

ISFA



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ISFA

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THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

No, the date and volume number on the cover and the contents page is not a misprint. What happened to the June issue, you ask? I don't know either. As you know, Bob and I alternate in editing ISFA. Well, the June issue was his, but for some reason or other he has never made it yet. But don't give up in despair; he confidently assures me that he will make it. In the meantime ISFA is making history...alright, so it's the kind that Custer made, but it's still history! Yes, we have succeeded in putting out the August issue before the June issue, thus fouling up old Father Time; no other fanzine can make this claim - or would want to.

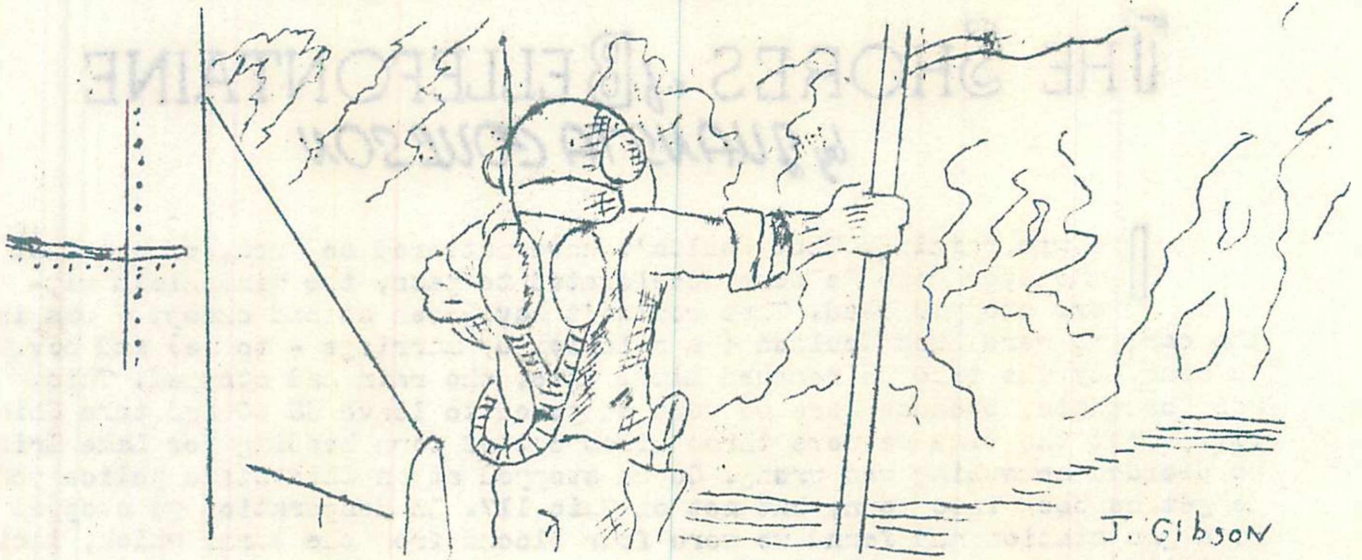
You've probably noticed that this issue is smaller than usual. The reason for this is very simple; I ran out of money. Originally I had planned to run about 34 pages, but due to my financial straits, the letter column, two poems, two pages of the art section, and a short-shot story were cut out. However, all will appear in the next issue (or rather, in the issue after the next, since the preceding issue is, in reality, the next. Confused?) I'd like to acknowledge receipt of letters from Raleigh Evans Multog of Maryland, Warren F. Link of Penna. (He also sent a story, bless him), Neal F. Wilgus of Arizona (This kind soul sent a story and a batch of cartoons), and Alan Dodd from across the Atlantic.

Now comes the question of why I'm broke. At last I saved up enough cash to buy a new mimeograph. My old Speed-O-Print was on its last leg - it seemed to enjoy shredding paper and in hundred other ways making life miserable for yood. The new minico is a BDC Rex-Rotary. It uses no ink pad or liquid ink; the thing operates somewhat like a printing press, using an oscillating roller to spread the ink - which is a paste. Although I'm not used to it yet, I hope you'll notice an improvement in the reproduction.

There's one thing that's been bothering me. I know of at least two people who misunderstood "Triumph" (ISFA #6) and possibly more. Neal Wilgus completely missed the point of the story. The theme was not the world-is-going-to-be-a-stinking-mess-if-we-don't-change-our-ways theme which is currently being exploited - although there probably is a touch of that in the story. All "Triumph" tried to point out is that what we call Christianity, and which its founder (Who would undoubtedly be barred from preaching in 99% of 'Christian' churches today) called love, is a far more potent force than we realize. Mari Wolf in her column made some kind of statement to the effect (I left my copy of MADGE at work, drat it!) that events portrayed in the story could not overthrow a dictatorship. Of course they couldn't, nor was it implied in "Triumph". The events simply showed the

(Continued on p.6)

TERMINAL PLANET



by *BILL BYRD*

The door to the outer airlock opened, and a figure in a highly reflective metal suit climbed down the ladder to the ground. He thrust into the hot sands a flagstaff with a special metallic cloth brilliantly colored blue and white.

His words could be heard throughout the spaceship as he said, "I claim the planet Mercury in the name of the United Nations of Earth."

Then he climbed back up the ladder and into the ship. A half hour later, when his suit had cooled off, Captain James issued an order to the effect that at 1400 hours a scouting party would explore the immediate area on the twilight side of the planet.

It was 2200 hours, and the scouting party had not returned yet. The Captain said, "We'll send out another party in six hours to locate the lost men, and this time take an atomic rifle along."

The second party did not come back, and likewise a third. The Captain and his lieutenant were eyesore from staring out the view-screens.

Get some sleep, Lieutenant. You and I will go out at 1800 hours!

The two shadowy figures walked through the rocks. They noticed a pale, shimmering light coming from the mouth of a cave. They entered the cave and then followed a long, winding tunnel.

(Continued on page 27)

FROM THE HALLS OF INDIANA *to* THE SHORES of BELLEFONTAINE *by JUANITA COULSON*

It was raining. That wouldn't have mattered so much, except that whenever Gene De'ese accelerated to pass, the windshield wipers stopped dead. That wouldn't have been so bad except I was in the car; so were Buck Coulson (a relation by marriage - to me) and Gene De'ese. By the time we reached Lima, Ohio, the rain had stopped. This was fortunate, because here we were supposed to leave US 30 and take Ohio 117. About the time we were three miles out of town heading for Lake Erie, we decided something was wrong. So we stopped at an Ohio state police post. He got us back into town, but not on Ohio 117. In desperation we stopped at a gas station and found we were four blocks from the turn, which, incidentally, never meets US 30. Grr.

We got to Bellefontaine. It was raining when we went in. We checked into the Logan, changed clothes, came back down, floated down to the Ingalls. Fans!...Lyn Hickman, George Young, bunch of other people. I grabbed a coke, and we gyrated back down the street to Walt's Hamburgers for something to eat.

"No, it wasn't on the table - it's my coke! You can't have it! Help!" I had a little difficulty convincing the waitresses that I always carried a half-full coke bottle around with me.

Half way through my hamburger, there was a thunderous thud. George Oakry and train burst through the door and collapsed, gasping, around the cash register. The Snyders, Lee Trumper, Ed McFulity, Ted Sarantoc, and Bob Adair, not being so dramatic, collapsed on the pin ball machine.

George was burling about having escaped from the Deluge, and Lee was yelling about being robbed as we descended and began snatching Berlins from her grasp. While chattering, the management instigated a foul plot, and by some means or other, we found ourselves out the screen door and standing under an awning. After being waded through by entering and exiting patrons several times, we decided to take our lack of trade elsewhere, namely the Logan, where most of us were staying.

Since we hadn't unloaded the car due to the rain, and Thom Stratton wanted to get some more Bull Sheets (his...uh...illustrious one shot)... Lee Anne told us there was a back door. She began to lead Thom Stratton toward said door. Thom inquired gently if she were sure this was the door, pointing delicately to a small sign reading MEN. She decided maybe it couldn't be, since she had come in that way. However, it turned out that

it was the back door - too.

The next morning I awoke at 3:30. This disgusting turn of events didn't subside until everyone else got up at about 9:30. We went down to the Ingalls (It had, surprise, stopped raining) and met Bob Briney, George Young, Tom Harnas of Chicago, and George Price of someplace (Chi?). Thom Stratton passed out Bull Sheets and got a picture for posterity of everyone reading with a leadpan expression. Oh yes, Earl Kemp was there too. They hadn't eaten breakfast (I was the only one who had - having eaten at 7 o'clock) so we went down to an eatery called Isaly's.

After dining sumptuously on ice cream, we went back to the Logan and met Lee Anne and Jean Bogart, who hadn't eaten - back to Isaly's.

Back, Gene, Briney, and some others were magazine hunting. When they got back we met George Ishry and the Snyders (who had been attacked by a wild Ohio potze-brie which had eaten half their pants), plus Dennis Campbell of Canada and Jack Harness of Pennsy, who hadn't eaten. Back to Isaly's.

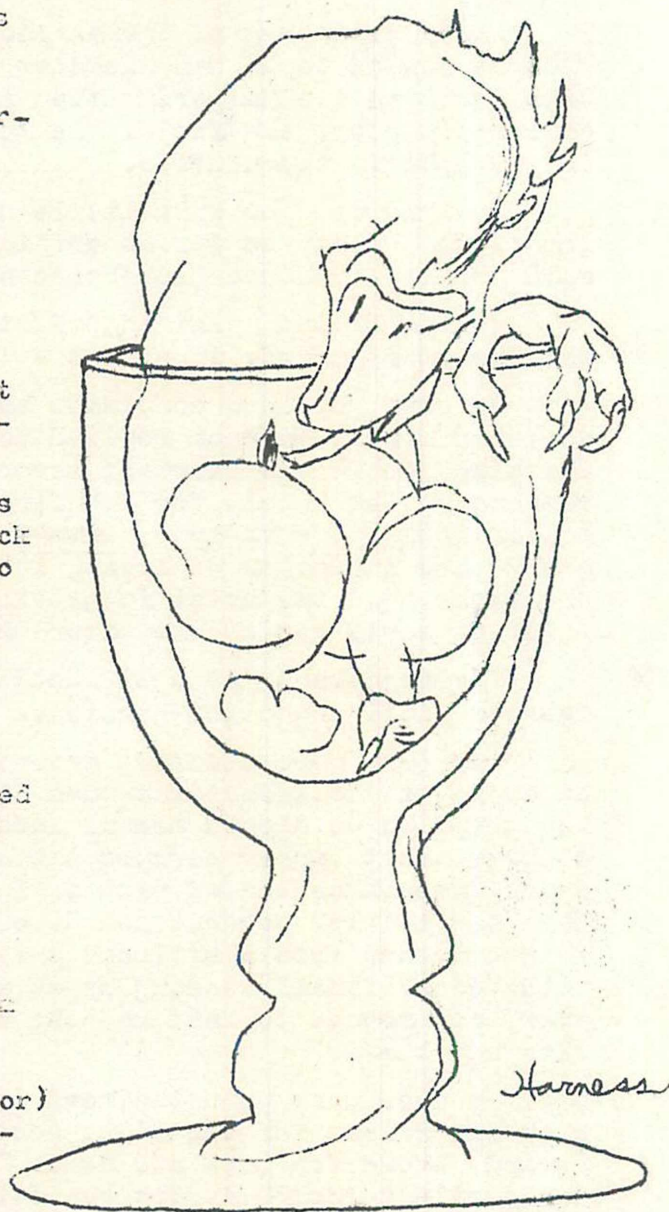
This went on all morning.

Somewhere in there someone suggested we eat dinner. Harness foolishly opened an art folio in the presence of four fan editors. (The illo on this page came from there - Ed) He somehow survived.

The afternoon session opened in a small soundproof, and airproof, anteroom (thats what they did with the money we paid them for fixing the door! Remodeled the whole furchlugginer first floor) where Doc Barrett introduced what he intended to be a panel: Sam Moskowitz of SF PLUS noteriety, Frank Robinson, and Lorry Shaw. Unfortunately for the others he let Moskowitz begin.

Sam took off on the thesis that sf cons were a farce - the editors did not cooperate and did not profit; no writer or fan would dare open his

The Demon in Demon Rum



~~Mouth in criticism~~ at a con for fear he would be blacklisted by all the eds present for daring to suggest there was a lack of perfection. That was the gist, but it took twenty minutes or more to get back around to it.

Marty Greenberg of Gnome Press got up, supposedly to make a rebuttal. What he seemed to do was huckster for Gnome Press and talk about production costs as the hampering item in the sf field and proclaim the fans couldn't support the field. The 'pros don't support cons' argument seemed to get lost in the shuffle.

Evelyn Gold got in a little huckstering for GALAXY and claimed the fans 'didn't count as far as critical value went, since the cruddy stuff sold and fan-adjudged masterpieces flopped.

Earlan Ellison claimed sf stories were about characters, not people, and Evelyn remarked, in effect - 'look who's talking'.

Someone got in a complaint about the hotel and management at the Prison, and Horeen Palasca replied that wasn't going to happen at Cleveland. She also got in the first of several pleas that the fans get in their reservations at the hotel. For the first time in years we have the promise of the entire hotel to ourselves, with the exception of the permanent residents, and we are in danger of losing it because the fans won't get in their reservations, and the hotel is getting cold feet fearing they'll be stuck with a lot of empty rooms come Labor Day.

The argument got a bit hot before Barrett finally cut it, and we adjourned until the night session.

Our four were standing around the Logan Lobby bemoaning the outlook of eating in Bellefontaine when Ellison ordered us to get the car and follow him. So we dashed around back and picked up the Rambler, coming through a street that barely scraped the sides and began chasing Ellison and a sport Studebaker loaded with a minimum of ten people. and, by the time it had gone a mile, several pounds of asphalt from scraping the road. After a slight detour into a railroad switch yard, we took off into the trackless wilderness, finally ending up at a country restaurant called the B&C, where everybody seemed to have had the same idea. Practically the entire convention was there.

We ate, went down the road and played miniature golf a while, then came back and waited for the night session, which seemed to be buying mags from Howard DeVore for Buck and Gene. Bev and I suffered through a Laurel and Hardy silent 'comedy'. One con film was shown, made by two Canadian fans; nothing from Tucker this year.

We went back to the Logan and played penny ante poker for a while, 've being, Lee, Bev (she was just watching), George Oshry, the Snyders, Dennis Campbell, and several other Hoosier followers. Eventually Bev and I went down to our room, where Buck and Gene, in typical fashion, had set up a chess board.

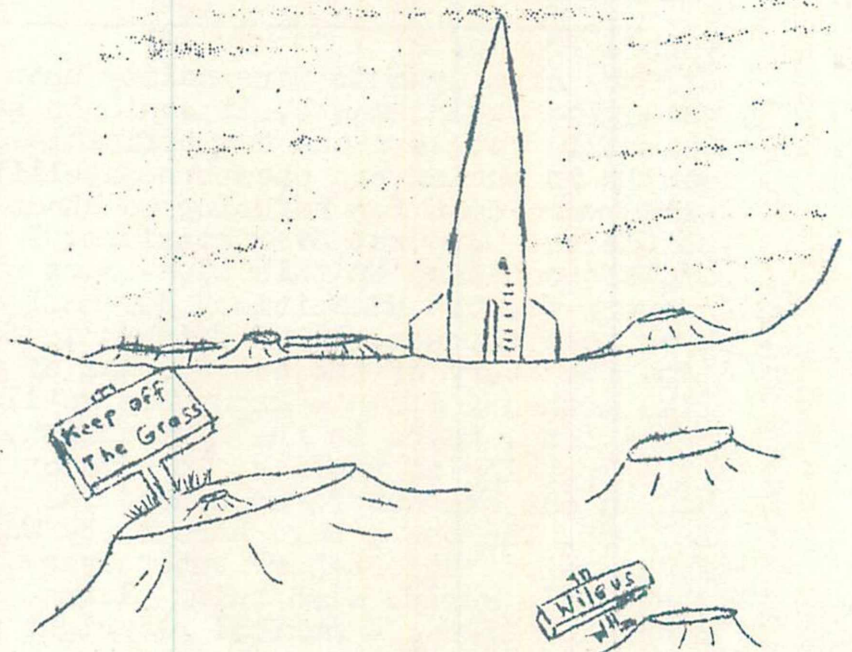
While kibitzing and reminiscing on Rog Phillips trying to unlock a door that was standing wide open, we were interrupted by a fan named Dan Curran, quite drunk and dressed in black. Since we were dressed in black, too, he seemed to have a bit of trouble separating us and finally gave up. He asked for a cigarette, and, having none but Buck's asthma inhalers (made of jimson weed, primarily) we offered him that, which he took, lit, commented it tasted lousy, and continued to smoke.

After climbing off the floor, still smoking the asthma inhaler, he adjourned to the hall for a bout with George, which unnerved him slightly. He accused George of being a fascist and brushed him lightly, at which George, drawing himself up to re-buff height, retorted, "Sir, you have struck me! And when you have struck me, you have struck a friend of the Czar! He then proved that Curran was simultaneously a Loyalist, an anarchist, and a bolshevik. Curran retired, muttering, to open his door and close it. This was followed by a dull thud.

Harlan and a number of fans wandered in. Harlan took off on some tales of New York gangdom, embellishing somewhat for the sake of dramatics. He embellished so far that he put his foot in a Mauser pistol description, about which he seemed to know nothing when others did. After writing a 'story, which was snatched by Lee, he departed. The others did as well, when urged by us (it was our room), and thus ended Saturday night and part of Sunday morning.

Sunday morning was the banquet. Same stuff as last year, maybe literally.

Then we went to the Ingalls' anteroom for the last session. Lou Tabacow got a kidding from Doc Smith and Ed Hamilton who read letters from a number of



pros praising him for writing 'SVEN', the story which appeared on the cover of a recent OTHER WORLDS, but nowhere in the magazine.

Noreen Falasca made another plea for the hotel reservations; New York said it was united; George Young said Detroit wasn't; Buck said Indiana was more or less, if you can discount the fact that it has twenty active fans - and five fan clubs.

Ellison presented his citation plaque to William Atheling, Jr., somewhat complicated by the fact that neither Atheling nor the plaque were there.

Bloch and Tucker read an exchange of letters discussing the possibility of holding the next Midwescon either in Bloomington, Illinois, or in Weyauwega. (It may be held in Cincinnati, by the way)

The Chicago Science Fiction Society, represented by Earl Kemp, presented its award for "outstanding service in the field of talking and talking and talking and talking" - a 28 ounce bag of cow manure to Sid Coleman - who took it in very good grace.

And that was it - for '55.

(Contd. from p. 2)

effects of a dynamic personality upon two officials - thus foreshadowing later events. It couldn't happen you see, no totalitarian would act as these two officials did. Perhaps not, but recently in one of the eastern satellite nations a number of Russians were shot for refusing to shoot a number of inhabitants - people who were not even Russians. I can see I'll have to write an article sometime on this idea - sort of a companion piece to "Technocracy Vs. the Humanities". How am I aware of all this? Well, I have here the sequel to "Triumph", "Not By Might" which does relate the story of the overthrow of the dictatorship by Gandhi-like methods. I don't know when we'll print the thing - it's awfully long. Maybe in the next annish.

Speaking of stories, we have on hand a satire. We haven't had an out and out farce since "The Man Who Hocked the Moon" in ISFA #5. The one I have here is by Warren F. Link and is about the fortunes of "Undertaker" Untermeyer, a sort of D.D. Harriman of the coffin world. Also being planned is a mess about Oxcart Hammerhead 2 1/2nd, a musical playwright who turns to stf for the theme of one of his plays. As you can see, we aren't quite so hard up for material as we once were. Naturally, we will still welcome material - especially nonfiction, although we'll not be too reluctant to accept fiction. Artwork we can always use, if we are to run an art section in every issue - are you listening, Jack, Joe, Bill, Juanita, and Chuck? Gads, this is a lot longer than I had planned on, so au revoir (I learned that from a whole year of French - isn't modern education wonderful?)

Ed McN

OVER THE COALS

Law Forber

CAMBER #4, Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Rd., Hoddesdon, Herts, England. 9d or 15¢ This is an interesting zine, well mimeoed on half-page foolscap, with a neat but crowded format, and interesting material. The illos may not be quite professional, but they are darn good, 'specially the femme on the cover. The editorial is called "Confused Thinking", and it IS, but no more so than the average fan editorial. Four columns, including a letter column and fanzine reviews, fill up most of the space. Did I say four?...There's also a promag review column. "The Solar System" by Terry Jeeves is listed as "Educational"; I quote: "On a clear day, the sun can be seen from the British Isles, sometimes for minutes on end, assuming, of course, you know where to look. Upwards is held to be the best way for this." THIS is educational? Well, you may not be able to earn a Ph. D. with the information in this article, but you will have a lot of fun. "Through Time" by Brian Lumley is a somewhat run-of-the-mill poem, but well illustrated. Arch Trufan (the most obvious pseudonym since Grego Hearnback of SF PLUS) wrote "Filing System", a fair story. And there are interlineations galore...all in all, I rather liked it.

There is a rumor to the effect that Lincoln freed the slaves. Whoever circulated it never contributed a column to Ed McNulty, who is in reality a reincarnation of Simon Lagree.

Indyfandom has done it again; as if INFERNO (See ISFanish - Ed) wasn't bad enough, Tom Stratton has come up with: THE BULL SHEET, a pornozine if there ever was one. Unlike I., however, BULL has the definite advantage of being pubbed by an old hand at keeping barely within the Postal regulations. It involves various STFinitions which Ed wouldn't print in ISFA, so I won't waste my ink typing them. The Editorial is short and as maddening as any of Tom's work. Five of the twelve pages are taken up by "The Bogy in the Bedding" by James R. Adams. This is the story of one of the adventures of Grosbeck Guggle, Investigator of Sidekick Phenomena. It's a good satire, and also a riot. Then we come to the advertisements - for combination shoe-horns and bottle openers, and used bulldozers. Both advertisements are genuine, but slightly obsolete. A poem by Tessagore Tyne, "BRIEF Interlude". I think Tessagore Tyne is a pseudonym for Tom Stratton. The illos, mainly by Juanita Coulson, help to round out

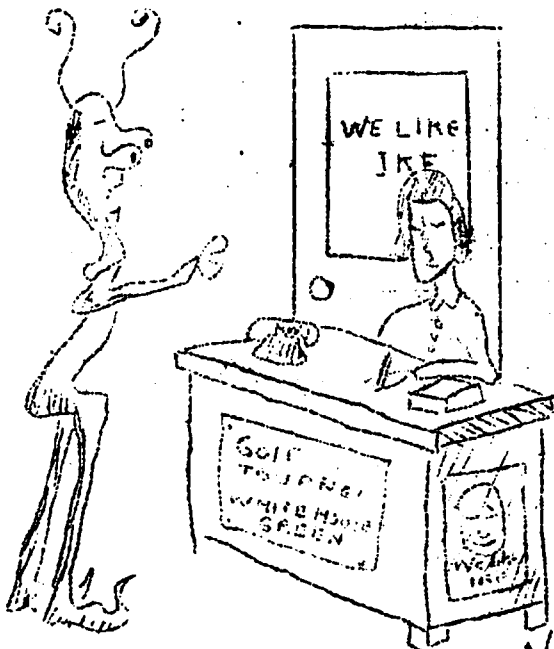
the oneshot. Supposedly you can get it by sending to Tom Stratton, 1314 S. Union St. in Kokomo. However, Tom has since moved. (Has to keep ahead of the Postal Inspectors, you know.) You can get it through Buck Coulson, whose address is below. No charge for BULL, but Tom would probably appreciate postage money.

EISFA; Buck and Juanita Coulson, 407 1/2 E. 6th St., North Manchester, Indiana. Most of this ish is taken up by "Medic & Manure (and other conventional topics)" by Bob Briny. This is a Midwescon report and especially interesting to those who can't afford cons (like me). "Miserable Success" by Ricky Ertl (of Argentina) is a good story with a new theme (new to me, anyway) about a sci-fi story writer whose world wide success becomes his undoing. One can tell that the story was not authored by a person whose native tongue is English, but that in no way detracts from it; the humor is a lot better than some of the fan attempts I've seen. "Ramblings" and "Rumblings", the two editorials, are, as usual, interesting and true to their names.

PSI, Vol.1 #1 Lyle Amlin, 307 E. Florida, Hemet, California. In this we find two editorials, "The Ed Snaps Back" and "Act III of a Two-act Play". The editor ran out of room on the first master (PSI is dittoed) so he took up another page. Vah Nietz contributed "The Tar pits of Phandem", a survey of what makes fan fan. Juanita Coulson wrote a movie review of "This Island Earth". "The Book Nook" by Peter Eberhard takes up REVOLT IN 2100, Heinlein's latest future history collection. All of these are well

done. However, this fanzine is best in the editorials. I like the kind of editorials wherein nothing much gets accomplished, but the editor has a lot of fun.

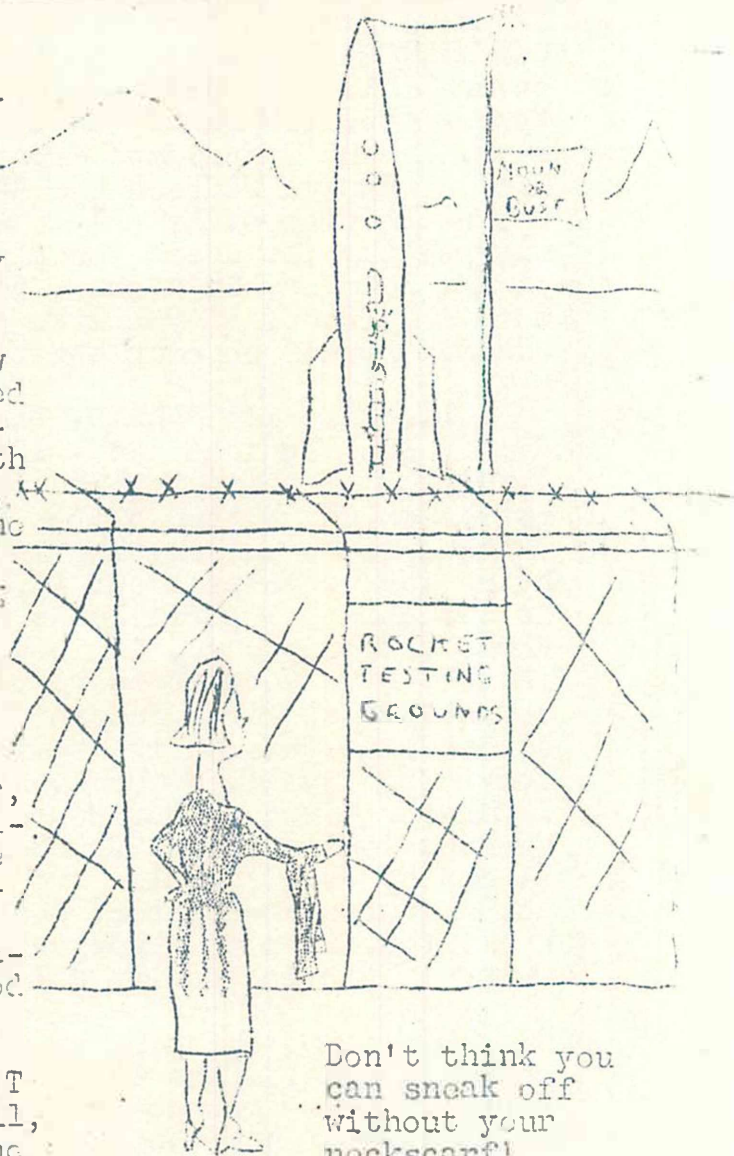
Before I go on to the next zine, I'd like to kick up a storm. According to Ed, several of you readers don't think Over the Coals is long enough (and then again, some might think it too long). Or adequate enough. Or so on. Well, I'm not trying to reprint the entire zine in each review. Just list the contents and comment briefly on each. However, as great minds run on a single track, some fanzines seem pretty repetitious, therefore fanzine reviews may seem repetitious. I do not mean to say that all fanzines



I don't care where you're from, you've got to have an appointment.

are carbon copies of all those which have gone before. But fanzine, promag, movie, and book reviews are pretty much the same. Either you like the opus in question or you don't. And reviewing reviews is as futile as anyone can get. Also, I am aware that my reviews don't cover a very large segment of the fanzines pubbed. Who said they do? I try to review the majority of the zines received by Ed and myself. I have two issues of Dick Geis's PSYCHOTIC. Both are well worth reviewing; indeed, I believe it is the top mag in the field, but both issues are sadly out of date, so I'm not reviewing either. Ah well, to wander back to the subject:

SCINTILLATION, Mark Schult-zinger, 6791 Meadow Ridge Lane, Amberly Village, Ohio. The cover, by an unlisted artist whose signature I can't decipher, reminds me vaguely of the old STARTLING covers by Bergy. There's a BEM (or reasonable facsimile thereof) chasing a scantily dressed girl. Good artwork, but I'd like to raise a question: the girl is packing a mean-looking blaster...WHY DOESN'T SHE USE IT ON SAID BEM???? Oh well, girls who look as good as this one aren't suppose to have any sense. Another two piece editorial. And an article by Lou Tabakow, "A Plague on Your House". This last depicts the various sub-species of fen who can be observed at cons. Well done, but just a little bitter. "Legenda" is a book review column by the editor. His opinions match mine on the books I've read and he reviews. Nice to know somebody agrees with you. "The Fiend Speaks", a column by Ray Schaffer, Jr., deals with a wide variety of subjects; birth control, an attack on stf by a social worker, fan classification, etc. "Command Performance" by George Jennings left me cold. It didn't make a bit of sense - at least not to me. All in all, SC is good, and worth the 10¢ - 10/\$1 price.

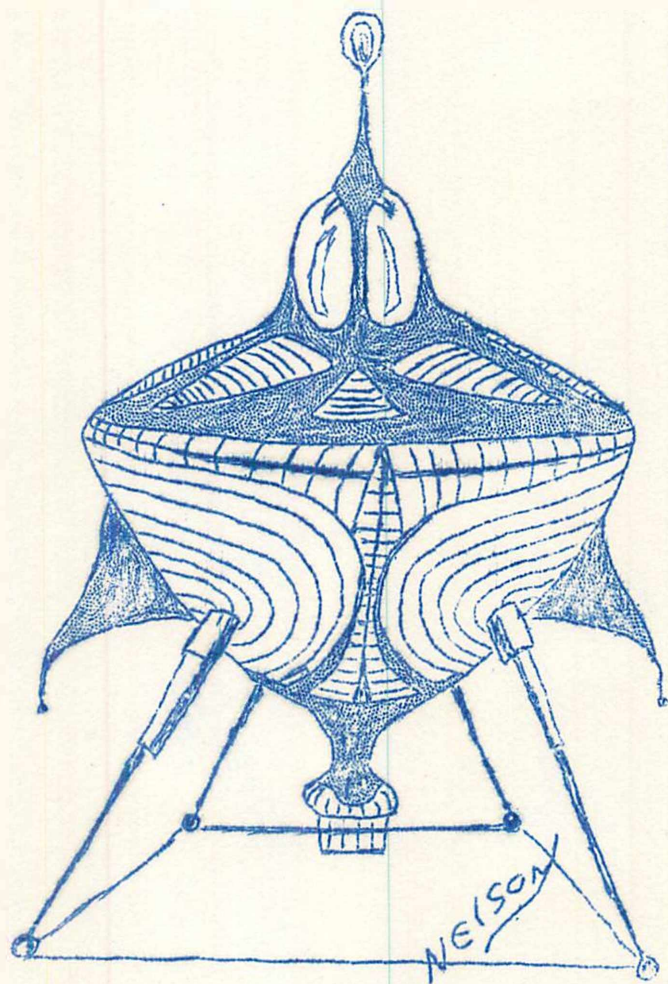


Don't think you
can sneak off
without your
neckscarf!

WVHIMSY, Ron Voigt, 3859 Sullivan St., St. Louis, Mo. 15¢ - 12/\$1.25 This poetry zine is apparently the successor to Ron's FANFICTION. No illos, but the format is excellent - wide margins, several kinds of type - yes, this zine is PRINTED - Ron sets the type himself. Much of the poetry is off-trail - and very, very good. In the July issue appear, among ten others, "The Track of Man" by Eugene Widrick and "Fantasy Concerto" by Bill Young - two top notch pieces. My only complaint about this is the too frequent misspelling (at least for a printed zine) - but maybe I'm being too picky; however, in a short poem, a misspelled word can ruin the mood or effect. If you like poetry and a well put-together zine, WVHIMSY should be near the top of your fanzine subscription list.

Last of all: MERLIN, Lee Ann Tremper, 1022 N. Tuxedo St., Indianapolis, Indiana 5¢ - 12/50¢ No, I don't imply anything by leaving Lee's zine for the last; it was the first one I found, so it was on the bottom of the stack. "Brythonic Mythology" by J. T. Crackel is an interesting introduction to Welsh legendry. I've heard sundry yelps about it, but I don't think it's out of place in a fanzine, especially as MERLIN leans slightly towards fantasy anyhow. In any case, it is well written and well illustrated. "Meeb", Dave Jenrette's regular cartoon feature, is funny as usual. Jenrette also did a fascinating little piece of fiction, "The Siren of Saturn". This satire takes the wind out of the tough space-cop very effectively. James R. Adams contributed a poem named "There's A Monster Lives at Our House". Good. The columns - "Foreign Stf" by Buck Coulson, and "The Bookshelf" and "Stfantasy Pocket Editions" by J.T. Crackel - are all interesting, though I do think that the features are better. Lee writes an editorial called "Excalceebur". Yes, it's an atrocious pun. I LIKE atrocious puns. She also writes a fanzine review column, "The Kettle".

Now comes the part of my column which makes enemies and antagonizes people...fans too. Here is where I let down the raging torrents of mixed metaphors (like the one immediately preceeding). Lee Ann and I have been running a feud (mild type) in the letter column of EISFA for about three issues now. Well, I'M going to drag ISFA into it. She says in MERLIN that my rather irregular zine (CHAOS) is badly mimced, and strictly for local fen. Has anyone seen Lee's first attempts at mimecing? And I know CHAOS is mainly for locals. It's a newszine for a local club. She states elsewhere that she told me what was wrong with me, and I took it as a compliment. She said I wasn't human; that is a compliment. I hate people, human type especially. Lee puts out a good fanzine, but I just don't like her. (The preceeding, written in cobra venom, I was first tempted to cut out. However, since this is probably Lee's last column for ISFA - he's going to descend upon Hanover College soon - yes, Lee they actually accepted him, sight unseen in all probability - I decided to give him a chance to get in one last lick. In order to forestall an assassination - mine - I'd like to say that the preceeding in no way reflects my opinion - Ed)







NELSON

YEEED GOES TO THE MOVIES

Within the last two weeks I've managed to see three stf movies and one fantasy - somewhat of a record for me, since I usually only get to see about two movies a month. Only one of these is new - This Island Earth. To judge by the extravagant claims of the movie ads, one would believe that T.I.E. is a Gone With the Wind of stf films, an epic worthy of the pen of Doc Smith or Hamilton. However, having been assured by thousands of movie ads that such-and-such a film was the greatest ever (it was unty-two years in the making, so it must be!), I entertained a few doubts just before (& during) I shelled out for a ticket. Unfortunately, my doubts were fully justified. In a sense, the film was an epic - it had enough color - in about the same sense as a Fourth of July fireworks display. The story briefly was this: A brilliant government research scientist builds a souped up T-V set from parts which are mysteriously sent to him by a nonexistent electronics company. He is contacted via the machine by high browed (& I mean that literally) extraterrestrials, offered a chance to join them in scientific research, and is then treated to a sample of the aliens' power as the machine is consumed by tremendous heat. The scientist is picked up by a strange airplane, flown to the aliens' retreat, meets several other eminent Earth scientist - one of whom, of course, is a good looking female scientist - and soon learns that the alleged altruistic motives of the aliens are actually a cover up. He and girl friend try to escape, but they are captured by the aliens who are now leaving Earth to return to their own planet which is under siege by EVIL comet people. The two Terrans learn that the aliens had gathered the top scientists of Earth to carry on research (in atomic energy or something of the kind, I think), the results of which would be used in the defense of their planet, whose energy was being rapidly used up by the necessary maintenance of an energy screen about the planet. However, they arrive on the planet too late to be of any help, and, after a run-in with a beserk alien drone, they are returned to Earth by the dying expedition leader. End of story. The darn thing ended just as I was settling back in my seat to get ready for another half hour or so of it. I left with the feeling that the story actually got nowhere - even though there was some traveling around. I suppose not too much should be expected from Hollywood's first attempt at something resembling grand space opera. But there were quite a few hideous blunders for which there is no excuse. For instance, the spaceship burn-

ing brightly while passing through the Thermal Barrier in outer space was pretty, but... the beautiful glowing meteors (or were they comets?) with fire dripping downward into space and which were towed by the enemy ships and used for missiles, were nice, but... the monster disintegrating completely due to a great change in the air pressure of the space ship was an interesting bit of photography, but... these are a few of the samples. When will the other producers and directors besides George Pal begin to turn out stf films whose 'science' is above an 8th grade level?

The next film I saw (during the same day) was a delightful change. It was a fantasy, an old one, "The Wizard of Oz". The story concerns the dream of a young girl in which she miraculously is blown to the Land of Oz (At this point the film seems to have changed producers, for the film suddenly switches to technicolor, a trick which one or two other films have since employed.) where she immediately makes an enemy of a witch, sets out for the Emerald City to ask the Wizard to send her back home, and on the way meets an assortment of characters who join her - the Scarecrow looking for brains, the rusty Tinman looking for a heart, and the Cowardly Lion looking for courage. The story of their quest and mishaps makes for a very amusing and enjoyable ninety minutes or so. The sets and costumes were all gorgeous. The Wizard of Oz, like Disney's productions, is a movie for those who go on living after they 'grow up', not for the unimaginative corpses which make up the bulk of the 'adult' world.

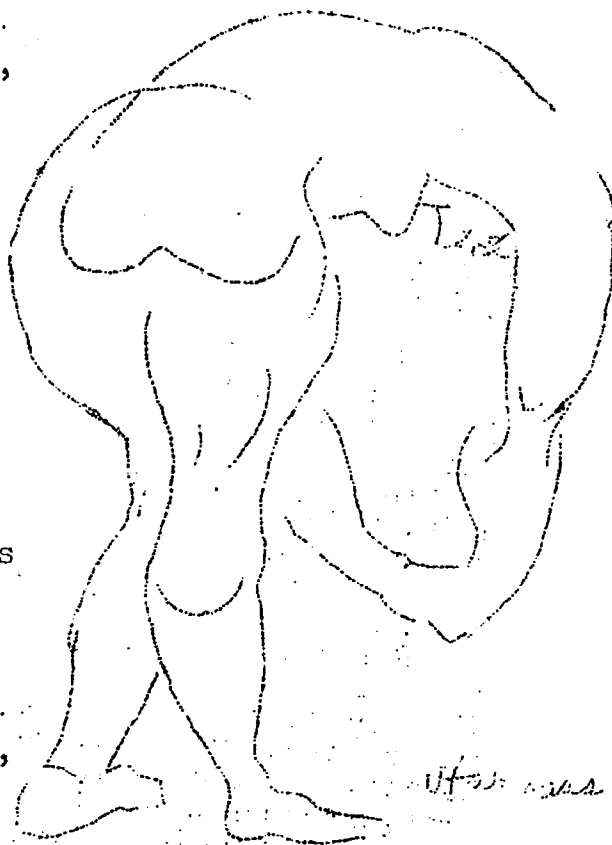
While on vacation in Florida, I had the good fortune to see The Conquest of Space. Like most of Pal's productions, it was beautiful. The special effects were a fan's dreams come true. I'll always remember the shuttle rocket rising up from Earth and the Station revolving on its axis - and the views of the ship

and Mars - wow! The only bad thing about the movie was that some ridiculous nonsense (for lack of a better name, we'll call it a story) kept getting in the way. Why, oh why, do they buy the rights for a book and then proceed to write their own mediocre story - as if the conquest of space wasn't in itself a good enough story. I guess the film had to have some kind of drivel injected into it in order to sell to the general public... too bad. Using the special effects in the film as a basis of judgement, think what kind of a movie Pal would have had if he had actually followed the book and taken us around the Solar System and to a few stars!



"Oh, it's you..."

Red Planet Mars was one of the many stf films which I missed when it ran here at the various theaters, so I was very happy when one of the 'late shows' on T*V played it here. It got off to a bad start, but got better as it went along. I missed the first few minutes of it, but when I came in, a scientist and his wife were just starting to try to contact Mars, using some kind of device whose nature escapes me. Anyways, needless to say, a reply is at last forthcoming from the red planet. The ensuing messages, the film would have us believe, spreads panic over all the western world by telling of the many superior aspects of Martian civilization, such as cheap power. Stock markets crash, millions are thrown out of work (just why I don't know - certainly not because of the flimsy reasons given in the movie), and, of course, the Government moves in, takes over the machine, and clamps a security lid on any further Martian messages.



Thus far the film is like most Hollywood attempts at stf - a miserable, disgusting mess. However, after seeing the last half of it, I changed my mind; in fact, the best way to see this movie is to miss the first part. Just assume that the West is faced with imminent financial ruin, and that the Sec. of Defense is urging the President to launch a war against Russia to prevent the collapse of the West, and you have the makings of a good story. And there's the next Martian message. As usual, my memory is foggy on the details, but the gist of the message was this: 2000 years ago (Earth) you were told to love your neighbor...why haven't you done so? This, and succeeding messages, start a world wide religious revival, thus making any war on the part of the west impossible. Behind the iron curtain, the Soviets try to stamp out the revival, but the attempt ends in the destruction of the Soviet government and the triumph of the Christians. This was one Hollywood movie that really surprised me - its makers actually seemed to have some insight into the real nature of the struggle between East and West. They apparently realized that communism is an idea, and an idea can only be defeated by a better idea - not by guns or bombs. Judging by the reactions of my friends, most fans probably didn't like this film. Sorry, fellows, but this time you're wrong. Hollywood should be congratulated for combining stf and the current conflict into a fine movie - or rather half a movie.

McN

THE UNQUIET GRAVE

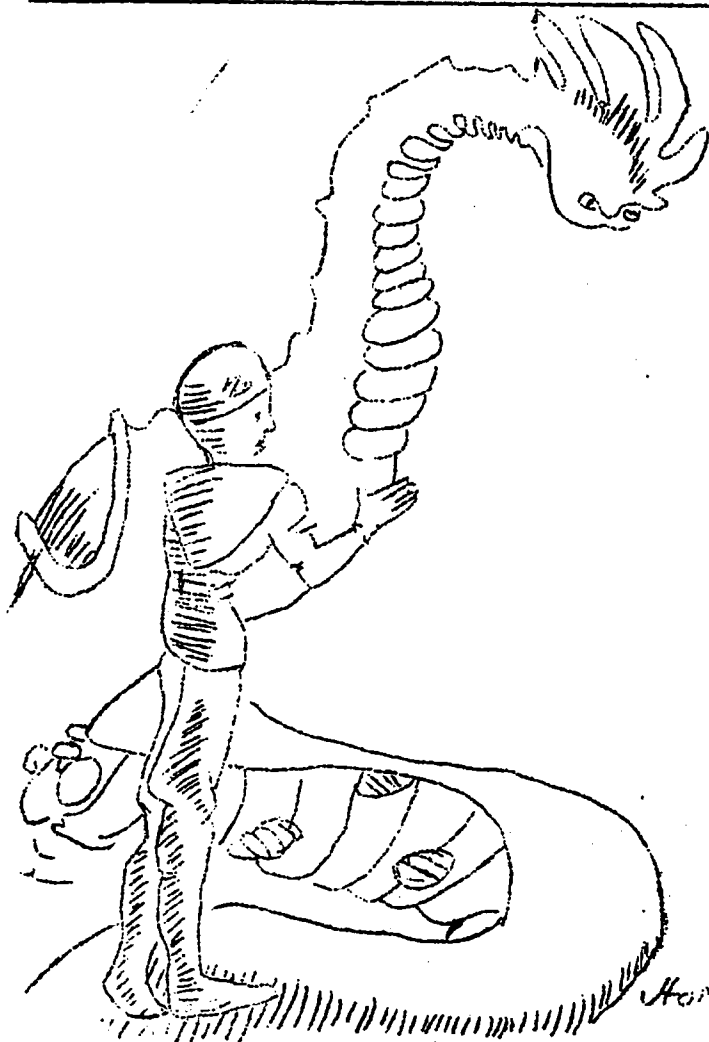


The column in this issue will be a little different. I am reviewing several representatives of the British paperback industry with the idea that you might be interested in the type of stuff most commonly encountered in England.

STOWAWAY TO MARS by John Beynon (Nova Publications 1' 6)
This is the first of the "Nova Science-fiction Novels", a series somewhat on the order of Galaxy Novels. Contains 128 pages, with a good cover by Hutchings. This book is an odd mixture of writing styles. Part of it reads like an AMAZING STORIES, circa 1930, while the rest is modern, sometimes humorous, and fairly good. The plot is somewhat hoary, consisting of the first trip to Mars complete with beautiful feminine stowaway. Other factors are intelligent Martian machines, insane Martian machines, a rival Russian rocket, a rival American rocket (which crashes), and a love affair between the stowaway and a Martian man. Beynon (better known as John Wyndham) depicts the Mars of sand, cacti, and machines very well - he does not succeed as well with his humans. There are also a few lapses of logic (such as the acceleration couch which is somehow provided for the stowaway during the landing on Mars) This is a novel with unrealized possibilities.

THE MUTANTS REBEL by E. C. Tubb (Panther Books 1'6) Tubb, whose prose occasionally rivals that of Bradbury, obviously didn't get paid much for this, and wrote it as rapidly as possible in order to show a profit. Earth, following an atomic war, has become a matriarchy with men denied equal rights and despised. Rebuilding is too slow, and people are worried about the mutants, born out of the radiation. The hero, sentenced to work on an undersea farm, escapes, discovers that he is a mutant, and joins a group of mutants who are working to overthrow the Matriarchy. Last sentence; "With her fingers twined in his, they stood waiting for the rebirth of a world." One hundred forty-four pages of fast-paced, entertaining drivel.

TORMENTED CITY by Charles Grey (Milestone Publications 1'6)
Following an atomic war, the world is ruled by a World Council of five members. One of the members has become a virtual dictator. Our hero makes an unsuccessful attempt to kill the dictator, following which he talks the man into hiring him as a secret agent. Burtard, the dictator, is building towers to broadcast energy. Our hero knows that they are for some other, sinister, purpose. He raises an army from among the beggars and sends an-



other World Council member to organize the Martian rocket fleet. An attack is made on the towers, during which Bur-Tard is revealed to be a robot servant of an alien machine striving to make Earth into a planet useful to the alien race. At the last moment, the Martian fleet arrives like the cavalry and destroys the alien spaceship. A ridiculous plot and writing of the quality to be found in PLANET or IMAGINATION.

DAWN OF THE HALF-GODS by Victor La Salle (John Spencer & Co. 1'6) Calling this piece of trash science-fiction is an insult to the name. It is a poorly blended assortment of trite plot ingredients. The STELLAR POLARIS is returning from Venus, which has been discovered to be exactly like the Earth, with no inconvenient natives. Paradise, in short.

The commander is worried about this Eden being spoiled by the rulers of Earth,

the insidious I. C. B. However, radio signals to Earth are not answered, and a landing on the Moon shows that the great military base (a great military base on the Moon already, and only two ships have gone farther!) has been destroyed. Another landing is made at the Space Station, where the ship's I.C.B. Controller is killed, for no good reason except that he would have interfered with the plot if left in the script, and the scientist and his beautiful daughter report that Earth has been taken over by the horrible mutant children, and all the cities are destroyed. A landing is immediately made on Earth (!) and contact made with some surviving normals. A few homo superiors appear, recite their lines, and disappear offstage. An attack is made on the spaceship launching site (conveniently spared by the mutants) and fourteen spaceships seized. (Fourteen ships waiting to be launched when only two ships

had gone beyond the moon, and one of those had been destroyed. No wonder the mutants took over!) The commander is captured by the mutants, who give an unconvincing picture of brutality, like actors who aren't sure of their lines, and is about to be put to death when some of the crew arrive with blasters (the ships are made of neutronium, by the way) and rescue him. Everyone leaves Earth, and the commander sets a time-lock on several hundred pounds of plutonium, which has been mined on Venus and brought to Earth so the author could properly destroy the mutants, who were invincible to most human weapons. The resulting explosion destroys the Earth, and the survivors head for Venus, joyous with the knowledge that the Solar System is again safe for humanity. On the way, the commander falls into a clench with the beautiful daughter of the scientist, whom the author has ignored up until this moment. Fade-out, while the orchestra plays something sentimental.

I CAME - I SAW - I WONDERED by Volstead Gridban (Scribner Distributors 1'6) Rather surprisingly, this is a good book. A Martian chemist accidentally discovers the secret of space travel, builds himself a ship, and arrives on Earth in the middle of a storm. (Also in the middle of England) Since he looks outwardly exactly like an Earthman, the couple who take him in have some difficulty in believing that it all isn't some hoax, until he receives a cut, and they see his blue-green blood. He is here to study Earthmen (with the aid of an eidetic memory, which is a great advantage in learning the language), and intends to take back an account of his adventures to Mars. There are some fairly good reasons as to why he is like Earthmen (and why Martian politics are much like those of Earth), and the rest of the novel is devoted to his reactions to the differences between Earth and Mars. There is none of the wild adventure which characterizes most of the other British novels that I have read; the tone of the book is quietly philosophical, and rather pleasing.

NO PLACE LIKE EARTH edited by John Carnoll (Boardman Books 2') This anthology is certainly worth the price. Edited by the editor of NEW WORLDS, it contains seven good to excellent stories, plus an introduction by Arthur C. Clarke; a total of 192 pages. Six of the stories have appeared in American magazines, but most of them do not appear in other anthologies. They are: "Breaking Strain" by Clarke, and "Survival" by Wyndham, both from TWS; "The Two Shadows" by Temple, from STARTLING; "No Place Like Earth" by John Beynon, from 10 STORY FANTASY (and including a short sequel from ARKHAM SAMPLER); "Balance" by John Christopher, from FUTURE; "Machine Made" by McIntosh, from, I think, GALAXY (some of my mags are being bound at the moment, so I can't check this); "Chemical Plant" by Ian Williamson. The best stories are "Survival", a nasty story of slow starvation in a spaceship unable to land or to be reached in time; and "Breaking Strain", a novelet of the men left on Mars after Earth's destruction, and their effect on the Martians, and vice versa.

SEX IN S-F

BY NOAH McLEOD

On top of a heap of other magazines on my foot locker are five science fiction magazines, including the current issues of all the Columbia s-f mags, the current number of Startling, and the last issue of TWS. All contain stories dealing in some measure with sex. Yet in the thirties Gernsback followed the policy that sex and science fiction do not mix, and Campbell still does in ASTOUNDING.

How did sex invade modern science-fiction? It started back in the thirties with Aldous Huxley and Olaf Stapledon. These two English hard cover writers, having fewer taboos to contend with than Americans, and writing for an educated audience of adults, wove into their stories certain speculations about future changes in sex mores. Also, they inserted philosophical discussions about sex. There was a certain amount of half-hearted imitation on this side of the Atlantic, but the English writer has a great advantage over the American: There are only two taboos he must watch, (1) he must not criticise or ridicule the royal family, (2) he must not be grossly obscene. By contrast, the American writer is stifled with dozens of taboos. He must not say anything which implies criticism of the more important religious or patriotic organizations; he must not depict the sex act or the nude female body too straight-forwardly, even if he does use good taste. He must never criticise the ideas of the Churches on sex ethics, no matter how good his grounds are. A story, for example, which hinted that adolescent girls should be given a working knowledge of birth control for their own protection would probably be rejected by nearly all magazines.

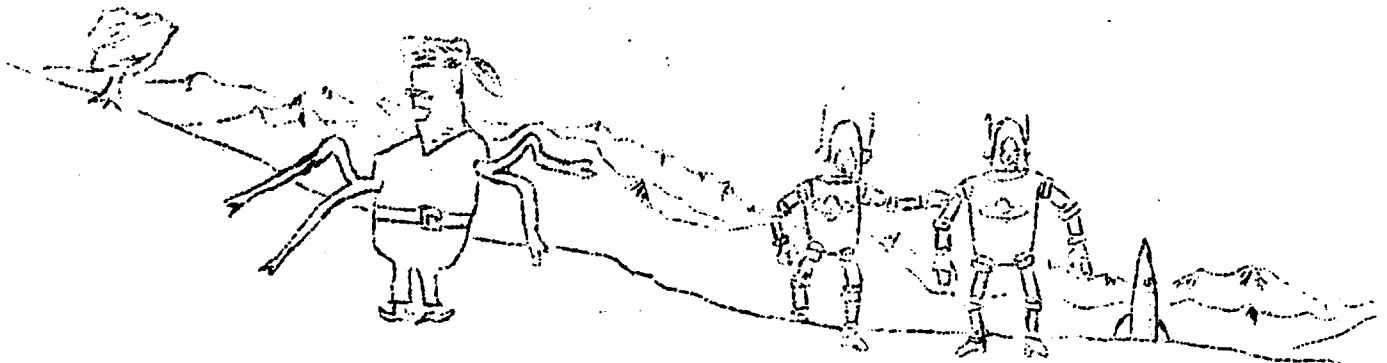
Under these conditions the problem is how did sex get into science-fiction at all? There were two routes, the first of which was the occasional science-fiction efforts of main-stream novelists and the second was the biological yarn. The "high brow" or "egg head" writer, writing for a limited audience of educated adults, if not as free as his English fellow, is far freer from taboos than the writer who writes for the general public. Such science-fiction as is written by main stream novelists shows a much freer handling of both sex and religion than that written by routine science-fictioners. Stories such as PLAYER PIANO and LIMBO are good examples.

The story which is to be credited with really putting sex in

science fiction was a biological yarn, *THE LOVERS*, written by Phillip Jose Farmer, and published in *STARTLING* in 1952. At that time *STARTLING* was edited by Sam Mines who saw that science-fiction was handicapped by the taboos which had been permitted to grow up, partly by inertia, and partly by front office pressure. It is to Mines' very great credit that he persuaded the front office of Standard Magazines to set him free from most taboos. The results were very gratifying. In the next two years and *STARTLING* published such stories as *THE LOVERS*, its sequel *MOTH AND RUST*, and DeCamp's *VIRGIN OF ZESH*.

THE LOVERS was not merely a biological novel and an outspoken sex yarn, but a powerful attack on revivalist Christianity of the Billy Graham type. The Haijac Republic, which sent out the interstellar expedition, was a cruel dictatorship founded by Isaac Sigmen, a revivalist of the Graham type. In the story Farmer gives amazingly detailed descriptions of the body and sexual reactions of Jeanette, his non-human but humanoid heroine. After *THE LOVERS*, sex was in science-fiction to stay.

But sometimes the taboos can lead to curious results which may damage the convincingness of the story. Take for example that excellent novel of historical speculation, Ward Moore's *BRING THE JUBILEE*. The hero, Hodge Backmaker, was not a great lover, but a rather shy young man whose chief interest was books. But he manages to enjoy the favors of three young women of above average intelligence and good character. These young women are not nymphomaniacs or play girls; Hodge has nothing material to give them in return for their favors. The whole performance is the least convincing part of the plot. It could only be explained by two suppositions together (1) That the girls in question had available a cheap, certain method of birth control, and (2) That the girls in



"Boy, you see those Davy Crockett hats
all over nowadays..."

the probability universe where the story takes place did not get the conditioning during their childhood that makes most girls unconsciously fear men and boys. But discussion of these questions would be against taboos much more effective than the taboo on sex. Aldous Huxley could discuss birth control freely in *BRAVE NEW WORLD*; American authors can't.

Sam Merwin, who knows more about story telling than science (he makes very gross errors in science at times), uses sex to create personality conflicts and to delineate character. An example of this is found in *THE HOUSE OF MANY WORLDS* and in its sequel *THE ROAD TO MISENIUM*, both in *STARTLING*. Here Elspeth Mariner a very idealistic young poetess, has as a working partner one Mack Frazer, whose ideas about sex are those of a healthy tom cat. His constant attempts to seduce Elspeth, and his affairs with other girls, furnish a good deal of movement for the plots of these two yarns. Another good example of Merwinia is *THE EYE IN THE WINDOW* in the current (May, 1955) *SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY*. Here one conflict that develops is between Nesi Wyndham and Marta Cranc over the affections of Joe Maturelli. Nesi loses Joe when he discovers her to be a neurotic who can give herself freely only when moved by sympathy or pity towards a man. Another characteristic of Merwin is that usually the reader finds out about sex after the event; he does not describe the love-play itself. Merwin's knowledge of psychology is good and his writing a cut or two above the average, but too many of his women are sophisticated cosmopolitans whom the reader feels have pre-marital relations because it is fashionable.

D. A. Jourdan is as different from Merwin as the latter is from Farmer. He deals with the sociology of sex, just as Farmer deals with its biology, and Merwin with its effects on personality. His best story so far is *CHANGE OF COLOR*, in the November, 1954, *SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY*, which deals with the effect of the desire for romantic love on a society whose official policy is promiscuity. The fact that most men and women want loyalty in their sex partners has very destructive effects on that society. *CHANGE OF COLOR* deserves anthologizing.

Another type of use of sex in science-fiction is found in *NAME YOUR PLEASURE* by James E. Gunn, published in the Winter 1955 issue of *WONDER STORIES* (which, I think, was the last issue before the mag folded.) Here the heroine, Beth, is living for a few weeks with an experienced older man as part of her training for marriage. Much of the action turns on Beth's emotional development.

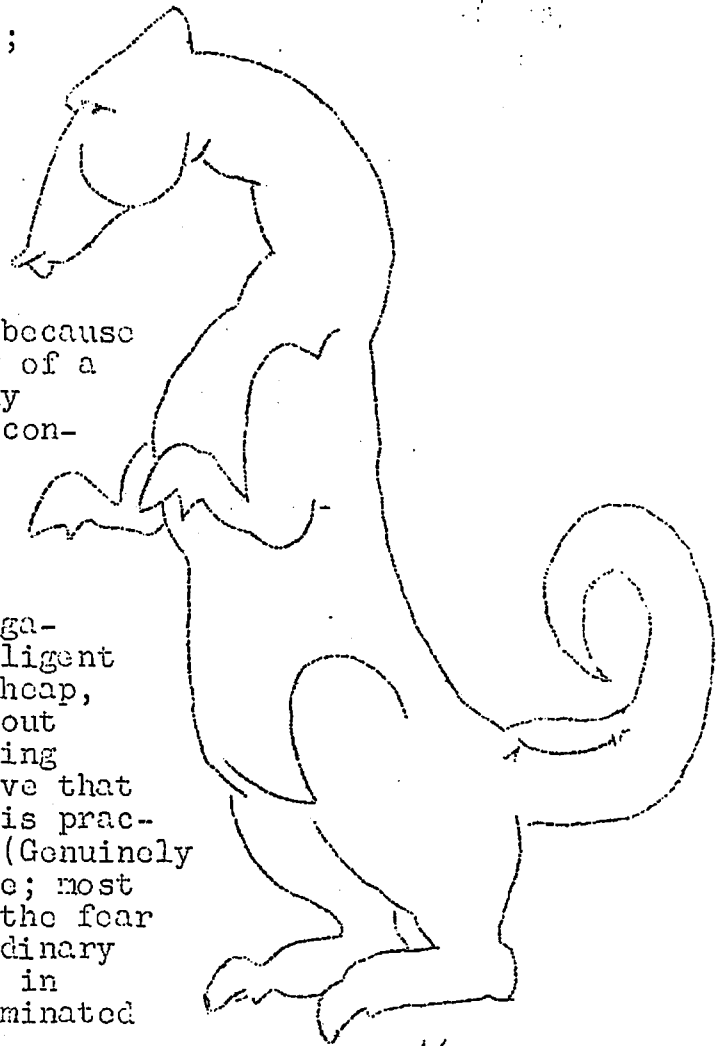
Lastly, let's look at DeCamp's *THE VIRGIN OF ZESH*. This is a farce, turning on the misadventures of a prudish lady who had

led a sheltered life. She finds herself in an environment where several adult males are willing to use force to gain her favors. She ultimately ends up by mating with an alien. This story is very good reading, but is a parody of the biological yarn rather one itself.

These examples form a rather incomplete survey of sex in magazine science-fiction. It is obvious that the combination of a Phil Farmer and a Sam Mines is rare, that although sex is here to stay in science-fiction, much of it will be in the watered down form used by Merwin. If Aldous Huxley or Olaf Stapledon submitted manuscripts to *GALAXY* or *ASTOUNDING*, they would get nothing but rejection slips.

It is one of the peculiarities of American literary taboos that while vivid descriptions of the torture or disembowelling of girls are permitted in the detective and gangster magazines; intelligent description of the sex act and the way the partners react to it is so risky that only a very few authors dare to undertake it. One of my best friends is a widely read pro writer of science fiction; he will write nothing concerning sex in his stories because it so increases the difficulty of a sale. A Martian acquainted only with American magazines might conclude that to murder a girl by sadistic torture was a less serious crime than to awaken her sexually.

It is doubtful if any magazine would dare print an intelligent story about the effects of a cheap, safe contraceptive drug. Or about the slight change in conditioning growing girls which would remove that unconscious fear of men which is practically universal among women (Genuinely uninhibited women are very rare; most promiscuous women merely push the fear under a little farther than ordinary women do). Since World War II in Japan more pregnancies are terminated



U. Barnes

by abortion than by birth; would any science-fiction magazine dare publish a story about a similar situation in America? A hard cover novelist might.

In space operas brothels are frequently mentioned as existing on outer planets in desolate surroundings. Nothing is ever said about the women inhabiting those brothels. Are they priestesses of a sex cult, heroines there because they think men need them; adventuresses on the make, paid employees of a space line, or chattel slaves? What is their attitude toward the men they entertain? What chain of events brought them there? It seems to me that Judith Merrill, Margaret St. Clair, and Marion Zimmer Bradley have the necessary talents and insight to produce good stories on this subject. But do they have the cold nerve and intellectual honesty? What about it, girls, want to follow in the footsteps of Stapledon?

In concluding, I would like to remark that while writing about sex, it is easy to accidentally slip over the line into pornography, but I believe an occasional bit of pornography does less harm than intellectual dishonesty.

RETURN BOUT

As if the main editorial isn't long enough, here I am again. This appears for two reasons. First, there was a half page left over on the stencil, and I have no filler material for it, and secondly, there were a few things that I wanted to say since the other stencils were cut. I said in the editorial that several items had to be cut, well now I'm making a substitution. Originally I'd planned to run a story by Ted Sarantos called "The Beautiful Ambassador", but it is five pages long, which would run the issue over thirty pages. Hence the substitution "Terminal Planet", which was originally cut. Want to go mad the easy way? Become a faneditor.

Some of you might be interested in this bit of information. "The Galactic Post" is coming out again after about a year - or so I've heard. Apparently it will be published in Tucson where Ray Beam lives now.

And one final piece of news before leaving. ISFA will soon go quarterly. This is being done for several reasons. Bob is transferring this fall from Butler to Duke University, hence several hundred miles will make it inconvenient to carry the mimeo back and forth. I won't have much time since I have to work between 30 and 40 hours a week and carry a regular load at college. Even more important is the opposition of my parents to fanediting. Thus ISFA goes quarterly - I'm not sure when. Ed

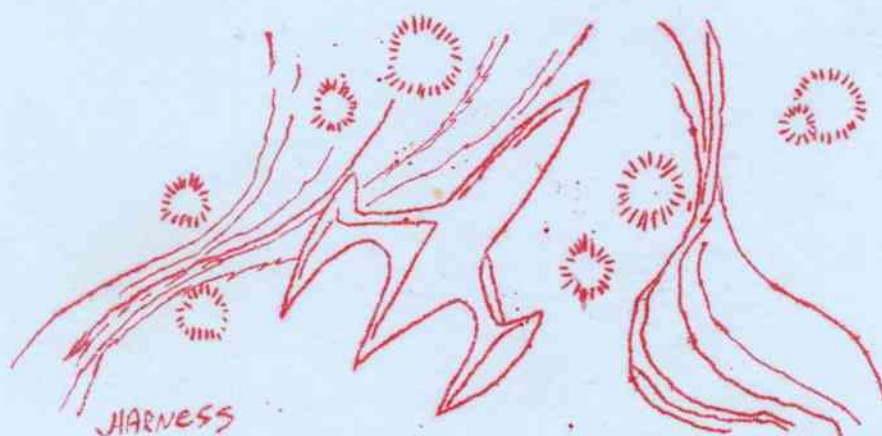
(Contnd. from p. 3)

"The light's getting brighter, Captain."

The ground crumbled beneath them, and they fell into a dark, obsidian pit. They both sat up at the same time. As Captain James rose to his feet, the Lieutenant froze in terror. There on a granite rock sat an immense being. His skin was a deep reddish color, and he carried a pitchfork-like weapon.

The creature spoke, and even through the helmet of his suit, the Captain heard him say, "Welcome to Hell, gentlemen. Hachahaha=hahaha!"





HARNESS