

T H E
FUTURIAN

An amateur magazine devoted to *fantasy fiction*.

W i n t e r
1 9 4 0



A GREEN JESTER PUBLICATION



T H E

F U T U R I A N

W i n t e r
1 9 4 0

VOL. 3

NO 1

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Poem | Ralph Milne Farley |
| How to Build a Spaceship | Arthur C. Clarke |
| Fan Parade No. 5 | Roland Forster |
| On Broadmindedness | Harry Kay |
| In Memoriam | Jemini |
| Book Review | Bert Lewis |
| The Science of Names | D. R. Smith |
| A Science-fiction Plot | Alan Roberts |
| Departments : | Fan Gossip |
| | Argumentative? |
| | Editor's Letter |

An amateur magazine published approximately quarterly. Subscription - 3d. per copy postfree. America - four issues for a quarter, or trade.

Produced at the Green Jester Press

All views expressed, are those of the contributor.



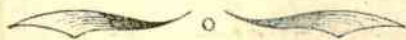
The End of the World

(A Sonnet in Divided Rhyme)

BY RALPH MILNE FARLEY

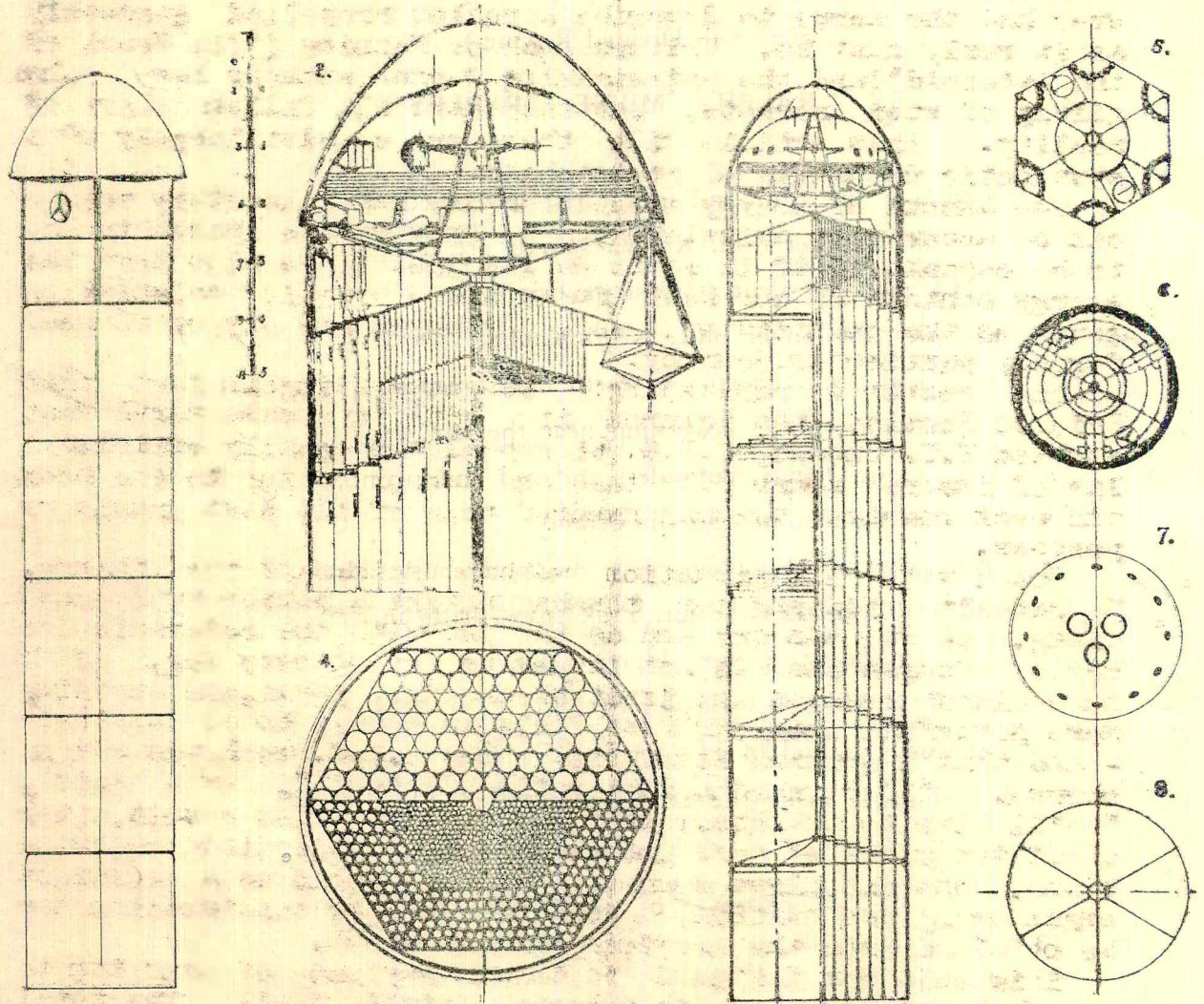
Now tide and time and life at last have died.
The air is bitter thin. Known sounds are mute.
Inexorable the silent stars shine bright.
The sky, no longer blue, is inky hued.
The tidal drag the spin of earth has stayed.
So that our sphere is settling near the sun,
Which now hangs motionless and red and plain.
Life has receded to the slinky mud,
From whence it first emerged. A gloom most sad
And chill pervades the air. Pink snow drifts in,
Dyed by the dying sun. Upon a flat,
An oily swell laps listlessly. God hid
The aim and end of His terrestrial plan;
For this He made the earth and peopled it!

Reprinted from 'Fantasy Magazine'



This poem is based upon H. G. Wells's prose description of the end
of the world in his 'The Time Machine'.

Diagrams of The 'B.I.S. SPACESHIP'



For the loan of which we are indebted to The British Interplanetary Society.

HOW TO BUILD A SPACESHIP.

By Arthur C. Clarke.

(Patents Pending).

As far as I can remember, no Science Fiction author has ever had the nerve to describe a rocket propelled spaceship as it really must be. Writers such as Manning ("The Wreck of the Asteroid") and the painstaking German authors have spoken glibly of step rockets, but they have all fallen short of reality. This article will therefore consist largely of a systematic debunking of rocketships.

The amount of energy needed for any interplanetary voyage can be accurately calculated, so we know what a spaceship has to be capable of if it is to do its job. We also know the energy content of our best fuels and a simple calculation gives us the quantity of, say, hydrogen and oxygen we need for any particular journey.

The result is depressing: so depressing in fact that Science Fiction has ignored it with the same verve that enabled E.T. Snooks, D.T.G. to repeal the equally inviolable law of inverse squares. To take one ton of matter to the Moon and back requires several hundred tons of the best fuels we possess.

Faced with this situation we can do one of two things. We can sit twiddling our thumbs untill a better fuel comes along, or we can try and do the job with the materials we have. Course one is not likely to get us very far, as we have almost reached the limit of chemical power, and anything more powerful than our best fuels is likely to be unstable - and that's putting it mildly. The B.I.S. took the second course. "If we need a fuel ratio 100 to 1", we said, "we'll have to use one, and that's that". The result, after about two years of work and indecently complicated calculations, was the first spaceship ever designed as a straight engineering proposition. Some idea of its construction may be obtained from the drawings in this issue.

This ship was designed to take a payload of one ton to the Moon and back, using a known, stable fuel. The total weight worked out at 1000 tons, of which 900 were fuel and 100 structural material. By carrying the step or multiple rocket principal to its ultimate, we evolved the "cellular" system whereby the ship is composed almost entirely of cylindrical fuel containers, each a complete rocket motor, which are dropped immediately after use. By this device no weight was carried a moment longer than necessary, and so an enormous increase in efficiency was obtained. (P.T.O.)

Fig. 1. gives an overall view of the ship. The life-container (shown in more detail in fig.2.) is at the nose, under a carapace of heat resisting material. The rest of the ship's body, as is shown in the unnumbered diagram, is composed of cellular motors stacked in the most compact manner to give the ship a hexagonal cross-section. (Fig. 4.) The circular life-container sits on the top of the hexagonal column, so that at six points it overhangs and thus enables the crew to have visibility rearwards. A ring of side ports and three **forward** gives visibility elsewhere. (Fig. 7.)

The ship is composed of **five** "steps" of large tubes, all of which are used in the escape from Earth, and one step, immediately under the life-container, which consists of smaller tubes. This last step is used for the landing on the Moon and the return to Earth. The final landing on Earth is done by parachute.

There are three couches in the life-container (shown in plan in fig.6.) and the crew recline in these. Round them are instruments and controls necessary for flight.

When the ship lands on the Moon, only a portion of the upper step is left and there is sufficient clearance for the hydraulic shock-absorbers (one of which is shown partly opened on right of fig.2) to operate. The final landing on Earth is effected by parachute.

In order to give stability at the take-off, and to provide artificial weight while in space, the ship would be rotated slowly, and special instruments (which have already been constructed) have had to be devised so that astronomical observations can be made. A cat-walk is provided round the inside of the life-container wall, as this would be "down" in space, while the ship is rotating.

Steering and a certain amount of power are provided by small liquid fuel motors placed in groups as indicated in fig. 5. Tangential tubes are also provided to eliminate and build up the spin of the ship. The actual firing of the great number of main driving motors, which have to operate in a complicated "staged" sequence, is done by automatic electrical system analagous to an Auto Exchange. This system incorporates safety and course correction devices, and a simplified version of the circuit employed has been published in a recent "Journal". It's very pretty.

Looking at this description, there seems very little that I have had time to describe at all properly. However, I hope that the drawings themselves will help to clear up any points I have had to omit. By the way, as the couch on the left of fig.2. is equally comfortable either way, I had better mention that the head of the occupant is towards the center of the ship, and his feet on the cat-walk.

The cost ? It's difficult to say, but the construction should not require much more than £ 250,000. Most of the parts are mass-produced, and the main expence would go into the instruments. The life-container (with a bit of luck) could be used over and over again. That goes for the crew as well.

Some day, someone is going to build a ship ~~after~~ these lines, unless rockets become obsolete before space is crossed. We may not see it built in our lifetimes, but it will certainly be constructed within the next thirty or forty years. At the moment, the B.I.S. has been placed into cold storage, so please don't write to me asking for particulars of membership. (Though the shop is still open for the sale of "Journals" at 6d a time - Advert.) However, as soon as the present civil war is over, we will get down to work again. And we have reasons for believing that by the time peace returns we shall have learned a devil of a lot about rockets.

THE END.

-:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:- -:-

Q U E R Y ?

Towering pinacles of stone, ever changing hues of soft lambent light glinting in the darkness on their smooth sides, dark green splashes of foliage show the vast number of shrubs which make such a wonderfull display in this city-to-be; music echoes lightly from roof and balcony gardens where people are at their leisure; an ordered and finely-cultivated country-side surrounds this metropolis of human endeavour -- Life moves and is enjoyed!

A deserted countryside; small mounds of discoloured concrete show how the ingenuity of man has equelled that of the burrowing mole, dark and sombre patches where other underground refuges have been, a few wisps of broken wire, a grove of whitish crosses, a dismounted and half-splintered gun, dark convoys of food trucks labouring thru' the darkness without lights, then the gleam of a searchlight - the shriek of a descending bomb.

WHICH ?

-:- -:-
-:-

Forster, Charles Roland.

Born 1915. Elementary and Secondary Education, with School and Higher Certificates. One year at a commercial school, followed by a year as teacher of Gregg Shorthand, etc. Disliked the work (and the pay) and got out before being kicked out. Sat Civil Service Examination and am now a Customs and Excise Officer. Yes, I like the work (and the pay !)

First contact with fantasy at 10 years when I read " A Princess of Mars " by Burroughs. Was scared, yet fascinated. Discovered the American Mags. in 1931 and immediately became a devotee. Interests have broadened since then to include Weird fiction and "pure" (and "impure") fantasy. Have become more critical of recent years and dissatisfied with many of the magazines. Believe the best fantasy has been published in book form.

Favourite Fantasies: Oh, dozens of them, including " Brave New World ", "Sugar in the Air", "Turnabout", "Gay Hunter", "The Undying Monster", "Creep, Shadow, Creep" and "The Devil Rides Out".

Favourite Authors: Merritt, Taine, Thorne Smith, de Camp, Weinbaum, Lovecraft, Quinn, Moore and Howard.

Favourite Magazine. "Unknown" (at present.)

Interests: Reading and collecting fantasy of all kinds; science, psychology, in particular; psychic research; motor-cycling (until I almost got killed). Member of the scientific Book Club and Associate Member of "The Probe".

Politics: Socialist, since reading Jack London's fantasy "The Iron Heel", at the age of sixteen.

Ambition: To lead a quiet and comfortable life.

THE END.

We fans tend to complain of the narrow-mindedness of the world. When S.F. is insulted; our consolation is that the insulter is narrow-minded and unintelligent. Yet, is this Broadmindedness? The fan makes patronising allowances for the feeble mentalities of non-fans, but, despite his words, does not seriously consider the reverse possibility. He does not realise that two mentalities of equal ability may not be similar. To be in the minority is no proof in itself, of superiority or inferiority.

In controversies many of us show inability to appreciate that the other fellow has a view point. Some endeavour to see both sides.

There is, some danger attached to broadmindedness, a person who sees both sides lives in a mental state of flux, he is always changing his views to suit new facts. He is sure of nothing. Such a person tends, also, to express all sides, causing people to think that the often conflicting opinions which he utters are his own, and therefore that he cannot make up his mind.

The narrow-minded person assumes a view and retains it, observes only evidence in favour of it, and never changes his attitude. He lives in a firm, unchanged world.

Therefore the narrow-minded person is placidly happy. The broad-minded person is observant, and, if subject to doubt and worry knows also the thrill of investigation, discovery, and excitement. Not for him a placid bevine existence, but one of quest and dissatisfaction and success.

Safe from great fear - safe from great joy.

--:-- --:-- THE END. --:-- --:--

IN MEMORIAM.

Fantasy enthusiasts, in common with the larger world interested in literature generally, have much to mourn in the sudden passing of Lord Tweedsmuir, whom we know better as John Buchan. In his long writing career John Buchan touched on fantasy many times; but did not adventure into a full-blooded fantasy at all. Probably the only story we fans admit into our collections, is 'The Gap in the Curtain', (Various editions, cheapest being Nelson: 2/-) which deals with an attempt to pierce the veil of the future and, like all his works is most competently written. One or two assortments of short stories might perhaps scrape in, because of odd tales wherein appear supernormal forces or curious conjectures.

'Jemini'.

B O O K R E V I E W - - - - - - - - - - - - b y B E R T L E W I S .

Only three titles of (S.F.) note are available to me, for in this review. Our first title is quite a misleading one, but the work is quite different to the name - "Edge of Running Water" by William Sloane (Methuen 8/3). Readers will probably remember his previous dip into fantasy with his "To Walk The Night. Contrary, as I said, to the title's suggestion, the story concerns a time - machine, in a different way however than one expects. We are all rather guilty of trying to dig into happenings in the "hereafter", the "skyscraping" Americans are very much realists, so why not "hereafter-piercers"? Mr. Sloane gives it a sense of eerie atmosphere and an ever-present chord of terror. This should prove as little encouragement to would-be time-travellers.

For those who like their fantasy, well seasoned with humour here is a well-recommended title; "The Mantle of Methuselah" by L. Reed and H. Spiers (Rich and Cowan 7/6). If you knew you were destined to live to the age of nine hundred, would the knowledge bring happiness? The Hero of this story, discovers the secret of Methuselah's longevity and, in consequence, meets with the most devastating experiences. Here is a fantastic, rollicking farce with a good plot - just the thing for dispelling "blackouts".

In a more serious vein, we have "We Band of Brothers" by "Seaforth" (Herbert Jenkins, 7/3). The author has tried to imagine what would have happened, had the 1938 crisis led to immediate war. Most of the prophesied horrors come upon us, London is bombed almost out of existence. Not many months of dreadful slaughter have passed however, before there arises a new spirit of peace. This comes by methods, which if not applicable at the present moment, are no less interesting on that account. After falling in this country, some Germans, like many others, have had enough of Nazism, band together with some English officers and men, to form this new spirit of peace abroad.

For those who like fantasy in the form of short stories, the following publication may be of interest; "Two and Two Make Five" by V. Knowles (Newnes, 3/6).

o o o o o o o o o

Two new books issued just recently, at 6d. each, are; "The Gas War of 1940" by Neil Bell; and "Gullivers Travels"

"THE SCIENCE OF NAMES!"

By D. R. Smith.

Although at first instance it may seem ridiculous, a close examination of the facts will show clearly to the unprejudiced that there is a close connection between the name of an author and the quality of the stories he writes. While it is not an absolute law, except in the case of pseudonyms, there is undoubtedly a tendency for a writer with an unpleasant name to write shoddy stuff, while an author with an honest, forthright name sort of name will produce the real McCoy.

Let us take the case of one of the most universally favoured writers, one who is acknowledged to be unique in combining prolificity with a remarkable uniformity of excellence, namely, John W. Campbell. Note immediately his surname is one of the most honoured ones of a race noted for possessing high qualities of mind and body, and as for his first name, who could be other than true to his race when blessed with the fine bold name of "John". It is a grand combination, surpassed only by the pseudonym under which he has published some of his best works, Don A Stuart. I need not prate of the honour in which we hold that surname, nor the established records of more than one who bear the first name.

One swallow does not make a summer, so let us examine further examples of the empirical law. John Tain, again that noble given name combined with a surname that surely conveys the fantastic realism that is so well displayed in his stories. How could Stanley Weinbaum fail to please, a given name carrying with it a note of strength and courage, together with a surname that signifies as certainly as any could the great merit of his stories, pleasant entertainment. Again, does not the bluff devil-may-care air of Kent Casey suggest just the sort of stories he writes. When the lilting though learned, words Sprague de Camp appear on the contents page we understood at once that here was an author who would give us something new and something fine, while the appearance of Lester del Ray intimated that we were to be treated with something better than usual.

Turning to the darker side of the picture let us observe the horrid names the hacks flourish under. Frederic Arnold Kummer, delect as well as vice is obvious in that name which begins so favourably and ends so hideously. What a burden for any writer. . . . is a name like Eando Binder, or Nathan Schacher, crushing burdens that nobody but a genius could carry successfully. Polton Cross, Ed Earl Repp (Ugh!),

Lloyd Arthur Eshbach, one could cite examples almost without end. But there is no need to belabour the point.

There are exceptions perhaps, though not all are unexplainable. It may be difficult to see at first how anyone bearing the fairly respectable name of Arthur J Burks could produce anything so bad as the Josh McNab stories, but we do not know what abomination is concealed by the mute "J". The exact degree of influence of a bad name over a good one is a problem that calls for longer and more thorough amount of research than I have been able to give it at the present time.

The law is, I think, strong enough for a careful student to be able to form a fairly good idea of the contents of a magazine by reading a list of the authors, though all these may be unknown to him. This is invaluable in these times, when a good many fans are so busy that they can hardly find time to correspond with each other, let alone read such magazines as they can obtain. In due course it may be that the indifferent authors will attempt to foil us by assuming pseudonyms carrying a hypocritical air of quality, but I don't regard this as a serious danger. Close examination has convinced me that the lower class of writer would be mentally impossible of carrying out such a scheme.

THE END.

-- -- -- -- --

A SCIENCE FICTION PLOT.

By Alan Roberts.

Bilge!
The Judgement Day! A monstrous blue flame, all consuming is eating up the Galaxies in line with the Solar System. Rapidly it is approaching our Galaxy - what can be done to save Earth? The time is somewhere round the year 10,000,000, and man's science is so great that he can warp space. He translates the whole of his Galaxy into the good old fourth dimention - Hyper-space. The flame stops, barred by the 4th Dimentional barrier, and disappears.

Now, in the microcosm (of which our Universe is but an atom), also a doom is coming. The inhabitants concoct a machine to stop this doom (Ether Eddy, Nova-disease to make sun explode, or what-have-you). The crucial moment comes they give it the juice - electricity. And our Cosmos is but a small part of a wire conductor. The electricity speeds through the wire - we stop it by the above means - the micro-cosmic machine fails, and the inhabitants perish.

-- -- -- THE END. -- --

By 'Issitt Reelytree'

We deeply regret to have to announce that the Leeds Science-Fiction League is now "suspended", due to the forced preoccupation of its members, with other activities. At any rate that is a nice way of putting it! We hope that, after some four years in existence, this is not the end of the organisation, and that it will be revived in happier times - anyrate we are following the august examples of the B.I.S. and the S.F.A.

Eric Moss, our ex-Librarian now of The Royal Corps of Signals, has been spending a few days in hospital in the salubrious surroundings of Harrogate, England's premier Spa (Advt) Then he spent a weeks leave, telling us all about army life - and we are still Pacifist; and has now departed to defend our empire in one of the more far-flung parts. . . . Harold Gottliffe has also been on leave, and told lurid tales of sailing the seven seas in his gory Hospital ship. . . . Both these gentlemen are doing as well as can be expected. . . . Part of this issue has been stencilled for us, very kindly, by Ronald Holmes, of Liverpool; while "resting" between jobs. We are now pleased to say that he is helping to make Britain's rationing scheme the success it is. . . . Latest news heard of Ronald Fishwick, who doesn't write to us now (does he think that it's treason?) is that he was at Aldershot - he is one of our bright Militia Sappers. . . . Whilst we are chronicling the movements of fans, we had better mention again that, owing to the closure of London University, Richard George Medhurst is now serving his time at historic Cambridge - as tho' London wasn't historic. And we'll bet he's grubbing round the bookshops there! . . . James Rathbone of Edinburgh (Macabre) has been before his local C.O. Tribunal, and received the 'sentence' of "non-combatant service". Tough luck old fellow! Wonder how many more fans will be appearing as Pacifists, offhand there are R. Holmes, J.F. Burke R.G. Medhurst, C.S. Youd, D. McIlwain and, of course, ourselves, who have already put in a first appearance. . . . Does't this Editorial plural mix one up? . . . Congratulations to Frederick Ø Pchl, who used to write "Americanews" for us and who is now editing America's latest couple of stf. magazines - namely; "Super Science Stories", and "Astonishing Stories"; both of which, we assure you, are better than they sound. . . . A new British fanmag with a satirical and humorous "slant" comes Dave McIlwain, 14 Cotswold St., Kensington, Liverpool 7; and is entitled "Gargoyle". . . . "Weird Tales" has now gone bi-monthly and its veteran editor, Farnsworth Wright, has been dismissed; protests are coming from all over fandom.

ARGUMENTATIVE?

Once again we have a good bag of epistles etc., a selection of which are hereby presented for your entertainment and instruction. Apologies are due to those good people whose letters have been unmercifully cut, and also to several who have been left out entirely. Editorial comments are again underlined. .

PussyWillow Temple commenced with a very full criticism - I was pleasantly surprised to see the familiar green cover of the FUTURIAN again in these dark days. . . I'm afraid the duplicating isn't equal to the printing, but for your first effort in duplicating it is a amazingly good (thanks, pal). I remember when we first experimented with a duplicator in our late flat. Never was there such a waste of paper, ink, and breath - I'd hate to say what the breath was used for.

The first page of the Editorial was very nicely handwritten - "again amazingly good" when I remember what your normal hand writing is like, and how hard it is to write on a stencil. The second page went a bit wild!

George's (Medhurst's) article was excellent, as is everything I have read of his so far. He puts down what he thinks, not a procession of words shaped into the conventional idea of an article, saying nothing new in a dull and tortuous - and torturous! - way. Hamilton's barefaced plagiarism has annoyed me for a long time - we won't think a writer ought to earn his pay. . . . Bob Tucker is talking truth when he says that there are often more memorable bits in the readers' letters section than in all the stories. This is because, like George, the readers generally write what they think, and do not string hack phrases in the form of a conventional "story". All people, even s-f fans are attracted most by the human element in things.

I thought "The Thing" was going to be a good burlesque at first; then as I went on, I realised that it was not going to be exactly that after all, it seems to fall between two stools. I do not think Leslie can be very old - by which I mean he is still at school - and therefore cannot judge it by any other than school mag. standard - by which it is quite good.

The readers' section was as interesting as most of these short selections generally are; I wish it could have been longer. It was somewhat badly spaced, and I am still wondering where Farley's letter left off and Johnny Burke's began.

Bert's review crammed a lot of information in a very small space. Afraid I am not an admirer of Dennis Wheatley. His "ideas" - discovery of Atlantis, another Comet Doon and etc. are as old as Verne. And not a tenth as well written. I wonder how such mediocrity becomes so popular. And there is no doubt that Wheatley is popular. Sidney Horler, another writer on a similar

level, is also extremely popular among the uncritical masses. And they both think they're geniuses! But then they write for money above all motives - and they know their business. Better than I do, certainly. (But you are not doing so badly, Bill!)

And here is a paragraph from Julian Parr of Stoke-on-Trent I suppose I'd better comment on the issue while I'm writing, so here goes:

The general format was excellent, barring the inking of page 20, which, on my copy at any rate, was very bad. But the only bit of art work inside is the Editorial's meagre spot. Don't you think a few inside cuts would improve its appearance? Of course, badly drawn ones are worse than none, and then again, I suppose you hav'nt much space for art and printing . . . Definitely the best piece was R. G. Medhurst's "Fount". The three pages it occupied were worth the rest of the book, barring "Argumentative", which was the next best. Youd's letter was slightly above the others average, but there's not much to choose between them all.

You know, the outstanding thing about your mag. is that it is itself outstanding. (Spare our blushes Julian! To compare it with another fanmag. would be trying to compare - say - London Illustrated with Picture Post. I think that explains the difference better than I could. I particularly admire the very clear Mimeo-ing, the fine paper, and - naturally - the printed cover.

A short and pointed comment from *Alma Feather*
I don't particularly care for the cracks taken at your contributors by your would-be clever correspondents. I never criticise unless I can do better myself.

Humourist *R. G. Medhurst* has a go
Now at last, the sacred commentary on the Futurian. Working from front to back, the first thing to hit us in the eye is the Editorial, of which, after deciphering the writing, I am prepared to say that I accept your apologies. Only don't do it again.

Actually, the issue seems a very creditable effort, striped as it is with the shadow of prison bars. I expect even greater things to be smuggled out by a friendly warder in the middle of a hunk of stale bread.

Comment on the brilliant critical article by R. G. Medhurst is hardly necessary. (101 out of 10)

Now you have secured Bob Tucker as a contributor, couldn't you persuade him to give us some of his own humour! Seems such a pity to let Bob waste space, that might be filled with his own great thoughts; on other people's criticisms. (There's

hint for you, Bob) And nothing much seemed to arise, even out of these, except that odd people write odd things to Editors which we know. Anyway, he left out one of the oddest, which took the form of his own obituary (This, by the by, like Prince Hall's joke with the dresser in "Henry IV", never seemed to reach any conclusion. Except, of course, that Bob's present outpourings have the piquency of spirit messages.

Ahhh! "The Thing". Yes, I thought William Hope Hodgson's "House on the Borderland" was good, too.

Not sure about "Argumentative?". It may seem ungrateful, after you have given in so gracefully to the clamourers who want to see their names in print, but I do think 8 pages of letters in a 20 page mag. (24 pages, please) is a little too much. . . Mr. Smith invokes Wells and Merritt, Verne and Keller, and says "Skylark" was fine. I will invoke Doyle and Burroughs, Serviss and Haggard, and, if you like, Achille Eyraud, Lucian of Samosata, Anthasius Kircher and Mr. George Bernard Shaw, and say "Skylark" was only fair. Really, Mr. Smith, even if you do prefer to judge Weinbaum by what he did rather than what he might have done, you evidently do not prefer to defend "Skylark" from the actual text. If we are going to argue around the story, I might as well say that the "Acclamation" was't so uproarious as all that. As to the nourishment on Wells and Verne, I seem to remember that the wail that haunted the discussion columns of '28 and before was, "Verne is dry. Wells is better, but that's not saying much. Kick 'em out and give us something new". Reading "new" as "more juvenile" the reason for the success of "Skylark", one of the first "new" efforts, is obvious.

Osmund Rebb

has a little to say as well

. . . "The Pen is Mightier . ." will, I am sure, be endorsed by all who habitually turn, as I do, to the readers departments of the s-f magazines before reading any of the stories. but it reveals an undesirable degree of complacency. The worst yarn ever written, required more effort than the most eloquent letter; for narrative is a more difficult literary form than the causerie, or chat, that constitutes the typical letter. The rules of suspense and climax, the problems of characterisation and local colour, these must be faced and tackled by all story-writers, good or bad; for the letter-writer they do not exist. All he has to do is to sit down and talk of this and that - on paper admittedly, but not according to any prearranged plan; just as he pleases, in fact. So away with this notion that readers sweat more over their letters to the editor than do authors over their stories. All the same, this was a good article, and its worth 8/10.

"The Thing" would have been more impressive if its mad

dog had turned out to be something really fearsome like a werewolf. It would have been genuinely funny if it had ended in an anti-climax; if the cause of all the bother had been revealed as something ludicrously harmless. As it was, the story fell between two stools. For atmosphere, of which it had plenty, it gets 7.

"Argumentative" almost justifies Tucker's article; which means that it could scarcely be bettered.

We can't miss out entirely, so here is a short selection:-

... Medhurst's new way of obtaining enjoyment from science fiction is interesting, but I think it is more likely to appeal to Baconians and solvers of cryptograms than to the normal reader. Also, it would seem that the amount of "new ideas" in a story of which the inspiration is to be traced is a rather indeterminate quantity, depending to a certain extent on the will of the reader and his capacity for splitting hairs.

The poem did not seem to me to be particularly inspired. The short jingling lines seemed to me to be in ill-accord with the majestic sentiment of the idea, and the latter itself seemed rather incoherently stated at times. One is left in a haze as to how many space-ships there were or whether or no, Lunar defeated the attack on her completely or only struck back in useless reprisal. "And Tycho's rays that cast" is an outstanding example of poetic licence. On second thoughts perhaps the poem was inspired, the spirit was willing but the flesh was very weak.

The story is difficult to estimate fairly, for it is impossible to re-read it... The picture of fear is authentic enough but it loses rather than gains by the author not telling us, until the end that the prowling thing is a mad dog, for the fear of a supernatural being is harder to put across than the fear of a mad dog, which in itself is a definitely terrifying thing. . . The terror the author seems to be trying to convey is a terror of the supernatural rather than the purely physical fear . . .

My request for you to mark the items of each issue had some rather curious effects! Seven stalwarts responded; but I hope this number will be greatly added to, for this issue. Here is the rating: Editorial and "Argumentative" tie at 90% each (Oh, you flatterers), "Fount of Inspiration" has 82%, Pen is Mightier . . . reaches 65%; Book Review, 60%; The Thing 55% and Lunar 54%. All in all, quite good apparently! Theoretically, "Format" and "Fannag Directory" ought to appear at 100 & 80% respectively, but these only received one vote each!!!

8

Ye Letter from ye Ed.

4, Grange Terr.,
Chapelton,
Leeds 7, ENGLAND..

Dear Friends and Fellow Fans,

Firstly I must apologise for the extreme lateness of this issue. However, the excuse is self evident in the chaotic conditions prevailing. My own private tussle with our paternal government continues, and another round is due at London in the very near future. The continued publication of The FUTURIAN is primarily dependent on the outcome of this little affray; for if I have to leave Leeds, no one at all is available to carry on.

However; begone dull care, and let us cross bridges when we come to them. Let us assume that "The FUTURIAN" will see many more issues yet (what a prospect!)

You will note a change of format in this issue - in fact you can't miss it. Opinions thereon are respectfully requested. We are now prepared to take longer articles essays and dissertations up to a length of some 1500 words. Shorter ones too, will be welcome; in fact we are prepared to take almost anything that can be wangled in as fantastic or futuristic. For the benefit of typists, our page as at present constituted, consists of 48 lines of 60 spaces each, so that you can help us considerably by keeping to these limitations

Don't forget too, that your reactions to our contributors ideas are of great interest, and I derive immense amounts of sardonic amusement from the perusal of angry epistles. A forecast of the next issue would be somewhat premature, at this stage; though I may say that I have received two pages of emphatic disagreement with Johnny Burke's article in the Summer issue of "F". from Raymond van Houten, of Paterson, N.J.; which will be turning up in due course

And so for the present we leave you, with the earnest and hopeful wish of,

Good Reading,

If an "X" appears here
then your sub. expires
with this issue. You
know what to do!

J. Michael Rosenblum