

PHANTASMAGORIA



RESTING PHYSICIST

(SEE PAGE 13)

Phantasmagoria is published by Derek Pickles at 22 Marshfield Place, BRADFORD, Yorkshire, England. Art Editor is Alan Hunter.

EDITORIAL

This fourth issue of PHANTASMAGORIA is an attempt, by doubling the size of the magazine, to make up for the uncommonly long delay between it and the third issue. There are very many reasons for this delay that I do not intend to mention; but it is hoped that in future there will not be more than four or five months between issues.

The change in format has been forced upon me, I personally do not like this foolscap format, and as it is impossible for me to produce a magazine using my original format the next and future issues will be quarto sized; perhaps partly printed; and partly duplicated, but details are rather vague at this time.

With reference to the Fan Poll as described in THE OUTPOST in this issue, I feel that this type of poll is essentially a futile project. I did not complete the ballot form which I received as I am always chary of these so-called 'polls of fandom'. The first thing I take exception to is that 'all' fandom is not contacted, and the second is, how many fans read even one tenth of all the fanzines that are published. The third is that only about three hundred people returned forms when I have listed in my own files the names and addresses of over one thousand fans who are active in that they read at least one fanzine, and subscribe to and read the professional magazines, and this must be a very small % of fandom.

\$

KEEPING UP TO DATE IN THE EDITOR SQUEAKS.

The first item of interest is that Dennis Gifford, of 16 Sydenham Park, Sydenham, LONDON S.E.26, is publishing a "SPACE PATROL HANDBOOK". Details are:- cost 1/6d post free. Printed 16 pages plus cover; 3½ pages halftone photos and line drawings; ready in three to four weeks (mid-April). Contents include "SPACE PATROL MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE"; and an INTERPLANETARY PASSPORT with first space already stamped 'London Space Port' and spaces for Luna City MarsPort, etc., SPACE CRAFT RECOGNITION and construction details based on designs used in SF films. Stills from recent SF films. Complete index and data on SF films from Geo Melies to date. Glossary of languages (Earth words and Martian, Venerian, Plutonian equivalents). Codes, Competitions with prizes etc.

Dennis is a free-lance comic-strip artist specialising in SF. Fantasy and Weird strips, should be an interesting booklet although seemingly designed more for readers of the Eagle than for NEW WOR-

Next piece of news is that a new British pocket book firm has come into being, beginning operations in April, four titles a month projected, averaging 80/100,000 words, with 192/224 sewn pages, fourcolour, semi-stiff jackets. The only title of importance to readers of this magazine is the Novel selection for May it is "BENITA" by H. Rider Haggard. Described in the blurb as "An engrossing African adventure, with a supernatural theme by this perennial best-seller". They also ask for 'new and promising writers'. Published under the imprint CHARLOT BOOKS; the Editorial Board consists of Louis Golding, R.J. Minney, Nancy Spain.

Vince Clarke in his SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS has been attempting to discover what an organisation known as THE BRITISH SF ASSOCIATION is. After writing to the Secretary (who has had letters under this heading published in various English and American magazines), Vince is still in the dark as to what the BSFA consists of. However after describing his efforts Vince received a letter from oldtime British fan Paul Enever who mentioned that he was Sec of a British SFA back in '34, Vince had never heard of this one either. Now I

(continued on Backcover-

DOOR

Who Knows? Behind the door perhaps there stands
A mute with bowstring and with scimitar,
A wraith with silence eloquent in hands -
Or nothing but the twinkle of a star.

Behind the door perhaps the fortunes are,
Whose bony fingers write in shifting sands
The destinies of men of many lands -
Or just an empty room, the door ajar.

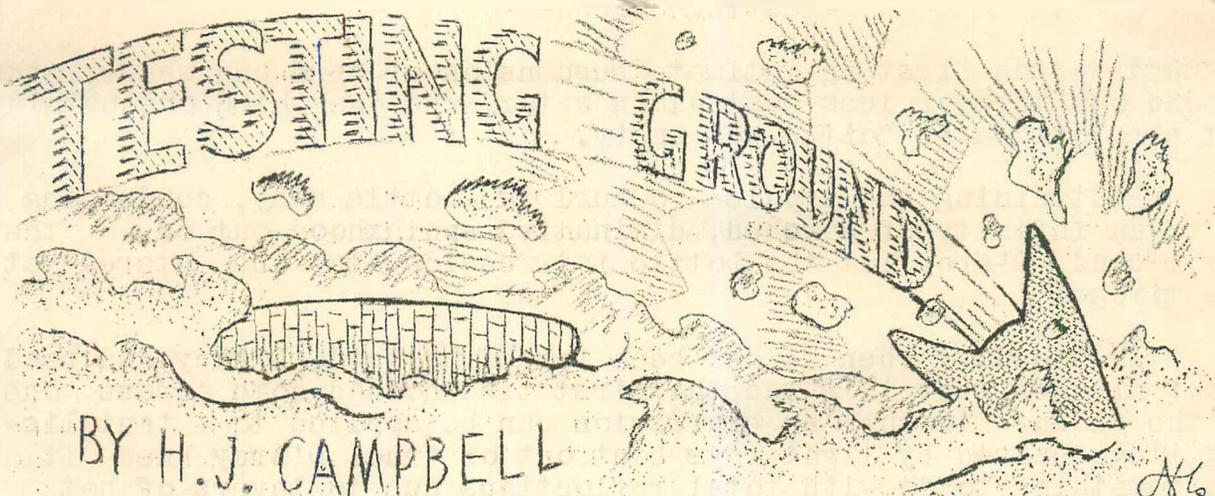
Perhaps there is in there a sense of dread...
The echoes of a curse that someone said;
Perhaps there's nothing but the moon inside.

The door stands not quite shut. What's to be done?
Just pull the door to, and just step aside,
And leave it to the moon, and wander on.

A SONNET
BY
JOHN
BRUNNER



J. WILSON



Actually, it may not have been D'Arcy's fault that the test rocket never got more than a mile or two above the Woomera range. Anyhow, they thought they'd keep him away from his drawing board for a bit by sending him out to find the scattered fragments in the hundreds of tons of sand that the rocket sent flying when it stopped flying itself and swiped the desert with its five-ton war-head.

D'Arcy didn't like it. He was not at all pleased being the only moving thing in the million square miles of undulating nothingness that comprised Australia's contribution to the science of thrust and lunatic research. He had the feeling that he was being put upon.

As his tracklaying jeep ground to an uneasy halt, he shook the sand from his hair and slipped a pair of goggles over his red rimmed eyes. He let his podgy body down from the jeep and looked around. The view was the same as it had been for the last two days. Sand and sky and sun.

Now that the shadow of the jeep's canopy had gone, the sun retaliated to its temporary ostracism by sending a shower of yellow swords onto D'Arcy's face. Red hot swords that penetrated to whatever bone there was beneath his rounded flesh and made him feel that being caught in a rocket blast couldn't be much worse than this. He reached into the jeep and brought out a spade, saying "Bother" when his unprotected fingers touched the sweltering metal. He drew on some gloves and then proceeded to attack the nearby sand as though his wife or his last month's pay was somewhere down there.

Gradually he cleared away the sand from around the protruding spike of metal he had spied. It turned out to be a bit of fin. Grunting with satisfaction at the completion of his task, D'Arcy tossed the fin into the jeep and was about to climb in himself when he changed his mind.

A little to the left of him there was a mound of sand about twenty feet high. With commendable forethought that might have surprised his colleauges back at the base, D'Arcy inducted that by climbing the mound he would be able to make a survey that would obviate a lot of circlings in the jeep.

So he squared his rounded shoulders, tucked the spade under an arm and scampered up the slope, his feet sinking up to the ankles in loose sand. Once or twice he pitched forward and had to splash about like a sportive porpoise, mouthing mild expletives and getting himself a little sandier every time. By the time he reached the apex of the mound his energy was at a very low ebb even for D'Arcy. He was hot and bothered by the sand that had dribbled down his neck and was now laying the foundations for another damper desert somewhere below the third button of his shirt.

D'Arcy irritably dropped the spade and threw himself down, he slipped the water bottle from his belt and took three long
(turn page--

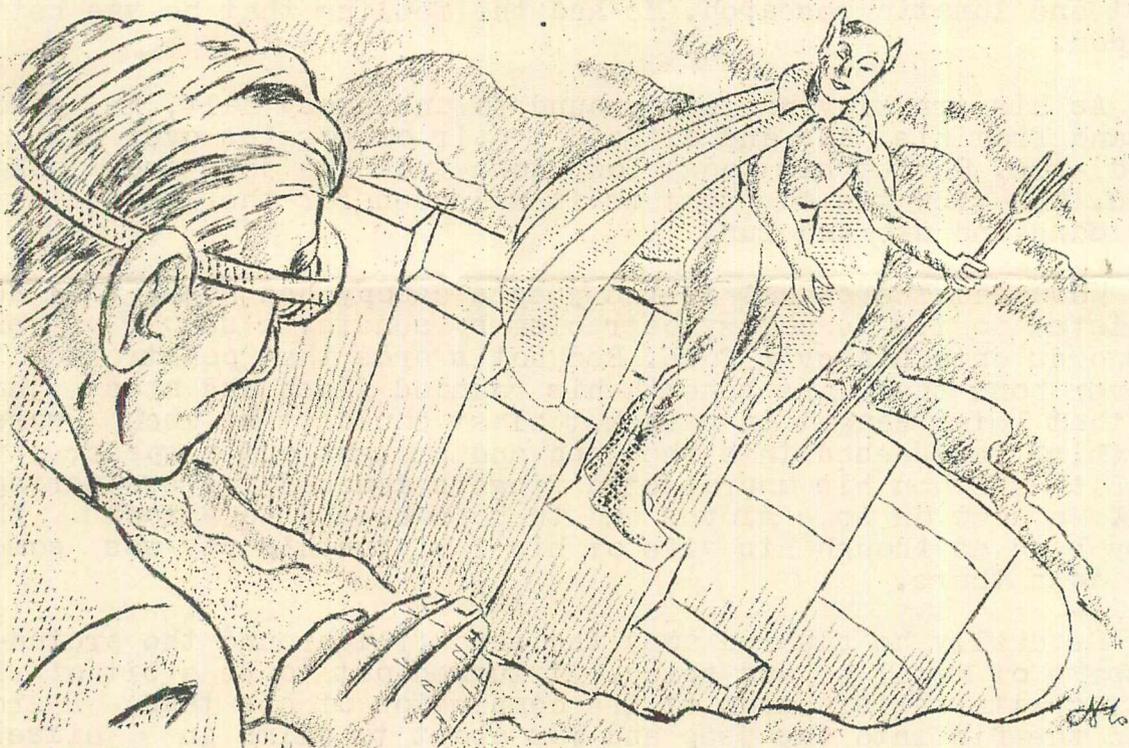
-Testing Ground-

draughts, - the first an intimate suspension of sand and water, the second one more or less just plain water, and the third one nothing but air. His water bottle was empty.

Restraining the impulse to hurl the bottle away, condemning it to an infinity of parched, diminutive sphinxhood out on the level sand, D'Arcy let the bottle fall beside him and stared at the mirage.

In the days when he had been forced to read, D'Arcy had read about mirages, but this was the first time he had come across one in the flesh - if such an expression can be applied to a tantalising image caused by light rays bent out of true. D'Arcy knew it was something to do with total reflections due to layers of hot air above the sand or some such phenomenon. He stared at it sullenly.

The fact that its configuration meant less than nothing meant less than nothing to D'Arcy. He lay quite limp and uninterested as his eyes roved casually over the apparent hole in the sand with its jagged surround of gleaming brown masonry. Then he became more alive than he had ever been since the day he was born. A figure climbed out of the hole. Then another. And another. Even in the shimmering heat haze, the figures were too solid to be the products of any kind of drunken light rays. Aliens perhaps, foreigners poss-



ibly, but definitely not a mirage. And definitely human, with the requisite number of arms and legs of the standard shape and size. And their faces, whilst maybe not being a perfectionists idea of beauty, had the usual features in the usual places.

D'Arcy upped himself and ran down the slope towards the figures as they began putting more brown blocks into position. His eagerness, coupled with a certain amount of inevitable momentum, carried him rapidly across the sand and laid him down flat in a silicious flurry at the feet of one of the figures. He looked up, spat out sand, and said "Clumsy of me".

The nearest figure turned to its companions. "Oh, my God", he said. "A phlegmatic Englishman".

D'Arcy relinquished the posture of the beasts and regained his position among the primates. "What are you doing here?", he demanded as if this were his own private desert and trespassers would be interloped.

"We live here", the man replied. "Lived here for years".

(continued across-

D'Arcy stared at the hole in the ground. "Down there?"

"That's right. Down there. Goes a long way down. Spreads out too. By the way, my name's Nick".

"Pleased to meet you", D'Arcy responded. "I'm D'Arcy".

"You probably can't help it", Nick said. "Want to have a look round?"

D'Arcy thought he might as well. It wasn't every day that he came across a hole in the desert with men living down it. A hole that goes deep and spreads out. He trailed after Nick to the edge of the hole and followed him down the steps. The other men had resumed their task of rebuilding the masonry. The steps ended at a kind of landing, with a corridor on one side, and more steps, going down, on the other.

"nuisance, that rocket of yours", said Nick. "Blew the top off all right. This place hasn't seen daylight for centuries."

"Is that so?", D'Arcy asked politely. "Sorry about that. But - er - who are you? I mean, you people.....".

"Us? Oh, we aren't anybody really. We just saw the way things were going and decided it would be safer down here. Took us a long time to build it, but it's running all right now."

D'Arcy was struck by a sudden thought, which in its unfamiliar environment went straight from his brain to his tongue. "When did you start building this place?"

Nick calculated mentally. "Let's see. It'd be something like nine hundred thousand years ago".

"Nine hundred-!" D'Arcy gasped. "But man has only existed for a million years."

"That's right. He started right here in Australia. People say it was India, but that's nonsense. After about a hundred thousand years a bunch of us here reckoned the others were on the wrong track so we dug in and disappeared. Looks as though we were right too. Rockets and things".

Nick had led D'Arcy along the well lighted corridor and into a vast space that was criss-crossed with smooth functional buildings. The illumination looked more like daylight than daylight itself. People and vehicles were bustling about all over the place. The scene stretched away into the distance and dwindled under the inexorable laws of perspective. A complete world, underground. A futuristic world from the past.

"What do you do for air?". D'Arcy asked.

"Sand is silicon dioxide, you know. We split it mesonically Use the silicon for masonry. Good stuff".

"I'm sure it is", D'Arcy agreed, gazing with a silly sickness around him. "And how do you get rid of the carbon dioxide?"

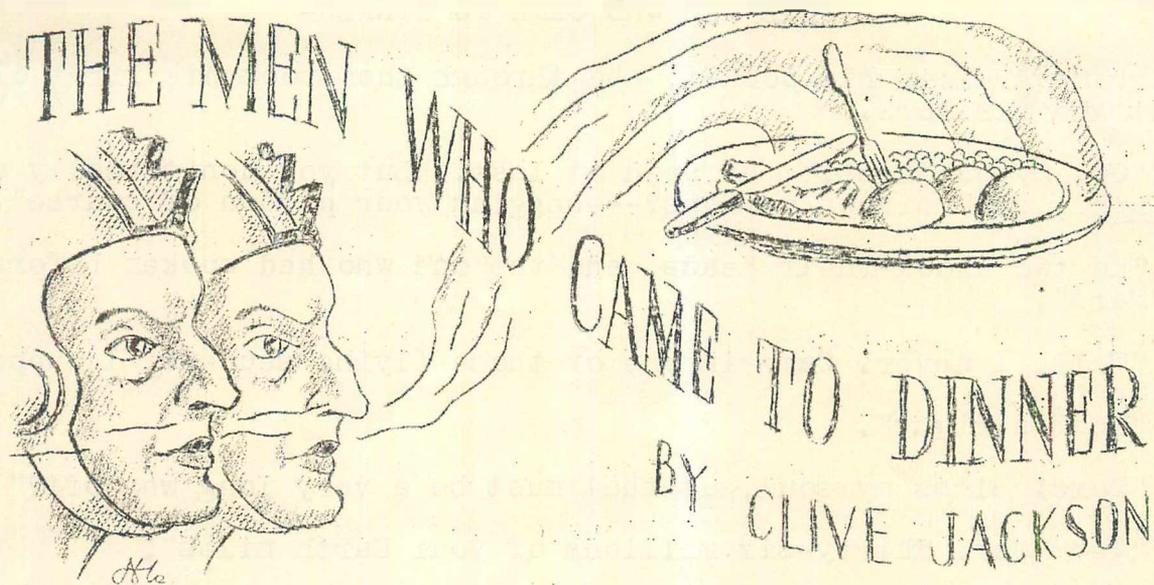
"Split that too. Carbon comes in handy for our generators. We're completely self-supporting. Food grown hydroponically, of course."

"Of course", D'Arcy murmured. "How else? Water?"

"That was a bit of a problem at first. Then we hit on the idea of getting it from bauxite. There's masses of it round here that gave us aluminium and more oxygen too".

D'Arcy had another thought. "How come you speak English?"

(turn page-



The whirling disc came down from the winter stars and settled feather light beside a dark wood. Two beings that could have been mistaken for men got out, and, after looking all around, set off towards a lighted cottage across the fields. They moved slowly and heavily as if they were very tired, and when they reached the cottage they were quite exhausted, so they waited a little while on the porch and studied the neat brass plate which said "H.R. Rufus, M.D."

Soon their breathing was steadier, and one of them stepped up to the door and smote it loudly with his gauntleted fist, ignoring the two bell pushes with 'day' and 'night' printed beside them in neat white paint. Almost before the sound had lost itself across the frosty fields the door opened and a woman was silhouetted against the bright light from within; and, although they could not see her face, they knew she was puzzled, probably frightened, because after all they were not quite human-not quite right.

Their two long, brown, identical faces slipped into wide smiles, and one of them said, "Good evening", very politely. She hesitated, starting to close the door again, but a man's voice called from inside; "Who is it, Helen?". A moment later the speaker appeared, a short man past middle age but in no wise senile, a plump and comfortable man who had nevertheless known a lifetime of unceasing hard work. Although he was almost bald, the hair that remained to him was still dark, and his teeth were strong and white; the only burden which old age had imposed upon him showed in his eyes, peering myopically from behind thick-lensed spectacles of old fashioned design balanced on his red button of a nose.

"Well, don't stand out there in the cold", he boomed, "come in and thaw the frost out of your bones". His wife stood aside, looking apprehensively up at them as they stepped past her into the hallway, tall and thin and exactly alike, and both wearing one-piece suits of whitish leather with helmets to match.

"Nights getting chilly", said the doctor, as they followed him into his cheerful little parlour; but they made no attempt to warm themselves at the log fire, seeming rather to avoid it as if they found it distressing. "Sit down", "make yourself comfortable", said the doctor, plumping himself down in his own ancient armchair. "Come far?", he asked.

They smiled again, "Oh, yes", said one, sardonically, "From Mars".

"Ho-ho! Bless my soul, that's a good one!". The plump little man was shaking like a jelly. "Helen, come and meet the men from Mars!".

She did not join in with his laughter, but said, "Henry, you have your reading glasses on".

Sobered by her tone, he hurriedly sorted a pair of spectacles
(turn page-----

-THE MEN WHO CAME TO DINNER-

from the several in his pocket, and through them took his first clear look at the visitors.

"Oh, my goodness!", he said at last. "But you don't really come from Mars?, some circus perhaps?---begging your pardon of course".

The two shook their heads, and the one who had spoken before said "Mars".

"Well, I never! Came in one of those flying saucers, I suppose?

"That's right".

"Mars! Bless my soul, but that must be a very long way off?".

"Very far. Thirty-six millions of your Earth miles".

"Incredibly! Oh, I wonder, would you mind?-----". The doctor leaned forward and took the Martian's pulse, consulting a big silver turnip watch. His bushy eyebrows went up. "Heavens! A hundred-and--sixty!".

"On Mars our pulse rate is only one-thirty-two", explained the Martian obligingly.

The doctor had produced a black notebook and was writing quickly. "--one-sixty. Wait till old Willoughby hears about this! One-thirty-two. He's another G.P.- biggest bore in the district". He whipped out a thermometer and popped it into the Martian's mouth. "Just keep it under the tongue. I'll be in the 'Lancet'. Mouth closed, that's right. Might even do a paper for the Society. Let's see; well, well, seventy-seven-point-six. Old Willoughby will die of envy!". The little doctor chattered on, but he did not allow his talking to interfere with his examination of the Martians, which medically speaking, was very thorough indeed. But at last he closed his notebook with a snap; and said, "My goodness, look at the time! How long since you had a meal?".

"Yesterday", said the Martian who did the talking; but we only eat once a day".

"Well, if you'll get your clothes on again we'll get you something to eat".

"Very kind of you", said the Martian, "We were hoping to find food here".

"So you shall, so you shall! Least I can do. The dining room is this way when you're ready".

.....

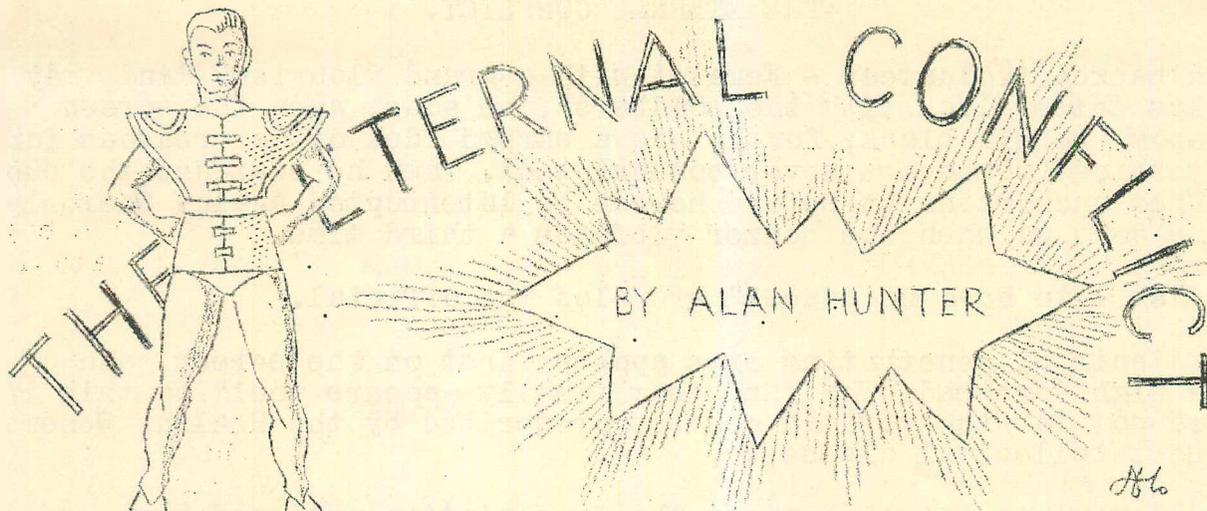
It was long after midnight when the two walked back to their machine, their breath steaming in the cold air and the frosty grass crunching under their feet. They were laughing, and seemed altogether rested and refreshed. Speaking in the sibilant Martian tongue, one of them said to the other, "My, that was fun!" and his companion, thoughtfully picking his teeth with a matchstick, replied, "Yes, it certainly was fun. But imagine them having RED blood! I could hardly bring myself to drink it".....

--o-

Advertisement.

WANTED.WANTED.WANTED.WANTED.

The first three issues of PHANTASMAGORIA. Please write to Ian T.Macauley, 57 East Park Lane, ATLANTA, Ga, U.S.A. All letters ans.



THE INTERNAL CONFLICT

BY ALAN HUNTER

The Administration Officer for the War Department of the Unified World Society swings his feet from the desk top as a buzzer sounds near his elbow - it is imperative that a large size in shoes should not hide the dignity of his uniform. He returns an unfinished cup of coffee to the tray at his side. Coloured flashes appear when he leisurely presses the button operating a televisor on the desk. These coloured flashes group themselves into an aristocratic face with a long moustache.

"War Administration Office?" it demands.

"Yes", replies the officer impersonally, watching with interest the gradual appearance of a well-filled bookcase behind the face - this article of furniture has long been considered obsolete due to the advances in visual entertainment. As the screen attains maximum clarity, he just has time to read several titles, such as "Outline Of The Colonial Age", "The Rise and Fall of Empires", and "Life and Death in the Steel Age", (archaic subjects, now only obtainable in printed form), when the aristocrat declares, "I am about to register for Military Service".

Without troubling to conceal his bored expression, the officer reaches towards a row of pushbuttons, but the gentleman with the large moustache is not prepared to endure such casual treatment.

"I am sixty-eight", he adds pompously.

The officer allows a polite expression of disbelief to appear on his face, for it is seldom that one so young wishes to volunteer.

"Life today is much too soft - no initiative. Where is the adventurous spirit of the past?", growls the voice from the screen. "Give me excitement - and men who are MEN!", and he glares at the officer with scorn. But the officer is unmoved.

"Certainly", he replies suavely, "I will connect you with the appropriate authority," and he pressed a button marked - 'Volunteer - Male'.

When the face has faded from the screen, he reaches for the unfinished cup of coffee. The buzzer sounds again.

"Forsooth!" swears the official. In common with many other things, profanity has a tendency to periodic revival. Irritably he presses the televisor button.

On the screen a girl appears, hair swept back to reveal unpleasingly large ears. Instinctively the official expands his puny chest to fully display the gold braid decorations on his tunic.

"I wish to volunteer for nussing duties", she simpers, neglecting the customary formalities in her obvious eagerness. "My name is Olga, 973".

The official adopts his most impressive manner. "I will put your request through the proper channels", he says, pressing the

(turn page----

-THE ETERNAL CONFLICT-

button marked 'Volunteer - Female' with a grand flourish. "And may you have better luck with the soldiers", he adds, when the screen has become safely blank, for he has a shrewd idea of her reasons for volunteering (women are never conscripted). Then he snatches the cup of coffee and drains it before he can be interrupted again. Scarcely has he done so when the buzzer vibrates a third time.

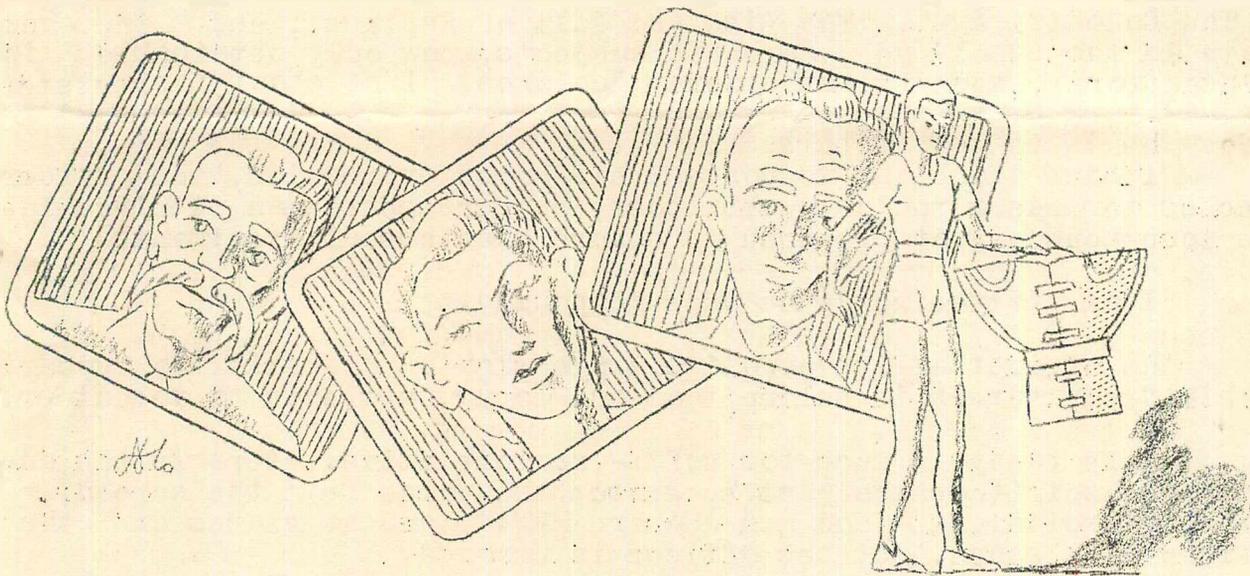
"Am I to have no peace!" grumbles the official.

A pair of penetrating eyes appear first on the screen, and then a high forehead. The face that finally appears would be thin if it were not for the vitamin courses prescribed by the Health Scheme for the intellectual classes.

"I want to appeal against the conscription notice I have received", a harsh voice snaps.

"Compassionate or conscientious grounds?", demands the officer, for the law, as formulated by the Recreations Council, demands that every male, on reaching the age of two-hundred, must serve a term of military service.

"If I am to be compelled to turn my attention to mundane affairs", growled the intellectual, "then it must be for a useful purpose. I will work in an Atomic Station". Working with atomics is a highly dangerous occupation - only forty years before two men had been injured in an explosion, and another accident might occur in any decade. It is, therefore, considered a more than adequate alternative to military service.



"I will switch you over to the department concerned", replies the official and presses a button marked 'Objectors - Official'. Then he looks at the wall clock - it registers seven minutes past noon. "Forsooth", he exclaims, for nobody works in the afternoon. The Administrative Officer begins to shed his uniform. "Three calls in one day! If this continues I shall have to apply for an assistant". As he folds the bright uniform carefully for sliding into the storage slot, he murmurs wistfully, "I must apply for permission to wear this when I am off duty. I am beginning to feel quite insignificant without it". Dressed now in plain utility civilian clothes, Smith 1, 127, 312 steps into the elevator that will carry him down to street level.

.....

It is half a year later.

In the War Administration Office sits Smith, 1, 127, 312, once more resplendent in his uniform. Beside his elbow the buzzer sounds so he casually flips the television button, and a face appears on the screen, clean shaven but vaguely familiar.

(contd across

-THE ETERNAL CONFLICT-

"I demand a discharge", roars the face without a long moustache, before he can even utter a word.

"Conscript or volunteer?", demands Smith, defensively.

"Volunteer - fool that I was!", snaps the voice. "All spirit has vanished from the world. This is only playing at war!", and the face glares at the officer.

"I will connect you - "; replies Smith hurriedly, pressing the button marked 'Discharge'. Beside it is the button for conscripts marked 'Disciplinary' - they have no hope of repeal before the full term of their service is completed.

When the screen is blank, Smith wipes his forehead and then sips nervously at a cup of coffee. He has now remembered the face. "These young fools of less than one hundred years old!" he mutters reassuringly. "So many of them seem to forget that we are a UNIFIED World Society". Suddenly he chuckles, as the memory of an archaic bookcase, filled with books, returns to him. "He may even have thought that people still get killed in a war". The buzzer intrudes on his thoughts. The caller this time is a girl. Her hair hangs gracefully to her shoulders, hiding the ears, and she wears a nurse's cap - this face also seems familiar. She simpers at him from the screen.

"I wish to apply for a discharge from the War Medical Staff".

"On what grounds?".

"Matrimonial!", The official hesitates. Seeing the hesitation the nurse adds quickly, "Our genealogical ratings have been approved as complementary by the Eugenics Council".

"But has he completed his service?".

"No - he is to be discharged".

The officer looks suitably sympathetic, for he knows a discharge is given for only one reason - the most serious injuries, such as a bruise or a sprained ankle, can be promptly cured, but the one ailment which has completely baffled medical science, and to which soldiers seem peculiarly susceptible, is the dreadful common cold.

"I will connect you", he replies obligingly, pressing the "Discharge" button. Her face fades from the screen. The buzzer immediately sounds again. One of the girls from the welfare department on the floor below wishes to speak to him.

"We have received and answer to your request for permission to wear your uniform off duty".

'This is quick', thinks Smith, 'for it is only five and a half months since I sent in the application'. He smiles in anticipation.

"Your request has been refused. Sorry".

As she fades from the screen, the officer's hopes fade also. He looks at the wall clock - ten minutes to noon. Ten minutes, and then he will become plain civilian Smith. So it must be - every day. Slowly, as he sits there stunned, an item on the news broadcast of the previous day returns to him - "Atomic workers are to be allowed to wear their working overalls at all times". Grey overalls are not as attractive as an officer's tunic, but they are more highly respected.

With two minutes of officialdom still left to him, Smith presses the button marked 'Volunteers'.

"I wish to join the Atomic Worker's Corps", he says.

UNDER SCORPIO

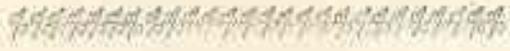
Bright is the night October
When the colourful children stars
Call as they play ball.
In the heavens there are no bars.
So they play not in Space's oases
But in desertlike drifts of distance
That over the universe sprawl.

They trip from appointed sources
To skip in the Milky Way,
And by orderly forces as horses
At circuses circle appropriate courses
Arrive at length in array.

Does it matter if we in our limits
Behold not the whole of the heaven?
We may glimpse in attempting to skim its
Surface an essence whose presence
Provides for our vision the leaven.

Terence Heywood.

(With acknowledgements to
"The Poetry Review".)

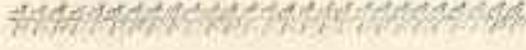


TO H.P.L.

Poet of the unsure mind,
Of the still steel hand that folds around my heart,
Of the last phases of demonic art,
Disquieting.

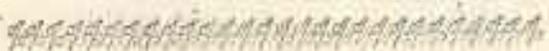
Poet of the musty air,
Of the uncertainty that lies behind the door,
Touches and sounds that leave me - not quite sure
If I am sane.

John Brunner.



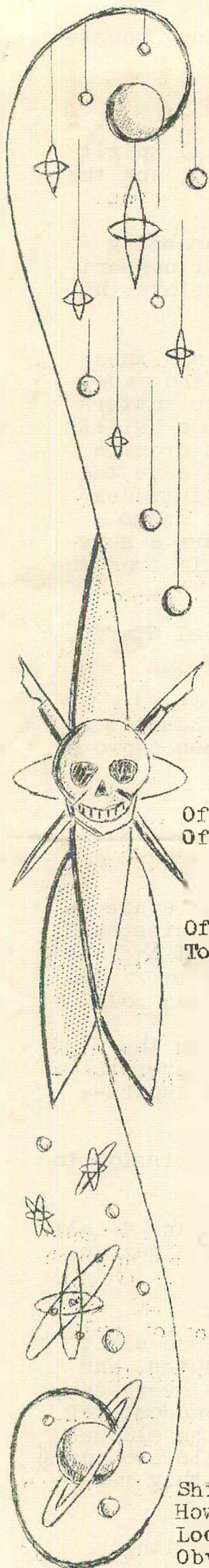
This freedom; a quality so often prated of,
A state of being unattainable.
Always there are repressions
Of Nature, if not man. From our first thought
To our last, we are chained.
Beset by the impossible,
Fettered by convention and limited intellect.
Blinded by vanity,
We crawl the Earth.

Peter Ridley.



Shine on you pretty little planet,
How I wonder who is on it.
Look! that sudden flash of light;
Obviously ACC in flight....

Anon.



28/6

RESTING PHYSICIST

With eyelids drawn across the sight
like cobwebs on a shrivelled grape,
he veils his retinae in thought.
Within the testudineous shape
of skull the teeming symbols fight
to gain equality with nought.

His hands are clenched, his knuckles gleam
against the black arms of his chair -
each bone a stunted ivory tower -
each fist a barrow of despair
where molecules of menace dream
in ossuaries of slumbering power.

Within his grip, as yet uncast -
until the strutting symbols mate -
rattle the pockmarked dice of death;
three calcic keys to detonate
the lurking fuse, release the blast
and suction of atomic breath,

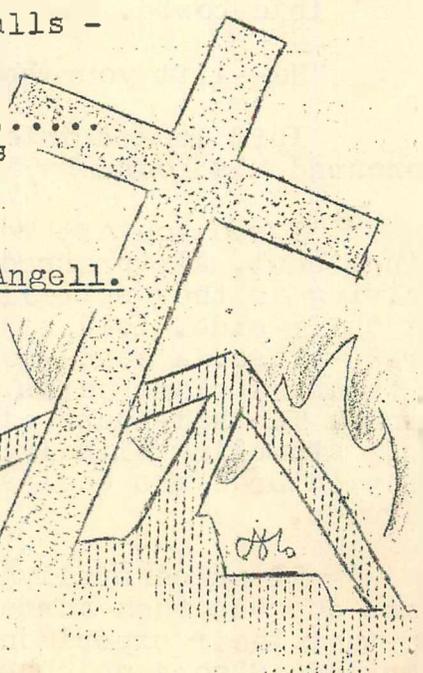
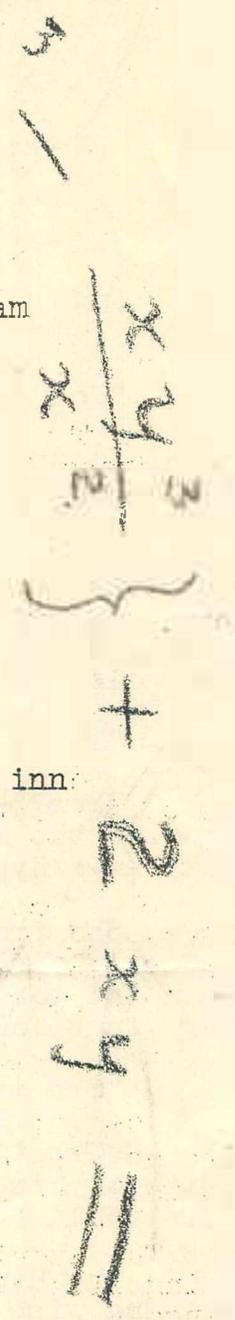
to sweep across the rocking globe
like Lear's five fiends, till church and inn
crumble to pinnacles of dust,
and hissing splinters scream and spin
about the city's ears, to probe
tower and bridge to common rust.

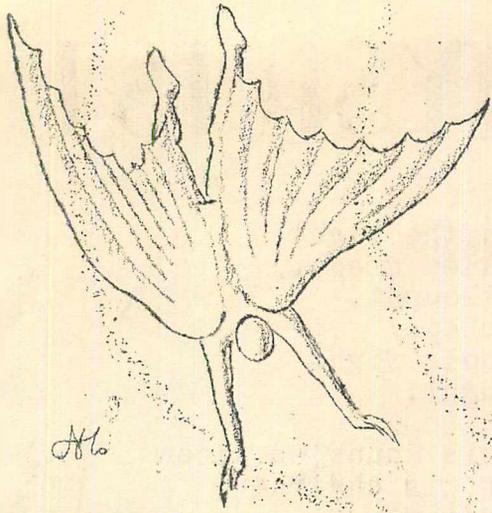
About a world of constant night
the lifeless ages smoke and sweep
till sinuous tendrils white as bone
from crack and fissure coil and creep
into a mass of weeds that fight
to clothe again the fire-licked stone.

And now the tenuous eyelids spring
into the caverns of his brow,
as shards the crackling chrysalis.
Fingers unflex and drum - as though
the bastions barred to pondering
may fall to perigenesis.

Each after each the salvoed walls -
swollen to smoking fistulae -
burst in a fostering cicatrix
of devastating formulae.....
And on the figured paper falls
the shadow of a crucifix.

James Angell.





WISDOM of the HYPRIANS

By: E.R. James

"You should be re-born a Hyprian!"

In the ears of Ibid's imagination, the words of the Director of the Hydroponic Gardens rang again, and the storm of mortal applause beat again.

He smiled at his bronzed reflection in the mirror, then looked up through the sun roof of his house. Against a background of moving cloud, the City of Glass--home of the timeless ones--sparkled upon its golden pillar like the jewelled tip of a sceptre.

"Ibid?"

"Yes?" He turned and saw his slender wife, standing in the doorway of the room. "Oh, its you--Darling, d'you really think they'll make me a Hyprian?"

She frowned and turned. He stared after her. What was wrdng now? Suddenly wings beat above the garden. Bronzed, sandalled feet reached down and touched the lawn with the grace of a Greek athlete. The shining wings folded behind the wide shoulders.

"Greetings Ibid!"

"Greetings!" gasped Ibid. Then it was true. He was chosen, in spite of his youth, to join the great men of science. How proud his wife would be of him!

The Hyprian frowned. "I can read your mind mortal". His eyes, seeming wise with the wisdom of centuries of watching mankind, dilated strangely.

Ibid bowed. Perhaps his pride had not been fitting.

"No--lift your head!" commanded the Hyprian.

Ibid looked into the eyes of the half man, half machine, who honoured his house by mere entry.

"I see you are ready". The Hyprian caught Ibid up. The great wings beat. Air pressed against Ibid's eyes. The ground fell away, revolving as they spiralled up, with the Pillar of Gold a curving wall at their side. Ibid staggered giddily as his feet landed on warm, green glass. A hand--soft as satin--strong as steel--steadied him. On a thousand glass walls the sunlight flashed and glinted with a myriad tints. The hot-house atmosphere of the place closed over him as he was led, stumbling blindly, forward. At last, passing through a doorway, they entered the cool shade of a great hall, flanked with motionless figures.

"Look carefully", cautioned the Hyprian. "These bodies--far more durable than mortal flesh--are given to the great ones of science so that their experiments may continue and not be lost to perishable mankind. Choose which pleases you most...remembering that no second choice is possible".

Ibid walked down the silent aisle. He stopped, catching his breath. It was--like looking at himself.

"That one!" How pleased his wife would be to find him so little changed.

In a glass hall, mercifully shaded except for a concentration of sunlight upon twin operating tables, panic flared in his mind as he approached the vacant table.....As though awakening, he opened his eyes. A Blur of colour filled his mind. They'd blinded him! "I can't see!"

"Do not be alarmed, Ibid", came the answer. "Your body is new to your brain. You must learn to co-ordinate your reflexes all over again. There is always a period of readjustment before a new member can take his place amongst us".

As Ibid lurched to a sitting position, vague images formed in his mind. Encouraged, he concentrated--and suddenly saw with a new and startling clarity. He looked down at his new body. It seemed the same. But if--if he really had Hyprian powers, he should be able to see with vibrations other than ordinary light. At once the flesh of his legs faded to transparency, bones and sinews showing darkly. Startled, he looked up. The shadow-bounded skull of his guide leered at him. Presently, left to himself, he stumbled on uneasy legs to the City gates. A Hyprian barred his exit.

"Sorry, Ibid, but you are not yet ready for mortal view. Imagine how you--one of the perfect ones--would be mocked if you cannot manage your own body! There will be years of training necessary to make you unconsciously wiser than the common sort".

A chill wind touched Ibid's soul. "But-- My wife?"

"She shall be summoned. Meanwhile, why not visit your new fellows in the Botanical Institute?"

An inherent sense of direction guided him to spacious laboratories. At hazard, he examined a mixer of hydroponic solution: a familiar apparatus; or was it? The more he studied it, the more he scratched his head. He approached two Hyprians and heard English words and odd abbreviated phrases like those of a partly understood foreign tongue. As though sensing his presence they turned.

"Ah! The new man".

"I understand he actually verified what you assumed before beginning your present twenty year plan".

"Primitive--"

"But effective".

"In that one instance, yes. Are you forgetting--"

Suddenly, Ibid knew that his wife had come. He ran towards the living quarters, guided by his extra senses.

"Ibid!" She ran into his arms. "I thought I'd lost you!"

He held her tightly.

She screamed. "You--you're hurting me!".

His super-human strength!

--WISDOM OF THE HYPRIANS--

"She stared at him, gasping, rubbing herself. "You--you've changed. You're--a Hyprian!" She turned away with a choking sob. "No Ibid, I no longer belong with you. I must go back amongst my own kind".

He clasped his Hyprian head in his Hyprian Hands. And a Hyprian voice seemed to speak in his mind: "Yes, she is mortal, Ibid. You are now dedicated to the quest for knowledge. Put off the muffling cloak of flesh".

He fled. His wings opened to his need, lifting him high above the glittering City. Geometrically unnatural, it towered above the gentle hues of forbidden town and countryside below. Science on a pedestal-- Involuntarily his wings closed. He slipped Earthwards. He reached back with his strong, Hyprian hands and rent his new wings. Falling-- spinning slowly as the trajectory of his fall grew steeper, he waited oblivion.

But suddenly, out of nowhere, wings beat in his ears, shading his face. Arms clasped him and he was borne up so violently that the very air was like a gag in his throat.

"Open your eyes!"

He almost fell forward. Then he looked up into the wise eyes of the Hyprian who had come to his house. He looked around, and gasped. He was still in his house. What had happened?.

The Hyprian smiled. "Being a Hyprian is not all you imagined it to be, is it?".

"No".

"Good. My mission here is accomplished. Live on in harmony and satisfaction with your own kind. Work hard. Then, in forty, fifty or sixty years' time you may reach maturity and be ripe for transmutation".

"Ibid?".

His wife stood in the doorway; her eyes wide open. "Oh!". She stared fearfully at the Hyprian.

Ibid uttered a cry of joy. He had been given a glimpse of the truth. "Oh, my darling!" He ran to her soft, human arms.

\$

THE OUTPOST--Continued-- very first time in the history of fandom the No 1 Fan is a girl. Lee Hoffman, the pretty young editor of QUANDRY, has just fought her way to the top over the entire body of American fandom, including such legendary giants as Ackerman and Tucker. Of course it was to be expected that this poll, the first for several years to cover all fandom, would have shown some big changes. The days of the Ackerman-Tucker rivalry -- so keen that finally Ackerman designated Tucker No 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Fan--were over. Both of them, especially Ackerman, had more or less retired from really active fandom. The field was wide open for the newer fans, and Lee Hoffman was one of the most brilliant and much the most active. Even so the extent of her victory was probably more than most people expected. The results:--Hoffman 104;Willis 76;Tucker 27,Keasler 25;Ackerman 21 -- shows that she polled more votes than any two other competitors put together. This is probably the most definite result in the history of fan polls, and one of the most richly deserved.

.....Perhaps you would like to hear some of my impressions of my visit. (My experience is that people generally like to hear what sort of impression they make upon foreigners.) For one thing, you may know that New Yorkers have a reputation for rushing and bustling, but they're utter snails compared to Londoners, who rush more madly than any people I've ever seen. Most of my countrymen, for instance, when they find a nice escalator willing to carry them up to the surface from an underground railway station, are willing to let the machine do the work instead of running furiously up the whole length of the thing, as I repeatedly saw Londoners do.

Point two: Everybody was extremely kind to us and gave us a delightful time. We came across only one anti-American manifestation, and that was a dear old lady pacifist convinced that these hysterical Americans are plotting to blow up the world with their horrible atomic bombs out of sheer wickedness. After she had given us a piece of her mind, however, we laid ourselves out to be agreeable so that the old girl found herself liking us in spite of our nationality. She gave us that peculiarly back-handed compliment that Americans sometimes get in Britain, and which they never know quite how to take: "You're not very American, are you?"

Last point: The dialects threw us only once, when a London fan asked me; "Didja ramble to wohla nallah-ya?" I said "Beg pardon?" He repeated, and I repeated, and so on until another fan translated; the man wished to know if I had understood WORLD OF NULL-A. (I hadn't).

Cordially yours,

L. Sprague de Camp

-OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES.....

Having a few minutes to spare from more serious things (e.g. S.F. News, etc), I have been reading Pht, and have decided that if your best friend won't tell you, I will.

.....As for the rest of his remarks (W.A.W.'s), they answer themselves... a characteristic of Walt's actually, except that he laughs at his own jokes, being able to see the funny side of them. I seem to have touched a sore point with that 'A' crack, hein?. By an extraordinary coincidence (and I swear it's a coincidence), Beardsley, the great black-and-white artist of the 1890's was an 'Abrey Vincent', but tho' artistic too; I'm not afraid of being taken for him so much (he's dead) as with Arthur C., seeing that we both have the same spiritual home, ('The White Horse'), and are both losing our hair early and fast, and are both brilliant... in our respective ways.

.....Bob Shaw is a li'r. 'Lost World' was perfectly visible from the back of the hall, where I was watching ACC doing a magnificent job juggling records. If they had shown it on the face of a certain fanzine editor's young sister, Bob might have seen more of it. I didn't see much of Bob during the Con actually... he was merely a hump under the blankets in our bedroom, from whence the expression 'Going from bed to Erse'.

.....THE EDITOR SQUEAKS quite conventional; nice cracks about the beards.. pity Jack Chandler wasn't there.. his is 'Captain Kettle'.

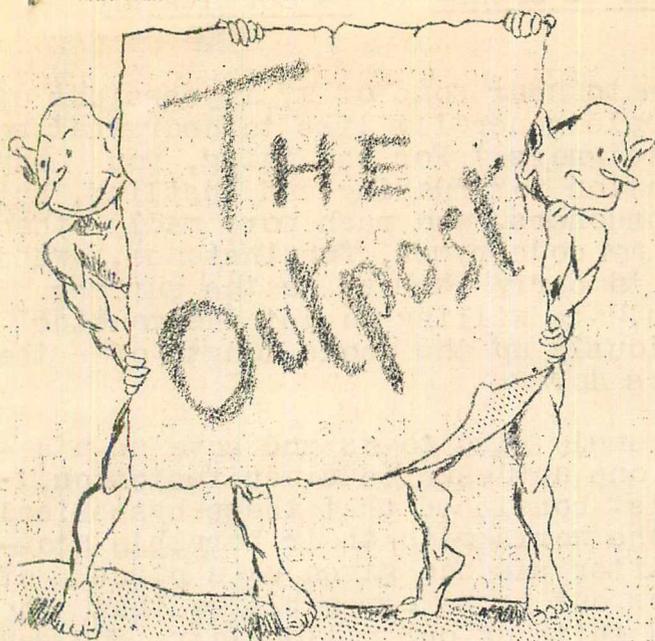
Phanatically,

Vincent Clarke

A Critical Commentary by

Walter A. Willis

#####



CARNELL BREATHES AGAIN The on-
-r a r d
progress of "Authentic Science Fiction Monthly" has ground to a shuddering halt with the publication in the March issue of Roy Sheldon's SPACE WARP, a novel which takes us back to the bad old days when "Authentic" was just a trashy pocketbook. I'm not going to waste your time describing in detail the plot of this lukewarm potboiler. You've read it a thousand times before and if you've any sense you won't read it again. This version of the

tedious capture-escape-capture-escape routine of the tenth rate thriller takes place in another dimension--a transfer which gives the novel what slight claim it has to be called science fiction, but nothing at all in the way of interest. The characters are straight from stock, consisting of one senile scientist, one dumb daughter, and one muscular moron. They are chased all over the world of the other 'dimension', their vicissitudes of fortune leaving the reader agog with indifference. Even when they stop running the heroine remains chaste, thereby destroying the last possibility of relieving the reader's boredom. There seems no good reason why the story should ever end--or indeed have been started--but they finally make their escape, positively and finally, from the inhumanly intelligent aliens by a ruse which would probably have been dead cunning if worked on a tribe of Australian aborigines. No doubt the aliens were as glad to see the last of them as we are. The writing is too simple-minded to be read by any adult other than a reviewer with a strong sense of duty, but it is not quite comy enough to be funny. Not recommended.

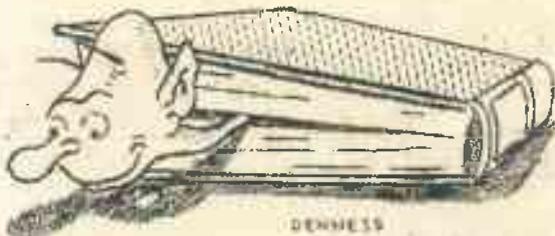
No doubt someone will write in to say that this novel was overwhelmingly popular with hundreds of thousands of "Authentic's" reader's and that it wasn't designed to appeal to jaded science fiction fans. But it's for the latter I'm writing.

The previous "Authentic" was something of a disappointment too. Campbell was kind enough to tell me he was writing a book in which I was the principal character--though not kind enough to tip me off when he changed the name of the hero from Wallis to Grant--and I was hoping for something as rich in possibilities for satire as the MOON IS HEAVEN. But CHAOS IN MINIATURE throws away all the glorious opportunities he had to provide ammunition for the London Circle. He should have asked Vince Clarke for technical advice. The book is much better than the Sheldon thing, but it shows many more signs of hasty writing than any of Campbell's previous novels. For example we are told on page 14 that the newspapers are printing the results of football matches on Mars, and yet 90 pages and only a day or so later Arthur C. Clarke is weeping quietly into his orange juice, not because his pools hadn't come up, but because he has had to abandon his attempt to make the first flight to the Moon. The reason for this Ego boohoo is that the Moon has disappeared, having been the victim of a recklessly wielded 'reducing ray'. This apparatus is the basis of the book's plot, but the logic and details of it are not worked out at all. There are so many inconsistencies and outright absurdities that the book must be classed as 'fantasy' and not science fiction. Incidentally, by a curious

coincidence a story with a very similar plot (Hubbard's 'The professor was a thief', ASF Feb. 42) was recently broadcast on Dimension X over AFN. After the publication of CHOAS IN MINIATURE, I hasten to add.

THE GOLD WAR For months now H.L. Gold has been digging at John W. Campbell in his Galaxy editorials. It all started when Street & Smith sabotaged his Galaxy SF Novels by refusing to release Hal Clement's NEEDLE for republication. Gold showed his annoyance over this very openly, and more recently he jeered at ASF for imitating his cover layout, asking them whether they wanted him to send over the rest of his new ideas, or would they like to wait until he had tried them out for them. He also poked fun at the way they reviewed books which had first appeared in GALAXY as serials without mentioning their source. Now in the March issue he has taken the offensive, with a little tongue-in-cheek paragraph in his editorial assuring his readers that he is not likely to fall for any "pseudo-scientific fad". This deadly allusion to dianetics, Campbell's greatest mistake, is different in kind to his other gibes. They could have been interpreted as attacks on Street & Smith, but this is a blow at Campbell himself--and at a very weak spot, for Street & Smith are said to have taken a poor view of dianetics themselves. Or at least at its effect on their sales.

When is Campbell going to hit back? He's been taking it all lying down so far--the same position from which he seems to edit his magazine--but surely this must shake him out of his lethargy. It's about time something did, for the current issues of ASF are nothing but an example of how long a magazine can continue to exist on its reputation alone. Look at the March issue: a cover style stolen from GALAXY and a desperate appeal for subscribers (next thing they'll be advertising in GALAXY), another of JWC's rarified editorials, the first instalment of a serial which would have been a thoughtvariant in 1940 (in fact it was), a Things to Come in what might be a parody of the offhand Campbell style, ending with the inevitable exclamation mark, a short by a new author which consists entirely of a mathematical proposition disguised as a story, another of H.B. Fyfe's shoddy pieces of illwritten rubbish, almost impossible to follow even if it were worth making the effort, another refugee article from the Scientific American, another undistinguished short with a plot that was done better in a 1950 fanzine, a barely competent re-write by Williamson of one of the better stock plots, a story by Merwin which he would have rejected from TWS, a book review section which succeeds in reviewing the PUPPET MASTERS without mentioning GALAXY (I'm waiting to see how they perform this feat with the GALAXY SCIENCE FICTION ANTHOLOGY), and another of those BRASS TACKS where projections of Campbell tell him how wonderful he is. Incidentally, how long is it since there has been a hostile letter in ASF? They're getting them all right.



I know Campbell was a great editor, and that he made science fiction as we know it and love it, but is he a good editor now? Do you get in ASF the impression that JWC is toiling mightily night and day to give you a better magazine? Or do you get the impression that he is rather bored with the whole thing and would far rather be happily auditing at home? If this campaign of Gold's has the effect of putting new life into Campbell it will be the best thing that has happened to science fiction since Campbell took over ASF.

STOP PRESS The results of the Quandry Poll, which has just closed, would astonish anyone who has been out of touch with fandom for a couple of years. His biggest surprise would be that for the

(concluded at foot of page 16-----

