

I TO YOU

If we are to judge from past effusions, the editorial in a first issue should be apologetic, containing the usual excuses.....but we have all read them -- why elaborate?

THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR i.

i is the only truly British magazine for science-fiction fans which needs no justification, and indeed gets none. It is not the product of a club. It is not a hobby-horse. It is not a vehicle to create a quantity of egoboo for its editors, who care not for any more of this useless commodity than **they already have**. In any case, we are all, to a greater or lesser extent, "filthy hucksters" and got paid for getting egoboo the easy way.

i is produced simply for the amusement of the Triumfanate and their friends. If therefore, you don't like the magazine, the only tears to be shed will be your **own**.

Appearances to the contrary, i does have an editorial policy, BUT we do not intend to divulge it. (In any case, details change each Thursday night). The more perspicacious of our readers might discover the basic tenet of that policy after about three issues. Good luck to them.....

i does not intend to take life too seriously; or indeed, to take life at all, if that be avoidable. Nor do we intend to take fans too seriously. Or fandom. And certainly not science-fiction. We shall mention s-f from time to time, of course, somewhere or other in the magazine. But we do not intend to be constructive about it.

This issue has a central theme: 'fanac is fun'. Next issue's theme? It could be anything ----- Bheer is Bhest, Drink More Milk, Bigger Beards for Britain, Come to Sunny Wigan, Home Rule For Bognor Regis, --- we haven't decided yet. Why should we? There is no rush.

Of course, we realise that eventually fandom, or, to be more accurate, the section of fandom which is so deplorably lacking in a mature or even half-baked sense of humour, is going to feel an intense antipathy to this magazine, its editors, and the entrails thereof. We care not. If you don't like i, don't buy it (always assuming **that** we would sell it to you anyway....). We will certainly not give you a copy. Remember, Stuart is an Aberdonian: that's bad: but the Comptroller-General is Ted Tubb. Free copy? You have even less hope than...but we mustn't get too personal -- yet.

On the other hand, sad experience has shown us that most fen will take literally any insult, in or out of print, without a murmur. How spiritless can they get, these parasitic jellyfish who dare to think of themselves as human beings, or, let us be fair, humanoid? Are all the essential guts of fandom filled with skimmed milk and liver pills?

One more thing: look at the contents page. You will get good writing in i, whatever happens. Crud we need like we need a hole in the head.

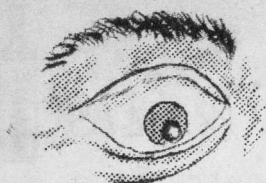
We hope that you enjoy i. If not, we feel for you. For you will have spent 1/6d (or 25 cents) to no avail.

Sincerely yours,

Stuart

Vint

Led



A MAGAZINE FOR SCIENCE FICTION FANS

VOLUME 1. NUMBER 1. CONTENTS

JUNE, 1954.

It is vaguely a quarterly publication of some members of what is usually referred to as the London Circle ; however it should not in any way be considered as the Official Organ of that proudly unorganised group of fans

It does not operate on a subscription basis, but has its own peculiar system, of which details will be found on the inner back cover.

This issue is sold at a price of one shilling and sixpence, or twenty five cents.

THE EDITORS NATURALLY CANNOT ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY OPINIONS, INCLUDING THEIR OWN, WHICH MAY APPEAR IN THIS PUBLICATION.

The cover was designed and drawn by Vince Clarke, who is also responsible for most of the interior illustration of this issue. " The subcutaneous fan " is illustrated by Morton.

EDITORIAL AND OTHER DETAILS

This magazine is edited by a Triumfanate : E.C. TUBB,

A. VINCENT CLARKE, and J. STUART MACKENZIE.

The editorial and publishing address is 5, Hans Place, London, S.W.1 All communications to Stuart at that address

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT - BLOODSHOT

Although this magazine emanates from London it does not intend to be a parochial affair : we welcome comment, criticisms, news, in fact, almost anything : all that we ask is that the thing be well-writtenthe origin matters not.



THE

SUBCUTANEOUS FAN

WALT
WILLIS

This was meant to be one of those scholarly, constructive articles in which your editor so excels, but I am beginning to think that he has discovered some important principle in life that has so far eluded me. Redd : do you never find that when you want to look up a reference someone has invariably borrowed the book ? It's always happening to me --- people are so dishonest. The worst of it is that I never seem to find anything worth quoting in the books I have of theirs.

The one I was looking for this time was Rachel Ferguson's **THE BRONTES WENT TO WOOLWORTH'S**. It was to have been the first link in a long chain of speculation about the ways in which the fan mentality expresses itself in the absence of fandom. As far as I remember --- don't bother to correct me if I'm wrong --- Rachel Ferguson and her sisters had invented an elaborate private mythology concerning the Brontes, and lived in it themselves a sort of pseudolife in parallel with their mundane existence. I think the Brontes themselves had one which they shared with Branwell, and I know that lots of other people, like Shelley, also had these private worlds of their own. I was going to argue that this was a manifestation of the sensitive fannish mind. To me, at any rate, the main attraction of fandom is this property it has of being a combined mythology and microcosm --- an artificial private world which does actually have a real existence (but not too real) and in which one can enjoy a sort of temporary reincarnation. (A whole bunch of reincarnations, if you follow Speer's example and split yourself into more than one identity.) At the very least, two lives for the price of one. It could be argued that fandom is not an escapist hobby at all, but almost the reverse --- an overflow outlet for the creative imagination. Fandom is a nocturnal emission. (I put it baldly like that with a view to the remark's immortalisation on a **WILD HAIR** type cover.)

However, in the absence of the Ferguson book I'm afraid this article is going to degenerate into personal reminiscence. I only hope I'm right in assuming I can get away with this sort of stuff in **FAPA**. Certainly I cannot think of any other audience likely to be interested in the rise and fall of Sauce Bottle Fandom.

Sauce Bottle fandom flourished in Belfast about fifteen years ago, and at one time had as many as four members. We met twice a week in a local cafe, and at first we talked only of the usual things students talk about --- art, religion, politics and other dirty jokes --- but it wasn't long before we invented Sauce Bottle Fandom. We were all the sort of people who read at meals, and if there was nothing else to read we would read the labels on the jars

and things on the table. We soon found that we all knew off by heart the label on a sauce known as 'H.P.' Not only did this label carry a much greater wordage than any marmalade jar, it was of an immensely higher literary standard. For one thing, part of



WILLIS DISCOVERS FANDOM!!

it was in French, which gave it an immense distinction in the eyes of us Francophiles. The label had three sides. The middle one had a picture of the Houses of Parliament at Westminster, a statement that the sauce was made by Garton and Company, and a description of its constituents --- pure malt vinegar and oriental spices. On the left hand side was the blurb in French --- "Cette Sauce de premier choix" --- which we intoned with the solemnity we gave

to Baudelaire and Rimbaud. And on the right hand side was a copy of a certificate by two public analysts that they had "regularly taken samples from stock and found the sauce to be in every way pure and wholesome. -- Signed, A. Bostock Hill and William T. Rigby."

It was those names that got us. There seemed to be limitless significance in them. A. Bostock Hill was obviously a short stocky type, stolid and unimaginative, but steady as a rock and honest as the day was long. William T. Rigby, on the other hand, was a wayward genius, brilliant and erratic, and with a streak of the Bohemian artist. In no time at all we had the two characters fitted out with parents, schools, careers, love lives, friends --- an entire world. Every detail was filled in with loving care, Finally we had constructed an entire imaginary universe for Hill and Rigby, with a cast of scores, which included virtually every proprietary name in the British bottling, canning, and confectionery industries. Every change in a proprietary label was the outward sign of some vast drama taking place behind the scenes, and the occasion for long and serious speculation by us. We were, for instance, saddened when the HP people suddenly substituted typed signatures of Hill and Rigby for the holographed ones we had known since childhood. It could only mean that poor old Hill was failing. No doubt he had for some time been unable actually to take the samples from stock himself, but his loyal friend Rigby, ever the more dashing of the two, had shown him his results and guided his faltering hand in signing the hallowed document. Then in 1939 two things happened. The war broke out, and the certificates disappeared altogether. The latter could only mean one thing, and sauce bottle fandom came to an end.

By that time the mythos was really immense. We had not only accounted for every idiosyncrasy in proprietary labels, but had incorporated dozens of other odd items that had caught our imagination. Things like an enormous and mysterious unsigned painting of a lady in blue that hung in the attic of my grandmother's old house, several Victorian lithographs of domestic scenes in the downstairs rooms, and a photograph of an unknown Edwardian ancestor whom we christened Wallace Willis. And finally we had integrated the whole thing with an equally massive mythology in a different field, quite incommunicable since it dealt mainly with local place-names and Irish words, and ingenious theories as to whatever happened to the Pict

Nobody ever got around to writing the whole thing down -- it would have been quite a job -- and I thought it had perished completely until the other day I found among some old papers a draft I had sketched of the main events in the Hill - Rigby story itself. It started off with A. Bostock Hill's childhood and already one of the two Holy Grails of the saga -- absolutely pure malt vinegar -- was making its appearance. As you probably know, vinegar is made from inferior wines, and in the first chapter, based on one of the

Victorian lithos, old Squire Hill is staggering home drunk after his nightly debauch. "D--n and b---t," he roared thickly as he reeled up the stairs. Mrs. Hill blanched. "Shut your ears, children," she murmured, clasping her eldest son in her arms. "Arbuthnot," she cried, "tomorrow you embark on the great sea of life. Swear to me by a mother's love that you will fight this daemon Empire Wine that has enslaved your father, and that you will remember always our family motto, SPIRIT VINI RECT.!" *

In the next chapter Hill goes to boarding school and falls foul of the school bully, Guy Fletcher (Fletcher's Tomato Ketchup) and his toadies Cyril Urney and Sidney Needler. (Urney and Needler were the makers of a chocolate we thought vastly inferior to Cadbury's.) He is rescued by William Terence Rigby, one of the school bloods, and confides in him his dream of transforming his father's curse into a blessing for all mankind. Later, at the University, where Rigby is specialising in tropical plants, they meet some of the other characters in the saga --- Wallace Willis, Vladimir Potemkin, the mad painter, Richard Cadbury, and Sydney Garton. They also spend a holiday at Heidelberg, where they meet Gustave Tobler and Heinrich Heinz. ** Towards the end of their university life, however, both Hill and Rigby fall in love with Wallace Willis' sister, the mysterious blue lady painted by Potemkin, and Rigby goes out East to forget. Worried by reports that he has gone native, Hill presses on with his monumental work.

The furore which greeted the publication of "Pure Malt Vinegar, Its Past" need not be described. The book was at first greeted with derision

* Pharmaceutical name for vinegar

** "Ich habe mein Heinz in Heidelberg verloren"



and obloquy, but when it was realised that the author had effectively discredited all previous thought on the subject, a wave of despair swept the world. Such was the position when Hill produced the second volume, "Pure Malt Vinegar, Its Future." It was the young men who first realised the daring scope of Hill's ideas. Absolutely Pure Malt Vinegar, hitherto thought but a vain dream, was possible. In Paris, Montmartre student opinion rallied to the new leader as the result of some anonymous prose, poems, and manifestos.....

Hill can now afford to organise an expedition to search for Rigby. He enlists the aid of old Professor Heinz ("57 Varieties have I made, and I will no more until Rigby is found make") and with Tobler they set out for the Orient. They find Rigby in the heart of the Burmese jungle, "writing feverishly on a bamboo table covered with scientific instruments. The piercing gleam in his eyes belied the dissipation on his features..." "Your book made a new man of me," he says, "and I have begun my researches again. I don't want to raise false hopes, but I think we have an appointment with Sydney Garton and I have one of my prose poems ready for Sydney if he cares to use it. 'Cette sauce de premier choix' "

They all return in triumph to England (except old Professor Heinz, who succumbs to malaria with his life's work uncompleted) and Garton produces the ultimate sauce. Not without opposition from Fletcher, Crosse and Blackwell, but the saga ends at one of the "quiet dinners Hill gives regularly to his friends. The genial old man sits at the head of the table. with Rigby, frail but indomitable, and with still a youthful gleam in his eyes, on his right hand, and Doctor Otto Heinz, son of the revered Professor, on the left..... The gay conversation rises and falls, stilled when the butler enters bearing tenderly a priceless cobwebbed bottle of old vintage vinegar."

And to think that I might have poured all that energy into fandom, instead of a sauce bottle, if I had come across the Belfast SEL in 1935 !

WALTER WILLIS

** Reprinted, by permission, from "SKYHOOK", edited by Redd Boggs.

GLOSSARY TO THE SUBCUTANEOUS FAN: For those readers unacquainted with the intricacies of US fandom or HYPHEN ----FAPA, in which this article originally appeared is the Fantasy Amateur Press Association whose 65 members are pledged to produce at least 8 pages of fanzine each for the club per year; Jack Speer, referred to on the first page, used the name of 'John Bristol' as well as his own in the fandom of the early '40s; the fanzine WILD HAIR had a cover composed of the type of quote-now found on HYPHEN'S backcover. avc.

QUALITY AND QUANTITY rarely go hand-in-hand, and the prolific author who is also worth reading is rare indeed. One of the few in the fantasy field is AUGUST DERLETH, and in the following article EYE looks at some of the lesser-known works of this 45-year old US author.

THE PHENOMENAL DERLETH



• BRYAN BERRY •

TO the average reader of s-f and fantasy August Derleth is probably best known as the editor of many fine, though expensive, anthologies of weird and s-f tales, and as the director of Arkham House,* the publishing firm which was the first to specialize in fantasy books. But these two functions fall very short of being the sum total of this extraordinary man's multifarious activities and give little idea of how, throughout a career that began in his early 'teens, he has proved as fallacies innumerable 'stock rules' relating to free-lance writing in particular and to authorship in general.

In his book WRITING FICTION Derleth describes how, when he was about fifteen, having already written 40 stories and collected 40 rejection slips, he revised one of these rejected titles and re-submitted it. It was accepted and appeared under the title BAT'S BELFRY in Weird Tales for April, 1926. And it was the first of a multitude of stories, essays, articles, reviews and poems to come from his pen in what would appear to be a never-ending stream.

It is significant to note that, right from the start of his writing career - apart from a period spent at the University of Wisconsin and a further period (quite a short one) when he was acting as assistant editor on a magazine - Derleth has successfully carried out his initial intention to be and to remain a free-lance writer. That in itself, of course, is far from unique; his special distinction lies in the fact that while churning out weird stories -- mostly modelled, as he freely admits, on the Lovecraft masterpieces-- detective stories and so on in order to provide the wherewithall to live, he never lost sight of his ultimate goal.

This goal, this vast and ambitious scheme, grew out of an idea conceived while he was still very young. It was, basically, the urge to write a series of books showing the growth of a typical mid-Western village from the 1830s up to the present day; a series of something like fifty books in all that could, by its very nature, include

* Now affiliated with Pellegrini & Gudahy.

(The Phenomenal Derleth. Cont.)

historical novel, contemporary novel, short stories, poetry, novelettes, non-fiction and, in fact, practically any literary form. The typical village that Derleth planned to immortalise would be the village in which he himself had been born and in which he grew up. There would be no need for him to travel all over the world seeking for subjects about which to write; he had his subjects within walking distance of his home. He would tell of the microcosm that was his village of Sac Prairie, and he would, by the magic of his pen, show how it mirrored the vastness of the macrocosm. Thus was born the idea of the Sac Prairie Saga.

Unlike many writers with ambitious schemes, Derleth did not use his plan simply as a conversational gambit with which to prove to critical listeners that he was really capable of better things than thrillers and stereotyped horror yarns and would eventually get down to his 'real work'. Instead, with what Sinclair Lewis has aptly described as 'gigantic industry', he pursued his idea and, in 1935, the first book in the Saga appeared; it was called PLACE OF THE HAWKS and contained four long stories. Two years later came his first serious long novel. Entitled STILL IS THE SUMMER NIGHT, it was a historical tale and, though written when he was still quite young, is today quite high up in Derleth's own selection of his best work.

In addition to writing books he continued with his phenomenal output of magazine stories, essays, poems, etc., and also, in 1939, brought out Lovecraft's THE OUTSIDER AND OTHERS, the first book to appear under the imprint of his own publishing company, Arkham House. Some years later two bairns were born to Mrs. Arkham House - namely, the publishing houses of Stanton & Lee and Mycroft & Moran - both of which, with AH itself, had Derleth as editorial director. Some of Derleth's Sac Prairie books have appeared under the Stanton & Lee imprint, while Mycroft & Moran have put out, among other titles, Derleth's two books of pastiches in the Sherlock Holmes style: IN RE: SHERLOCK HOLMES; THE ADVENTURES OF SOLAR PONS and THE MEMOIRS OF SOLAR PONS.

The fact that some of the Sac Prairie novels have not been published in England is to me a source of wonder. I have read a good many of them in the American editions and feel very strongly that they are infinitely better than many other contemporary American novels that have been published over here and lauded by the Press. In particular I would mention SHIELD OF THE VALIANT. This, apart from being a first-rate novel, at once sincere and entertaining, is partly autobiographical and is thus of especial interest to anyone with any literary aspirations who might be keen to read of the gradual growth of Derleth himself. The book covers a period of half-a-decade, from the time when, as a writer of mystery stories he was anxious to get down to the Saga, up to the beginning of the war when, with numerous books behind him, he could realise that despite critical acclaim and financial award his work was still very far from what he wanted it to be.

From various sources I have learned that Derleth is a big and burly blonde man, blunt of speech, casual as to dress. From some of his novels and, more especially, from his day-by-day factual accounts of life in his village, one sees that he is a keen nature lover and possesses considerable botanical and zoological knowledge. A fervent hiker, often preferring his own company to that of others, his observations on the fauna and flora of the land surrounding Sauk City ('Sac Prairie') are acute, interesting and frequently amusing. Among numerous hobbies he includes stamp-collecting, collecting comic-strips, swimming, fencing and chess.

Perhaps the most amazing thing about the man is his incredible output. I read somewhere that he estimated his annual wordage at between 500,000 and 1,000,000 words. Perhaps that would not be fantastic were he writing solely for the 'pulp'. But that

is not the case. Very little of his material, apparently, is sold to the pulps nowadays. Quality and quantity seldom go hand-in-hand, but a perusal of Derleth's serious Sac Prairie novels, his poetry and his journals (especially his journals) will show that in his case they have gone hand-in-hand. Certainly the left hand that writes the competent but undistinguished weirds is vastly inferior to the right hand from which come the Sac Prairie books, but they are both activated by the same brain; they both belong to the same man.

As John Cournos said in THE New York Sun when reviewing one of Derleth's Sac Prairie books: "...Derleth writes with feeling and artistic skill which deserves to be noticed in a day when toughness and four-letter words are substituted for art. Derleth's art is delicate, often exquisite, rich with that poetry which alone can deal with intangibles."

If your acquaintance with Derleth's work is limited to the reading of his various weird stories then I do earnestly suggest that you interrupt your regular diet of fantasy and s-f and try to get hold of one of his Sac Prairie books. When you've read it I think you'll agree with me that the review quoted above is very just in its praise.

BRYAN BERRY

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ANNOUNCING

..... to all who are interested.....

It is proposed to hold a small and select Convention for Hallowe'en, on Saturday 30th October, 1954.

The convention will be held at a private residence in London. Food and drink will be provided.

Admission will be by ticket only, purchased prior to the date of the convention. Costumes and decorations, with accent on Fantasy. Proposed charge at least a guinea a head : proposed time from 8 p.m. to daylight.

If you are interested, please communicate with the editors.

T
H
E
J. STUART
MACKENZIE



In another publication * I recently touched upon the concept of "planes" within eras of fandom. Stratification, I called it. Since that editorial appeared I've had a number of comments on it, and most people seem to agree with the notion, if not with the terminology. Perhaps, then, it would be worth while to expand the theme and see where it leads to: if you're not interested, well, there's a far better piece after this one - turn to it now.

I am reminded in fandom today of the rudimentary sociology which I learned all too many years ago. I don't want to write a history of fandom (and nobody else wants me to, either), although a social history might make rather good reading -- you know, skip all the stuff about science fiction, just write about the parties and the conventions..... but I think that you will agree that there is, in this country today, a definite breaking up of fandom into various groups with different interests and ideas of "fanac". Until recently fandom in this country was homogeneous. Just like milk. But now the cream, the curds, whey and skim are all getting into separate layers, as it were.

Let's flash back (lovely expression, that: how does one flash, anyway -- sounds dangerous to me) to the time when there were no 1/6d. s-f p. b.'s in this country -- back to the Golden Age of the immediate post-war period. Fans were few, and no matter what sort of s-f they preferred, they were inextricably mingled: they were all on the same diet, anyway.

Then came the day of Vargo Statton.... and pocket books began to flood the market. Today, they tell me, J.R. Fearn, writing as Vargo Statton and Volsted Gridban, sells a quarter of a million p.b.'s per annum. That is a heck of a big sales figure: and then he turns out a lot of other stuff under his many pseudonyms.....one writer, that is. Whew! Publishers by the n, hitherto unknown, even undreamt of, began to leap into the fray with their contributions to the glory of science. Why? Well, obviously, any publisher who wants to keep on drinking champagne for breakfast has got to sell: s-f sold well, so sell s-f... And when the Home Office began to display altogether too curious an interest in gangster stories, the switch was at once apparent. What has happened? Simply this: there has grown up, and this is true, a sub-species of fan which so likes the work of Fearn that they want to start a fan club in his honour. There is even a fanzine - NOT Space Times - which supports this remarkable desire.

* Space Times, of which the writer is an editor.

With the greatest of respect for the Northern Irish branch, I cannot for a moment imagine WAW as a leading light in such an organisation. I cannot imagine Frank Arnold's recommending a Vargo p.b. I do not see my friend Vince Clarke in ecstasy over one of the fortnightly opies which -- and here I quote his publishers -- 'flow from the pen of Mr. Multiman'. Not really.

Then perhaps I am right when I say that to classify some of the Colossi in fandom as Vargo Statten fans would be inaccurate. To classify the intelligent readers of the London Circle (free ego-boo department : put my pint over there, please) as Vargo Statten fans might be to exaggerate a little. But to classify the lay-man or lay-fan, by whom I mean the non-scientific and non-literary (both are a priori conditions) as potential VS fen is both logically acceptable and, it seems now, practically possible.

Some years ago, when even Grandpapa Walter Gillings was but a stripling, there lived a remarkable ~~lady~~ female by the name of Mrs. Annie Besant. Among other things, she was a leading light in the creation of a now religious cult (she was as great an expert on this as ever Ted Tubb will be) which based its beliefs on a peculiar hotch-potch of Indian mysticism and Christianity. They called it Theosophy. Now, I decline to comment on the merits, or the demerits, of Theosophy, except to say that it has done me a signal service in providing me with a jargon for this piece : I shall unashamedly steal their concept of the "planes of existence", mingle it in the sausage machine which passes as my typewriter, and ~~presently~~ present to you my notions of the planes of fandom.

I am credibly informed that the present era of fandom (I was going to say cycle, but thoughts of a well-known Irish machine dissuaded me) is numbered 7. The mark of the beast is of course 666. No connection with any other firm trading under a similar name, and all that. It is fitting, therefore, in the interests of universal harmony (courtesy of the Rosicrucians) that we elect to have seven planes of fandom. Let's have a shufti at 'em.

"The first shall be last, and the last shall be first", said Somebody-or-Other. Yes, James, I do have one, but it's on the other side of the room and I'm in a hurry to get this finished so that Ted and Vince can tell me it's not good enough. In keeping with the aforesaid fine sentiment I shall nominate the ultimate, the almost unattainable, the veritable NIRVANA, the 7th Plane. From there we shall work downwards, slowly and reluctantly, occasionally using a little force to shift the mud and see what lies below.

Obviously, the dwellers in the Seventh Plane, having attained a state of blissful perfection and navel contemplation, are no longer readers of s-f, or even fans in the ordinary sense of the word. No, I will NOT define fan - go buy your own dictionary. They are interested in fandom for the sake of the people they know in it. They publish (fan variety), write, -- tell it not in Manchoster, but occasionally even for filthy lucre, and of course they pontificate. Essentially they are fun to know.

Among these demigods I would number such revered men as Willis, Vince Clarke, a certain Mr. G.R. Harris Although each of them is a filthy huckster, yet they are not perniciously so (for mark this well, no vile pro shall cross the hallowed threshold.) Of course, there are others, but I don't intend to embarrass either them or myself with the revelation of their names. Besides, some of them might decide to sue me for libel.

Dropping, as a peregrine, from a great height, our vicious eye (note the pun, please) turns to the Sixth Plane. Here is gathered what is indeed a motley crew. They even look it. There are the fans who have not as yet ceased to take fandom seriously -- people like me, for instance --, there are vile pros who were once good, clean-living (huh?) fans and now, but never, never, read fan-fiction, unless they are hard up for a plot. There is a merry host of fanods, liars all when it comes to the number of subs they have. "But then, everyone's a faned these days, my dear ! " There are some honest-to-Ghu actifen, 90% of the London Circle, odd bods like Ken Slater, Mal Ashworth, and all my other friends who aren't mentioned can decide for themselves whether they are exalted

in Seventh or merely magnified in Sixth. And, too, there are in Sixth even a couple of "professional editors" who were once mere men, as you and I. All right, lady, take it generically.

Sixth Plane existence is fun, too, though not to be compared with the lotos of Seventh: there is one blotch on the otherwise fair escutcheon. Said b. on the e. is a residual itch, like a vermiform appendix, to be "up and doing". To be, Ghu preserve us, active. "One simply must get this thing done...etc., etc." Fortunately, however, this last is merely said when one wishes suitably to impress some neo-fan: in other words, to talk him into buying the next round. No one ever means it seriously. Hence, of course, the indubitable failure, utter and complete, of every London Convention. For further details see SPACE TIMES, Vol.2, No.5, (All copies sold out) or ask any fan in Manchester.

Sixth Planers are the people who occasionally get a free copy of a new fanzine (until the editor realises that under no circumstances short of blackmail or the promise of ego by the boofull, will they ever subscribe.) This is a sharp contrast to the Seventh Plane which automatically gets free copies of all fanzines - except SPACE TIMES, who are too mean, and 'i', which is also too mean. Now, it wouldn't do to misunderstand me: some Sixth Planers DO sub to the occasional fanzine, but only to such as HYPHEN, which one simply has to get for the backover, in case Willis quotes you: NIRVANA, if you're one of those lucky people who can get one of the editors drunk enough to invite you to sub.: SPACE TIMES, if they cannot get out of the clutches of either Mackenzie or Varley (beside those two SHYLOCK was a philanthropist), and naturally, 'i'. Here we guarantee them egoboo. Other fanods please note the technique.

Sixth Planers are very voluble, full of grand schemes and fanciful beliefs, some of them may one day see the cold clear light shining from the BELFAST LIGHTHOUSE and be translated to the Seventh Plane: most of the Sixth is however doomed to fester where it stands. At the bar of the nearest pub.

It is time to say farewell to the Bolted Earls and the Lordly Ones of the Sixth and Seventh, as we bore our way down through the well-nigh impassible barrier of vituperation, jealousy, "intolerance", fan-fiction, and second-rate fanzines, down and down to a veritable holocaust which proves to be the Fifth Plane.

Here in the murk, occasionally illuminated by a red torch of anger, amid the coruscating blue flashes of "If you ask me....." (nobody did) and "You can't tell me conventions run at a loss...", is a weltering, writhing mass of fen. Made up of wildly differing types (some of them were once gentlemen) they none the less have one thing in common -- a porfervid sense of their own windy importance. So is Bicarbonate of Soda important, in its own gusty way.... But for once they are right: remove the Fifth Plane and you remove the market for fanzines. Which might be a good thing at that.....humm.

Let us, from the bonded warehouse of our knowledge, peering a little closer, pronounce upon this unhealthy tangle of besotted humanity. "Hellish dark and smells of cheese," said Pigg: and like MR. JORROCK'S cupboard, this Pandora's Box is replete with a cheesy odour --- a lotted fanzine.

All around us here is the second-rate, the striving after knowledge, the earnest writers of essays like this one (didn't you know? I'm Mr. Multifan). Somehow the efforts seem to miss the mark -- no cracks, you filthy swine -- or even fail to reach fruition. Essentially Fifth Plane is barren. Any inhabitant thereof who displays the glimmerings of intelligence soon finds himself in Sixth Plane, anyhow. No, for the Fifth, in bulk, there is little hope of salvation: they read pocket books, no matter by whom they are perpetrated, they actually collect crud (truly, I am sorry to have to say this, but I do assure you that it is true), avidly read all and any s-f, no matter where it appears or who wrote it, pinch their kid brother's Dan Dare, even, and read that while securely locked in their closets (which goes to show that they have some shame, for on the Fourth Plane they read it openly), and in very sooth are as

addicted to science fiction as the London Circle is to Lou Mordecai's beer. Of such people few real fan are made. Imagine ! Reading the stuff ! Bad enough having to write it.....

It is really too much to expect any decent self-respecting fan, no matter how earnest he be in his research, to venture for long into the cesspools of the Fourth, Third, and Second Planes.

Let us be content, thereof, with the assurance that they are even more horrid than the Fifth. In these planes are the teenagers who pore for hours over the more lurid American Space Comics. Near-nudes are their joy: their heroes are those musculo-bound heroes who are rarely seen outside of the comic strip, the advertisements of MR. ATLAS, or MR. T.S. ELIOT's interesting dramatic composition, 'THE HAIRY APE'. The Fourth Plane is the natural habitat of the teen-age monstrosity, the 'Teddy Boy', who goes for a Borgey cover in a very big way. His business is strictly bust. They have one identification which never fails -- even more than the Fifth Plane, some of whom were dragged up to show some respect for their elders and betters (hah!) -- they are constitutionally incapable of being polite. These are the people who at a convention, think it vastly entertaining to detonate fireworks under a lady's chair, no matter what her physical condition might be, or to carefully insert the muzzle of a loaded water-pistol in a girl's ear and then squirt so hard that the eardrum is punctured. These things I have seen. Hobbledehoyes and clods. The differences in strata here are relatively unimportant : there is a gentle elision from one to the other.

Doffing our respirators with a sigh of relief, we quit the noisome stench of the Second Plane and emerge into the green fields and smiling meadows of the First, or Nursery Plane.

Here it is that the young child, clutching his hot pennies in his grubby paws, makes his perilous way. (Keep Death Off the Roads) to the paper shop on the corner, where he will squander his unearned money on rubbishy trash....."Now, when I was your age, my lad, I got a penny a week, and didn't waste it on such tripe....." Junior, your parent is mendacious : only he read his s-f in such titles, believe it or not, as Magnet, Gem, Adventure, etc etc.

At this stage the young mind is being formed and trained, ready for the none-too-distant day when it must choose between the primrose path that leads only to such things as joining a fan-club, and the hard, tortuous road which may even one day end for him at the inner sides of the pearly gates of Seventh. The acid test has still to come : which way will they go ? All the world loves children ; all fandom loves the First Plane, the snotty-nosed little blighters

STUART MACKENZIE

".... England's players were so superior that each man seemed to have two heads and four legs....."

Evening Standard, March 25th. 1954

Films registered with the Board Trade in the week ending 5th April, 1954, include 'Killers from Space' - RKO Radio Pictures, Ltd. Made by Planet Film Plays Ltd. Length 6,436 feet.....
WATCH THE NEXT ISSUE FOR A GREAT PRIZE ANNOUNCEMENT.....

A NATIONAL FAN CLUB

Nigel Lindsay

TO ALL FANS !!!

Give me your votes. Give me unlimited authority. I guarantee to organise for you the Fan Club to end all Fan Clubs. Its aims will be : (1) a steady, reliable supply of fanzines : (2) a standard sub rate for the whole of the British Isles, and (3) the introduction of fandom into places it has never before penetrated.

This is how I propose to go about it.

First I take over all actifans, their typewriters and duplicators, and their meeting places. All machines will be pooled, and redistributed in a more satisfactory manner than at present. Most of the actifans are already conveniently located in groups, so I make each group responsible for its surrounding district, and give it the following duties : Greetings and Contact : reporting on local news and meetings : magazine and book reviews : stencil cutting and duplicating. For this purpose I grade the actifans into Writers Class III, Stencil Cutters Class II, and small fry (Handle turners, inkers, etc.)

Next I divide the British Isles into some two dozen areas, each presided over by an Area Fanning Board. In each area I place an Area H.Q. and three or four Sub Area H.Q.'s. From the local groups I pick the cream of actifans and transfer them to the various H.Q.'s with suitable promotion. To the Sub Area H.Q.'s I send Writers Class II to do stories and articles, and Stencil Cutters Class I to be entrusted with artwork. They are carried by a staff of local small fry (handle turners, tea makers, etc.) At this level I place the Libraries, Trading Bureaux, and Information Bureaux.

To the Area H.Q. itself I send the Exalted Ones: Writers Class I, who are capable of doing Editorials, and Illustrators, who are in a class all of their own. Here too I appoint a Chief Editor to pass all MSS for the Area, and a Chief Accountant to fix sub rates and advertising rates. At this level I shall really have fun by the introduction of a central subbing office. Here will be kept the accounts of all fen in the area, compiled from information sent in by each local group and the trading bureaux. On such a scale as this I can invest in some electronic accounting machines and send the fen their bills all in code, which they work out by comparing the symbols on the back. This office will be in a different city from the Area H.Q. so that everyone concerned will get a nice lot of post each day.

Another cunning departure from the mundane is a Bulk Purchasing Board who will study the markets for the cheapest and nastiest stationery and buy enough to supply the whole area. The

money saved in this way can be used to purchase a couple of lorryes to distribute the stuff. One outstanding benefit, of course, will be uniformity : you won't get any more fanzines with a hodge-podge of green, white and old gold paper. Or a mixture of rough and slick pages. Also you will be encouraged to keep an alert mind by the introduction of such refinements as staples that don't fit your stapler, pen refills that won't write, and - best of all - blotting paper that doesn't blot. Not to mention watermarked paper, curse it, that you can't take home.

Now we come to the people who regulate all this activity : the Area Fanning Board. Bear in mind that you are now in the higher echelons, so these folk need know nothing whatsoever about fanning, but must be expert in inventing complicated games such as three-dimensional chess. They will publish their own special fanzine, called "Fanning Instructions". It will have a private circulation among the actifans only, and consist entirely of jolly puzzles, cryptograms and games of patience.

So far, so good. But I haven't yet mentioned the parallel organisation, which I am building up alongside this one. It will be called the Fanzine Grid. It will be answerable to no one but the Central Fanthority itself. In each area it will have an Area Publishing Office, and a large number of Feeder Stations, each attached to a local group. In the Area Publishing Office I shall place a flock of small fry to do nothing else but staple, address envelopes and stick on stamps. They will get a steady flow of stencilled pages from feeder stations all over the area, and the Grid will be so designed that in an emergency the flow can be diverted in from the neighbouring areas, thus preventing any cut in the supply. These fanzines will have holes punched ready for filing, but the holes will be different distances apart for different postal areas, so that every time you move you will have to throw away your old files and buy new ones.

And who will correlate the various Fanning Boards and the Fanzine Grid ? Why (stand up) the Central Fanthority (sidown) These great ones will know even less about Fanning, but must be capable of making Big Decisions. They will however have a staff of very select actifen to deal with such important matters as National Conventions, the International Fantasy Award, and Fan Slang.

Of course, a great deal of cash is needed to run such an organisation as I propose, but that is easily overcome. The Bulk Purchasing Boards will approach publishers and dealers and get promags at wholesale prices to sell at a profit. The small bookshops won't mind. Any remaining deficiency can simply be met by raising the sub rates. There will be no other clubs for fans to go to, so they will either pay up or change to Wild Westerns Fanning. Most of 'em will pay up, of course.

And there you have it. Can't you just picture the smooth efficiency of this well-knit organisation ? Drop in for a moment at the local office at Big End-on-Sea in the South-Eastern Fanning Area :

Junior Slip-Sheeter Will Wallace : "These stencils you cut last week ---"

District Senior Stencil Cutter Vincent Clarke : "Well ?"

W. "They installed a new electric Gestetner yesterday... These are

for Flat Beds."

C. "Well, why the hell didn't you run them off last week ?"

W. "I had to write BRE reviews because Al Mashworth was sent to the Turnham-on-Couch office."

C. "They short of writers again ?"

W. "Yes. Poor old Ken McStuart was sent all the way from there to Ipsnitch because they had no Contact man."

C. "That idiot over here last week on sub collecting last week - wasn't that old Harry Chuck from Ipsnitch ?"

W. "That's right.... and all three making a nice packet out of their travelling and meal expenses !"

C. "Wouldn't it have been simpler to ..."

W. "Shush !"

C. "Have to cut them stencils again then, I guess."

W. "Can't. We've no Gestetner ones."

C. "Then flaming well indent for some !"

W. "Impossible. The monthly indent's just gone in."

C. "Petty cash ?"

W. "Hah !!!"

C. "Well, what happened to the old Flat-Bed ?"

W. "They sent it to some damned hick in the Rural Development Area."

C. "That must be the bloke who rang me up this morning. Wanted to know what the hell it was for. Thought it might come in useful for grinding corn !"

W. "You've got something there...."

- - e n d - -

B I B O

When ***** thought fit from this world to retreat,

As full of Brown Ale as an egg's full of meat,

He turned in the boat and to Charon he said :

"I will be rowed back, for I am not yet dead."

"Trim the boat, and sit quiet," stern Charon replied,

"You may have forgot, you were drunk when you died."

Arundines Cami.

- - - - -

" The Supermancon will be the finest Convention the London Circle has ever held....."

Operation SPLASH

PLAY SPACEMEN

There is a tendency in Fandon to think of s-f as the literature of the future. It has been defined in all sorts of ways, but in general all the definitions make some sort of use of the concept of postulation : the deduction or induction of the course of future events, the postulation of probabilities, and so on.

I wonder how many of us have thought of science fiction as merely being one more symptom of a cultural revolution, just as important as that change from the Classical to the Romantic school of literature ?

Look in any toy shop today and you will certainly find some sort of space gun, sometimes even space men's suits, helmets, and so forth ; model space ship kits are on sale toys..... Now look back to your own childhood. Practically all toys today are still what they were then -- imitations of a larger thing, possessed by the adult world. When you played with your toys you were playing with the idea of being grown-up, of possessing those things or at least being concerned with them. Toy motor cars, building sets, Meccano sets, and so forth..... and our transition from youth to adolescence incorporated in its neural patterns an identification of those toys with the real article. We think, then, in terms of the language which was appropriate to our toys...

Today's child is a different proposition. His toys are the toys of the future : historically, they are for the first time toys which do not simulate the actual possession of the adult world. They are figments of the imagination, and not only of one imagination, but of a mass-imagination. That is terribly important : consider the implications

The very fact that the child of today is playing with space guns, space suits and the like, presupposes an acceptance, unconscious if you like, of the probability (not merely the possibility) that when he is an adult he will know these things. It presupposes too, of course to some smaller extent, a definite acceptance by the environmental adult world (which pays for the toys) of the real foundation for the toy.

Consider then the effect upon the child. His semantics will be wildly at variance with those of his grandparents, and to a lesser degree with those of his parents, for he will have been from childhood on unconsciously thinking in terms of the future, not for himself alone, but of the planet as a whole. To him space travel will seem logical, normal. Something he never seriously held in doubt. His thought patterns will vary from ours, too : we have, in general, as fans been constantly struggling to overcome the amused contempt of our contemporaries : not so long ago it was quite a bold move to read s-f (particularly with a Bergey cover) openly on a bus or a train : now, not nearly so much, although sufficiently a rare sight to make one talk to the reader, in the hope that he (or preferably she) is a fan.

What will be the effect on world affairs ? A nice point, this. Will it induce in the minds of the politicians a sense of the triviality of this planet in comparison with the rest of the universe -- humility, in other words ? Will it create a greater sense of global values, bringing with it a desire to avoid stupid and now, unnecessary wars ? Will they finally come to realise that international war on earth is obsolete ? Or will it bring dreams of galactic conquest, and the space wars that the pulps love so much ? Will it create a World Dictator ?

Just as the space gun is the symptom of this new way of thought, which is creeping unawares upon the Western world, so is s-f a symptom. It takes moral courage to plan a future for mankind generations after you yourself are dead : it takes courage to negate the omnipotence of Man, and to say that there are others besides the children of Adam. But as time goes on, less and less courage is needed, for as time goes on so the thing becomes accepted as being nearer and nearer to a realised fact. Think about the implications of that for a moment : they will perhaps startle you.

Science fiction is to the new literature as Wordsworth was to the Romantics. No more, no less : the fandom of today is much the same in many ways as the young followers of the Romantic school were : more organised, more vocal, that is all. Science fiction is not an end in itself : merely a symptom of a cultural revolution --- but it is to that revolution what the tractor is to the farmer or the anti-biotics to a physician : the indispensable tool for the best results in the quickest time.

J. STUART MACKENZIE

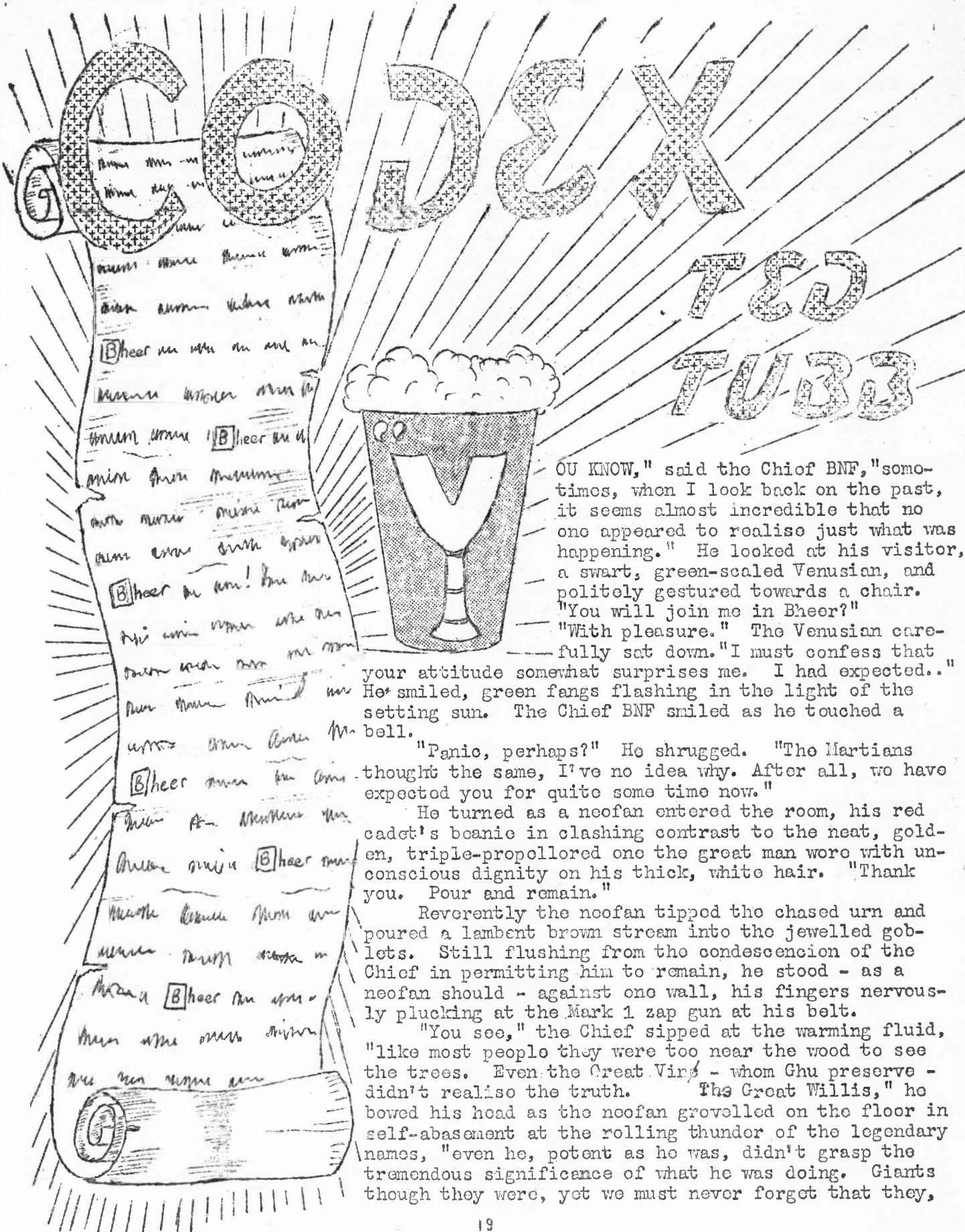
WAIL OF AN ANGUISHED FAN

Some time ago Vince Clarke circulated a chainzine called "DUPLICATING WITHOUT TEARS". This chainzine seems to have been lost, or at any rate mislaid : there is a possibility that some fan editor or publisher is holding it until he can write his contribution to the saga.

Would any fan editor or other fan who has seen the 'zine please be kind enough to drop Vince a postcard saying who sent it to him, and to whom he sent it, so that an effort may be made to locate it. Vince is most anxious to assemble the material so that it may be prepared for publication.

The address, in case you have forgotten it, is 16 Wendover Way, WELLING, Kent.

Thanks.....



YOU KNOW," said the Chief BNF, "sometimes, when I look back on the past, it seems almost incredible that no one appeared to realise just what was happening." He looked at his visitor, a swart, green-scaled Venusian, and politely gestured towards a chair. "You will join me in Bheer?" "With pleasure." The Venusian carefully sat down. "I must confess that

your attitude somewhat surprises me. I had expected.."

He smiled, green fangs flashing in the light of the setting sun. The Chief BNF smiled as he touched a bell.

"Panic, perhaps?" He shrugged. "The Martians thought the same, I've no idea why. After all, we have expected you for quite some time now."

He turned as a neofan entered the room, his red cadet's beanie in clashing contrast to the neat, golden, triple-propollored one the great man wore with unconscious dignity on his thick, white hair. "Thank you. Pour and remain."

Reverently the neofan tipped the chased urn and poured a lambent brown stream into the jewelled goblets. Still flushing from the condescension of the Chief in permitting him to remain, he stood - as a neofan should - against one wall, his fingers nervously plucking at the Mark 1 zap gun at his belt.

"You see," the Chief sipped at the warming fluid, "like most people they were too near the wood to see the trees. Even the Great Vins - whom Ghu preserve - didn't realise the truth. The Great Willis," he bowed his head as the neofan grovelled on the floor in self-abasement at the rolling thunder of the legendary names, "even he, potent as he was, didn't grasp the tremendous significance of what he was doing. Giants though they were, yet we must never forget that they,

even as we are, were human."

A muffled sound came from the neofan, a combination of half-protest and half-doubt. The BNF smiled down at the flushed features. "You will learn, my son," he said gently. "You will learn." He sipped again, then, remembering the basic tenets applying to all those who drank Bheer, emptied the goblet with a series of tremendous gulps and held it out for more.

"Why do you do that?" The Venusian licked his lips with his rolling tongue. "I find this drink more satisfying when sipped with dignity."

"Tradition." The Chief lifted his goblet in silent homage to all those who had gone before. "A custom springing from the early days when the only safe place to keep Bheer was in the stomach. Also, and I must admit there is a little doubt on this point, it was considered impolitic to retain a full glass; such an action precluded being offered further supplies." He frowned. "That is one of the few points still open to dispute. Some say that a little left enabled the drinker to wait until some other offered to buy the round, some say that the best ploy was to remember an urgent, temporary appointment, while a few insist that the Old Ones were beyond all mercenary considerations. History, however, does not give weight to this opinion."

"I see." The Venusian closed his inner eyelids in ecstatic enjoyment of the fabled Bheer. "You were saying....."

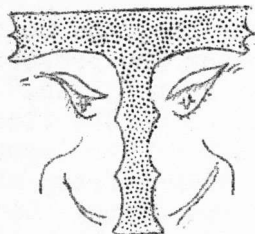
"Of course. You must forgive an old fan's ramblings." The Chief sighed. "It is hard to watch the passing years, to remember when one was, even as our young friend here, a bright and eager young neofan." He smiled at the boy. "Produced your first fanmag yet, son?"

"Yes, sir." The boy almost swallowed his tonsils in acute embarrassment at being recognised. "A one-shot too, sir, and I'm working on...."

"Yes, yes." The Chief lifted his hand. "You must be sure to send me a review copy." He lifted the urn, his hand trembling a little as he poured the goblets full. "As I was saying, even the Great Ones didn't know just what they were doing. There must have been an impression, a hint, a subtle something perhaps emanating from the infinite, but, be that as it may, they didn't really know."

"I find that hard to believe," murmured the Venusian. "Not that I doubt you; the whole system knows that Truefans never lie; but....."

"I understand your hesitation, and yet it is the undoubted truth. The archives reveal that for many years all fan activity was concentrated on dissection, examination, evaluation and discussion of the actual pro-mags themselves. The word 'science-fiction' appears with appalling regularity and it is hard to believe, in these enlightened days, that such productions were even read, much less subscribed to. There were clubs, of course, small gatherings of the persecuted, and there were even martyrs to the Cause. One heart-rending case is that of an undoubtedly Devil-possessed parent actually burning a sacred collection before the eyes of a screaming neofan." The Chief shuddered as he thought of the heresy, and buried his face in his goblet. "Naturally, such a thing could never happen now, but it serves to reveal the state of public opinion back in the Unenlightened Days."



HE VENUSIAN nodded, his slit eyes glazed a trifle, and his clawed hand fumbled as he reached for the urn. "A potent liquor, this Bheer," he muttered. "If a stranger could ask the formula?"

"It is a closely guarded secret," said the Chief BNF regretfully. "Discovered, so I understand, at the time of the famous SuperMancon by the adherents of the London Circle."

(Codex. Cont)

The secret is known only to the Guardians and must not be divulged."

"I understand." The Venusian licked his lips as he drained his goblet. "A war secret, you might say."

"Perhaps," said the Chief, a little stiffly, "but we Truefans prefer not to discuss the matter. The Great Ones, as I have said, were human, with human traits, and even they did things which are looked upon with some small misgivings. However, to continue." He burped and settled his golden beanie a little more firmly on his head.

"The first signs, if we discount the general trend of all true fanmags to make a point of ignoring 'science-fiction', came with the publication of 'Scrooge on Ice' by the Great Ving, followed by the 'Enchanted Duplicator' by the Great Willis. These two, of all fen at that time, seemed to have the closest affinity to the surging longing which so shortly afterwards was to break its bonds and sweep over the civilised world. Soon afterwards came that memorial piece, written by one of the professional authors of the day, a man who, while bowing to the necessity of earning a living, yet still nurtured an inward fire. I refer, of course, to Charles Grey, and the piece he wrote is known by heart and is a 'must' together with Scrooge and The Duplicator. It begins;

"He was an old fan, and tired....."

"I have read the piece," said the Venusian hastily. "A truly remarkable work!" He hesitated. "You say that Grey was a professional author?"

"Yes, but why do you ask?" "Never mind, but...he made money at it?"

"Certainly." The Chief smiled. "I understand your incredulity. Most Truefans of the day tended to frown on Filthy Pros and Vile Hucksters, but we must never forget that even the Great Ving, the Great Willis, the Great Bulmer, the Great Harris, and indeed, a surprising number of the Old Ones, were professional writers. Some were even Editors, and it says much for the fen of the time that such pursuits were tolerated and even encouraged, but naturally, their best work was reserved for the fanmags."

"He was an old fan," muttered the Venusian, "'and tired'...." He shuddered and reached for the urn. "Incredible."

"But true." The Chief frowned into the empty urn and snapped his fingers at the wide-mouthed neofan. Swiftly the lad picked up the container and ran from the room, the single propeller on his red beanie whirling with the speed of his passage. Within seconds he was back with further supplies of Bheer.

"Good work, lad. I'll see you get promotion to a two-prop cadet for this." The Chief stepped carefully over the grovelling figure of the neofan and shook his head in amused depreciation at the Venusian. "Sometimes their enthusiasm becomes a little embarrassing -- but such is the price of fame."

"It could be awkward at times," the visitor agreed, and blinked as he missed the goblet. The Chief put it into the clawed hand.



AFTER the memorable piece by Grey, the tide began to turn into a flood. Other authors followed the trend. The Great Ving wrote 'The Esoterics of Fandom'. The Great Willis followed it with 'Sublimations Of Fan-Ego' and the Great Stu Mackenzie proved by statistics that all fen were living an unnatural life, a state of existence comparable only to that of the early Christians. In short, they were trying to fit an ideal into a civilisation which was basically and financially against it. Incidentally, it was the Great Stu who proved, also by statistics, that it was possible for a Truefan to live without visible means of support, a fact which had been apparent to the inner circles for many years by then, the Great Ving

having obviously lived on nothing but air and fandom for some time." He paused, and stared at the Venusian. "Have you seen the monument to the Great Vinç?"

"I have. A magnificent piece of architecture. A tremendous duplicator and a bag of wind. Symbolic, I presume?"

"Of course. These two objects served to keep him alive for an incredible period of time. A length of time so incredible, in fact, that many of us believe that the Great Vinç could not have been wholly human. Alone of all the fen of his time, he proved what the Great Stu had shown by his statistics. A Truefan is able to exist by eating his words and breathing egoboo - it proved the salvation of Fandom."

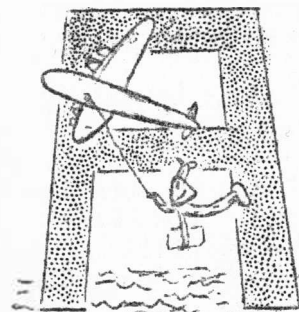
Again the white-haired Chief hid his face in his goblet. "Before you return to Venus you must be sure to see the other monuments to the Old Ones. The symbolic ocean in Ireland for the Great Willis. The stone computator for the Great Stu, the Vale of Shadows where lie all the First Fen, that strange place where, at night, can be heard the ghostly sound of ancient duplicators and the muffled curses as they produce their eternal storms."

"An interesting place," said the Venusian thickly. "I must make a point of seeing it."

"The annual pilgrimage is at Whitsun of each year. The ghosts are at their busiest then, but, naturally, you could go at any time."

"I will."

"The literature I have mentioned served to trigger the inward awareness that Truefen were not as normal men. After the SuperMancon this awareness reached a high peak and at the Great Meeting - the first Convention to be held in the open - the entire seething pulse of inward tension exploded in a scintillant fury of action. Most of this was due to the Great Slater. Well versed in military strategy, he, together with the Great Buckmasters took over the organisation of the co-ordinated effort. Within a few weeks all Fandom in Great Britain had been united into a composite whole. True, there were factions. The Great Bentcliffe founded a splinter gro up whose credo was that no Truefan could be born outside of the Manchester region, but he was attacked by the Scottish group and quashed with the assistance of the Great Cohen. It is said that the flaring of Zap guns made the nights hideous and that for once it just couldn't rain fast enough in the Bleak City to provide ammunition. The turning point came when the Great Newman, who had been secretly working for many years on the Project, produced the Mark V., super-zap gun with an incredible range and devastating effect. After that the insurgents had no chance and the internecine strife was over before it had really begun."



"ND THEN?" The Venusian grunted as he tried to rise, only to find that his legs wouldn't support him. "What happened then?"

"The Gospel spread. Missionairies were sent to every part of the globe and the results were miraculous."

"But I understand that travelling in those days cost money? As most of the fans were in a state of perpetual financial distress, how did they manage?"

"That was wholly due to the Great Wansborough. For many years he had been frowned on as someone with slightly unworkable ideas but when the true awareness blossomed in the hearts of Fans, and it was realised that - to a true believer - nothing was impossible, the great Wansborough came into his own. For five shillings he not only provided a year's reading of pro-mags, but arranged for air transport to America with free board and lodging for a month. How he ever did this remains a mystery, one of the many of the Time of Enlightenment, but do it he did, and when made Commander of Transport, proved himself as one of the greatest of Fen by sending miss-

(Codex. Cont.)

ionairies all over the world at a cost that even the tight-pursed fen could afford. His monument is now one of the finest in the Vale of Shadows - together with that of the Great Burgess - the only fan known who never bought a drink or was seen to taste Bheer - but I wander from the point."

"Which was Bheer?" The Venusian blinked hopefully at the Chief who, with a start, realised that the visitor was tighter than a Convention Committee member on the second day. Hastily he offered more Bheer.



NCE the thing had started it swept the world. Backed by the Editors, members flocked in to taste of the new way of life and, once tasting, they stayed to the end. As one of the first tenets was that a Truefan could live on nothing, and as the only way to find out whether or not an applicant was a Truefan was to lock him up with a duplicator and a postal service for not less than three months, both the population and housing problems were solved without difficulty."

The old man sighed. "Those were great days. Great names and great ideals. The Great Ratigans, who with a judicious combination of lurid art and extravagant hospitality seduced hostile groups to a mumbling acquiescence. The Great Campbell, whose beard, worth every hair its weight in gold, awed the crowds as he preached the benefits of Bheer, the prophet of Ghu. The Great White, Temple, Shaw, Enover, Carnoll, Klein (who made a fortune by selling fanmags as banned, privately printed 'hot' literature - and the Great Duncombe who held onto the cash against all the thirsty pleadings of the Great Brown and the Great Arnold. Great Names... shall we ever see their like again?"

He sighed, and a tear trickled down his withered cheek, and his hand as he lifted the urn trembled with emotion. Hastily the Venusian pulled his goblet away from the diluting stream.

"But how did it happen?" he asked plaintively. "What was this magic which turned the world from an armed encampment into --" he gestured towards the high windows, "--this?"

"Haven't I explained?" The Chief BNF turned so fast that the triple propellers on his golden beanie spun like refined rainbows. "It, the philosophy of Truefandom I mean, proved the answer to All. For years the Truefans had lived in a world of fantasy, utterly divorced from the mundane world of reality around them. At first, when contaminated with 'science-fiction', true awareness of what they were and what they did was hidden from them. It was only when they discarded the excuse and retained the fundamental reality of their pursuits that they could shake off all care and enter fully into the Golden Life. Trufandom showed that there is only one Ghod and Bheer is his prophet. Life became fun, a miraculous world where no one worried about anything, where each man was his own editor, his own writer, his own boss. It was more than that, it was an actual Way of Life, and a Way of Life is a....."

"Religion." The Venusian nodded, then, toppling as a tree topples, fell in an unconscious heap on the floor. The Chief BNF stared down at him, shaking his head in mute admiration at those long-gone giants who had compounded so potent a brew.

Automatically he reached out for a fanmag and began to read.



DISPUTE RAGES ON THE EDITORIAL STAFF! Should 'i' run book-reviews? 12 of the Triumfanate say 'Yes'...and 13 say the opposite, or 'No'. (The half is the schizophrénic). But we all agree that Frank Arnold is the Man For The Job.... So here is EYE running over:

BOOKS

Francis Arnold



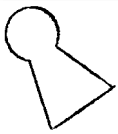
THE GREEN HILLS OF EARTH

Robert A. Heinlein, Sidgwick & Jackson,
9/6d. net.

Interplanetary travel will be attempted by many different people in many different ways, and we can back our fancy as to how it will be done first. In The Man Who Sold The Moon Robert A. Heinlein depicted his version of the events leading up to the first voyage out, and showed its being achieved by the commercial enterprise and enthusiastic salesmanship of one Delos. D. Harriman. In the present volume, second in the famous 'Future History' series, we have 'Rhysling and the Adventure of the Entire Solar System.'

In a dozen snapshots we glimpse a society going about its everyday life in the interplanetary age: trouble in a space station when a blonde radio operator joins the crew; worse trouble in another station, when an Army officer attempts a dictatorial putzsch; suburban tourists rubbernecking round the craters of the Moon; the lunar colony, with the joys and sorrows of the bright young operatives; and the famous title-story of Rhysling, the blind singer of the spaceways. Most of these tales have a family-serial atmosphere, with a few casual references to jets, weightlessness and the stars-wheeling-by-outside-the-window to give a little interplanetary decor. All very briskly told, and entertaining to read, of course, but it doesn't seem much of a result, after all the trouble Harriman took to get it.

Only in the last story, Logic of Empire, do we get a glimpse of bigger things. Commercial enterprise on Venus has brought slavery and the press-gang in its wake, and an underground movement is fighting for freedom. However, their hopes of succeeding on Venus are forlorn, and most men pin their faith to Nehemiah Scudder, the religious fanatic whose preachings may bring about a change of heart among the rulers of Earth. In the next volume of this series by Heinlein, If This Goes On, we shall hear all about it.



PRIVATE

i



?

i. Spi.

It is exactly sixteen years to the day (depending upon which day you read this), that a gawping London neo-faaan named Eric Williams first likened faaans to blotting-paper and the ensuing years have more than proven his prediction. Let us cast a jaundiced i over that London hell-spot, the Globe, and see what sort of blots on the landscape some of these earlier faaans of Second Faaandom have turned out to be -- and at the same time let us dissect the modern neo-fan who tipples mightily each week on soda water or orange-aid.

The Globe, as any bloody provincial or out-of-Town alien will tell you, is the high-water mark of British faaandom. In fact, if you ask decadent couldn't-care-less-whether-i-serve-you-or-don't proprietor Mordecai to take you down to the Pool Room he'll show you where the dogs parade, their high-water mark, and the Pool. It was into such a decrepit madhouse that i was recently initiated, having the pleasure of meeting Australian Stirling Macoboy en route from New York to home. He, like myself, was being initiated by the resident bar-flies --- a case of being soaked by the soaks, or standing round after round because it was impossible to get away from the bar. These old lags have a trick of encircling you with your back to the bar counter while they recite the latest scandal, making it difficult to do more than nod, say "Yeah", and pay the tally.

The henchmen of Second Faaandom line the bar, and looking into these tired and withered faces made me realise that Fate makes strange bed-fellows. Here were the gang-leaders of pre-war faaan wars --- Youd, Burke, Arnold, Chapman, Carnell, Temple, sit-on-the-fence Ving Clarke, Gillings and others, their hatchets buried (in each other's backs), while they prey on the gullibility of the members of Seventh Faaandom --- Buckmaster, Bulmer, Burgess, Mackenzie, sit-on-the-fence Ving Clarke, qui Boit, and the thinning ranks of Fifth Faaandom -- Tubb, Bounds, Hawkins, Duncombe, sit-on-the-fence Ving Clarke, R@igan, and lesser fry.

Lining the fringes of this sweating mass of humanity can be seen the professional hangers-on -- publishers, agents, representatives, editors, would-be artists, would-be authors, book salesmen, bums from Fleet Street looking for cheap copy, merchants from Hatton Garden looking for cheap diamonds, toughs from Holborn looking for cheap women, and Campbell looking for cheap magazines. While there i discovered that Campbell actually wears a bow tie under his beard (which has been specially trimmed and shampooed for the Mancon....) Another interesting fact i learned was when Carnell stated publicly that he intended doing exactly the opposite to what his rival editors do -- i noticed that while remaining clean-shaven, he is letting his hair grow long at the back in opposition to Campbell. Campbell, i discovered, is so hard up



that he has taken a job as a laboratory attendant, complete with white smock and squeegee, and passes his time (in between washing out laboratory pans) trying to discover the Elixir of Life. It is to be presumed that should he discover immortality Carnell will commit suicide -- with due publicity.

My primary purpose in visiting this sink-hole of inequity was to find out how many faaans were going to attend the Supermancon. i was appalled at the paucity of fellow travellers going North into alien territory, or even expecting to go. Second Faaandom was almost conspicuous by its absence, only Carnell and Gillings from the Foundation of British Faaandom were going, presumably as Historian and Recorder of the Great Occasion -- and to check each other's veracity on the Saga of Pelican's Vest (only First Faaandom will know this one...)

Closely cross-examined until he was cross-eyed, bibliophile Fred Brown simply smirked and said he had to take the family away. Charlie (they-can't-kill-me-even-when-they-drop-a-locomotive-on-me) Duncombe lifted his wooden leg (the one the dogs use), and said he was going to have a rest. Temple, Youd and Flood bluntly said their wives wouldn't let them and showed their cancelled passes for Whitsun. John Burke, chief shisen-stirrer of 1938, ex-Liverpudlian, monogamist by trade, looked blank, drank Arnold's beer, and said "Ahrrrra". Arnold, who had already borrowed the beer from Macaboy, slowly-sipped his ginger wine, burped, and said "What convention?"

Final enquiry i made among new and old faaans was which British magazines did they buy and what was their opinion of them? This enquiry lasted an hour and was I have ~~exer~~ experienced period. reads any magazines what writes all those witty nor reads them because he or the time -- in fact, he can because he is too busy faaaning fessional faaan in the world. perhaps the most amazing period. Positively none of them buys or soever. Vinç Clarke, who magazine reviews, neither buys cannot afford either the money not afford to work for a living Which makes him the only pro. i hear that ireland's professor of erudite profundity is going to have a few words with Vinç come Manconday. Since W-i-l-l-i-s rigged the Transatlantic Faaan Fund in Vinç's favour the latter has been unapproachable --- he now has 783 correspondents and has been cited as a co-respondent 784 times. Once by Willis.



i learned that the only faaans who read s-f mags are those who had a story published (like Tubb) and visit Cooper's bookshop and snatch a copy to read their own lousy prose in print.



One thing I did find the Globe egg-heads fully in favour about -- they were 100% behind the threatened rail strike. They would then have a cast-iron excuse for not visiting Manchester.

Make sure of missing our next instalment of "Where's there's Dirt there's Danger", when i shall be extracting the urine from Manchester's effort at running a National convention. You may be among the lucky winners of free publicity.....



"WAKEY
WAKEY!!"

I SAID,

but they already had -

H. J. CAMPBELL

In the May Issue of AUTHENTIC (the one I edit, you know) I made some comments in the Readers' Letters Section on the appalling sin of omission on the part of London fandom, viz., that there was no London Fanzine to represent this thriving, active, intelligent, formless, group.

Of course, nobody ever tells me anything -- anything nice, that is -- so I didn't know that at the time of publication, if not long before (*) a bunch of the Globe lads had already laid the foundations of 'i'.

Well, that's fine ! Now we are to have a London fanzine again. I hope it lasts and I think it will -- under the capable direction of the editorial trio -- if they're not at each other's throats within a few issues, like the editorial staff ofer, let's forget that sordid episode, shall we ?

Now all we need is for 'i' to climb to the top of the tree of British fanzines. Well, the editors have taken one big step towards that in getting me to write this piece for you. Who, among all my loyal dotting friends in fandom would dare to slam a magazine in which I appear ? Who ? Well, I don't have to tell you -- you know ; but nobody will ever take any notice of them anyway, will they ?

So, since the stage is set for stardom, so to speak, I thought I'd offer a few words of advice on how to read 'i'. (I have already given the editors 300 foolscap pages of advice on how to edit it) (+) because, like a prozine, a fanzine stands or falls by its readers, and everybody must pull his weight.

First off, don't read 'i' in the early morning. It's a scientific fact (strictly authentic, eds.) that blood sugar level is low in the early morning, and you have to have lots of sweet blood to read 'i', properly. Next, never read it standing up or sitting down. In these positions the blood drains into the legs

* December, 1953, to be precise. Three pints of bitter.

+ So closely typed that each line half-covered the adjacent ones. It starts: "But a bottle of RUM. Present this to Bert....."

and abdomen. Adopt a nice, flat, prone position, no matter where you are, and the rush of blood to your head will make you think it's coming from 'i'.

On the whole, it's best when reading 'i' to use one eye, and certainly not more than two. If you possess more than one eye, you should find some method of closing the other. The editors will do it for you if you approach them with the right kind of remarks.....

Never hold 'i' in the hand while reading it. This is basic. The fanzine should be pinned to the wall, preferably with a blood-stained dagger. And whenever possible, the opposite wall, rather than the one alongside you; otherwise you'll be looking at a slant and therefore way behind the times. Turning the pages may be inconvenient, unless, like some fans I know, you've got elastic arms. To overcome this difficulty in a very pleasant way, hire one of Ted Tubb's girls for the job. He has them in all shapes and colours, to suit even the queerest tastes. (Advt.)

Once you've settled down to it, don't try to read every word. Many of them don't mean anything on their own, but take on significance in a kind of gestalt fashion. This, as you will know, is the latest thing since Finnegan's Wake, and represents a stream of unconsciousness. This way, 'i' asserts its individuality by combining the superegos of personality complexes and subliminal connotations with the introspective hallucinatory engrams of paranoid endometriomaniacs. That's the way Vince Clarke describes it, anyway.

The illustrations (what illustrations ? eds) should not merely be glanced at. Many of them contain deep, rather dangerous messages hidden cunningly between the lines in case the Russians happen to see them. So pore over the illos. until you can see at least two of every line. If no message becomes apparent, it probably means that you are not a true fan, or not a subscriber -- one issue in advance only -- to 'i' --- even if the two terms are not synonymous, as they probably are. The remedy should be obvious. *

When you can honestly say that your eye, (only one, remember) has seen every speck of print in 'i', then is the time to write to the editors giving them your views. Your views will, of course, be Cycloplan, and all the better for that. You should be sure to rate the contents or at least say what was best and what was worst. (Maybe he's getting muddled -- we aren't Nebula, to pay him a bonus if his lousy piece does get top rating....)

When you rate this issue, I trust you will have no doubt as to which feature takes top place. If you have,..... well, you're no friend of mine like I thought you were.

'Bye, bye.....

Bert

* Ta, Bert, and all that --- we KNOW all true fans will get 'i', even if we have to blackmail the so-and-so's. As for the others, we care not for their predicament : WE are suitably provided for.

THE DAY OF THE MACKENZIES

DAPHNE BUCKMASTER

HERE IN CAMBERLEY it is quiet and peaceful. Thirty miles from the Globe, surrounded by pine woods and far from the harsh cries of neofen, one feels at one with the Universe.....

Into this haven of English beauty one Maytime Saturday come the Mackenzies. Stuart and Constance. Self-confessed publishers of EYE.

I had invited them down for the weekend. In all innocence and with my trusting girlish heart I had invited them. I admit it. May the people of Camberley forgive me.

The London weather had not been as good as ours, and right from the start it was evident that they had brought the heavy skies with them. They kept stopping every ten yards to put them down and change hands. We went into the house and, after they had washed their travel-stained faces (they had come through Staines on the way and had forgotten to protect themselves with Persil) they unpacked their bags and presented me with a joint of meat. I was naturally very pleased with this, not knowing then the dreadful Fate we were so narrowly to escape as a direct result of it.

An hour or so later we heard the harsh cry of a dying rook on the landing. It was the doorbell. (I must get a new battery). I opened the front door and a tall young policeman stood there. He looked ready and eager to serve the noble organisation to which he belonged....father like a serious and constructive fan.

"Good afternoon, madam," he said, in the best English tradition, intending to lull me into a false sense of security.

"Good afternoon," I said, making the score equal.

"I'm sorry to bother you," he said, which was a damned lie, "but I have to do my duty. There is a trail of blood leading up this road and on to your front door step, and, " - peering over my shoulder-, "up the stairs. How do you explain this?"

Playing for time I asked him to come in and led him up the stairs (our flat is on the first floor). I dare not tell him the awful truth as meat is rationed and it is a serious thing to waste any part of it.

Then I had an inspiration.

Pointing to Stuart, who was just visible behind a half-open door, I murmured confidentially in the ear of the Law. "It's our visitor. He's a vampire - had lunch on the train and -" I lowered my voice, "- he dribbles."

At that moment, Stuart, wondering what was going on, advanced across the landing.

"Gaaaaaaahhh!" yelped the policeman, and leapt over the banisters and out of the the front door. Rather like a serious-constructive fan coming upon a Convention party.

After that, we had tea, and Ron mentioned a pottery which is only a few miles from here. We decided to go over and have a look at their window, which had some intriguing original pieces the last time we had been there.

A notice in the window said:

IF WE'RE IN, WE'RE OPEN. IF WE'RE OUT,
YOU'VE HAD IT
BUT TRY THE DOOR, ANYWAY

So we did and they were open. Some of their work looked very much like BEAs so we really started getting interested and ended up by being shown around the workshop, Stuart and the proprietor learnedly discussing glazes and adhesives.

Meanwhile, Connie and I wandered round examining the exhibits. In a dark corner we came across a thing that looked like Aladdin's Lamp, so we picked it up and rubbed it. Much to our surprise, it was. In a puff of smoke a genii appeared, saying "Anything you wish will be granted" or words to that effect. So we asked for three days of sunshine for the Mancon.

He looked extremely pained.

"Mistress, I am a genii of the highest species. I am capable of Class A miracles. But what you ask is unprecedented. Three days of continuous sun in -" he bowed low, "-the Place of the S nguinary Ones is an occurrence which would shake the very foundations of the Universe. Is there nothing else that you desire?"

We thought deeply.

Then, "All future issues of HYPHEN to have a hundred pages?"

He fingered his beard. It was actually beered too - large stains all over it. I suspect he got it secondhand from Campbell after his trip to the States. ((Or he may have been the original genii with the Light Brown hair? stencil-cutter ave))

"That would take some time," he said slowly. "You see, there is a sea to cross, and although the Will is there, it takes a bob to cross the shaw. White should be I don't know. My colleague George charters a plane though...." he dwindled away thoughtfully.....

By this time the men had tired of trying to get professional secrets from each other and returned to the shop. It was getting quite late, so, with promises from the potter to give us a demonstration sometime, we left.

It was pouring with rain and pitch dark and it was not surprising that we got lost on the way home. It appeared that we had taken the wrong road back in the woods, but as we were all married it didn't matter.

On Sunday the weather was still looking pretty unpleasant, so we hung around indoors talking about fanaffairs in general. Sometime during the morning I went into the kitchen to see how the cooking was getting on.

As soon as I opened the door, I was met by a thick curtain of blue smoke. Shaking off the momentary impression that I was entering a fan gathering, I quickly went to the oven and looked inside.

It was the joint, of course. The joint THEY had brought. Not content with nearly landing us in gaol, it had now got itself overheated and split the Pyrex right down the middle. Yes, the dish had a sheer clean crack in it. Which is more than you can say for HYPHEN these days.

Well, genius that I am, I managed to get an edible dinner on the table, and after that nothing much happened. What ever does on a Sunday afternoon in the country?

After tea the Mackenzies packed their bags and we took them down to the station. Five minutes later they were on their way to London.

Here in Camberley it is quiet and peaceful.....

DAAPHNE BUCKMASTER

* It's a moot point whether any reference to the magazine of that name is intended.

Y O U T O I

As Athene sprang into battle full-armed from the head of Zeus, in like fashion has i sprung full-fledged into the maelstrom of turbulent emotions and entangled intentions that is fandom today. With these facts in mind it is with particular pleasure that I extend the good right hand of friendship and congratulatory welcome to the fledgling i -- a pleasure not untinged with gratitude that another stalwart has appeared in the lists girt for combat and ready to champion the sacred cause of TrueFandom.

As the editor of NIRVANA I wish all success to i.

NIRVANA has for many years stood like some lonely and aloof pinnacle in a stony and trackless desert waste, superb, benign, majestic, and altogether wonderful, serving as the mark towards which other fanzines struggle, and providing the inspiration of example. Here let me hasten to add for the benefit of those secons who might consider that remarks such as the foregoing anent one fanzine are rather out of place in another, that these observations are intended purely as a cheering word, as some sort of comradely slap on the back.

Five years hence we trust that i will have proved its shining aspirations in triumphant fact. On a quarterly schedule that means a solid 20 issues. If those issues appear with any close approximation to the regularity and punctuality of NIRVANA then Fandom will well be able to give the accolade of 'Well Done!'. By that time, too, with 20 i's, many HYPHENs and BEMs, and 40 Ns behind us, we may well be able to look around to find that the breathless wonder of the one religion of TrueFandom is firmly established. Others have more to say on this important topic elsewhere.

One point does occur, however, that is worth making, despite the blushes of fatuity which it invariably arouses. True Fandom implies fun for the sake of fun. Mighty BNF's have said so, pouring humourous scorn on the secons. The fact still remains that in fandom we have fun stemming from an inner core of emotion, feeling, belief -- call it what you will -- that is lacking in the more normal 'funnish' pursuits. We've just bought a house. There was work to be done. Not glamorous work like painting, but dull routine stuff. (For the full story of the glass-bottomed book case see Vince.) The fans rallied round, working cheerfully. All the time, between strokes of the scraper and splashes of the brush, priceless gems of Tubbian witticism and Clarkeian humour sprinkled the dusty air like fairy lanterns. The religion of TrueFandom works.

In America, home of the strange and the odd, Father Divine has successfully fathered a fantastic religion that has welded millions of people into his close-knit organisation, spreading his

own Godhead. They operate schools, shops, social centres throughout the States, and succour many needy folk during the bad years. George Baker -- Father Divine -- himself is able to own Rolls Royces and to feast himself and his followers right well. He also does not pay Income Tax. This latter fact, with the latest three-line whip - in red - from Her Majesty's Collector of Taxes staring me in the face, has a peculiar and savoury charm all of its own. TrueFandom might well seek to emulate Father Divine's religion in at least one respect. However, the good Father forbids all forms of sexual intercourse and decrees that there shall be no family ties among his followers. He is father, mother, brother, sister and lover - all in one. He also claims immortality -- at approximately 74 he'll soon be entering that wobbly stage of the nineties when every ball seems dead on the wicket - and anyone on the ranks who has the temerity to die is cast off and forgotten.

In some quarters serious misgivings are felt as to the possible results to the minds of his followers when he dies. If he is not a true immortal, that is. The conception of a million people suddenly being bereft of their all, their family and their god at one stroke, is not nice. Their religion would be flung in their teeth by a cynical fate.

The writing on the wall is plain. (Graffiti magnifying glasses 4½ guineas. Graffiti torches 2 guineas extra.)

We must put away our zap guns and face the future in all humility.

Once we have established the one religion of TrueFandom there can be no going back. No return tickets will be issued. We shall not expect converts by the million, rather, we shall carry on our present policy of accepting with reserve the willing novitiates and retaining that tight circle of brilliant minds. But once we have begun - we must press on.

Even to contemplate the cessation of publication of NIRVANA and HYPHEN and BEM would be a too hideously awful contemplation. The mimeo ink that would rush from ruptured veins, savagely slashed by sharpened staples, the reams of duplicating paper crushing beneath their ponderous weight TrueFannish skulls, the Enchanted Duplicators going up in smoke and flame -- the prospect appals.

We must stand firm and publish -- come what may.

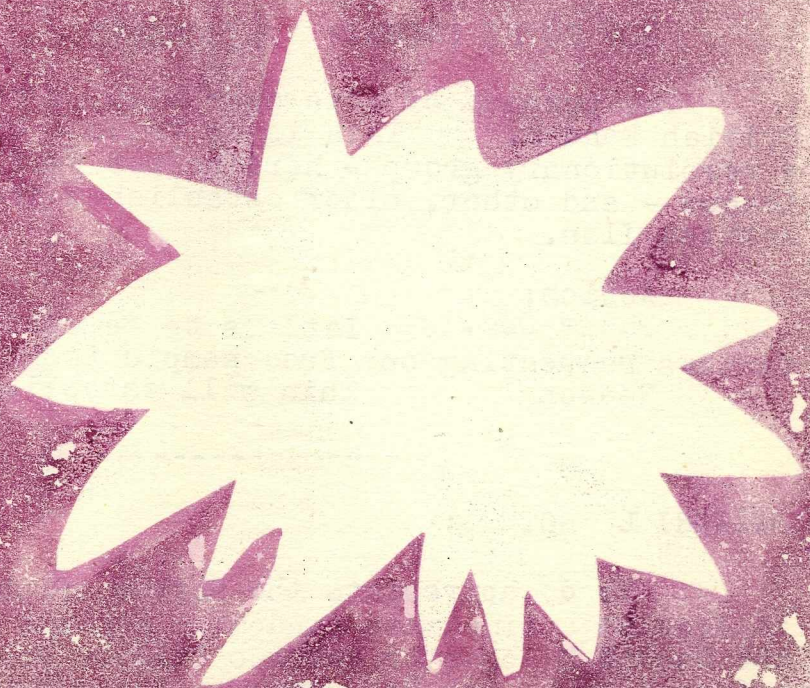
NIRVANA will never yield!

i has entered the lists. Debate well the significance of that step, and decide. The future looms over us in portentous magnificence; let i stride boldly forward to partake of that glorious inheritance!

KENNETH BULMER

i is proud to open its letter column with a letter from the distinguished editor of NIRVANA. May we hope to see YOUR name on a letter suitable for publication?

BLOOD SHOT



O P E R A T I O N

F A N S M A S H

Special Agent Stuart Mackenzie recently ventured - without even a Zap-Gun to protect himself with - into the conclave of a sinister cabal in the apparently tranquil atmosphere of the "Globe" a tavern in Hatton Garden, London, E. C. 2. (prop L. Mordecai, closing time 11PM). This assembly must calmly have been discussing a scheme, so diabolical, that the imagination reels the low depths of which the human mind is capable of descending. An uneasy hush took the place of furtive whispers as your agent forced his way into the assembly, and a weak attempt to bribe him with beer was scornfully refused. However, by plying the conspirators with strong waters - including a well-spiked orangeade - your special investigator obtained - from the inner pocket of the arch-conspirator while he was grovelling on the floor for a dropped penny - the following documents.

We believe that only a frank and complete exposure of this damnable project can save fandom from its hidden enemies. We approve their operational programme exactly as we received it. Uncensored. Naked in all its horrible concept. A thing only to be scanned with horror and loathing by every true fan.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED:

* * * * *

OPERATION FANSMASH.

(Strictly confidential)

NOT TO BE SHOWN! * DISCUSSED! REVEALED! DISPLAYED!

The purpose of this operation is to put new life into British Fandom. This is to be done by creating strife between a revolutionary group - hereinafter referred to as the Rocket League - and other, older established groups throughout the British Isles.

Action;

Phase One. Letters to be sent to all editors of all fanmags requesting one free sample issue.

Reason: This will establish the identity of straw-

EDITORIAL NOTE :

We do appreciate the horror of this disclosure, coming as it does at a time when fandom is replete with the ineffable joy of the Second Manchester Science Fiction Convention, affectionately referred to by its Treasurer as the SUPERmancon : but we felt that our duty to fandom lay plain before us. The document is verbatim.

man "Bill Henderson" (sic). Also, fanmags are needed for the purpose of critical review. (Phase Three)

Phase Two; Letters to be sent to committee of Super-Mancon. (See attached sample)

Reason. As per phase One. Also to establish commercial side of B.H.

Phase Three; Newsletter to be sent to all fanmage. Letter to consist of blasting review of all other fanmags than the one to which sent. These reviews to be in a serious, but bitterly vicious adult vein. Newsletter also to state aims and objects of Rocket League and to request membership fee.

Reason. By blasting other fanmage publication of newsletter is assured (always remember that we are dealing with a juvenile, semi-moronic intelligence). To get preliminary memberships. To establish further the identity of B.H.

Phase Four; A second newsletter to be sent out. This newsletter will claim a large membership of Rocket League. (We must ignore true facts at this and every other stage of the operation.) This newsletter will include intensive programme for R.L., fictitious or now depending on actual membership.

Reason. To arouse intense jealousy among fans because they didn't think of it first. Also to substantiate claim made in Phase Three that fans are being ill-treated by egoboo-mad editors and need an adult organisation.

Further Ideas.

Must break away from adolescence in fandom. Must appeal to readers at present unconnected with active fandom. Must put fandom on new footing etc. (High minded stuff). Blast all existing figureheads. Create chaos eg; Confidential letters to each of two editors stating that the other thinks the recipient a bum etc. Phoney letters, purporting to be copies of those received, could be dispatched.

Suggestions;

Write to faneds asking for confidential comments on others fanzines (any such letters to be published). MUST BE LEGAL! Offer to publish amateur storied in fanmags (author to pay for publication). Fictitious agent. Offers to handle am-authors work (payment for reading fees etc.) Fictitious paternity suit against prominent BNF. Letters of complaint and insult written to editors by outraged fan.

Recap;

The whole and entire idea of Operation Fansmash is to wreck fandom as at present existing. This should never be forgotten as qualms of conscience etc cannot be tolerated. Rivalry should be encouraged, hate cultivated and lies spread. Let's get 'em at each other's throats - then jump on 'em!

SAMPLE ONE:- Letter to Supermanson committee.

Mr Cohen.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to introduce myself as a person intensely interested in fandom and science fiction in general. Having been employed in South Africa for more than five years as a publicity agent I feel that I could greatly assist you in your forthcoming convention.

I attended the one at Whitsun of last year, the one at the Bonnington Hotel and, from a professional point of view, it left much to be desired. I will not go into details as I feel sure that you know what I mean. To avoid a repetition of such a fiasco I suggest that you take advantage of my offer. I shall be free next Whitsun for a few days and, if you would like the services of an expert to handle your publicity etc, you may call on me.

If you will let me know what monies would be at my disposal I will set to work at once for, as you know, such things take a little time to organise. Naturally, as a professional, I can guarantee a tremendous response, at least double that attending the London Convention, and so I am certain that you will not hesitate to take advantage of this good fortune.

My fees will not be onerous. Naturally I shall expect expenses with, I suggest, a percentage of the gate, and a guaranteed minimum of twenty pounds (£20).

I await your reply and hope to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Faithfully yours

Bill Henderson.

SAMPLE TWO;- As above but to P. Hamilton.

SAMPLE THREE;- AS ABOVE BUT TO Eric Bentcliffe.

SAMPLE FOUR; Ditto to Brian Varley.

SAMPLE FIVE; (aligned from Phase Three) Letter to fanmags and editors of same.

Dear Sir,

As one who has recently been re-introduced to fandom, may I request a sample copy of your publication for study and for purposes of being brought up to date on fan activity. I would appreciate it if you would let me know subscription rates etc, and also whether or not you take paid advertisements.

Sincerely yours.

Bill Henderson.

Note; All above letters will serve to ensure that "Bill Henderson" is known and accepted before Operation Fansmash moves into "Phase Demolition"

SAMPLE SIX;- Proposed programme for Rocket League.
Dates; (Any Dates)

Item One; Lecture on orbits, take-offs and landings.
(Taken vertibam from Willey Ley)

Item Two; Social evening. Refresments provided.
(Weak Lemonade and let the bums talk)

Item Three; Discussion and demonstration of the effects
of pressure on the human body. (The old chair-lifting trick)

Item Four; Lecture. Demonstration of nuclear fission.
(Mouse-traps and corks)

Item Five; Film show. (Anything cheap. Metropolis?
Perhaps we could get away with a magic lantern)

Item Six; Demonstration of reaction motors and jet
engines. (Balloon blown up and released.)

Item Seven; How to write science fiction. (Some
egoboo-hungry amateur author telling how he wrote his masterpiece)

Note; The above is merely a guid to the type of ambiguous
programme necessary to enrol a large membership. Not to be
put into effect unless there is no other way out.

SAMPLE SEVEN;- MOST IMPORTANT! Criticism of fanmag.
Example.

Slant; A more ambitious project than most. With good
format and lavish illustrations the few typographical errors are
hardly noticed except when they destroy the sense of the prose.
It is a cause for pity that the editor seeks to use this
publication for personal aggrandisment, but for those who are
willing to ignore this obvious plea for flattery, the magazine
has something to offer. Mr Willis obviously believes that if
only he bangs his drum hard enough, people will come flocking to
his doo - with subscriptions!

Example.

Space Times; A rag! One of the things which has
caused all intelligent men to turn from fandom with nauseated
disgust. If the editor sincerely believes that poor material
poorly duplicated and poorly, even moronically presented, just-
ifies the exorbitant charge for the publication, then we can
only leave him to his psychopathic world of make-believe. No
more about this sickening publication.

Example.

Peri; Typical of the insidious influence the established
magazines have on impressionable youth. The unborn child of a
careless mother. A mess.

Example.

Hypon; A scycophantic orgen designed to cater to the
American love of flattery. Do we need money so much? And if
we do, is it necessary to appeal to their charity so obviously?
It is to be regretted that = aside from typos - the publication
seems to have a small modicum of interest. Not reccommended.

Example.

Operation Fantast; A peculiar attempt to travel the thorny path between professional and amateur publication. Perhaps Captain Slater will have realised by now that childish driving does not become mature reflection merely because it has passed through a printer's hands.

Note; The above criticisms are designed to throw the faneds into a gibbering frenzy. This subtle method of reversing the truth is to be recommended. As follows;-

Con-science. A brilliant and scintillating publication which will appeal to all readers with a mental age of above two. The subtle jests, the hidden wit, the merry puns and descriptions of young fen at their play will bring a tear to the eye of many an old, hardened fan. This publication is to be highly approved and will have many uses even after it has been read.

SAMPLE EIGHT;- Newsletter to be sent to all fannags.

My name is Bill Henderson. I tell you this because few have heard of me and perhaps you'd like to know who I am. Briefly; I am ex-writer, an ex-pilot, an ex-publicity agent and an avid follower of that type of literature known as science fiction. I returned to this country after more than five years abroad and naturally tried to catch up with the latest developments in the field.

I was disgusted.

To me fandom appears to consist of a band of adolescents - too old for marbles and too young for women - a self-flattering group of introverts not worth a seconds thought but for the undoubted influence they have on the reception of science fiction in this country. At a recent convention I was ashamed to admit to reading science fiction. Why? Because of the childish antics of supposedly grown men. Beanies! Water pistols! High-pitched laughter and giggling inanety! Stupid grins and pitiful attempts at humour. Sullenness and a frantic desire to shout louder than their neighbour. Fandom! My God!

Now that the BBC, the book publishers, the toy manufactures and the films are accepting the medium as a means of exploitation, the present crop of self-elected, so-called 'fans' are letting down all we older readers have worked and striven for. Let us take a look at these peculiar specimens. First they are, as an article in that rich publication NIRVANA explains, merely cretins. They are mentally deficient, of low intelligence and with a low, animal cunning. Watching them I drew the conclusion that most of them get science fiction magazines, not for the contents, but for the pornographic covers. One can imagine them, furtive and leering, locked in their tiny rooms, gaping, and wishing that they could read. Other attributes are; an undisguised sexual inefficiency; a drooling, moronic, semi-shamed lusting after undraped pictures of the female body; a longing for flattery and a desire to be prominent in a field which has no prominence to offer. In short - they are bums.

This is your present day fan.

I want to change all this. I want to make being a fan something to be proud of. I want to raise the opinion of the general public towards fandom equal with that of the British Interplanetary Society, the Royal College of Fellows and the Philatelists Society. I want the term 'fan' to be synonymous with that of intelligence so that to be called a fan is to be called an educated, experienced, appreciative authority on science fiction instead of the drip the word now conveys. I want all that.

Do you?

If you do I have a proposition to make. *Divorce yourself from the childish excursions, one might even say excreta, of the average fan editor. Some of them - a very few of them - may be trying to do good. Most of them are playing the field for a bunch of suckers. How many fan editors, swollen with the money given them by unknowing innocents in return for the crud they issue, live in rich comfort? Have you read any of their effusions lately? I have. I give a brief report on what a professional editor thinks of them. I don't like it. He didn't like it. But the truth, unpleasant as it may appear, cannot hurt.

And we want the truth.

(Here give mag reviews sample seven.)

You didn't like it, did you? Do you want to do something about it? If you do I have a plan, a good plan, and one which will lift all truefans from the rut into which they have sunk. Don't think that I am going to give you a trashy so-called fan-mag. I'm not. I'm going to give you something better. I am going to give you the ROCKET LEAGUE!

This will be THE organisation. The ROCKET LEAGUE will be something that YOU will want to join! You can join. You can send me 2/6, and this 2/6 will be the preliminary fee to enroll you into the foremost organisation of all time!

You needn't be a noneentity cater to by morons. You can be something and somebody.

You can be a man!

Just send the enclosed membership form with 2/6.

Final Recap attendant on fresh suggestions.

After the damage has been done and fandom as at present known has been split by feuds and the ROCKET LEAGUE has split the fans apart, OPERATION UNITE comes into force.

We expose the Rocket League for the fiddle it will be but, admitting that Henderson had a good idea, found the Science Fiction Society. Both organisations can exist at the same time (double subscriptions from those you want to belong to both)

After the Big Stir we then smooth ruffled feelings by saying that the whole idea came from an Irish Spy.

I M P O R T A N T !!!

TOP SECRET!

ON NO ACCOUNT MUST THESE DETAILS BE ALLOWED TO FALL INTO OTHER HANDS

EYE'LL BE SEEING YOU — AVC

EYE has some distinguished contemporaries, and a few ~~extinguished~~ ditto. Why not try a few? You can't possibly say that you don't like fanzines if you've never tried any except those that have been pushed at you by some desperate editor....or editors. Current fanzines include: FEMIZINE No. 1. The first all-female fanzine in the British Isles (and Northern Ireland.) Edited and printed by Joan Carr (Sgt. J.W. Carr, -WRAC- % RASC Sgt's Mess, Maida Camp, M.E.L.F. 17), it suffers from having 3 editorial addresses, which is straining even our benevolence towards the female sex too far. For heavens sakes, girls! 9d each, 2/6d per year --- uh-huh, we never knew any who could count either ---- FEZ may be worth a long sub....it seems determined not to be serious...but right at this moment the only real difference between it and male zines is maybe a leetle more s-x, thus bearing out the old adage about female minds.

Now you've come back from subbing to FEMIZINE, we have another oddy for your delectation: THE NEW FUTURIAN. If you're an oold fan.....fifth fandom or before, here's a big dose of nostalgia for you. If not, then know that during the War one magazine survived and kept British fandom alive (or at least semi-conscious) as a unit...Mike Rosenblum's FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST, affectionately known as FIDO. Now Mike has revived it...9d a copy from 7 Grosvenor Park, Leeds 7. To say that this fanzine could have appeared at any time from 1940 onwards is not to be denigratory; it exemplifies the best type of serious approach to s-f -- regarding it as a specialist hobby for the bibliophile. To the book-collecting fan, NEW FUTURIAN will be indispensable; to the fan with an interest in the 'time-binding' forces of fandom the series 'The Story of British Fandom' by Gran'pop Gillings himself is a must; but if you're looking for poorly drawn cartoons and reviews of the latest BREs..this is not for you!

SCIENCE FICTION SATELLITE is the astonishingly well produced fanzine of the North East Science Fiction Society, price 1/- from Don Allen at 3, Arkle Street, Gateshead 8, Co. Durham. This is a young fans fanzine; it has quite a number of ideas that we hope its organisers will grow out of (to put it more politely than it deserves), but there's some talent here that shouldn't be ignored. Forward, Trufan missionairies!

ORBIT, organ of the Leeds SF Association, 1/- irregular from George Gibson % Adelphi, Leeds Bridge, Leeds 1; is an interesting pot-pourri of all sorts, and as such is hard to ignore. A trial is recommended.

HYPHEN, Walt Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, N.Ireland, has 200 American subscribers and 50 odd British. Considering that this is the best fanzine in the world for the adult prepared to cock a humorous eye at s-f and fandom, this discrepancy is a standing disgrace to British fandom. HYPHEN costs 9d, but its worth is beyond diamonds.

BEM, from Mal Ashworth and Tom White, 3 Vine Street, Cutler Heights, Bradford 4, Yorks, is in the HYPHEN and 'i' (?) tradition of humour; Mal in particular is distinguishing himself as a Truefan in the best tradition. BEM hasn't the reputation of a Belfast fanzine or the names of London effort...yet, but it has a sort of genius right now. 9d vastly underates its worth.

ORION, organ of Lakeland S-F Society, from Paul Enever, 9 Churchill Avenue, Hillingdon, Middlesex, price 4d yes 4d, is edited by Paul Enever. If this isn't sufficient recommendation we feel sorry for you.

At the time of going to press (Haw) we have no news of FISSION, SPACE -- DIVERSIONS, BRENCESLUSS, TRIODE, or HAEMOGoblin, but keep tuned into our station for further developments on all fanzines. A.V.C.

OPERATION DELUCE

YOU'RE A SCIENCE-FICTION FAN ?

YOU'VE GOT A BETTER IMAGINATION THAN
MOST PEOPLE ?

Then try this for size:

You've had an accident. You were jumping in school sports and you fell.

You can't move your legs.

You can lift your arms...just, but you've little power in them.

You can't control your fingers.

You're pinned down, every hour of the twenty-four, in an invalid chair, in bed, a place where people have lifted you and let you sit or lie.

You're like that for year after year...

* * * * *

What are you going to do? You read s-f but this isn't the imaginary future, when surgery is miraculous and robots are at your service. This is 1954, and painful reality. And your name is Bill Warren.

Let's quote Bert Campbell on Warren:

"...But he's happy and confident and courageous. Took him four years to get like that. But now he does a weekly column on films for his local paper, and he has tried his luck at a couple of stories. I asked him how he managed that. Shall I tell you?

Bill lifts one arm, lets a limp finger dangle over the key he's after. Then he brings up the other arm and lets it fall onto the first one, hoping that he hits the right letter. Then he

goes on to the next letter.....

Bill is an avid reader of science-fiction, but he can't get enough of it to occupy the long hours when he just has to rest (he can't work for a living, of course). I thought you might like to know his address: Bill Warren, 314 West Main Street, Stirling, Kansas, USA . I know just how happy he'd feel if you wrote him a letter....."

This is easy for fans. Fans are always writing letters, and most of them for no purpose except fun. Next time you take the cover off that typewriter or the cap from the ink-bottle, remember Bill. The address is given above; even if you lose it, send to us and we'll forward the letter to Bill and the address to you. Don't expect a reply. You can write and post a letter in half-an-hour; it'd take Bill ten or twenty times as long. And if you publish a fanzine, how about putting Bill on the permanent free list? And if you have some magazines or books to spare, how about sending them to him? You needn't even post them direct; send them to Stu Mackenzie at the editorial address and they'll be shipped across in lots with an addressed postcard that Bill need only get posted. You'll then be informed of your gift's safe arrival. This is OPERATION DELUGE. Further details can be found in the March '54 SPACE TIMES.

YOU'RE A SCIENCE FICTION FAN?

So is Bill Warren

YOU'VE GOT A BETTER IMAGINATION THAN
MOST PEOPLE?

Can you imagine not being able to walk or move easily, to be tied down by the strait-jacket of a useless body but with a still-active mind?

YOU'RE A SCIENCE FICTION FAN?
YOU'VE GOT A BETTER IMAGINATION THAN
MOST PEOPLE?

THEN USE IT.....AND GIVE !

(Note. Bill will be getting this and future EYES...without this leaflet, naturally.)

+++++

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