted frivolity) Bowden seems to make fuller use of the resources of language.

It's the imagery that grabs me. Not only can one enjoy the superficial story line (as with Wodhams), but there is the imagery to savour, & the sensations it builds up. Trouble is, that's where the faults occur. Bowden tends to forget that imagery should be disciplined, that each separate image should somehow lock into the others to produce a train of coherent, smooth-flowing impressions. He forgets this, & so we get lines like

"the throb of the ship seeped into his mind like warm chocolate into ragged pieces of blotting paper".

At first sight that's very good (though it's too good - it startles & distracts), but a moment's thought betrays the author: he's revelling in imagery for its own sake, & the point of the story is temporarily forgotten. Moreover, the image implies that the character has a mind like blotting paper, & whilst this may at first seem like a deft stroke of characterisation, characterisation is itself out of place, for "Voyage" is no more concerned with character than was 2001 : A Space Odyssey (which, I suspect, greatly influenced the writing of "Voyage").

I also feel there is a second fault in the story, &, if this is so, it is once again concerned with the crafting of the story. Having finished his preliminary scene-setting, on p.17 Bowden finds it necessary to convey to the reader cartloads of science before he can take the tale any further. The trouble is, those paragraphs of information read too much like a chatty text-book, & the reader realises he's being treated like a meron who has to be given a crash-course in the author's science. I'm not suggesting that Bowden should have conveyed the information in another way (such as by dramatisation of the mechanics of the ship,

or by a character's soliloquy or reverie), but I do feel the passage should have been re-cast to remove this tone of "science made simple". Perhaps he should have written those paragraphs in a less direct tense.

For all that, "Voyage" appealed to me - as did both copies of The Mentor. Count me in.

Yours sincerely,

Van Ikin.

Neil Rahman
54 McLay St., Coorparoo, Qld., 4151. 29/3/71.

Dear Ron,

ARGH!! To be struck by the dreaded "This is the last issue unless you respond in some way", how terrifying, but of course you're right. (** How could I be wrong? - Ron.**) As Heinlein once sagely put in : TANSTAAFL, except that with struggling thru my last year of high school, taking a small hand in organizing QCon, and the growing heap of fanzines, books, and other assorted rubbish on my floor which most correspondence disappears under, I rarely wrote the LoC most fanzines deserve. Enuff of excuses; to The Mentor...

Mentor (** I'll let that one go.- Ron.**) (or Wise Council as Newnes Family Reference Dictionary defines it) is one of the best produced fanzines on the Australian scene, and certainly contains the best fiction of any fanzine, Australian or foreign. (** It ought to, since a high percentage of the writers in it are pros. Which is good, in a way, in that it insures good reading and gives the authors the feedback I think they would like. But I think this is more important for writers just beginning, as well. As you can see by this issue, there is a lot of constructive criticism of previous stories. Well to the writers good, methinks. So, come on, people, write : every fan has tried his hand at some fiction. Polish it up and send it in : it could do you some good. At least I will say why I can't print it if I decide not to. Thanks for the compliment, Neil. - Ron.**).

Some of the articles I really dig in TM are Australian SF fans, it's nice to know a little more about the fabled names of fandom, as a matter of fact I've been thinking of doing much the same sorta thing regarding the members of the BF&SFA for ANZAPA; I also look forward to pieces by John Brosnan and exQueenslander (instant egoboo for the rest of us banana-benders) Jack Wodhams.

All in all The Mentor is one of the most enjoyable fanzines I receive, something to look forward to.

Up QCon!!

Peace,

Neil Rahman.

Ps: Just thought of another reason for not writing as often as I'd like to, my typing pitiful (two fingers!), and my longhand gives me a pain to look at. (** Phooey to that! TMs 7 - 12 were done 2 fingered)

Jack Wodhams
8 Stone St., Berala 2141. 17/4/71.

Dear Ron,

The Mentor 18. It is imagined that REALITY F will get you a LOC or two, if ever, because this brief, over-ejaculating, over-emphatic discourse upon intercourse touches upon a subject of vast interest and virtually inexhaustible possibility. A book could be written upon it, a very large book, but, to the Clarke chagrin perhaps, a stubborn effort will here be made to constrain my comment to a paragraph or two.

I do not know, of course, just how unvirgin this sheila, Sheila Suttie, is, or might wish to be, or be aggressively determined to become, but to consider indiscriminate copulation as being 'with it', trendy, and somehow emancipating, like it or not, is a conception extremely superficial and immature. If it is to be - "Oh no, I don't mean with just anybody!" - then this implies a measure of discrimination, which in turn suggests some personal reservations and exclusivity in choice - which to inevitable lead to expression of personal preference, to involve attraction, wanting, wishing, caring, emotion and feeling. And so to the old familiar frustration if the one she do don't want to, eh? and finds her uninspiring.

To get unvirgin may not be quite so easy as we hear tell - pleasantly, that is, agreeably. It requires that little thing called love which, as we should know, is a matter of full time regard and affection that has sex as a fringe benefit. To carelessly become and behave unchaste is not to embrace even the mildest form of passion, but to admit the shallow precepts of whoredom. If and though she wishes actively to pursue unvirginity to demonstrate her avant garde independence, then still I think a girl might be as well advised to at least retain the old-fashioned notion of charging a dollar or so a time. This to ensure a plus commercial value rather than the total negative value minus that is the reward served to zealous abandonment. It should always be remembered that those who wish to obtain quality have to supply quality - the Rembrandt is not to be bought with gilded pennies.

It's nice to know that Cy Chauvin is nineteen - it provides some excuse for the predilection of his peds for his oral aperture. Quite liked his SS WATCHING. Nice to know Kevin Dillon is not dead and that his stream of consciousness still lives, etc., e.g. and ?

To find critical acclaim for the most part in 18's pages, but Jack does not sucker all that easy. But you can, if you like, continue with the attached, THE BREADBASKET - copy sent to Bruce Gillespie and SF Commentary ages ago (Oct.'69) but, so far as I know, he has not it used. (**Much thanks, Jack. Will use. - Ron.**)

All the best,

Jack Wodhams.

Leigh Edmonds,
2/28 Ardmillan Rd., Moonee Ponds, Vic. 3039. 13/4/71

Dear Ron,

look, a letter of comment on The Mentor 18 (well I never).

Don't stop to figure out why you put out a fanzine like TM or, soon enough, you'll find that you aren't doing it any more. Of course, it has always puzzled me why anybody would want to produce a fanzine full of fiction anyhow, you can always go out and buy the latest copy of Galaxy and there are better things to be read, not much better than what appears in TM I'll admit. (**Actually, Leigh, I am waiting for the prozines to fold so I can jack up my price to about 85¢ and be the only zine around with good sf. - Ron.**)

Your breakdown of costs was interesting but I fail to see how you can get a 32 page fanzine out of 15 sheets of paper. When I went to school two times fifteen was thirty, so I suppose you must be getting the other sheet by some magical means. If you can just make paper appear out of thin air then why don't you go into the paper business (** Yes... Well, Leigh, you will have noticed that with TM I start numbering the pages from the Editorial and as I had first intended to have the cover quoted as offset price (ie paper included) I left the cover - pgs 1 & 2 - out of the calculations. The other thing, of course, was that the offset covers for TMs 17 and 18 were done free. - Ron.**) and quit trying to find drugs in letters. (Off the record, as they say, nongs who think they can send drugs through the post are not quite that nongy... there have been cases...) (** Eh... Leigh, but who wants to tangle with Narcotics Bureau? - Ron.**)

As I read "Reality F" I became most embarrassed for here was a lady talking about things which no lady should even mention. Sex, sex, sex, sex and still more sex seems to be rearing its ugly head in TM - please cease and desist at once or I shall be forced to stop reading it. (** What, the sex or TM? - Ron.**)

Hmm, well, yeah, err, Ahhh... the rest of the issue was more or less readable - "SS Watching" was uninspired, "Solitude" was boring, reviews were passable, "Tourney Questor" was based on an interesting premise but dragged on forever, "Reality F" was blowing a lot of hot air into something which didn't need it (I suspect that Sheila could be the only person passionately interested in what she had to say and after having read it I wonder why she wasn't out there fucking instead of wasting time at the typer), "R & R Dept" was interesting in parts, "Info Page" didn't dispense much info, "S.F.A." is out of date as you should now know, "Australian S.F. Fans - Shayne McCormack" was interesting but not deep enough or long enough and the back page was well laid out while the Dimitri cover was quite good.

your

Leigh Edmonds.

(** You seem to be alone in the above, Leigh. See the previous LoCs. Dunno if I LoCced BOF. Hope so. Sorry if haven't. - Ron.**)

46.

Margaret Oliver
11 Cleary Ave., Belmore 2192. 11/4/71.

Dear Ron,

Thank you very much for "The Mentor", nos 17 and 18. I'm sorry that I didn't write the LoC for 17 that I said I would, but I was swamped with schoolwork. But now I'm tired of doing homework, so I'll give you my thoughts on 18.

First things first! I love the cover and so do a few of my friends who have seen it. I enjoyed "SS Watching", and especially Michael Black's "Solitude". I have read a number of his manuscripts before, and I feel this is one of his best: he has created a forceful atmosphere and I like the rhythmic flow of his phrases. "Tourney Questor" was most amusing. I don't really agree with most of "Reality F" except for perhaps the last paragraph of page 21, and of course your comment at the end, but it is an interesting addition to "The Mentor" - something different to think about.

I'm sorry that publishing The Mentor is getting you down, and I hope that things will soon be much better for you! While I remember it, do you have any spare copies of the issue (possible no.11), in which Gary Mason wrote an article about "Star Trek" and the censors? If you do, I'd love to buy one! (** It was issue 10, and at the moment I don't have spare copies; though if I do decide to get rid of some of my file copies I'll keep you in mind. - Ron**)

In TM 17, I remember you asked for opinions about holding the WorldCon in '75. (** In Australia.**). Well, I don't have much of an opinion as yet, since I don't know much about it, though I'll shout "Australia in '75!" as loud as the next fan! Would someone answer my questions please?

Approximately how much will it cost? How much of this amount do we have to have before we make the bid in '73? What chances have we of raising this amount by then? (I know my small donations won't go far!). Anyway, how low are our chances of winning the bid? Does anyone know for certain if South Africa has enough interest and energy to hold a WorldCon? For that matter, do we? Without meaning to insult our WorldCon Committee members, who have no doubt done much more than I have heard about, will they really be able to get everything organised in time when it hasn't even been decided in which city to hold the Con?

And on this note I must go, or I'll be slaughtered come Monday morning!

Peace and long life,

Margaret.

(** Hmmm, ah, I'm sure that a Committee Member would like to answer some of Margaret's questions? I have some recollection of discussion of the bid cost in early issues of "Aust. in '75"... - Ron.**)

Gary Woodman

6/27 Hartpury Ave., Elwood, 3184. 23/4/71. (** I got this on 22/4/71; not bad going. - Ron.**)

Dear Ron,

I thought it was decided upon long ago why people publish fanzines; it's largely because they're insane, or because they have so much money they don't know what to do with it - which is the same thing, I suppose...

Cy's story was pretty good, despite the second level, the level of watchers at a film - lines like "...let's delay discussing the philosophy of the picture until some later date..." and "...it had to; they'd been waiting over three hours already..." - how incredibly unreal, how nauseatingly banal. Characters should not emit quasi-intellectual procrastinations at no notice, nor should they sit in a theatre for over three hours, waiting for permission to leave... inconsistencies, inconsistencies, a plague of inconsistencies!

Mike Black writes descriptively, excellently, but not of the paranoia of the central figure. He has handled the weeping word-wooze very well, but misplaced his subject. Paranoia is so strong a feeling as to overstep the realms of emotion and enter those of sensation, and hence should be described by concretes, constructions of brutality, fear, despair....

But it was a good idea...

Ron, between you and Jack Wod, who is paying whom? (Or, as the curate said to the egg...)

Although this REALITY F stuff is really none of my business, I feel obliged to state that these days, virginity can pretty nearly be equated with intentional ignorance - the I-don't-want-to-know school (which is pretty overcrowded, but fortunately not so much be the young).

Further thoughts on David Gray's demonstrators-as-sheep comment: the important point is not that they are being led, but the fact that they are going somewhere. The direction is irrelevant; any change is preferable to no change. We all know what stasis does to societies, or rather what static societies do to themselves...

Sadness of suffering? Well, I dunno - I interpreted it as 'it is sad to suffer' - a peaceful, resigned sadness in the face of the seeming inevitability of suffering - general rather than personal. Cy?

Kevin Dillon is incredible. He's the only person I know who sends letters where the envelopes are integral parts of the letters. Reminds me of a diminutive, more incomprehensible Ginsberg - "I have seen the best minds of my generation destroy'd by madness, etc." Wow.

Just listening to Lennon's WORKING CLASS HERO... sounds a lot like the old Dylan, MASTERS OF WAR, HARD RAINS...talk about reversals...

may you never get footrot,

Gary.

48.

Shayne McCormack
49 Orchard Rd., Bass Hill, NSW, 2197.

Dear Ron,

"The Mentor" gets better every time, I'm really glad to see such good stuff coming onto the Australian fanzine scene. I must protest, though, at that terrible article by Shayne McCormack ...very boring stuff. And the picture - words cannot describe my horror. (** That's funny, Shayne. You did have words to describe it when I saw you last.. though I don't suppose I could print them as coming from a lady, could I? ‡Actually, they weren't all that bad...‡ - Ron.**) Reminds me of a frostbitten nun.

Its all very good and most commentable, but what I really wanted to comment on was the article by Sheila Suttie, "Reality F".

It seems that if one wants to be "in" nowadays, all one has to do is to be against conscription and Vietnam and for so-called "sexual freedom", I don't consider sex to be a "race". There is a starting point, true, which is the restriction imposed on a female by the biology of her own body, but as for it being a race, I consider the likeness crude. If a girl wants to keep her virginity until she is married, then that is her right, as a human being. If, at some stage in her life she meets a man she considers worthy of giving herself to, then that also is her right. It isn't a race, it isn't a matter of "clay feet", it is a matter of choice.

Is it so very wrong to have a set of maoral standards higher than what seems to be considered "right"? I don't think so, and quite a few other girls think the same way. The writer mentions that in recent history a virgin wife was infinitely superior to her sister who was 'un-chaste'. That was a time of strictly divided classes, where right and wrong had harsher meanings than they do today. The writer mentions one extreme, then suggests we should follow the opposite extreme. I don't believe in extremes, I try to moderate. Therefore, what it comes down to is this : virginity is concerned with the most important thing in life - sex. And something as importnat as that is a thing to be left to personal decision. (** Anyone wish to comment on this "most important thing in life"...? And where does love fit in in your scheme of things, Shayne? - Ron.**)

Yours most sincerely,
Shayne McStarTrek
(alias Shayne McCormack on her
better days)

Alex Gas
75 Trevellan St., Sth Caulfield 3162. 5/5/71.

G'day Ron,

Just got TM 17 & 18. Good Ghod! I think I'll write to the Government about all the unsolicited garbage one gets in the

mail these days.

In appreciation I enclose a freshly printed \$1.00 note for you to use as you see fit. (** Much thanks, Alex. It came in handy - with the other subs - to help pay the \$24 bill for cleaning the cylinder I have. - Ron.**). I note that I am requested to loc, well I would have anyway. (heh! heh! Finally got my name in print.)

Oh! and before I forget, there is a Monash University Science Fiction Association and strangely enough goes by the name of Monash University Science Fiction Association (or MUSFA as it is lovingly known to the honoured few!). If anyone wants to contact us for heaven's sake don't write to the president, Cary Handfield. He's mad, and besides, he can't write. Write to me, Alex Gas (address above) (I can't write either but I like letters), or if you're a sticker for formality, M.U.S.F.A., Monash University Union, Clayton 3168.

Now to get down to The Mentor. The only real fault I could find with no.17 was that the bracket opened on line 15, page 2 was never closed. (funny, but that's something I can't stand.

The first thing I read in a fanzine is the lettercol. I happened to read the lettercol in no.18 first which naturally enough sent me flipping through no.17 so I don't think I'll comment on it in depth as it was covered pretty well in the locs in no.18 (eg thanks - favourably impressed - loved the cover - the fiction in TM is better than that of any other fanzine - John Brosnan's writing is gorgeous - Ire, Ump and Vamp is my type of material - poetry usually leaves me cold - etc, etc). However I will say that of course you didn't get many replies to SFA, you fool you! What right have you got going around asking blasphemous questions such as can and should Australia hold a WorldCon? (I forgot something - Aust.S.F.Fans is a great idea, keep it up).

Now for no.18.

Rons Roost (sic...Stan) was grand stuff, the sort of thing when allied with How to Publish a Fanzine and In the Process Ruin Yourself is guaranteed to keep new fanzines from appearing. (and suddenly joining ANZAPA doesn't seem to be such a good idea. I mean, look what it might lead to,)

Knowing Cy Chauvin to be a poetic longhair, commojew, ratfirm. bum I expected SS WATCHING to be good when I started it and it almost lived up to it's expectations (ie I liked it but I hate giving praise to a fellow longhair....etc.). Unfortunately the same cannot be said for SOLITUDE. It stunk. You know, all form and no content. Well at least there was some purty English in it. Tourney Questor was a bit of a disappointment after no.17, but still enjoyable.

Reality F seemed to be merely a rehash of a hash, and even though it was well done didn't have enough originality to make it really sparkle. I lingered long over Shayne McCormack's autobiog. Mainly because I couldn't believe it. Imagine! Older than me and still a Star Trek fan!

To sum up, all in all a very readable 'zine. Am looking forward to TM 19. Hoping you can read this,

Yours optimistically
Stanlaus Rintgip.

Andre Norton
Route 1, Box 19-B, Maitland, Fla. 32751, USA. 2/5/71.

Dear Ron Clarke:

The copy of The Mentor which you were kind enough to send me unfortunately arrived when I was working against a deadline and my mail was, as usual, assuming a mountain high measure. I hope that you will excuse this delayed thank you for the fanzine.

My connection with Australian fans has been mainly through the very welcome letters of Patrick Terry -- whose great interest in my own work I have taken and cherished as a compliment which perhaps I did not deserve. But his accounts of fandom were of great interest to me, and I feel the poorer that I shall have them no more. A very great gentleman, and a most kind and considerate critic is lost to us with his going.

He supplied me with some volumes of natural history for my reference library, which I have not only used to good advantage in my background for the creation of alien animals, but which I have loaned to other writers here. And this means that his assistance in our imagined worlds still goes on and will continue indefinitely.

I appreciate your taking the time and trouble to send my your 'zine, which I read with interest and I hope you will forgive the long wait for my acknowledgement.

Sincerely,

Andre Norton.

(** Thank you for your letter, Andre. As you may know, the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation has instituted a series of awards in Pat's memory, called the "Patrick A.M. Terry Award for Humour in SF", the award given at the 10th Aust. SF Con in Melbourne over New Year 1971. This award gives some idea just how much Pat was thought of in Sydney, at least. As you may also know, Andre, Australia is hoping to win the bid for the '75 WorldCon. Maybe you might be able to see those animals, and you may find you like the people here, too. - Ron.**)

John J. Alderson
Havelock, Vic. 3465. 5/5/71.

Dear Ron,

The Mentor 18 to hand which I have read with the usual

interest. I would like to comment on Sheila Suttie's article in Reality F: it has logical implications that a harlot would find disconcerting.

First, what is marriage? In every code of law it is simply "mating" writ longer. It is sexual intercourse which makes marriage and without it there is no marriage. Right then, let us disregard those couples who "marry" before they have a public ceremony. Those who start the great adventure of marriage under a hedge or in the back seat of a car have made an inauspicious start, but let them be.

The implications from the article is that promiscuity is acceptable, reasonable, and right, and "the in thing". This is before one goes through the public ceremony of marriage, but how can one expect any girl or man to suddenly give up all others and have only the one partner. Does Sheila Suttie suggest we drop all form of marriage? Does she realise the immense body of law and custom that would have to be altered? It would be quite illogical to suggest that sexual "freedom" before the wedding should end therewith.

Another point. A girl makes herself public property, how "public" can she be. I am firmly convinced that if we are to have sexual "freedom" then we have sexual freedom. But does Sheila Suttie realize that implication, or does she think that this "freedom" is for the girls, not the men. On what basis is a girl to decide who shall and who shall not. Is she to take her pants off for the man who takes her to the drive-in and not for others. We know this racket, the oldest in the world. If this sexual "freedom" is anything other than prostitution, then on what basis has a girl the right to take one and reject another. Will she have the man with the most sex appeal : then what of those men who are just as interested but have not got that dubious quality? In other words are the sexual delights to go to the glutton and the greedy. Think again about this sexual "freedom". If a man wants to work up an appetite for supper, has the girl the right to resist merely because she wishes to be selfish. I think not, the idea of rape must be just as outmoded and silly as virginity. Sure, as Sheila Suttie says, we have "sexual freedom" and about one third of the girls avail themselves of it - as they have always done. But the other side of the coin : it is impossible for one man to rape a woman so we have pack-rape. Does a girl expect to have her cake and eat it; remember sexual "freedom"!

Men have their moral standards and they have their inhibitions. In both cases they seem to exceed those of women. They are also a little more logical and commonsense than the female, snarl as you like at that. Men considered that it were better if women were not a prey to wandering packs of louts and decreed a woman should be inviolate just as a man should be inviolate, for reasons it were well for every woman to consider.

In the pub would-be footballers kick many goals; many sheep are shorn in the bar; and many girls are ridden. A lot of women including Sheila Suttie believe this. Sheila Suttie knows nothing about men, and damn little about women.

We have had sexual freedom for untold generations. A man and a woman are free to remain pure as they wish; there is no other sexual freedom, and whatever else is taken is robbing someone else. If Heinlein knew any history he would know that his 21st century morals lay in the past and mankind has tried to wash their filth from their souls. His views on morals are as amusing as his views on rockets, his view was that a chemically powered rocket could not have enough thrust to get out of the atmosphere. In many respects I find Heinlein as silly as van Vogt,

Regards,
John J. Alderson.

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
Tomorrow will be dying.

from "To the Virgins, to Make
Much of Time", by Robert
Herrick (1591-1674)

Alan Sandercock
1 Michael St., Lockleys, 5032, Sth Aust. 9/5/71.

Dear Ron,

Thanks for issues 17 and 18 of THE MENTOR. I quite enjoyed the articles and I hope you will excuse a not very complete nor systematic LoC of both 'zines.

Jack Wodhams' story in 17 is up to his usual high standard, despite the cop out at the end. I'm also glad to see Brosnan back with one of his typically entertaining pieces dealing with that ever popular topic. You know what I'm referring to. It's interesting to note that his comment on film censoring in Australia, of white women's nipples, is already outdated with many over-exposures in recent film releases.

Another quite acceptable article in 17 is the Australian fan biography. Such a column has been needed in local fanzines for quite some time now.

I also enjoyed like article in 18. Speaking of 18, I was glad to see a fellow Adelaidian (P. Anderson) getting reviews published. Paul maintains his usual witty style, and even though I deplore his choice of reading material (Gardner Fox!) I still enjoyed and read the complete column.

Reality F : provided much needed feminine view-point for the 'zine, even though Sheila's article seems a little familiar and sheds no new light on the problem. Yes, I have also read 'I Will Fear No Evil' and, finding the whole plot situation so unbelievable and dull, consequently was not the least shocked or impressed by the characters' morals, I guess your comment is correct however.

Re R & R Dept. This seems to be one of the most interesting sections of the whole fanzine. Those nice long juicy letters from such interesting correspondents make fascinating reading. Having mentioned the letters, I noticed a letter from Cy Chauvin. I'm quite impressed with this guy; not so much for that long communication, but for writing that intriguing yarn 'SS Watching'. The presentation of the story in the form of a film script is refreshingly original.

Speaking of fiction, I guess I'll have to mention the latest 'Wodhams' effort. It just didn't seem to be my cup of tea. It was okay for the first page or so, but I soon tired of the idea. Liked Jack's illo's though.

One last thing to tell you is that Adelaide University now has a Science Fiction Association. Naturally enough it's called the Adelaide University S.F. Association, and anyone can write to me for details. Fandom will flourish in Adelaide yet. (** With all these active LoC writers coming out of Adelaide, I'd say SA fandom is well on the way. When is your zine coming out? - Ron.**)

Regards,
Alan.

"It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying,
Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled..."

Bob Vardeman
PO Box 11352, Albuquerque, NM 87112, USA. 12/5/71.

Dear Ron,

Many thanx for both copies of The Mentor sent (17 & 18). I've sent off a bundle of current Sandworms but the US mail is notorious, maybe even world famous, for its incredibly slow handling of mail. Thus, it may take a month to get out of the US & on its way to you, not to mention the in transit time between the US & Australia (contrary to popular misconception, all US fans are not filthy rich - I have to mail my stuff 3rd class or it would just cost too much. In country, this means it is sent by mule - overseas, I think it means that the fanzine is tied onto the back of a poor sardine who must swim to the destination with this onerous burden). (** The Australian Post Office ain't bad, either. Yesterday (17/5/) I received in the mail a 2nd class airletter from the UK - postmarked 13/5/71. In the same mail came a copy of Norstrilian News - postmarked the 11/5/71. It was from Melbourne : 600 miles away. - Ron**)

Comments on 18: Starting thru the zine, not much to comment on in the editorial since we are all overworked, underpaid, and love to do fanzines in spite of the other two conditions. After a while, I got the impression that I was working just to support my fannish habits... the more I read about other fans, the more certain I am that my reaction is a normal fannish one. Mundane activities are

useless except for financing fannish ones.

I'll pass on commenting on fanfic since I've rarely been known to like fan fiction and when I do, I start harping on "Why wasn't this in a prozine?"

Which brings me to Reality F by Sheila Suttie. I think it interesting to note that those "virgins" thruout history have often not been virgins by the common, modern day definition. The "vestal virgin" comes to mind. Hardly a celibate maid, that - more like a religious whore. She got the kicks and the temple got the money and presumably everyone profited from the exchange, even tho the whole deal had to be legitimized in the eyes of disapproving Victorian historians as being a religious rite or something.

Modern day standards are certainly different and with groups like ZPG (Zero Population Growth) in the US realize this. Primary problem in days of yore was unwanted kids. Current birth control techniques are not 100% sure, but they have many which come very close indeed. So if a girl is careful, meaning knowledgeable about birth control methods, and wants to enjoy one of the more pleasurable events of life, I'd say she'd be stupid not to. No, or little, physical risk, much to be gained.

As to the stupidity about a man wanting to marry only a virgin, I guess it is still a fairly popular notion, more's the pity. Which is really ridiculous. What exactly does a man want out of marriage, anyway? A virgin? Or a person to talk to, with, relate to, with, feel for, with? Is he wanting an ideal or is he wanting a person? I'd say the man who wants to marry only a virgin is selling himself a bill of goods and can blame only himself when the marriage goes on the rocks.

And it probably will because no human could hope to live up to a perfect model which the guy has mentally created.

Besides, there is an old aphorism which is applicable. "Practice makes perfect." While perfect is unattainable, practice is bound to help everyone concerned in all manner of ways.

To use a cliché current in the US, Sheila you're right on! May the next installment of Reality F be as logical and well written.

I second Eric Lindsay's request for your continuing series on fans in Australia. All too often distance makes getting to know other fans difficult. This is at least a fairly systematic way for Australia to introduce its fans to those in the rest of the world.

As to your decision to bid for a Worldcon in '75 or not, I think you had better look long and hard at one point and if the answer is "Yes" then all else will fall into place for you. The question is "Will Australia have enough people willing to work for the next 4 yrs to put on a good convention?" I think Heicon shows how very difficult it is for just 3 or 4 people to put on the entire show by themselves. Mandred, Mario, Thea & Hans-Werner all did fantastic jobs but they had to do it virtually

singlehanded. Something the size of the Wor. Icon is just too much for a small group, however devoted they may be.

So, if you've got the manpower and the determination to stick with the bid for 4 entire years, I'd say go ahead. I was most impressed with Robin's determination when I talked to him at Heicon and if he is any indication of the type fans who'll be backing Australia in '75, I'll be more than willing to boost your bid when it comes to vote in '73.

If, on the other hand, only a few people are truly interested, I'd say forget it since 4 years is a long time and all sorts of mundane affairs can intervene and force even the most ardent fan into gafia. Without a key member, a bid can fall flat - this is a sad thing but it is even worse if the gafia strikes after the bid is won. No one person should be indispensable and the duties should be widely enough spread out so everyone has something to do and no one person has too much. (** Well, Bob, the decision was taken in Melbourne over New Year to go ahead, so we'll see just how good is the old Australian spirit. - Ron.**)

I can tell by reading Shayne's autobiography, that there is a notable difference in terms between the US & Australia. How many years of schooling corresponds to your High School? In the US, it is 12 (with 1-8 considered elementary and 9-12 to be High School) and unless a person is held back for some reason practically everyone finishes at least 10 grades and a significant number finish all 12 (esp. since the 11 & 12 are not significantly more difficult than the 9th and 10th). (** In NSW at least the system goes somewhat like this. First is Primary School - Kindergarten (usually) and then classes 1 to 6. Next comes HighSchool (started around 13 yrs of age). This is, with the Wyndham Scheme, of 6 yrs, of which the first 4 are more or less compulsory, and the pupil can leave after the 4th if he finds it too hard going. You have to get a good pass in the 6th yr to get into University. Which is a total of, uh, 13 years; though maybe there are some who don't do kinda. The Old System 4th yr exam was called the Intermediate, the 6th yr exam the Leaving. In the New Scheme the 4th yr one is the School Certificate, the 6th the Higher School Certificate. The foulup came when they ^{again} changed schemes, and those who failed the last Leaving did it/in night classes, the last one was some three years ago. The Wyndham scheme is somewhat different is that the pupils are given a wider scope in science subjects in the new one, especially the girls. - Ron.**)

Really, Shayne, there are worse things for a fanne than knowing how to type - think of all of us poor male fans who hunt and peck out our fanzines and even then end up with dozens of typos per page. Just think of this as a case of the mundane world lending major support to the fannish. (By the way, are there many people who can think and then talk at 120 wpm? I might be able to think that fast, but I sure couldn't talk that fast.)

I may have to try a Georgette Heyer book since I've seen nothing but rave reviews of her books and yet have never read one.

As far as my readings have

shown, even the dinosaurs were short lived compared to modern day cockroaches. Now doesn't that sort of shake your faith in humanity?

The only thing I could see to disagree with Shayne on is her last statement - she may hate writing about herself, but she seems to be far from boring.

Enough for now. I'm going to try to get this mailed before a monster postage increase goes into effect on the 15th (better than a 30% hike for first class). (** Possibly the best way for International mail is still the Aerogramme, though, Bob. - Ron.**)

Best of luck with The Mentor, Ron, and all the luck in the world for Australia in '75!

SFanatically yrs,
Bob Vardeman.

(** Thanks for the support, Bob. We'll need all we can get for the '75 bid. - Ron.**)

Personally, I'd rather She said :

"Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made..."

(Robert Browning)

Robin Johnson

2/28 Ardmillan Rd., Moonee Ponds 3039. 28/4/71.

Dear Ron,

Upon your timely threat of excommunication, I take pen in hand to assault your eyes with my scrawl with reference to TM 18.

The general impression is good - a solid, well reprood, well laid out zine - nice Razuvaev cover, nice headings - and I feel it hard to explain why I wasn't too happy with this issue. I understand your problems of getting material, and as a world-class procrastinator I'm always impressed when anybody gets anything out on schedule : and yet I wish you could get sufficient material to be able to edit a bit more ruthlessly. In this issue, this applies most to Jack the Wod. His non-fact article, to use GALAXY's term, beautifully illustrated, is however at least 300% too long. It's fun, sure; but a bit ho-hum after ten paragraphs, with thirty left to go. (** I'll have to keep that in mind, Robin. Tnx. - Ron.**)

Good letter-column though : useful info page - and here I must congratulate you on finding the SUSFA - how about trying UNSW, New England, Newcastle, etc? (** First I have to find some-one going to 'em. - Ron.**)

It won't be news when your next comes out, I suppose, but the current highest bid for the AMRAs donated by Don Tuck for

Australia in '75 funds is \$100 from Ron Graham (** Norstrilian News for 9/5/71 still quotes it at \$100 - Ron.**). I expect in a few weeks to be announcing the postal auction of an ..(*This is I suppose, DNQ, though Robin doesn't say so, so I'll cut this here.*) and with the recent announcement of the choice of Melbourne for the Worldcon bid for '75 (** Which is news to me. - Ron.**) we are now checking on various venues.

I'll enclose my last NAMES (address list) in case ANZARA still hasn't de-chrysalized, but there should be a new one fairly soon. I'd like any names of people you know to be interested (a) in books & fanzines (b) films (c) Cons etc, not on it for the next issue, which may go a little further into interests if enough info is available. There are now nearly 300 people on my file in this country, and I haven't had a real go at Bangsund's address list yet. (** Any fanzine editors want a good address list? - Ron.**)

P.S. What's happening about meeting Jack Williamson?
(**Who is arriving in Sydney in July. Well, uh...- Ron.**)

(**The above letter wasn't signed,
but I presume it came from Robin.
- Ron.**)

Mike Glickson
267 Saint George St., Apt.807, Toronto 180, Ontario, Canada. 15/5/71.

Dear Ron,

I feel I should do something in response to your threatening fanzine but since I don't dig fanfic I found few comment hooks in TM 18. It did inspire me to dig out my file of ENERGUMAN 5 to see what response I got. Discounting the copies merely sold from which I don't expect any response I guess I sent out about 180. I got back 35 locs or comments for a 19% response. If you take the locs as a percentage of the total print run you get 14% while adding traded fanzines and art contributions, response is about 26%. That 50% figure seems a bit unrealistic for a genzine. A lot of US authors are fans in the sense of convention fans and there are several who appear in fanzines regularly too. The last issue of my zine had contributions of one sort or another from six different pros.

PS.The average issue of ENERGUMEN costs me about \$120.

Best,
Mike.

And a bit about distribution from a letter from Eric Lindsay of 19/5. ".../.../.Sent about 100 copies overseas about the same within Aus. (**Talking about GEGENSCHHEIN 1.-Ron.**). Score so far 3 paid sales, 4 subs, mention in NN, LOCs from Blair Ramage (reviewer), John Alderson, and yourself. Not too bad I suppose.. Because of the cost of printing 250 copies, next issue will have

less copies and will only go to those who have responded or have not received no.1, or somehow given me cause to think they would like a copy. At the moment about 20 people. (**That response is not all that bad, Eric, I got the grand total of one LoC for the first Mentor in this present series. - Ron.**)

Regards,
Eric.

THE COLOUR PROBLEM.

Being some comments about the use of tints in fanzines.

There is rapidly becoming a dearth of fanzines using plain white paper, including The Mentor. There is one main reason for this, as well as colour consciousness. If there are any mistakes at all, or if there is a lack of really first class typing and duplication, the white paper tends to show it up. Which is why about the only bloke using it is Johb, who has some of the best duplication anywhere.

I tried green early in the piece and gave it up - too yucky, and the actual green wasn't too good, either. I eventually settled on blue - it gives the best results as well as going well with blue or especially white, covers. Orange I let go as being too glary; and the new cherry red is a bit hard to take and the black type on red... eah!

On the other hand, if you have reasonable duplication there is really one colour that gives really all you want - buff. I haven't tried it, but have seen the results elsewhere; and they are the best I've seen. There are two grades of paper approximately: the Burnie paper @ \$1.53 (+ 15% S/T) a ream white, and the Bond @ \$1.66 a ream. I've been using the Burnie and you can see how it turned out (in WOMBAT). The see-through (printing from the other side) isn't too good in white, a bit better with colour. It is even more better with the dearer paper. I have been using Canadian Heavyweight white for the back page; this gives a little more strength to it and stops the back cover from coming off too easily.

One of the reasons given when a two colour zine is put out is to give a good package - and some faneds (such as David Grigg) uses a whole lot of colours in the one issue. This gives a nice personal touch to the zine, as long as everybody else doesn't do it - for an example of this see ANZAPA - which mailing looks somewhat like a rainbow. ANZAPA is also a good place to see different typing and duplication procedures and to see the effect of different colours and how they come out.

The above are only some of the things I have found out for myself, and they are my own opinions which, if any future faned wants to, ay be able to use if he or she thinks fit. I hope it is of interest. - Ron.

tm's INFO PAGE.

59.

Well, the info page this ish won't be too long - this ish is growing like topsy as it is.

* * * * * * * * *

Noel Kerr's electro-stenciling service : \$2 per foolscap sheet, contact Noel at 85 Morgan St., Carnegie Vic 3163. Postage back is free in mailing tube. Takes 1-2 weeks, but it's worth it. (Depends on the Post Office, is all.)

* * * * * * * * *

ACTIVE AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION CLUBS.

NSW -Down Under Space Kooks : President (Shayne McCormack)
49 Orchard Rd.,
Bass Hill,
NSW 2197

- Sydney Science Fiction Foundation : President, SSFF,
Box 4593,
GPO,
Sydney 2001

-Sydney University Science Fiction Association :
Pres: Leith Morton
110 O'Connor St.,
Haberfield 2045

QLD - Brisbane Fantasy & Science Fiction Association :
President, BF&SFA,
Box 2268,
GPO,
Brisbane 4001

TAS - Australian Tolkien Society :
Michael O'Brien
158 Liverpool St.,
Hobart,
Tas. 7000.

S.AUST. - Adelaide University S.F. Assn.: c/- John Hewitt
11 Kyrle Ave.,
Kingswood,
S.A. 5062

VIC - Melbourne Science Fiction Club : Box 1267L
GPO,
Melbourne 3001

* * * * *

FANZINES RECEIVED:

NORSTRILLIAN NEWS. 21-26. Aust newszine edited by Bruce Gillespie at GPO box 5195AA, Melbourne. Various items from both Aust and

from the USA; wide coverage of news - personal, books, clubs, etc. Good to keep up with the Jones (or Smiths) with. Aust= \$1.20 or a book of stamps. USA 10¢ a copy, UK 3 np ea.

B.S.F.A. BULLETIN. Put out by the British sf Assn. Edit add: Archie Mercer, c/- Harvey, 2 Stithians Row, Four Lanes, Redruth, Cornwall, UK. European news, correspondence, and books out in GB. no. 4J. To join the BSFA costs 30/- old money. You get pubs & VECTOR, their zine.

ASFM nos 2-4. Last issues of John Bangsunds latest well produced zine. Presumably back issues are available from the Master, at Parergon Books, GPO Box 4946, Melb. 3000 All sorts of interesting things and letters. 50¢ ea of 6pp, ie 20pp for \$1.50.

AUSTRALIA IN SEVENTY FIVE no 10. Put out by the Aust in '75 Committee. News of the proceeding '75 WorldCon bid for Aussie. You can get this zine for \$\$ or interest. I suppose both would really help. Produced by Gary Mason, GPO Box 4593, Sydney 2001. 16 pp. Also has zine reviews by Bob Smith of o'seas zines and general info on Cons of all types. Get it.

CARANDAITH. vol 2, no 1. Drool. It is for zines like this that I stay in fandom. 75¢ and can be gotten from Mike O'Brien at 158 Liverpool St., Hobart, Tas, 7000 and is the journal of the Aust. Tolkien Society, though it is printed and edited in the US of A. One of the top zines in the world. 74 pages full of stimulating food for thought, illos and stories. Something you can show to your non sf friends, or your mother. Recommended. In fact, you'd be silly not to get it.

SF COMMENTARY 16. 131 pages and is produced (no other word for it) by Bruce Gillespie @ GPO Box 5195AA Melb. 3001. I am not even sure you can get copies of this, though you may be able to. SFCs are \$3 for 8 Aust., \$3 for 9, USA, £1.50 for 9, UK. This is a special John Foyster issue reprinting Johns Exploding Madonna & the Journal of Omphalistic Epistemology. Which contain some of the best criticism to come out of Aust on sf. This whole issue is ASFR standard, and gives some very good reading. Something to have for your library. Congrats, Bruce. I know I would never do it.

TOLKIEN BULLETIN no 1. April 1971. Edited by Mike O'Brien at the address given above. Published irregularly by the ATS. 10¢ a copy, free to ATS membership. (for which you also get CARANDAITH.). This issue features Michael Wood's "Tolkien's Fictions" and is 7 pages. It is a fairly short - for this type of thing - rundown on Tolkien's fiction and gives various 'insights' into the issues behind the Ring and the writing. This type of material has been gone over time and again by Tolkein journals in the US, but it is still fresh reading for anyone (like me) who has not yet read this to death.

PEACE PLANS no 14. This is a pamphlet series for "recognition of all human rights, being the greatest degree of tolerance and impartiality which is morally still justified. This implies anti-totalitarianism or condemnation of communist, nazi, and other dictatorships." This series, put out by John Zube of Wilshire St,

Berrima, NSW 2577, is well thought out and not the usual mash. Contents include Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'Declaration of Rights' and articles on Law, Property in a Free Society and six others. $\frac{1}{2}$ foolscap size - 88 pages. For those in Politics fandom. 50¢ ea.

THE FANARCHIST no 4. Put out by David R. Grigg at 1556 Main Rd., Research, Vic 3095 for the usual or 5 for \$1. This ish reminds me of John Foyster's SATURA/GRYPHON in layout. 34 pages of fanish stuff, covering the FANZINES: A DISCUSSION which took place at the Melbourne Con over New Year - for those that weren't there, this in a good introduction to sf fandom in Australia. There is an Article by Michael Cameron in which he talks as if he had gaffiated. Fiction by the editor and columns and lettercol. Good issue and nice style. This zine is going places.

GEGENSCHHEIN no 1. This is Eric B. Lindsay's first fanzine, and is a good show for number one. The editor's address is 6 Hillcrest Ave, Faulconbridge, NSW, 2776. This issue has a really gonzine content, with articles and fiction covering Interstellar communication with lasers, Film reviews (No Blade of Grass), book reviews, good humourous fan fiction and an appeal from the editor for a suitable name for his zine. Oh, he also has fanzine reviews. GeG is available for the usual and is also 25¢ an issue. Looks like a good fanzine to support and get.

CHAO 3 by John J Alderson at Havelock, Vic. 3465 for the usual or 30¢ a copy plus postage (6¢?). By-the-way, this zine and most of the above are monthly. This zine is printed in green ink on white paper, which is new, and not all that hard on the eyes. Seems is mainly SerCon, and has article on Lee Harding's CASSANDRA'S CASTLE, SF as Literature by Steven Phillips, Migration and the Future (mainly in/to Aust) and LetterCol & fanzine reviews. I haven't seen the first two issues, but CHAO looks like shaping up to something, too. All it has to do is get over the hump (usually the first 6 issues.) 28 pp.

MOEBIUS TRIP 7. Edited by Edward C. Connor at 1805 N. Gale, Peoria, Ill. 61604, USA. The usual, or 3 for \$1. This issue has some good reviews and usually has some good ~~arguments~~ discussions going with pro writers. Funny cartoons scattered through it and a true* article on UFO's and what people who see them usually do. Interesting Letter-Col from such unknowns as Jack Wodhams, Leigh Edmonds, Bob Smith, Ron L Clarke, Robert Bloch, etc. Also fiction and an (other) attack on fandom. A good example of what a fanzine could aim for. 36 pp.

OUTWORLDS SIX. This wholly offset zine is put out by the husband & wife team of Bill & Joan Bowers at Box 87, Barberton, Ohio 44233, USA. Aussie agent Mike Cameron, 59 Carroll St., Bardon, Brisbane, Qld. 4065. One of the world's top fanzines. Wraparound cover art and really beautiful artwork through the entire issue. Has three figure studies by Will Rotsler which give some depth to sf art; a critique of Laffetty's FOURTH MANSIONS by Ted Pauls, a Stephen Fabian folio tribute to Isaac Asimov (again, beautiful), an article on Conformity in Fandom, a juicy LetterCol, more illos, and a Greg Benford column. If you want to have a glimpse of what a zine can be, see if you can get a copy of this zine. Beautiful.....A40¢, 32pp.

Along with O 6 came a folio of Limericks by George Barr, which are not all that bad. There are seven of them (8 counting the cover) and are illustrated by Barr. Full page (American Quarto) pages.

S.F. COMMENTARY 20. This is a monthly (or bi-m) mag which seems to come out fortnightly. At least, I had just Locced no 19 when a few days after I had posted it I got no 20. Gah. SFC is also one of the world's top review zines (the other is SPECULATION, from the UK) and is something one should get if one wants in-depth reviews (criticism) of sf books. It is published by Bruce R. Gillespie, at GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Vic. 3001 and is \$3 for 9. This ish is 51 pages, and I wish Bruce would post them in envelopes!

ENERGUMEN 5, edited by Michael Gliksohn at 267 Saint George St., Apt 807, Toronto 180, Canada. Another of the top zines. Offset back & front covers (Carter and Austin); 38 pages of some of the best duplicated work I've seen. I wonder what the fans in Aussie would say if they saw these zines against, say, TM - would they still think Tm was good duplication? I know the answer to that one, of course! There is also some fantastic artwork scattered through this ish; there must be artists in Australia who can equal this sort of thing. Where the hell are they? Good articles various fannish things, an in-depth review of Poul Anderson's TAU ZERO, a column by John Berry, an 'article' by Avram Davidson, and letters from BNFs and others (like, Jack Gaughan) who seems to be becoming an institution. I like the illo on page 28 by Canfield. Feb '71. For the usual or, as a last resort, 50¢ a copy.

GRANFALLOON 11, edited by Linda E. Bushyager, at Apt. B211, 121 MacDade Blvd, Folsom, Pa 19033, USA. Another t.... A kind of wrap-around cover by Steve Fabian enclosed 56 pp of really interesting writing. This ish features Jack Gaughan talking about his artworking for GALAXY etc; Linda talks about the coming Hugo awards for this year and the last WorldCon (Heicon) and her escapades (I'm not sure if that word is the right one to use...) in Europe; a background of Indiana fandom in the last few decades; a coupla reviews (like the new flick of DORIAN GRAY), an article on Charles Harness's novels; Locs and what looks like something that is stirring up discussions in the US of A and Canada = sf and fannish artwork & artists. There is also a portfolio of Alicia Austin's art - four black & white drawings - which show why Alicia is in the forefront of Fan art in the New World. Her work reminds me of Beardsley. Good issue, Linda. Available for the usual, or 60¢ a copy, Feb '71. Good illos spread not too thickly throughout.

SCYTHROP 22. April 1971, 40¢ John Bangsund is at it again - this time with a more personalized zine. This ish is 42 pages and features such names as Ursula K. LeGuin, who talks about styles in sf writing, A.B. Chandler who talks about 'My Life and Grimes'; John Foyster on Syncon '70; John Brosnan on The Bus; an article on Brian O'Nolan, as only John Bangsund can write; an interview of Keith Antill by Julia Orange; Reviews by George Turner; various reports and an Iron Outlaw strip. The whole ish done in the matchless style and top duplication that John is famous for. Now you only have to put out the 3 or so issues this yr, John, and the Hugo for 1971....?

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW 43. Edited by Richard E. Geis @ PO Box 3116, Santa Monica, Cal. 90403, USA. 50¢ ea. It is rather too bad that this is the last issue, if only because it is a hell of a time to start a trade! This ish is handy pocket size (8½ x 5½") and is 68 pages of offset. Cover by Austin and various interior illos by Kirk, Gilbert, etc.. There are a lot of ^{book}small/reviews, but also some good in-depth ones, eg on "More Issues At Hand" by William Atheling, Jr. (Blish) by Robert W. Lowndes. There is an analysis of magazine sf by David B. Williams, columns by Dick Geis; a verry interesting interview of Keith Laumer by Richard Hill; a column by Brunner, who talks mostly about himself; one by Poul Anderson and, of course, the LoCs. A real pity.

+ + +

The Cover; is a previously unpublished Virgil Finlay which was offered to me for a cover illo by Ron Graham. It is probably the last one of "Finlay's Girls" that has not seen print. I can only say thanks again, to Ron, for letting me have this fantastic artwork for the cover for The Mentor. It is copyright by Ronald Graham.

+ + +

Thanks also to Noel Kerr for the special job on the electro-stencils for this ish and for WOMBAT. They enabled me to get them out a lot sooner than I expected.

+ + +

Cy Chauvin, of 17829 Peters, Roseville, Michigan 48066, USA, is doing a 'foreign' (ie non US) fanzine review column in a major US fanzine. He would like review copies of Australian zines to review, and he promises to give your zine a good look. Help keep up the tourist trade and let the rest of the world see why we think we can hold a Worldcon. Up Australia in '75!

+ + +

Well, this looks like this for this ish. I've run off some 175 copies, of which I will post some 130 on the weekend, if all goes well. Overseas lists are growing and I hope those of you in the outer world who like this ish will Spread The Word?

Thanks to those who mentioned TM in their zines and I hope you like this issue. The cover is something - the printer had a few troubles and some may be getting it on ordiaary offset paper, though most should have it on shiny stuff.

As you will have seen by this issue, there is a shortage of poetry. If you have any, or know someone who has some, please sent it in - I can use it. Also articles and fiction; with some Australian flavour, if possible. This last stencil typed 27/5/71. Sorry if I left out your LoC : it only means I have not as yet recieved it.-Ron.

Australian S. F. Fans -

[third in series/



JACK WODHAMS

Ronald lad,

You are, what is known in the trade as, a pest. The Clarke is becoming my bete noire, or the hobbling Bob Cratchitt ever pathetically appealing to miser Scroogwod for any pittance from his known hoard of goodies. Or, this wheedling, sleeve-plucking mendicant has the gall to enquire, if ancient scrip is too prized, then how about something new?

A biography, for instance, starting from lovable curly haired child born back in 1931 in London's sprawling metropolis, through blitz and evacuation - devoting at least twenty pages to personal heroics and the Doing of Bit (like apple-picking and rabbit-catching) to defeat that awful man, Hitler - and on to the post-war years, and youthful rebellion, the Confrontazi with the last of many headmasters, the repudiation of scholarship, the embracing of the role of simple working man, humble working man accent on the simple - to unworking man, to working man, to unworking man, to....

Over and over, jobs, jobs, jobs, jobs, booting up and down again - the years of resentment against the necessity to work - the unfair ess of it all - and where were all these rich widows that were spoken of as being available? - they do not exist - swindle, like so much else - the disillusionments of life, the females unwilling to work for a person, to tend to a person's comforts, loving affection so clearly deserved, oh no, oh dear oh dear, no, quite, but quite to the contrary - so work, bastard, and the turning of spanners and twisting of screws and the laborious scrapings with file - and the dispensing of drinks, and the slick overcharging, and fast buck made with a smile - and the ten-ton truck like a tank to appease frustration somewhat to bully through the traffic, lord in contempt, and even Mercedes shying

Where the means to fortune? Where indeed. Write? God-damned foolishness. What chance, eh? what chance? Not work, anything but work - some easy way - work, curse, unavoidable, work - years - this job, that job, dissatisfaction never to for long let off chewing the guts - writing, toss off a few thousand words, easy, wouldn't it be easy, nice, turn it out, spare half-a-day a week, yawn, such a bore - hell! one day a bite! real money, it is possible, so it is possible, so it really is possible after all, after all, after all it can be done - shock - it can be done - now, writing, getting paid for it, sometimes, for some of it, tantalising, it can be done, pay dirt, where is it, the bitch? come on royal flush, king nugget, jackpot, it's there, somewhere it's there, come on brain, come on! - hooked - words - words, stringing them pearls, glowing joy, superlative, and bringing them to the critical jewellers' eyes, to have them pronounced plastic - the head, the wall, and ever the twain to meet - easy?

Hooked, baby.

Work, real work, itching, driving, donkey-work chasing a carrot - not enough time, not enough hours in the day, certainly no time to write a biography piece for Ron Clarke.

Nuts to you, feller.

Jack Wodhams.

-----+++++++-----

Reviews - cont. from p.31

number of the more famous creatures of mythology. These are used for their novelty value until Bloch decides that is is time to ring the changes and introduces the famous Gorgon to provied a convenient ending for his already long story. In spite of its length this later effort is not as successful as the two preceding novelettes, and perhaps the book could have been better if it had been replaced by a couple of stories more in keeping with the others. The idea behind "Nursemaid To Nightmares" was a good one but it should have been fully developed in a novelette of half the size.

"Dragons And Nightmares" is a must for all fans of Robett Bloch and those who reminisce about the good old days when Unknown and Weird Tales were still alive. I even suggest that the reader should try to obtain the Mirage Press edition as well to have in his collection and loan only the cheaper Belmont edition.

- Paul Anderson.

 SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM IS ALIVE AND WELL IN AUSTRALIA.

THE MENTOR

WINTER 1971

NUMBER NINETEEN

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Cover art by Virgil Finlay, copyright Ronald E. Graham (see p.63).
 Illustrations pages 3,11, and 22 by Shayne McCormack; page 29 by
 Bob Dobson; electrostencil headings by Noel Kerr; offset by Mr J.
 Douglas.

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This issue is for Carolyn Somerville : who appreciates good art.

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