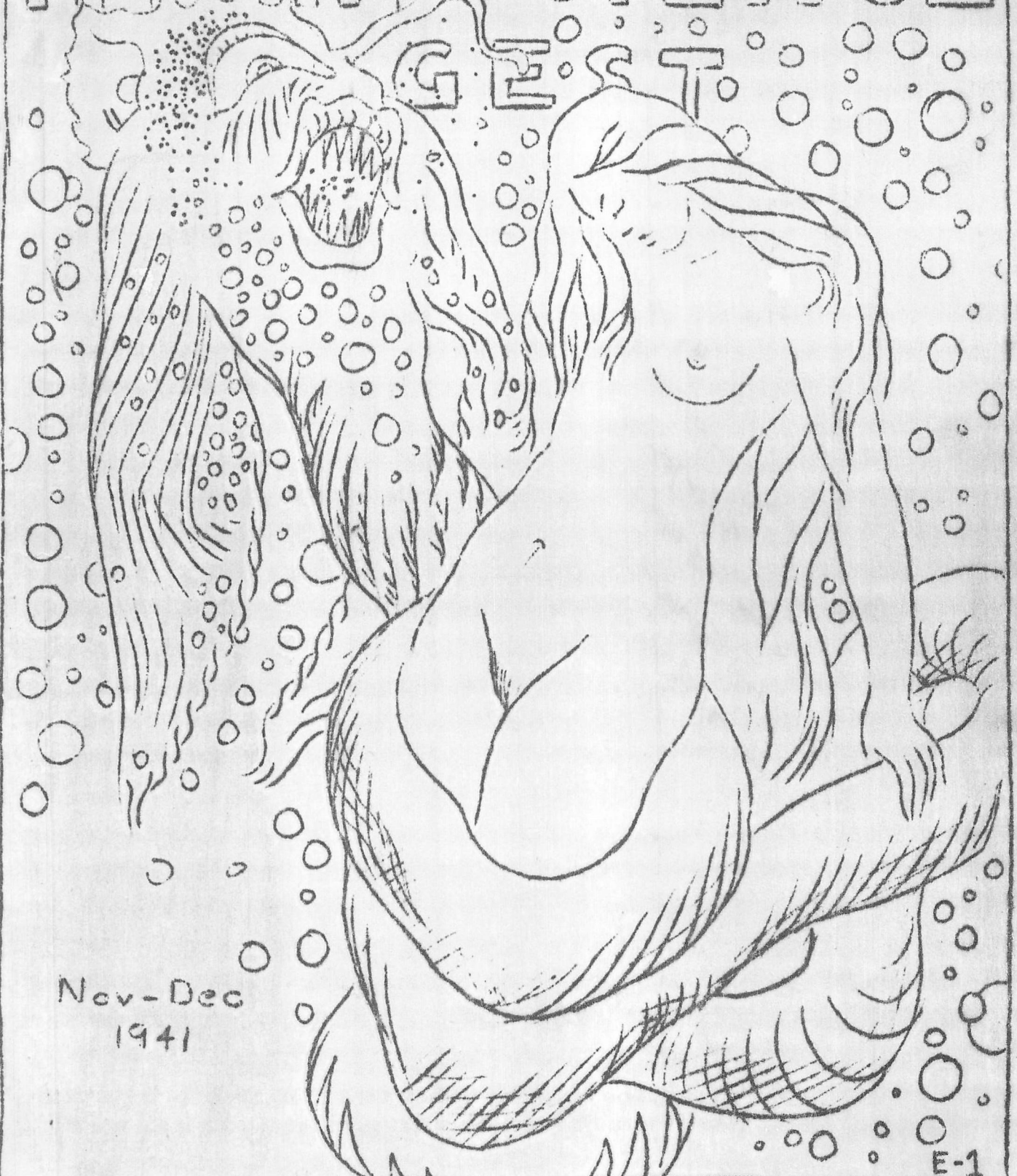


FANTASCIENCE

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Nov-Dec
1941

FANTASCIENCE DIGEST

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THE EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Frankly, readers, the appearance of this long overdue issue of FD amazes us as much as it probably does you. In compensation for the long wait, however, we have endeavoured to make this "Revival Issue" a very interesting one, an issue which the very active fan and the casual reader can enjoy..

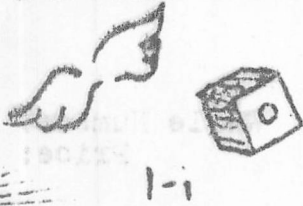
As you probably have noted by glancing at the editorial board, FD has a new addition in the person of Rust E. Barron, of Californ-

(Continued on Page 26)

FABLE & FANTASCIENCE

— by —

FRED W. FISCHER



Leslie Stone wrote a story about men with wings. Robert E. Howard equipped men with wings. Ray Cummings wrote of women with wings. Even the golden Amazons of Venus have wings.

This might present a syllogism: Major premise, men have wings; minor premise, women have wings; conclusion, all God's chilluns got wings.

That is, according to various authors. Had they ever heard of Daedalus and Icarus? If not, this could scarcely be plagiarism on the part of the authors.

Daedalus, you might know, was famous centuries before science-fiction. According to Greek fantasy writers, he fashioned wings for himself and Icarus, and they flew high, wide, and handsome over the Aegean Sea from Crete to Italy. Icarus, according to several accounts, so fascinated himself with his ability to execute powerdives, loop-the-loops, barrel-rolls, and tight spins, that he forgot his father's admonitions and flew rather close to the sun, which melted the wax on his wings and caused him to fall to his death.

Besides fathering Icarus and the interests of aviation, Daedalus was also creator of the wooden cow of Pasiphae, Pasiphae being the lady who indiscreetly gave birth to the Minotaur, for whom

Daedalus constructed the labyrinth at Cnossus. Theseus later killed the Minotaur, which brings on another cross-blanding of fable and fantascience, to be touched upon later. Before leaving Daedalus, let us mention in passing that he was also reputed to be quite a fellow in the fields of sculpture and architecture.

Modern scientists utilize the principle of the labyrinth in studying animal intelligence and recreation time. Psychologists refer to their intricate labyrinths as "mazes". Traveling circuses call them "fun houses" -- building equipped with confusing mirrors and blind alleys and twisting corridors. It is doubtful if either modern scientists or modern circuses have ever considered the possibility that Greek fantasy writers invented the maze.

Present-day authors, for their part, write thousands of stories concerning robots and hybrids. The Minotaur was nothing if not a hybrid. It may be assumed from the facts that Pasiphae's wooden wedding present from Daedalus might have been some sort of a robot.

But the classics mention robots with great frequency; idols that talked, wooden animals that walked, statues which came to life.

Perhaps you've read tales recently in which mad scientists

(always "mad" scientists roaming about, aren't there?) changed human beings into animals or part-animals, by judicious use of this chemical or that, or by ray-treatments, glandular operations, etc. Have these authors, numbering into the hundreds, considered the innovations of Circe, who without fanfare or mumbo-jumbo, converted men into swine? Or have they consulted the copyright of Zeus himself, who metamorphosed Io into a heifer that he might continue a rather clandestine affair unknown to Hera? Hera, by the way, beat contemporary monster-makers to the punch by creating the hundred-eyed Argus and the intelligent and implacable gad-fly, the duo which persecuted Io no end.

Which, inadvertantly and speaking of monsters, reminds me of Scylla. Scylla, to quote, was: "A fearful monster, barking like a dog, with twelve feet, six long necks and heads, each of which contained three rows of sharp teeth". Shades of Edgar Rice Burroughs! Even some of John Carter's Martian enemies were not so awesome, although the Barsoomian ape had too many arms, the calot too many teeth.

And Charybdis, guarding the strait between Italy and Sicily in conjunction with Scylla himself "thrice every day swallowed down the waters of the sea, and thrice threw them up again." Sounds rather like the maelstrom mentioned in England's DARKNESS AND DAWN, doesn't it? Could Charybdis have been only a problem in hydraulic engineering, so far as the ancients were concerned?

Which brings us back to Theseus again, in a roundabout way, because Hercules killed Scylla (according to some accounts) and Theseus emulated Hercules, his boyhood hero. Theseus was the Don Juan of his day. He was many times married and seldom divorced. His wives were merely abandoned or met unfortunate deaths. At any rate, it was Theseus who aided his friend Pirithous against the centaurs. Centaurs are hybrids. You'll come across centaurs quite often in scientifiction. Recently Clifford D. Simak wrote "The Loot of Time" and introduced a few villainous centaurs -- remember?

Pirithous aided Theseus in abducting Helen from Sparta as a girl, (Cradle-snatcher Theseus) and in return Theseus assisted Pirithous when that worthy tried to rescue Persephone from the lower world.

The lower world! Inside earth! There are literally hundreds of accounts in the classics concerning adventurous comings and goings to and from the earth's core. Burroughs and Verne and a thousand other writers carry on the legend. Maybe -- maybe there is an inner world. There's so much smoke, and always has been. All legends of all races--all mythology, is replete with tales of men who journeyed into the bowels of the earth on some pretext or other, and returned to tell of it!

One of the many who went to the lower world was Hercules, who had to abstract Cerberus as one of his twelve labors. Pluto gave him permission to seize this monster -- (was there once an open road connecting the upper and lower worlds? And did this inner realm have a king, as all the old tales say?), -- provided he could do so without force of arms. Quite a task, since Cerberus had three heads, the tail of a serpent, and serpents around his neck. Cerberus, let us mention since we have spoken of hybrids in scientifiction, was the child of Echidna

and Typhon. Echidna was a monster -- half woman and half serpent. Typhon was a monster with one hundred heads, fearful eyes, and terrible voices.

Either of this pair of horrors sounds like the creations of a fantasy writer's nightmare, but wait! They combined forces to disgorge upon the world more horrors than Edmond Hamilton, H.G. Wells, or Ed Earl Repp ever thought of later. Besides Cerberus, they were parents to the Chimaera, "a fire-breathing monster, the fore part of whose body was that of a lion, the hind part that of a dragon, and the middle part that of a goat"; the many-headed dog Orthus; the hundred-headed dragon appointed guardian of the apples of the Hesperides; the Colchian dragon; the Sphinx, differing from the Egyptian because rather than being a half lion, half human without wings, the daughter of Echidna and Typhon was a winged half lion, half woman; Scylla, previously described; Gorgon; the Lernaean Hydra; the eagle which consumed Prometheus' liver; and the Nemean lion.

You can really see that Hercules might have been incurring quite a family feud in making off with Cerberus. But he wasn't particularly bothered, having previously killed the Lernean hydra, which "had nine heads, of which the middle one was immortal. ---- In the place of the heads he cut off, two new ones grew forth each time."

Hercules, among other labors put upon him as penance, cleaned the stables of Augeas. Quite a task, since Augeas had a herd of 3,000 oxen whose stalls had not been cleaned for thirty years and probably smelled to high heaven. Employing quite advanced hydraulic principles and utilizing river diversion, Hercules cleaned the stables in a single day. Hercules next destroyed the Stymphalian birds, voracious creatures with brazen claws, wings and beaks, and feathers which they used as arrows. Hercules frightened the birds with a brazen rattle, and as they flew he shot them down.

Modern duck-hunters, take note. Or do you prefer decoying to scaring?

But inasmuch as this little essay deals with scientifiotion in the classics, or the application of present-day scientific principles in the classics, perhaps we'd better come down to earth and cite a few more specific and applicable instances before closing.

Perseus, for example, killed Medusa. To look at her turned one to stone. (Modern authors prefer rays or potent drinks). Perseus employed the principle of reflection of light, glancing at her only in a mirrored shield, and so was able to decapitate her. He escaped the vengeance of her sisters through invisibility granted him due to a magic helmet. Who knows but what this helmet might have not contained some scientific device to bend light-rays or reflect light? The helmet is fully as possible as any contemporary creations of invisibility as employed by THE INVISIBLE MAN, THE MOON POOL, THE SARN, TARRANO THE CONQUEROR, or a thousand other books and sources.

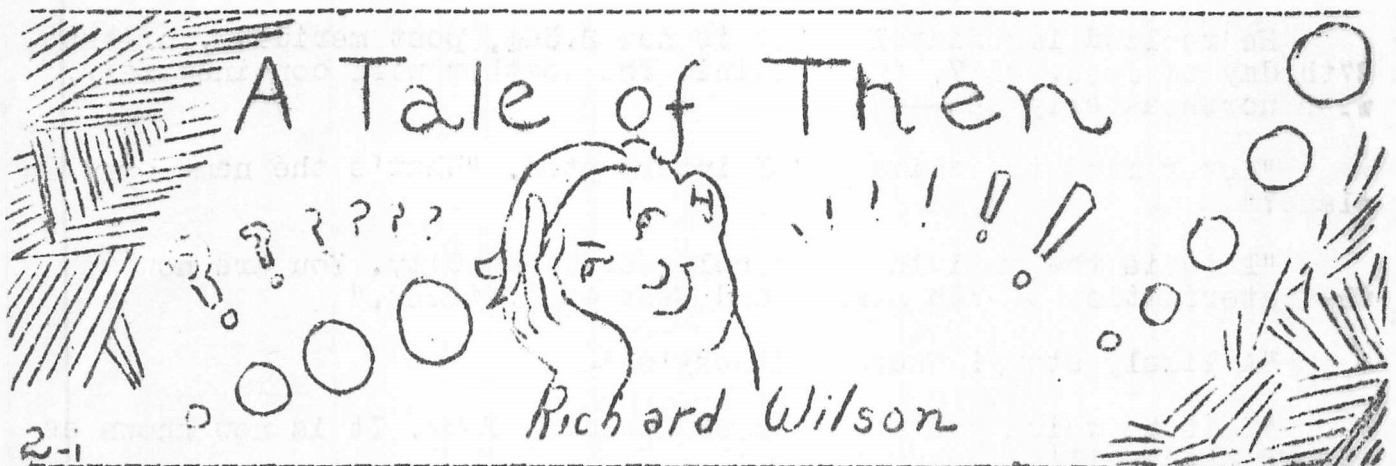
So we find that the ancients, the poets and historians of ancient Greece and Rome, wrote more stories with a scientifiotion tinge than we might imagine.. Modern writers might in many instances be accused

of mild plagiarism or at least copying of plots. Persephone took a trip to the center of the earth long before Jules Verne explored the possibilities of such a journey.

More recently: SARTOR RESARTUS mentions magic hats and vanishing cloaks. LOCKSLEY HALL predicts war in the air, and radio. THE ARABIAN NIGHTS are nothing but scientifiotion tales -- stories of marvelous inventions and ingenious creations: flying carpets, instantly flowering rose-bushes, magic cloaks, etc. (If this article meets with approval, I should like to someday write one citing instances of scientifiotion in THE ARABIAN NIGHTS, closely paralleling works by present-day authors.)

In conclusion, I admit whole-heartedly that my examples have been rather far-fetched and my discourse meandering, but I wish to point out that stories told by the ancients and odes sung by the poets, were fully as much scientifiotion in those olden days, as some of the contemporary fairy stories represent scientifiotion to us. And with literally thousands of such examples to choose from, a modern writer need never run out of scientifiotionplots. Scientifiotion is no respecter of languages -- it has long been written in all legends, all fables, and in all tongues -- including the Scandanavian.

Q. E. D.!



I had no idea where I was. It was utterly alien place, with buildings shooting thousands of stories into the air, and low, rounded vehicles whizzing breakneckedly through the streets.

I approached one of the hustling inhabitants.

"I beg your pardon -- " I began.

"Never give to beggars," he said, frowning fiercely. "Find it encourages idleness," and rushed on.

I walked up to a young lady who was looking into a store window, watching a youth industriously shoveling books into a furnace. The name on the store-front was "McClintock--Microfilm".

"Pardon me," I said, raising my hat. "Could you possibly----"

"I'm a lady, see?" she shrieked, spinning around. "A lady. And, bein' a lady, I don't have no truck with your sort. Understand? I'm a la---"

This time I fled.

I had gone three blocks before remembering my beloved Uncle Jason's sage words. "When in doubt," he would say, patting my tousled blond head affectionately, "ask a policeman."

No policeman was in sight, but a few blocks on I found a reasonably accurate facsimile thereof. He stood stiffly in front of a gas-mask shop. He was about seven feet tall, dressed gaudily in a varicolored uniform, with a blue-&-red neon sign on his cap, which read "Information" and flashed on and off.

I stopped in front of him. He clapped his hand to his head in a smart salute. There was a loud clang.

"I am Robert the Robot," he said metallicly, "and at your service."

This was wonderful.

"What time," I asked, "is it?"

He replied immediately. "It is now 2.34 $\frac{1}{2}$, post meridian, of the 27th day of June, 2117, anno Domini. The weather will continue fair, with northeasterly win---"

"Never mind the climate," I interrupted. "What's the name of this place?"

"This is the thriving metropolis of Nyork City. You are now at the intersection of 7th Avenue and West 42nd Street."

"A likely story! Where's Minsky's?"

"That to which you refer is on Sublevel Four. It is now known as the Havelock Ellis Museum."

I thanked him politely and wandered on. After much walking and many narrow escapes from sundration at the wheels of madly-dashing automobiles, I found myself on a long bridge which overlooked the city and what used to be the East River from a tremendous height. About half-way across a figure stepped from the rail and grabbed my lapel.

"I'll bet you don't know who I am," he said. "As a matter of fact, I'll give you odds."

I said No, I didn't.

"Well," he said, "once I was first mate aboard the interplanetary liner Bounder. One day the captain led me into his cabin and said, 'Sign this.' I said No, because I knew no such rations had been issued to the crew. And then there was the episode of the Martian cheese..... Anyway he had me spacehauled and turned out of the mercantile fleet."

I said that was too bad.

"And now no one will give me a job," he said. "So do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to destroy myself!"

"No!"

"Yes! I'm going to jump headfirst off this bridge, and almost before I know it, I'll be a bloated corpse."

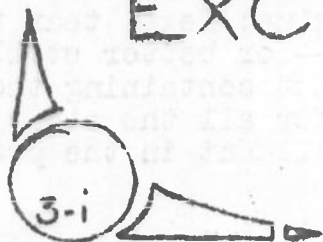
"How very melodramatic," I commented.

He looked pleased.

"Do you really think so? Well, here I go!"

And there he went. But he didn't dive. He went feet-first, and holding his nose.

But he made a beautiful splash.



EXCERPTING AND BINDING

By Langley Searles

The appearance of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES and the five issues of FANTASTIC NOVELS has not by any means made excerpt-binding obsolete; not only has the supply of available reprints been scarcely touched, but, at the present rate of use --- 60,000 words bi-monthly --- it won't be for years. Moreover, with the exception of Merritt's novels, very little stuff of pre-1930 vintage is seeing the light of printer's ink. And besides, much Munsey s-f will probably never be reprinted at all --- no Burroughs, for example, and few if any of the lesser-known and not as well-done yarns of England, Smith and Flint. (Have you noticed that outside of "The Blind Spot" and sequel, only one Flint story has been reprinted? It's no accident; the reception that "The Lord of Death" met with has discouraged the early appearance of the remainder of his stories. In fact, you may never see them reprinted at all.) Plenty of those old-timers are pretty tame reading nowadays; of course, if you read 'em back in 1918 or so, memory can still play the hypnotist with you when you see them again, but if you read them for the first time in 1941 and your hindsight is not 25 years but only five ---

All of which shows that excerpting and binding is in no sense out of date in 1941, any more than it was in 1931, or will be in 1951. And hence a few pointers on the subject would be timely to note, for it is far more of an art than is generally supposed. Once a serial is ex-

cerpted and bound, it can seldom -- if mistakes are made and a sloppy job has resulted -- be done over neatly; the task should be executed properly the first time.

Suppose, for example, that we have a six-part serial on our hands, and let us follow through the various steps in the making of the final product. Materials needed: scissors, rubber paper-cement, ruler, pencil, heavy pins, (or very slender nails), a small hammer, heavy magazine staples (paper clips, cut and bent to the proper size with pincers, may be used if staples are lacking), brown gummed tape (one inch wide), blank pulp-type paper, a few sheets of bond or typewriter paper. The work is most conveniently carried out on a knee-hole desk or a table of suitable height.

First, remove the staples from the magazine, bending them back where they clamp over the last page of the magazine, and pulling them out in front --- best accomplished by slipping the ends of a closed scissors underneath the wires and twisting them free. Now view the magazine along the top edge near the backstrip, and note that it is composed of five or six sections, still held together by glue. By consulting the table of contents, the section or sections containing the desired serial can be located by the page numbers. Break the binding on both sides of these sections and carefully remove them intact. Separate them carefully, and then chip off the dried glue. Next, tear the sections apart in the middle (where the fold is) --- or better still, cut them apart with a scissors. Discard the pages not containing the desired story, and then repeat the entire process for all the other parts of the serial story, setting aside each installment in the proper order.

Tear or cut about a dozen sheets of pulp paper to the standard magazine size ($9\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$), and put two of them before the first page of the story. Now take the first page and, if the story itself begins on an even-numbered page, cement to its back a blank sheet of pulp paper, using rubber cement (I use "Best-Test" brand myself), and following the directions given for permanent binding. Be sure to apply a thin, even coat of the cement both to the back of the first story-page and the blank sheet of the paper; get a 25¢ can with a brush for easy application, or for even better results spread the stuff on with your index finger (it is easily rubbed off when dry). This rubber cement has the great advantage of not wrinkling the paper it is used on, and also rubbing off any excess that may have been inadvertantly applied on the wrong area.

Now turn to the last page of part one. If it is odd-numbered, it has on the back some advertising or the beginning of some other story, or some similar unwanted material. If the first page of part two of the serial is also odd-numbered, the columns of print from the last page of part one may be carefully cut out and transferred (cement them on in the usual way) to this first page of part two. Although the illustration (if any) should not be covered in this way, the synopsis may be, as it is of no value if the entire story is present. If there is any of these columns left over, simply cement them to a blank page, and place the latter between the two installments. If there is not enough to cover the synopsis, simply use a bit of blank pulp paper, cut to the proper size, to do it. On the other hand, if the first page of

part two is even-numbered, insert a blank page between the two serial parts, and on the first side of it cement the last columns of part one and on the second side the beginning of part two. Combined with a few variations to suit specific conditions, this method will usually succeed beautifully in eliminating unwanted printed matter from the pages of the serial. Apply this method to the juncture of parts two and three, three and four, etc., until the last page of the story is reached. Treat this like the first page if necessary, and then after it put a couple of blank sheets of pulp paper.

Now take two sheets of bond paper (cut to magazine size) and along one side of each stick down a strip of the brown gummed-tape. Use one of these pages (tape-side in) for a title-page, typing or writing on it the name of the story, the author, and any other information you wish to record permanently, and placing it in the position of page one. Use the other page (likewise tape-side in) for the last page of the serial.

This completed, all is ready for stapling. Gather the pages together, shaking and tapping them until the left-hand and upper edges are even. Keeping them in this position, place them down flat, the first page uppermost and the left-hand edge toward you. Leaving an inch or so space free along this edge, weight down the pages with some heavy objects, such as books, to keep them in place. Next, using heavy pins or slender nails, drive holes for three staples along the edge; one set of holes should be in the middle, and the others about an inch and a quarter from either end. Never attempt to drive in the staples without first preparing holes for them, as this is one of the surest ways to botch the job completely. But on the other hand, the holes should not be so large as to allow the pages to shift. After the staples have been driven through their holes, turn them down at the back in the usual way.

Then take a piece of gummed tape and fasten it lengthwise around the stapled edges to act as a backstrip. After this, take another piece of similar length, and fold it in half lengthwise, gummed side out. Moisten one-half of it and affix along the left-hand (stapled) edge, folded side to the left. Wet the other edge and press down a 8½ x 11 sheet of bond paper over it, leaving about an inch and a half projecting over the left-hand edge. Now cement this projecting edge around the back of the magazine --- that is, the backstrip --- to the back side. Then trim off any paper extending beyond the edges of the pages of the story. If the serial had a cover illustration, it can be cemented to the front cover of the bound story; and if desired, a small strip of paper bearing the typed title of the story may be cemented to the backstrip. Finally, stack a pile of books on top of the bound story and allow it to remain under pressure at least overnight, preferably longer.

The chief objection to binding a serial in this manner will probably be that it is a time-consuming operation. Granted, it is. But the result will usually be found to be worth the trouble expended. And if it is absolutely necessary to cut down on time, simply eliminate the cementing operations described in paragraph six above.

If you're an entirely new hand at this business, here's a few

more tips for you. First, don't try to hurry the process; there are simply no short cuts to a nicely-bound excerpt, unless you want to buy it already made. Second, don't make your first binding jobs on your best stories; practice on the worst ones first, then tackle the good ones. And here's a tip, not only for beginners, but for everybody. Always be on the lookout for new tricks and ideas that you can incorporate into your work, and don't hesitate to try them, for that's the only way to prove their worth.

Lastly, don't take it for granted that, because the average story runs to magazine length --- 125 pages or so --- you must limit or build up the stories you bind to approximately that length. By using heavier (cardboard) covers, and heavier staples, you can build up your bound excerpts to 400-500 pages safely; if necessary for added strength, reinforce the backstrips and cover-hinges with cheese-cloth. Thus you can collect the works of your favorite author in one "book". For example, in my own excerpt collection, I have William Gray Beyer's series of stories bound up in this fashion; it runs to about 300 pages. Likewise, the ARGOSY fantasies of Murray Leinster (there are about thirteen yarns in all, by the way) I have bound up in one volume; they run to about 450 pages.

In closing, I would advise against bothering with serials that have appeared in book form if you can get the book instead. Having a novel in a professionally-bound book is better, of course, than doing it up yourself; but often --- as with some of Merritt's works --- the book is far harder to get. So bind the story up yourself if you have to --- and be assured that if you take time and patience enough on the job to do it right, it will compare favorably in appearance with the professional version. And good luck to you in your work.

The Decadent Age in Magazine Science Fiction

4. By Robert W. Lowndes

(Note: The writer makes no pretense, in this article, of speaking for any save himself. He would be interested in knowing how many, if any, of the "oldtime fans" agree with him. "Oldtime fan" in this case is to be taken as descriptive of an enthusiast in magazine science-fiction of not less than ten years standing. . . . The term "decadent" is among the many abused expressions in our language; it has come to mean, for many people, sheer contempt and a brand of inferiority. Not so is it used here. When the writer says "decadent" he is employing an analytic adjective in denoting a type; no comment upon desirability or goodness is to be connoted therewith.)

When one speaks of a period of decadence in the arts, in music, or in literature, it is usually assumed that this period follows a classical or "golden age" era. The particular art heretofore has been flowing onward, keeping pace with the flow of progress in the world without,

gaining in strength and agility, increasing steadily both as to quantity and quality. When the hiatus occurs, this flow is blocked, but not abrogated: sheer inertia causes it to spread out, to flow back upon itself, to create eddies and whirlpools. For a time, this spreading out creates great brilliance, and, not until the flow has finally halted and the stream become to stagnate does "decadence" become death.

In magazine science fiction, we saw a classical period, although whether or not there really was anything resembling a "golden age" is very questionable. Had the world not been plunged into chaos by economic crisis of unprecedented order, had the flow of science not been halted thus, then magazine science fiction could correspondingly have reached the peak of its development. But with the breakdown of scientific progress, the forcible retrogression of progress in many parts of the world, and the mad divergence of all aims to military objectives, science fiction, which was so vitally connected with the free and unhampered flow of scientific thought, progress, and experiment along constructive, peaceful lines, struck an impassable barrier. So far had it gone; no farther could it go. It could, true, look into the immediate future, build upon what knowledge there was and extrapolate upon such building blocks of the future as the scientists had made or described, but no longer was there a ever-progressing base for it. For five years there have been little or no new basis for science fiction: there have only been modifications and improvements upon such basis as had been and rejection of a few which had seemed sound at that time. The proof of this is indicated in that outstanding science fiction stories of five years ago are hardly distinguishable, from

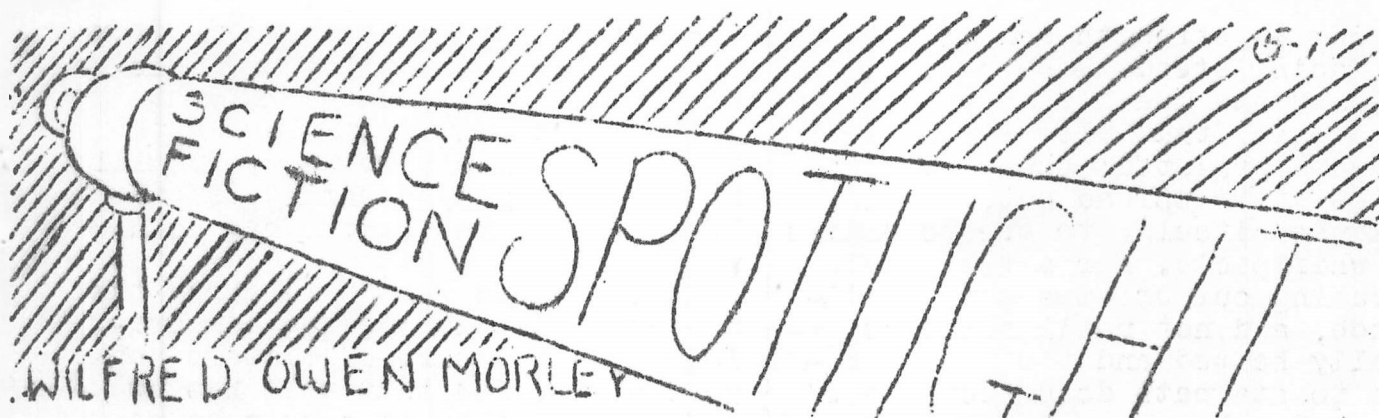
the scientific basis thereof, from outstanding scientific tales of today. Yet, compare the best sf tales of five years ago with the best of ten years ago. It will become painfully apparent, then, how complete the hiatus has been.

It is not enough to shrug the matter off by suggesting commercialism on the part of editors and publishers. Not that this has no effect, but that it cannot be accepted as the prime factor. Editors and publishers have always been commercial. the ARGOSY fantastic tales would not have been continued if from the first, they had not proven drawing cards, immensely popular with the readers.

As a matter of fact, when we speak of "basis" for sf tales, the rejection of this principle by so many authors and editors, and the widespread doubt as to whether or not such exists can be taken as a symptom of decadence. Science fiction has long ceased to be explorative: it is now decorative. At its best it is smooth entertainment, brilliant fantasy with an undertone pleasing to "streamlined" moderns. It aids in the mythology that scientists have invented for themselves: it shows every sign of becoming the mythology of the Neurotic Age (with thanks to Stanton A. Coblenz for a very apt non-political definition of our times).

When did the decadent age in magazine science fiction begin? It seems to have started markedly with Weinbaum, the great decorative romanticist. Ironically enough, he brought into sf something it needed after it was too late for any innovation to be of any use to it. The river had already been damned. Weinbaum brought the realist-romantic touch, the light realism which, during the classical period could

(Cont. on Page 29)



In the last issue of this column, we note with amusement, it was said: "After all said and done, Charles D. Hornig's SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY may never be published." Well, it did look as if it never would get started, but here's the fifth issue coming up now.

Cover is by Hannes Bok, suggested from scenes in Cummings' "Into the 4th Dimension"; Dolgov did the interior double spread on it. Good news for Philly fans lies in the fact that Lee Gregor, PSFS Member, is represented in this issue with "Power Plant"; illustration by Roy Hunt. This is the story that was accepted on the spot at Denver, and given to Hunt also on the spot. Two novelets are also in this issue: S. D. Gottesman's "Sir Mallory's Magnitude", a scientific mystery tale of sabotage in a world peace convention after the war, and "The Year of Uniting", by Hugh Raymond, dealing with a "scientific" regime in America some ten years from now. Also among the short tales are "Caridi Shall not Die", by Walter Kubilius -- Walt's been appearing quite frequently of late; PSFS members may recall him as an old-time ISA member, and pretty active at that -- and "Baby Dreams" by Alan Warland, a newcomer. Others, too -- it's going to be a big issue -- same amount of pages as before, but lots more stories.

There may be a number of fans who do not know of Arkham House's activities. They put out H. P. Lovecraft's works in the anthology known as "The Outsider and Others", a couple of years back. Now, they have regained their investments on this volume, and have brought out another book. This time, it's a smallish edition of August W. Derleth's weird stories -- but don't let the size fool you. There are sixteen of Derleth's best weird stories in the book. It is excellently printed & beautifully bound. It's a first class professional job, and equal to that put out by any standard book publisher at the same price, \$2.50 -- in fact, better than some. If Derleth regains his investment on this, he plans to bring out editions of famous fantasists regularly; next on the list is Clark Ashton Smith. Robert E. Howard will probably be in line right after that, and by pledging support to the ventures, fans may be able to get some of their favorite stf writers' tales reprinted in these splendid little editions.

Mary Gnaedinger is still waiting for the promised new story by A. Merritt, for FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES. Perhaps if some of the fans were to write Merritt, telling him that they, too, are waiting eagerly, it might spur him on. The gentleman is very busy, but when you know someone is waiting for a story, or rather, that a whole raft of people are waiting, it gives one the satisfaction which often turns into more driving power. "Burn Witch Burn" will probably be reprinted soon, we

are informed.

And fans are invited to write in telling whether or not they liked "Crimes of the Year 2000". The tale in the December FFM is only the first of a series.

A recent letter from Dr. Smith gives us permission to impart the following. We'd written him asking about rumors to the effect that he might be writing a new Skylark story for Palmer. Rumors were further that Palmer had vowed that no alterations in the story would be made. Dr. Smith says:

"As to the rumors as to Palmer publishing an unedited fourth Skylark story: they are not exactly baseless, but it is not going to happen, which paradoxical statement is explained as follows: -

"The rumor undoubtedly originated with Korshak, who was with me in Palmer's office when Palmer made me the verbal offer, which was exactly that. I said that it would take a few months for me to decide whether a fourth Skylark story could be written. I decided finally that it could be done, and wrote him that if he would put it in writing I would go ahead with the story. He didn't answer for six weeks, then wrote, in part - - '.... we never put anything in writing ... I am afraid that we will have to forget a 'Skylark' story on any but strictly free-lance basis.'

"Therefore you may spike these rumors as solidly as you please --- there will be no 'Skylark' story in any Ziff-Davis mag."

Our guess is that RAP wanted to make exactly such an arrangement with Dr. Smith, but was squelched by the powers above.

The Futurian Society of New York celebrated its 3d birthday recently, and held an election for exec. members. Elected were Michel (Director), Lowndes (sec'y), Wollheim (Treas.), Chet Cohen (Editor), & Kornbluth (Member-at-large). The present ultra-simplified constitution was re-affirmed by an overwhelming majority of those present, and the matter of an official organ referred to the Exec. Committee. But the official organ is not Pohl's Futurian Review; the FSNY turned thumbs down on that because the mag already has obligations and debts.

The first issue of the FSNY official organ (after three years of existence, forsooth!) came out recently and was mailed to a small list of professionals and fan editors. The official editor regrets that, due to the weather, only a few good copies came out and promises better coverage next time. So if you did not get the first issue of FUTURIA, don't feel slighted. FUTURIA will be an exchange mag, for the most part. Fans who are already exchanging with "X" need not send another copy of each issue in exchange for the FSNY official organ -- for those who do not issue fan mags, or have no professional status, some other means of receiving copies will have to be worked out. The FSNY frankly does not want to get into obligations in regard to its fan mags, inasmuch as the majority feel that fan magazines should be published for fun and distributed free of charge. But if a lot of requests come in, the non-exchangees may have to pay postage.

Oh yes, one reason why the FSNY isn't going in for heavy fan publications-stuff is that there are no official dues, and members who want to put out journals do so at their own expense. The Exec. Committee pays for its fun when it puts out FUTURIA. (As good a way of any of keeping the Exec. Committee in line -- you remember the old slogan: who puts out the official organ controls the club!) In regard to that, the members' attitude is: if anyone of us wants to be dictator, we'll

support him so long as he puts on a good show, pays all the bills, and doesn't step on our toes.)

Harry Jenkins writes us to the effect that he's thinking of coming to live in New York when he sells a story or so. Which brings up one subject your columnist wants to get off his chest. It's this: any fans who think they can sell one story then come to New York and make a nice living as a writer had better change their minds. Because unless you have a lot to live on, that is, enough to keep you going, without a cent of income, for at least one full year, then it's going to be tough with a capital T! The chances are that you'll wind up running an elevator. Because unless you have plenty on the ball (are so terrific that Campbell, Malcolm Reiss, Norton, and others grab your stuff as soon as it comes off the typewriter) plus plenty of sheer luck, you won't make a living writing. Not in the sf-fantasy field. And probably not in any other. Not until you've spent long weary hours getting the knack of it.

Two Futurians have managed to make out this way, yes. Doc Lowndes managed to keep alive during those first twelve months or so because (a) he had strong friends, who were willing and able to loan him money over long periods, and (b) because some friends were able to get a cooperative apartment, which put individual living costs way down. Damon Knight is making out because his parents send him the werewithal regularly. Eventually, Damon will be earning enough so that this won't be necessary, but it will be a long time -- and brother Knight has what it takes, too.

There is an opportunity in New York, now, for capable and I mean capable cartoonists. The comic book business is still booming, and replacements are needed constantly, due to the draft net. But that is something else, and has little to do with sf. Our advice is: don't come to New York unless you can hold out, on your own for a year, and can take it.

Congratulations are due someone at Standard for the cover on the December 1941 issue of THRILLING WONDER. That makes two for this year which have been outstanding -- one more was good, we thought. (The 2d outstanding one was for February and the good one for June.) By the way, they've changed matters again in regard to their feature novels. Now the lead story is to be 20,000 words, which will permit them to use 10,000 word novelets in addition to the usual run of short tales. And, we're not positive when this will happen, it looks as if Jack Williamson's "Alien Intelligence" is going to be reprinted in one of their books: this, you may recall, ran as a two-part serial in the July and August 1929 issues of SCIENCE WONDER. Which is all until next FANTASCIENCE DIGEST.

QUEST

I probe the Earth afar,
I search the heavens O'er
Yet, find I not
Her whom I seek
On all the Cosmic shore.

--Stan Bachrach



PART III - THE TIME MACHINE OF ISHTAR IN KOM

This section of the odyssey of Seaton and Crane, of Dorothy and of Margaret, their fiancées--this section is entitled THE TIME MACHINE OF ISHTAR IN KOM merely because at the end of Part II we stated firmly that Part III would be called THE TIME MACHINE OF ISHTAR IN KOM. Because we have a firm character or characters (and apparently a dual personality), we adhered to our avowed determination to call this THE stuff, etc., and called it THE and all the rest, as you will note.

It is hardly probable that Seaton and Crane will be able to visit ancient Babylon in this chapter, because they're bound for another part of the solar system in a spaceship rather than in a time machine, but they may be able to kom back to KOM for a brief visit whenever FANTASCIENCE DIGEST next appears elsewhere except on the newsstands.

If it ever does. The Madle fanzine had absolutely disappeared beyond the limbo of extinct mimeod bulletins and had been forgotten even by the editor months ago, yet suddenly here it is again. About a year late, to be sure, but indubitably here. Should the time continuum between issues continue to lengthen, it is probable that when we next pick up a number, we will be sporting long gray beards. And, meanwhile, what of our heroes and heroines, stranded in the depths of space?

Well, what about them? Who cares? It is time rather to worry about the unsung author of this thundering epic. He isn't EESmith, and he isn't John Campbell, Jr. He accepted the editor's suggestion that he very cleverly call himself Edward Elmer Campbell, Jr., a combination of the two, and fully anticipated that all fans everywhere would go into a frenzy of frenzied speculation as to just WHO he really was. So far there has not been a single coherent speculation. Nobody yet has asked "Who is he?" Many people have asked "What is it?" Apparently those who gave the matter any consideration whatever just decided that (1) Edward Elmer Campbell, Jr. was our name, or (2) knew better and just didn't give a happy hurrah.

There's something worse than a women scorned. It's an author ignored. There's nothing worse. If you doubt it, just read this part of THE FROLIC APACE and you'll find out there's nothing worse. Nothing could be worse. We've tried everything, including a Boilermaker Spec-

ial, and we know. For your information, a Boilermaker is comprised of one part warm beer, one part corn liquor, and one part vertigo. It carries all the authority of a tomahawk in the hands of a rampaging redskin, and will lay you low quicker than you can holler Kickapoo Joyjuice.

So in a spirit of revenge on all you readers who have signally failed to play guess with the management, we give you herewith Part III of this odious opus. Okay--so you give it back to us? Go ahead, laugh at our effort. We only hope you do. After all, this is supposed to be funny, at times. At the wrong times, maybe. But come--we must away to the star-spangled depths of space!

For it is in the gulfs which bridge the far off worlds that we now find Seaton, and Crane, and Dottie, and Marge. They are playing bridge, and Hawk Carse is kibitzing, having signed on with the crew to aid them in their fight with Blacky DuQuesne and the High Muckamuck of Macaroon.

"I bid seven no-trumps," remarked Dottie, dimpling, and skipping over to the past tense to prevent the ensuing paragraphs sounding too awkward.

"I double," snapped Hawk Carse quickly, looking into Margaret's hand. Margaret was playing West and Dottie was East. Crane was North and Seaton was in the galley cooking up a tasty snack for his pet thoat, which he had brought along and tied up in the engine room among all the delicate instruments, where it could do no damage.

"Eight spades!" cried Dottie, thinking quickly and extricating herself from quite a contretemps.

"That's different," commented Hawk, "but I'd still like to know who's playing the South hand."

At this point the problem of a fourth at bridge was solved by Seaton, who came in dragging after him a considerably subdued individual.

"A stowaway in our midst," he announced briefly. "I found him hiding in a jar of peanut butter. At first he insisted he was the fly in the ointment, but now he claims to be----"

"Julius Unger!" announced the stowaway cheerfully, as he bowed from the waist. He'd tried bowing from other places and had discovered his anatomy didn't allow such contortions.

A chorus of exclamations greeted this disclosure. Dorothy took the contralto, Margaret the soprano, Seaton tenor, Crane falsetto, and Carse was bass. "Whatever are you doing here?" was the consensus of the questionnaire. Unger explained briefly that he ran a newspaper and believed in keeping up with the times. To obtain first-hand information about the flight of the FROLIC II, he had decided to come along and get the number one story of all time.

"But we can't put you up," protested Crane, ever practical. "In

fact, we can't put up with you, if you want to phrase it another way. We're bound on a hazardous mission and would prefer that you get off at our next port of call, the third planet of Sirius. After all, you're only here because the editor of FANTASCIENCE DIGEST suggested to E.E. Campbell, Jr. (Guess who he REALLY is!) that at least one fan mag editor or writer be included in THE FROLIC APACE, and you're not speeding up the story any, but are just as out of place here as a plug-hat at a picnic."

So they stopped off at Sirroco (little Sir Oco? Yes.) and disposed of Julius Unger. They would have preferred to dispose of Melvin Erle Korshak, but his name didn't pop up until after Unger's.

You know what? Every once in a while ye author pauses for a moment to blow on his blistered hands after a period of pounding this torrid typewriter, and reads the tripe he has typed, and wonders what the heck he's perpetrating on people. After all, he has nothing against them. It's just that once upon a time he wrote Part I of this drivel, and then Part II, and now it seems that he just goes on, and on, and on-----

But at least we have immortalized four living characters: Julius Unger, Korshak, Madle, and Burroughs. Briefly, we wish to pause here to immortalize also a few more fans who come to mind: Tucker, Ackerman, Gilbert, Lowndes, Chauvenet, Fischer, and Joe Stalin. Would you rather be a science fiction fan or one of Sally Rand's fans? That is a question which will be debated in our next issue. Right now the question is, shall we continue to keep THE FROLIC APACE on the high plane it has previously occupied, or shall we lower its heretofore dignified style by lapsing into a slapstick, slaphappy delivery which is not necessarily concerned with the doings of such stupid people as Dottie, Margie, Crane and Seaton, but is primarily about fans and fandom, about fantascience and fanatics?

Or shall we just drop the whole thing right here and have another good old convention instead? I'll nominate Denver and you nominate Columbia and you nominate New York or Chicago or San Francisco or President Roosevelt for a fourth term, and by the time everybody gets split up and goes to those different places we won't have enough people at the convention to get up a decent bridge game.

Bridge? Bridge! That reminds me! We left Dottie and Margaret and their fancy fiances in the middle of a bridge game, didn't we, and Dottie had just bid eight spades, and doubled and undoubled.

But who cares? Have you read any good books lately? I read "The Absolute at Large", but it wasn't in the category mentioned. I also read "The Question Mark", by Jaeger. Neither was it. "God's Secret" by Pier was fair and Sax Rohmer's "The Island of Fu Manchu" gave a doggoned good picture of devil-worship and voodooism at one point.

Which brings us back to the realms of scientifiotion and reveals to us again the nauseating spectacle of those four rincompoops, D, M, C and S, playing bridge.

But it's getting so that I just can't go on. I get about as ex-

cited over the doings of this foursome as I do over the experiences of Little Mary Mixup in the funny papers, and I sincerely hope the High Muckamuck of Macaroon DOES prove of such invaluable assistance to Blacky DuQuesne that that worthy shakes D, M, C and S out of their smug, stolid self aplomb and gets them as jittery as jaybirds.

From all the foregoing you can pretty well determine that the author is rather fed up on THE FROLIC APACE and is loath to continue. Just in case he should change his mind, however, he has selected as the title for Part IV: FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON IN EIGHTY DAYS, or TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE CENTER OF THE EARTH. It's going to be replete with new characters, new stuff and such, new zip. It'll be about Pellucidar and David Innes and "Survival" and it'll be about one paragraph long. We know you will all be looking forward to it so that you will be able to look backward at it. So we leave you now with a burning question in our mind (minds? No.):

Did Dottie make eight spades? Or did the High Muckamuck of Macaroon make a grand slam? I'm afraid--sigh!--that that will be one of life's great secrets, because I must now leave you for the nonce, at once.

IT CERTAINLY DOES FUGIT - -

By Harry Warner, Jr.

There recently appeared in SUN TRAILS an article analyzing the cost of being a fan. However, no one seems to have done any calculating yet on a similar subject: just how much time fandom consumes. Therefore, I'm going to try to remedy the deficiency. And in so doing, I shall be writing for the ages. Others can cipher out the money they spend, based on the temporal capitalistic system; I am writing on a subject guaranteed changeless!

This article, incidentally, will contain a tremendous number of first person singular pronouns. Can't be helped; sorry. And remember, these figures are about me, and me only. They aren't meant as an attempt to show just how much time the average fan devotes to his hobby, because I spend more time on stf. fandom than the average active fan. But they should establish a sort of framework for you to figure your own time expenditures on, if you wish.

First of all, fanzine publishing. Aside from miscellaneous magazines, which will be spoken of later, I issue eight copies of SPACEWAYS and four of HORIZONS each year. That means approximately two hundred pages of the former and fifty of the latter must be put out each year. And it requires almost precisely one hour for me to do one page: of either. A page of SPACEWAYS takes about twenty minutes to dummy, twenty-five minutes to stancil, and the remaining fifteen minutes to mimeograph. (Of course, if I'd get out manuscripts, edit and dummy a page, then clean my type, take a stencil and stencil it, and finally get the mimeo in running order, ink it up, and run the page through, somewhat

more than an hour would be consumed. That hour-per-page works because I first dummy an entire issue, then stencil, then run off; by doing that, all the little details that take so long, if one page at a time is done, are eliminated.) I don't dummy HORIZONS; the material is written as it's typed on the mastersheet, and that consumes about a half-hour per page. The other half-hour is given over to hektoing, caring for the hekto, changing ribbons when hekto ribbon is being used, etc.

Of course, there is more work than that connected with issuing fanzines. Sorting and stapling an issue of SPACEWAYS requires about 3 hours. The same processes consume only an hour or a little more for HORIZONS, since the magazine is much smaller. Two or three hours more go into each issue of SPACEWAYS devoted to making up the subscription list and addressing and wrapping the magazines. Allow another hour for stamping and checking them, and the issue is ready to mail. HORIZONS, being distributed through the FAPA, doesn't require any time for bothering with subscription lists and wrapping individual copies. In other words--about 250 hours per year go into the actual publication of SPACEWAYS, and about 65 for HORIZONS. Not so terrible after all, is it? An average of an hour an evening, six evenings a week, put out the fanzines.

But there're lots of other things to do in fandom. Correspondence, for instance. I write one letter per day. If I skip a day, I write two the next; if two must be written in the same day, none is written the next. My letters average perhaps two pages in length, or about thirty minutes of typing them, and another ten minutes for addressing the envelope, finding a stamp, taking care of the carbon copy, and such little details. We have seen that less than an hour per day over the course of a year must be devoted to fanzines; therefore, fanzine publishing and letters together take an average of about an hour and a half per day.

Those were the two easiest things to figure. The remaining time consumers don't work on a schedule. The time it takes to read promags, for instance, is very difficult to average up. I read an average of something like seven a month, I've found. But just how much time is required to read one is the hard thing to determine. ASTOUNDING takes much longer to read than any other, partly because it has more pages, and partly because the stories can't be skimmed through in search of occasional gems, as is the case with other magazines. I'm a fast reader when I'm reading anything except good stuff, and that means I sail through all promags except ASTOUNDING and UNKNOWN in a hurry. Less than an hour a day spent on reading the professional magazines would be a safe bet; a precisely accurate estimate isn't to be had. So now we've found that fan activities for those three items consume something over two hours each day, and less than two hours and a half.

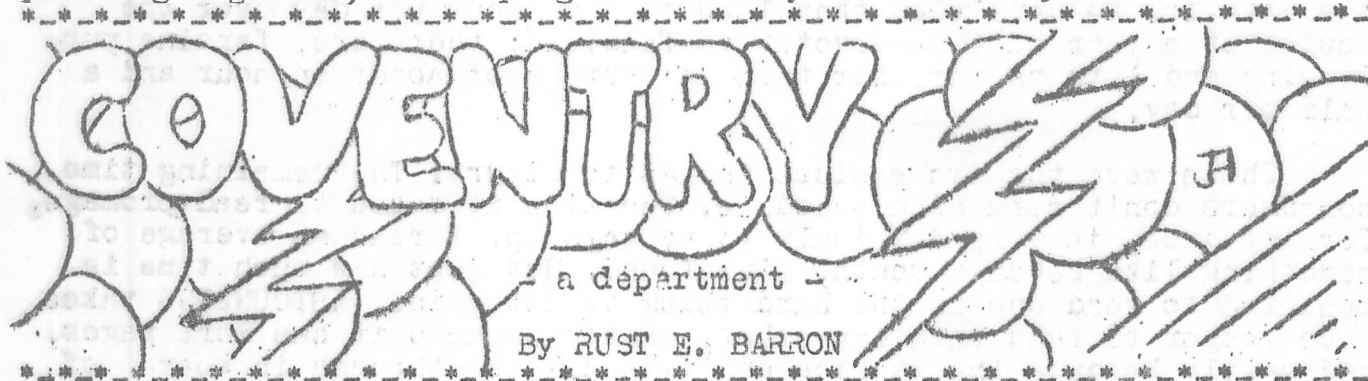
The one way in which I differ from almost every other active fan is in traveling around to conventions, conferences, and the like. Virtually every fan in the country has been to at least two of the fan gatherings in the last two or three years, and many belong to local clubs and societies and take a large amount of time. I don't. The little time I spend with stf readers here in town is negligible, and I'm still not doing any exploring for fans in other towns. So no time is consumed that way. Where many fans who attend, for instance, just the

big convention each year occupy themselves for a week or more with nothing but stf activities, I'm free. A fan like Ackerman or Widner probably would find his personal contacting with fans requiring more than an hour a day, on the average, over the course of a year.

Reading fanzines takes little time. Occasionally a big batch arrives in a few days, but there are often periods of up to a month when almost none comes in. Three or four arrivals a week seems to be the average, and one or two of those are two or four-page affairs which can be scanned in a hurry. If you want to be exact about it, better put down ten minutes a day for reading fanzines.

And that, friends, is about all. Not so much after all, is it? There are numerous other things, of course, that take up time, but for one reason or another they take very few hours over a course of a year. Filing away letters occupies a half-hour per month, filing away fanzines, perhaps the same amount of time. I used to spend some time writing--rather, trying to write--for the promags, but haven't written a word aimed at them for nearly a year now. Fan articles for publication in fanzines take a little time, but not so much. I read some stf books each year, but not enough to amount up to a very big figure. I write perhaps four postals a week, on the average; it takes only ten minutes to write a postal.

So, total time consumed on fan activities for me: less than three hours a day. I don't regret it. I'm positive that I get more pleasure out of spending that time on stf than I would on collecting antiques, planting a garden, or keeping a termitary. How about you?



Coventry was a place for rebels and individualists. Anyone who did not wish to conform to the provisions of the Covenant was either given a psychological readjustment or sent to Coventry. The first scientific social document ever drawn up by man, the Covenant was an attempt to allow the greatest possible personal liberty for everyone in the United States. It simply made illegal any form of damage, physical or economic, to any person. Punishment was therefore made illegal by the very wording. Offenders were therefore offered two alternatives. Psychological readjustment or the complete withdrawal of society from him--Coventry. A tract of land was set aside and all persons not abiding by the Covenant, and refusing to give up their individuality, were sent there.

The above paragraph is evolved from "Coventry" by Robert Heinlein which appeared in the July 1940 issue of ASTOUNDING SCIENCE-

FICTION.

This column will be a place for the rebels and individualists of fandom. If you have a non-conformist suggestion which you think may be of benefit to fandom, send it in. The purpose of this column will be to find out what is wrong in fandom and to try to determine why the condition exists and is tolerated.

Regardless of how rebellious your beef is, if it is something which might eventually be made to benefit fandom as a whole, it is wanted in "Coventry". Any beef or suggestion made herein is subject to discussion and all the berating anyone wishes to send in. Opinions are definitely wanted. Straightforward opinions and suggestions may sometimes damage the sensitiveness of some groups and individuals in fandom, but this column is offered to give those who want to complain a chance to make their complaint and express their reasons.

- - - - -

The first complaint occurring to the mind of this rebel is regarding the attitude taken by some individuals and groups on the question of convention sites. An infant movement has at last reached the point of nationwide organization. This national cooperation has enabled fantasy fandom to hold three World Conventions. The city for each convention, it has been decided, is to be chosen by the delegates present at the preceding convention. This has been done. The Nycon chose Chicago as the site of the 1940 Convention. Being more centrally located, it wasn't quite as successful, as far as attendance went, as the first attempt.

The fans who attended the second convention finally selected Denver as the next convention city. Certain eastern fans were "hurt" by this moving of the convention away from them. They wanted it where they could be able to attend without going to any excessive amount of trouble to get there. Rival conventions were suggested. Even the professional magazines were uncertain who or what locality to support for the 1941 convention.

It seems that these dissenting fans who tried to start rival conventions must not have remembered the difficulties encountered by the few fans of the far west in coming to the first two conventions. Perhaps they did not realize there were other western fans and readers who would become fans if a convention were made available to them.

Well---the Denvention came off. It was almost unanimously agreed that it was the best convention of the three. No, not many authors & editors attended, but it brought out several new fans who could manage to travel a third of the way across the country, but not all the way. It showed newcomers that a fan convention was worth coming to. They will want to attend the next conventions even if they have to make further sacrifices to do so.

As it was supposed to be, the delegates who were interested enough to attend this convention chose the site for next years gettogether. After considerable wranglinh, they selected Los Angeles by over a two-thirds vote. Immediately there was trouble. What about the

(Cont. on Page 29)



By ROBERT W. LOWNDES

Renew

(There weren't many stf magazines in these days. It was not only possible to read them all, but also enjoyable. All the "inner circle" fans did read them all. The titles of the stf books of ten years ago were: AMAZING STORIES, AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY, WONDER STORIES, WONDER STORIES QUARTERLY, and ASTOUNDING STORIES. It all sounds rather simple, doesn't it?)

1) November 1931

AMAZING STORIES, large size, 100 pages, printed on medium thickness pulp, featuring a rather good cover by Leo Morey from Jack Williamson's classic "Stone from the Green Star". The goodness of the cover is debatable. However, the main point to bring up is that Morey was the cover artist on AMAZING in those days. It was at this time that the old "aristocrat of science fiction" was beginning to slip. Artwork had already fallen down badly, and the quality of the stories was dropping as well. Not in the case of Williamson's serial, no. But the other tales in the issue were not so hot. Dr. Keller had one of his customary pieces, this one called "The Rat Racket". Abner J. Gelula made his debut with a stinker called "Automaton", the story of a robot who became a sort of Frankenstein creation. (Even ten years ago, that plot smelled.) This judgment of "Automaton", you must realize, is biased; a great many readers thought it good. Also in the issue were "The Anarctic Transformation" by Isaac R. Nathanson and "Luvium" by A. R. McKenzie. In the readers' column some goop was saying how when he placed the very first (April 1926) issue side by side with the current (Sept 1931) issue, how gratified he was at the unbelievable progress, blah blah blah. The issue as a whole, you have probably gathered by now, was not good.

AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY, large size. Cover by Morey from "The Demons of Rhadi-Mu" by Dr. Miles J. Breuer. In these days, it should be mentioned at once, AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY used only new material -- it did not consist of three back issues of the monthly, bound together sans cover with a new cover for all slapped on. This issue of the Quarterly contained a genuine classic: "Seeds of Life" by John Taine. There were other stories, which read rather pale in comparison. But the Quarterly was still better than the monthly.

WONDER STORIES had promised in the preceding issue, that the readers could expect a surprise next issue. Not only were they returning to

the large size format, but something else was in the offing. And so it was: WONDER appeared in November 1931 with slick paper and Paul drawings exclusively. This issue contained the conclusion to Schachner and Zagat's "Exiles of the Moon" (a good story, though no classic), the sequel to Clark Ashton Smith's "City of the Singing Flame": "Beyond the Singing Flame", a new-accelerator type of story, "The Superman of Dr. Jukes" by Francis Flagg, "Tetrahedra of Space" by P. Schuyler Miller, which copped a none-too-remarkable cover by Paul, and one stinker: "Emperors of Space" by two squirts who never got by again. Paul's artwork was more than good, there was the usual questions and answers (geez, science!), "Reader Speaks", etc. There were also the returns on a prize contest revolving around an unfinished story earlier in the year. And finally, there was a petition blank one was supposed to fill out, and pass around to friends: an organized attempt to get movie producers interested in stf cinemas. The campaign, was, of course, a flop.

WONDER STORIES QUARTERLY had a beautiful cover by Paul, and an outstanding story translated from the German. "The Cosmic Cloud" was the title. These were in the days of the German Republic, so there was no kick on the practice of using stories from the Reich. Also in the issue were two interplanetary-plot-contest winners: the fan did the plot and the author the story. Ray Cummings wrote what was blurbed as "my greatest story", "The Derelict of Space". (That is a matter for debate; I doubt if anyone agreed with Ray.) Clark Ashton Smith wrote up "The Planet Entity", no bull on this one. There were also such tales as "The Man-Beast of Torea" by Ralph T. Jones, "The Fatal Asteroid" by Neil R. Jones, 1st in the Nez Hulan series, and "The Struggle for Pallas" by the author of "Vandals of the Void". As a sequel, it wasn't much. Both WONDER and the QUARTERLY were pepping up in those days.

ASTOUNDING was the solitary small-size magazine. It was also the least expensive, selling, as it always has, for 20¢. Covers were by Wesso, likewise most of the interior art. This issue bore an interesting-looking skeleton on the cover, for an invisibility story by D. W. Hall, title "Invisible Raiders". It was full of "Yes, comrades" and cryptic Rooshian phrases: you guess the plot; right: the terrible Reds invading America, this time, however, just trying to blow up the Panama Canal. In this issue was presented what Harry Bates has considered ever since as his immortal contribution to stf; "Hawk Carse". The point is debatable; "Hawk" was nothing more than a western-story cowboy thrown into an stf-ized plot. But it was well-written. And popular. The serial was Diffin's "Brood of the Dark Moon". Also in this issue were; "The Planetoid of Peril" by Paul Ernst (we rather liked this one), "Spawn of the Comet" by H. Thompson Rich, and "The Terror from the Depths" by Sewell Peaslee Wright. In these days, ASTOUNDING was the closest thing to the average stf magazine of today. The readers' column was a little different from that of the others: the editor did not comment upon the letters.

2) December 1931

AMAZING STORIES starts a two-part serial by Paul H. Lovering called "The Inevitable Conflict". We could not find anything else in the issue worth reading, even at the time. There were "Sky Cops" by

Harl Vincent, "Pirates of Space" by B.X. Barry, "The Blattids" by Morrison F. Colladay, and things like "Trial by Television", "What Happened to Professor Stockley?" and so on. The covers were not too well-drawn, the interiors, with the exception of the one for Vincent's story, pretty bad, and so on. Readers' column interesting; also interesting were the book reviews.

WONDER STORIES started a four-part serial (it started out as a three-part tale, but expanded later) called "The Time Stream". Remember? Another one of John Taine's masterpieces. Cover was by Paul and showed a robot snatching up a scantily clad girl. Story: "The Reign of the Robots" by Edmond Hamilton. In this issue two authors made their first appearances: Arthur K. Barnes with "Lord of the Lightning" and Clifford D. Simak with "World of the Red Sun". Robert Arthur contributed "The Terror from the Sea" and there was something called "The Andromeda Menace" (not an invasion from Andromeda; 'twas the name of a spaceship this time). Much, very much better than AMAZING, though still not what it might have been, this issue. In the readers dept. letters glowing over the change in size, the new paper, etc. etc. etc.

ASTOUNDING presented this time a rewrite of "Into the 4th Dimension" by Ray Cummings, a novelet called "The White Invaders". It copied a dandy cover by Wesso -- and since Ray hadn't rewritten that story before, it didn't seem so horrible -- or did it? Capt. S. P. Meek had part one of a two-installment serial, "Giants On the Earth" (the Earth is subjugated by Jovians), S. P. Wright had "The Infra-Medians", a dimensional tale, and Robert Wilson had a really good, original little thing called "Out Around Rigel".

In WEIRD TALES, Edmond Hamilton had another Interstellar Patrol story, this one called "Creatures of the Comet". And in the November issue was a novelet entitled "Subterannea" by W. Elwyn Backus. Neither very much in the way of stf, but fans had to look afield at this time; the regulars were none too good.

THE EDITOR'S MESSAGE (Cont. from Page 3)

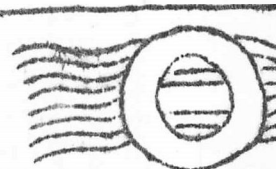
la. Barron is fairly permanently located in Philadelphia, and has been a definite help in the publication of this issue of FD.

Next issue will be the 4th Anniversary issue of FANTASCIENCE DIGEST, and we are preparing an outstanding issue. The following is not exactly definite yet, but the next issue will probably appear in a new superb printed format, the number of pages will jump to 40, and the price will remain the same. If all goes well thereafter, FD will continue to appear printed each issue, and will be in the mails every two months! Of course, we would like a little help, if possible. Congratulatory advertisements from 10¢ up will be greatly appreciated.

A word about the photograph on Page 3: This picture was snapped by Rusty Barron, and shows Widner's convention group in the Rocky Mountains at one of the highest points, if not the highest. From left to right; Milton A. Rothman, Art Widner, Julius Unger, and Bob Madle. We expected to have more than just one photograph this issue -- we'll do better next time.

The Jan-Feb issue will appear approximately January 15th. --RAM


 READER


 EDITOR
FANTASCIENCE
DIGEST


 COMMENTS

SAM MOSKOWITZ sends the following lengthy comments: Friday evening, October 25, 1940 I was reminiscing through my file of FANTASCIENCE DIGESTs and wishing that a new one would arrive to mark the end of your annual "siesta". The 1940 "siesta" can easily be said to be one of the longest of your fan publishing career.

Well, Saturday, October 26th, arrived, and the morning mail produced the long-overdue FD, and I went to work happy in the thought that I'd have something to look forward to when I got back home.

Really, reading FANTASCIENCE DIGEST is like talking with an old friend. There is hardly ever anything to disturb your enjoyment. Inevitably it supplies one of the finest evening's reading of any science fiction fan mag (or pro for that matter).

I thought the overdue issue would be crammed with stale material, tending to make it inferior to past numbers. Such was definitely not the case. The omission of several of your timely departments was a masterstroke of editorship, not a blunder as some fans will have you believe. There was nothing to date the issue, even the readers' department sounded like the last issue had appeared two months ago.

The standard of the 2nd Anniversary Issue was maintained. There was no let down in quality. I missed the cover, but even with a pictorial cover, I approve of printing the cover, lining up your features. I don't know why, but I take a sort of grim satisfaction when some fan mag adopts this professionalistic aspect.

The mimeographing was up to standard.

"Dream's End" -- a tale of pure fantasy -- how wrong you are Bob. It is one of the most chillingly down-to-earth pieces of writing I have ever read. The message, despite the beautiful style of writing, was brought out with terrible abruptness. One sentence. "Because", replied Life, "Thou must eat". was potent! A fantasy? No -- no fantasy. Fantasy carries you away from the dross and mundaneness of reality on the wings of words. There has never been a tale more grim, more real than "Dream's End".

Therefore, placing Tucker's hilarious "Art of Purloining a Library Book" next in line, was appreciated by this reader. It was funny, and it was well done. I even read it to the rest of the family and we all had a good laugh.

"An Old Timer Returns" by Julius Unger is a very good article. Interesting, concise, informative.

"Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction" by Robert W. Lowndes was much improved over Rothman's original version. The intercepting of the author's own opinions, prejudiced or not, is a necessity for interest in this particular type of article. Lowndes has made a suitable start, the idea has definite potentialities for development.

"Salvaged Souvenirs" is a nicely presented article. Enjoyable and all that.

"Let's De-Louse Science Fiction" is basically right. Our biggest weapon lies in the fact that all specialized types of science-fiction magazines in the past, such as AIR WONDER STORIES, AMAZING DETECTIVE, MARVEL TALES, FLASH GORDON, etc., have failed. Perhaps the most deadly damage done to degrade science fiction is the terrible pseudo-science (and I do mean pseudo) run in the comic magazines. This craze is appreciably running down, but the damage has been considerable. As I pointed out in an article several years back, the pseudo-science cartoon has progressed rapidly on its job of ruining the already precarious reputation of science fiction. It has done inestimably more damage than the hair-brained movie thrillers which are our second biggest danger.

EARL SINGLETON wrote the following, and then committed pseudo-cide (and I do mean pseudo): Did I say that Lowndes' "Ten Years Ago in Science Fiction" rings the bell with me? Lowndes is one of the most capable writers in fandom today -- more of him. Tell Fischer to try SPICY MYSTERY; it's delightful. He doesn't want to de-louse science fiction -- he wants to de-science sex-fiction. Personally I don't give a hoot whether the sex-fiction is de-scienceed or not. . . . Am I still the only guy who knows who is writing "The Frolic Apace"? (Yes, but make sure you don't spread it all over fandom, Tex--Editor) It's getting better and better. Don't pay any attention to these sophisticated people who don't like it. I suggest that someone de-louse them. Tucker'd be the man for the job. . . . Let's de-louse Moskowitz.

JOHN WASSO, Jr., sends the following: This is how I rate the last issue received. Best: "Salvaged Souvenirs" (2) Let's De-Louse Sf (3) Art of Purloining a Library Book (4) Dream's End (too short) (5) An Old Timer Returns (6) Initial Introductions (7) 10 Years Ago in S-F. I hope I don't have to wait as long for the next issue as I did for this one. I could read stuff like Fischer's "Souvenirs" day after day -- it's fascinating! For his information (or C. Spencer Clark?) Dennis Wheatley's books are published by J. B. Lippincott, Phila. I miss the departments. Scallions to Gregor for his lofty superiority regarding your best articles.

LEW MARTIN, the Denver beer-hound and Ladies' Man, belches forth these statements: To begin with, why in hell don't you issue it more regularly? If you could keep FD on a regular bi-monthly schedule you would be first place on Art Gallop Widner's poll. -- The contents is nice. The old fashion lettering is NG. Let's have the typical PSFS NEWS heading-type lettering.

"Dream's End" is swell, perhaps the best of the issue. Oh yes, the next time you see Phillips kick him in the but and make him write a sequel to "Revolt". Chain him to his tripewriter and get a whip or two and a ream of paper.

"The Art of Purloining a Library Book" is about the funniest thing I've read in your mag except Fischer's collector's article some time back. For once Tucker got something good -- lately I think he thinks that anything he signs Hoy Ping Pong to is automatically funny.

"Ten Years Ago" is very interesting. Lowndes is always good, but most anyone with a good collection could do just about as good a job.

(Cont. bottom next Page)

"The Decadent Age in Magazine Science Fiction" (Cont.)

well have resulted in remarkable progress in stf. But, further progress being impossible, it remained only for the stf writers to make of this valuable instrument in stf expression a thing-in-itself.

And with what brilliance has the stream of science-fiction flowed back upon its own current, made eddies and whirlpools, expanded and increased enormously. The fact that, despite economic conditions, there are a dozen stf magazines going shows that it is not dead -- yet.

A number of enthusiasts, no doubt, wish it were dead. But the decadent age in magazine science-fiction is not yet over, and it goes on, brilliantly and meaninglessly. Out of this whirlpool has come and will come many tales excellent in themselves, some tales which are literature. It will serve one purpose: to show the inhabitants of some distant future how mighty was the writhings of the creative, imaginative soul of the 20th century in the dark age of economic disruption.

"Coventry" (Cont.)

East? What about Dixie? The small minority wanted to know what became of the alleged promise to the east made at Chicago that the eastern part of the nation would hold the '42 convention. That was at the convention.

The next fan mags to appear already were questioning the advisability of the Pacificon. Editorials and short articles berated the groups supposedly refusing to support it. Now rebuttals are appearing. We will see what is to come of it.

Now it is my contention that this is all unnecessary and that if carried on, will be the downfall of what is becoming quite a successful movement. Surely, if we are truly fans, we will attend any convention in any city if we can get there by any means possible. If any of us are unable to attend, we owe it to the rest of fandom to cooperate and then wait our turn. If we all cooperate with a convention across the country, we can certainly expect more of the same when it becomes the turn of our own locality to hold the next convention.

Well, that's that. If you don't like it, send in your beef. Let me know what you think. Next time you get a chance, say what you think about it. Remember that "Coventry" is just the place for all you rebels. I may have the wrong slant on things, but I am expressing it and hope you do to. If we can bring about any advance in fandom by beefing and trying to make change, I'm all for it.

"The Reader Comments"

-With the exception of linking fan history with the readers columns.

"Salvaged Souvenirs" is pretty fair. Not up to Fischer's usual stuff, but good. The idea is either an attempt to get something new & novel, or a desperate idea when he was fresh out of ideas for an article.

"Initial Introductions" is above average. Another desperate stab for an article, or Warner might possibly have figured someone was interested, which I was. But it was a too worn theme. The Reader Comments is always good. It's interesting to see how your opinions tally with the other Joe's.

Well, that's too much already, so I'll quit, much to your relief.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

All Eastern Fandom has eagerly awaited this special announcement. At the last meeting of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, held November 22nd, it was decided that the Annual Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference will be held Sunday, January 25th,

This Conference will be practically a round-table discussion, unlike previous conferences. Everyone is invited; come prepared to express your own ideas, as no definite program will be made. We're going to let all the fans run this affair.

If you have any intention of attending the 5th Annual Conference, please state your intention as soon as possible. If You plan to bring anyone with you, let us know about that, too.

Everyone planning to attend is requested to write to Robert A. Madle at the earliest opportunity.