

I may disapprove of what you say, but I shall defend to the death your right to say it.—Voltaire

The ugly head of censorship rears its head above its treacherous iceberg body. We, as a nation, are in a furor over what is good and what is bad for our children to read. And legislators, pressured by certain crusaders with good will for brains and opinions for eyes, are busy originating bills and condemning this and that and everything that somebody says is "immoral" or "communistic" or "bad for children" and

You people are bastards. And I'm going to tell you why I think

First of all because there are rights I guarantee myself: the right to think as I please and to express myself in any manner I see fit and the right to freedom of action as long as I in no way cause the unhappiness of anyone around me and to the degree that the laws of society will permit (more precisely: the right to love my fellow man, no matter what an idiot he happens to be nor how much I disagree with his philosophy of life or lack of one; the right to honor all forms of ideas men may have, true, in my opinion, or untrue, as examples of thought; and to expect every other fellow man to do the same).

Second of all because there are rights guaranteed me in the Constitution. I want those rights. I demand those rights. And I expect every man jack of you—be you communist, fascist, homosexual. misanthropist, or science fiction fan—to be given those

rights. But we say out of one corner of our mouth:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

and we say out of the other corner: THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA MUST BE PROTECTED FROM INCORRECT IDEAS. Our youth, our tender innocent youth, must be protected from ideas that may show them what life is really like. Our youth must be lead to believe in fairy tales: that all men are created equal; that people are nice; that sex is naughty; that communism is pure black and America is pure white; that they have no right to question authority. Our youth must be brought up in a never-never land where no taint of reality may touch them. Their parents may beat them; their parents may show

them no kindness nor love; their parents may have sexual intercourse in front of them—but they must respect their parents.

Why are we saying ideas (of a certain nature) must be suppressed? Because we are afraid. What

are we afraid of? Ourselves.

And do you think this suppression of ideas isn't going on, that censorship on a large scale isn't going on right now all about you and getting worse as the minutes go by as you sit and read this? You, then, are lethargic. You don't give a damn. You're satisfied. Everything's the way you want it, you're free enough. And you think it will always be the same. But you're wrong; it won't always be the same. One moment is never the same as another: and the moments to come look very black indeed. A war is a tangible threat; we can meet it with force. But censorship is a worse threat to our freedom because it is not so easily engaged, not so easily fought,

and not so easily defeated.

In the past I have discussed the Entertaining Comic Group. I said that their crime and horror comics were forced off the newsstands. It is true. Recently Bill Gaines, the publisher, gave a talk at the Fanvet Convention here in New York. He has joined the Comics Code Authority because there was no other way he could get proper distribution. This group oks every comic bearing their seal of approval and Mr. Gaines pointed out the "corrections" made in the forth-coming issue of Incredible Science Fiction. The first change, of course, was the title (formerly Weird Science-Fantasy). The word "weird" was dropped because the judge passing on the comic felt that the word was not a proper one for our youth to behold. The major changes in the text of the comic were accomplished with this purpose in mind: to alter the idea that Man is a stupid ass to fight wars and that his main reasons for fighting them are selfish—that most people are cruel and selfish and mean and narrow minded most of the time—in order to perpetrate the "idea" that people are nice. And to change the picture of war as being a horrible monstrosity to one that looks like kids in a vacant lot playing with pop guns. Real emotions, real observations were deleted from the comic, and false ones substituted. Now, tell me, tell me because I want to know: Is it corrupting our youth to give them a realistic picture of war and people when they fight wars and to tell them why people fight wars? Is it better to tell them fairy of CZ until he is sixteen and then suddenly with no preparation whatsoever have him come face to face with THE NAKED AND THE DEAD? Of course, you are right if you say children are apt to get wrong ideas from horror and crime and war comics. But the point is they will not get those wrong ideas if they have proper parental guidence and a secure home life. And if they do not have these they are going to get wrong ideas, if not from comics, then from someplace else. The ideal place to get the wrong ideas about sex is in the school yard. But children will not be in-



fluenced greatly by what their school mates tell them if they have been given a healthy understanding of the function of sex by their

parents before they enter school.

Another form of idea censorship is the Chase-Johnson bill which This bill reads in part that it shall be ilis now in Congress. legal to send through the mail, subject to a penalty of fine and imprisonment, "anything that tends to promote world communism in the opinion of the Postmaster General." I repeat: anything. If this bill was in force and I were to say, as Voltaire did, "I may disapprove of what you say, but I shall defend to the death your right to say it." I could be accused of printing material that "tends to promote world communism." Would you ever feel entirely safe if this bill becomes law?

People are reforming. They are censoring ideas They are foster-

ing a form of fascism.

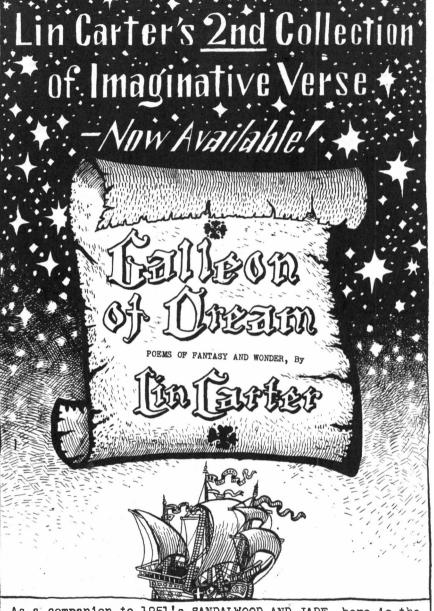
And that's why I think you're bastards. You aren't doing anything about reforming the reformers.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND ADVERTISERS: Please make all checks and money orders payable to me, Ron Smith, and not the name of the magazine. In order to cash checks made out to the magazine we have to have a business account (New York State law) and in order to have a business account we have to have \$500, I'm sure you will get the joke, so in the future ...

DEPARTMENT OF SWELLED HEADS: "The Martian Who Hated People" by Edward Ludwig (#7) has been chosen by Forrest J. Ackerman for his anthology MR. SCIENCE FICTION SELECTS to be published first England and then over here. And "Gone to the Dogma" by Joe Gibson

(#8) will be reprinted in Spaceway.

RAY SCHAFFER, JR .: In regards to the present wave of censoring and destroying comic books that is sweeping the land. Now I for one am no lover of comics (with perhaps MAD being the exception), but for the love of me I can't see any significant social gains resulting from this business of censoring/destroying these (so-called) evil breedin' comics. Maybe some of the comics are rock-bottom in the eyes of good literature lovers; maybe some of them are miserable trash, as the PTA has depicted them. But to remove them from the newsstands and burn them-for me, this is too much, for the action endangers our freedom of speech and press privilege. If we are to ban, burn and censor certain comics because a small minority protest, then what is to happen to the other questionable publications that litter the newsstands today, namely, nude photography mags, horoscopes, pocket novels, etc.? And if the above are then censored and baned, then it only stands to reason that a large percentage of our TV and movie thrillers must also go. After all, they stir the imagination, and we don't want a bunch of characters lousing up our American way of life by using their ability to do actual thinking, now do we? It seems to me that if we let this banning business get a foot hold in American thought, it might become impossible to stop the process, and before we know it, only Pogo will be left. But walt-Pogo is fantasy. Yep, Pogo must go. Sorry, Walt, you're a demoralizer. You're contaminating the minds of children with your utterly fantastic plots. FAHRENHEIT 451 may be closer than we think ... The PTA and other numerous investigating committees claim that horror and crime comics are bad for the mental development of a child into a good, clean and moral citizen. The comics, supposedly, contribute to juvenile delinquency. Well, perhaps, but how can one prove this? The answer is quite obvious—one cannot, for unless we isolate several children in a psychologist's laboratory for a long period of time, which is beyond the realms of possibility, such a goal is impossible of achievement. This nation's outstanding psychologists claim that horror and crime comics only have an effect upon children who are already maladjusted,



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——THE SIGN OF THE CENTAUR PRESS——

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before they ever started reading the comics. As far as a child becoming maladjusted solely through the reading of crime am horror comics, this has never been proven conclusively, and never will be proven, unless some parents offer the lives of their children to medical science, which would be placing them under psychological observation for a number of years under absolute seclusion Granted that many who are maladjusted do read comics quite extensively, but they were maladjusted before they ever indulged in the pastime For any child who becomes a delinquent due to reading comics undoubtedly has a screw loose to begin with. And yet, the lovers of good, clean literature insist on abolishing all the filthy comics that litter the newsstands so as to protect the minds of their children from evil and sin... I feel that we should bear one important point in mind when the censoring and burning of comics is involved -years of research and study have proven that a child maladiusted in early life will also be maladjusted in later life. He/she won't change. If not exposed to comics or other juvenile social evils when in their adolescence, they will surely encounter adult social evils when they reach the hard, cold years of maturity. Taking a comic away from a maladjusted child will not cure his sickness. In later life he/she will continue to exist in the same sickly mental state. Likewise, the banning of "bad" adult literature won't relieve a neurotic adult of his troubles. Some of the comics have practically nil value, yes, but the banning of the comics is even a worse evil, for it endangers the freedom of speech, press and thought. But perhaps you're one of those individuals who doesn't give a damn about the whole state of affairs. Then I suggest you attend one of these community burnings, if at all possible, and watch all those evil breedin' comics being thrown onto that glorious and beautiful bonfire. And before you'll be aware of it, because of your dumbstruck fascination, that fire will spread and spread. and you'll be engulfed in it.

((Get a foot hold? Censorship already has a foot hold in this country. Comic book censorship is an actuality. If you go down to the newsstands and pick up a comic book-almost any comic book -you will be reading censored material. That comic book will have been censored, in the manner I have described before, by a very few individuals belonging to the Comics Code Authority. But in New York they're about to go one better. The Fitzpatrick Bill has been unanimously passed by the State Legislature and now needs only the governor's signature to make it law. I quote from the April 2 issue of Publishers' Weekly, which in turn quotes the bill: "The bill would make it a misdemeanor to publish or distribute for resale any comic magazine the title of which contains the words or the publish or distribute for resale any comic magazine the title of which contains the words or the publish of distribute for resale any comic magazine the title of which contains the words or the publish of distribute for resale any comic magazine the title of which contains the words or the publish of which is devoted to crime, sex, horror or terror or the content of which is devoted to or principally made of pictures or accounts of methods of crime, of illicit sex, horror, terror, physical torture, brutality physical violence. The following section concerns paperbound books: 'A person who willfully or knowingly sells, lends, gives away, shows, advertises for sale or distributes commercially to any person under the age of 18 years or has in his possession with intent to give, lend, show, sell, distribute commercially, or otherwise offer for sale or commercial distribution to any individual under the age of 18 years any pornographic motion picture; vidual under the age of 18 years any pornographic motion picture; or any still picture or photograph or any book, pocket book, phamphlet or magazine the cover or content of which exploits is devoted to, or is principally made up of descriptions of illicit sex or sexual immorality or which is obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, indecent or disgusting, or which consists of pictures of mude or partially de-nuded figures, posed or presented in a manner to provoke or arouse lust or passion or to exploit sex, lust or perversion for commercial gain or any article or instrument of indecent or immoral use shall be guilty of a misdemeanor' (italics added)." The law covers practically everything—including most of the great literature and painting. What, for instance, is included in the words "horror, terror, disgusting, obscene, presented in a manner to provoke or arcuse lust"? And the basis of this bill is as rediculous as the bill itself. One of the promoters of the bill (it may have been Fitzpatrick, I've lost the newspaper clipping) said that he was backing it because (and I quote) he "believed" that there was "something in comics that caused juvenile delinquency". (Italics mine.) He believed that there was something. He didn't know that such-and-such in comics caused juvenile delinquency. He was merely of the opinion that comics caused juvenile crime. And on the basis of this he wishes to censor and to ban and to dictate. So you see, Ray, it's strong, and it's getting stronger...It's nice to once in awhile find someone who agrees with your observations, but you stop and ponder: in all this world there is no one so alone as you. You try to communicate but there is always a gulf between you and others. But sometimes you wonder: is the gulf real or is it of my own making?))

ROBERT BLOCH: You will find we are in agreement on this Commercialism-Science kick. I tend to regard this as the Age of the Consumer, in which a person attains status only by virtue of what and how much he is able to buy. A non-consumer is a schmoe...Might be that some day you'll be able to find such disquisitions set forth at greater length in some of my writing—it is rather ironically amusing that I am constantly showing such material into my booklength jobs and constantly having it deleted by the editors. About the only short carrying a "message" is my recent one in the March Amazing. A small fragment remains in the last section of the Lion pocketbook THE KIDNAPER, although the major part was cut out. At present I'm working on another novel in which the so-called philosophic asides are almost an integral part of the book. I suspect that if whoever sees it can't find a way of cutting it, they'll reject the whole thing. People don't want to be preached at: they

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145.HORROR ON THE ASTEROID-Hamilton-3.00
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BOOKS POST PAID from:

Russell W. Brickell Box 823 McCloud, California

merely want to be flattered and reassured ... Crusading is an unrewarding business per se: study the actual "crusades" and see what happened to the earnest ones as contrasted to the merchants, politicians, and self-aggrandizing adventurers who profited therefrom. And then consider the final lesson—the crusades failed to accomplish their purpose. No, I'd say you can't win. But you can try. And I don't think it constitutes rebellion: since who arbitrarily invested the status quo with authority over anyone? I think the trick is to adapt, without necessarily conforming. And to do so without inner conflict. That's the hard part... In s. f. you'll see terrific veneration for the status quo under thin disguises: Space Corps are usually a thin adaptation of Annapolis-West Point and G-Man schooling and standards. "Free enterprise" is envisioned as being conducted on a cosmic scale, but the logical quest is still for the ever-loving fast buck; medical and psychiatric and psychological conditioning techniques, however glorified, have as their goal the conformity of the individual. And this is have as their goal the conformity of the individual. And this is the kind of s.f. that has the greatest general appeal, for obvious reasons. I have read hundreds of yarns which, when boiled down, did nothing except "prove" that Discipline is Important, that Loyalty Comes First, that Love and Self-Sacrifice Are Noble, that Authority May Sound Tough But Really Knows What Is Pest, etc. And that, of course, is why Bradbury has tough sledding with a certain segment. He questions Authority. So the ideological warfare goes on...Not that I'm agin the good things of life—I am a born lux-problemed but I dedenlose the means of certains them and certain ury-hound—but I do deplore the means of getting them, and certain defensive attitudes which have sprung up to justify those means. And I shudder when I see so many people, who I consider to be intelligent in other respects, sincerely and whole-heartedly paying allegiance to precepts which have always since time began led only to war and social rivalry-hostility-divisibility which is in itself a form of war. On the other hand, blessed are the peace makers for they shall inherit the earth. About six feet of it, to be exact.

((If momma doesn't slap your little butt, the kids down the block take your marbles away from you.))

JANE SMITH: Thanks for the latest issue of INSIDE. It was very interesting, expecially Joe Gibson's "Gone to the Dogma" and William Freeman's estimation of that abomination Imagination. Hamling's answer was about like his editing, full of holes. Imagination is the only mag going that makes Planet look like literature.

A VERY LATE REVIEW: BUT THAT'S UNPRINTABLE by Dave Breger (Bantam, pp. 149, 25¢) contains 135 taboo cartoons together with text explaining what the taboos are, why they are, and where they are. Interesting. However, Mr. Breger makes one statement in his section on children with which I must take acception: "...when some wretched things called 'comics' are rightfully attacked everything called 'comics' becomes an innocent victim." His defense in this book is only on behalf of the "funny" cartoons. But, Mr. Breger, isn't the attitude you've expressed here characteristic of those you are berating?—when someone attacks your profession it's not fair, but as long as they concentrate on the other guy it's all right. I'm all for you in your desire for less taboos in cartoons—but I'm also of the opinion that all forms of censorship (other than the present legal ones against obscenity) are equally beinous.

There is nothing to say when a man dies except that he is dead. If you feel that you should say something, you should have said it before he died. His ideas, his creations—those are a different matter. But your flowers, your tears, your kind and noble words—they are for the sake of appearances.

The Story of the Future

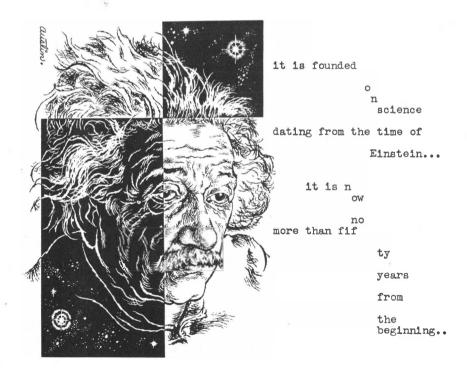
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morris scott dollens
jon arfstrom
naaman peterson
jack gaugan









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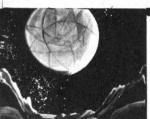
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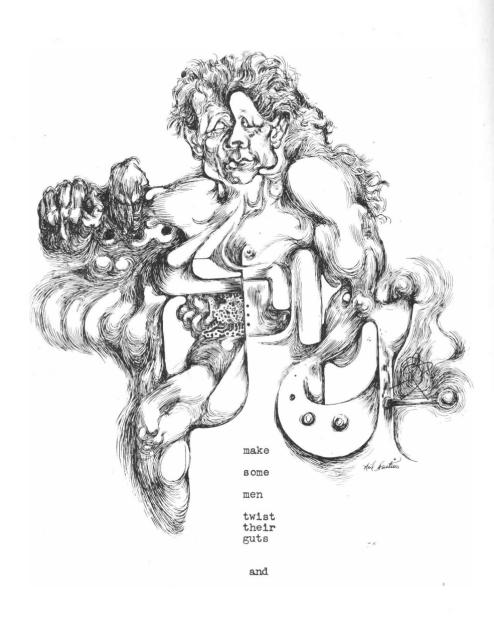
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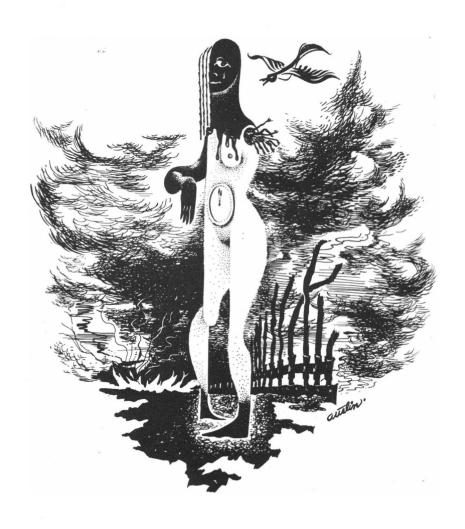


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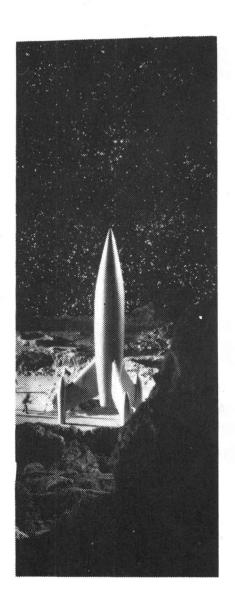


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or dreams may come to pass



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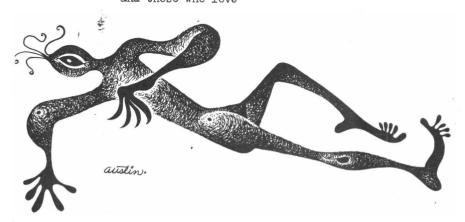
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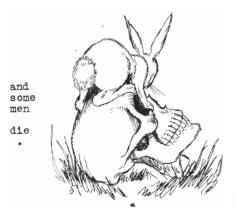
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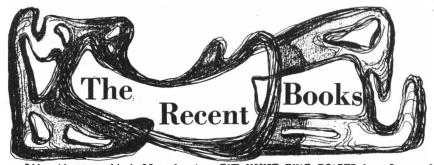
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Like the war it tells about, THE MOUSE THAT ROARED by Leonard Wibberley (Little, Brown, pp 280, \$3.50) is something of a sleeper. The publishers didn't send us a review copy—probably because they weren't aware that they'd published a fine tale of real science fiction. And the Duchy of Grand Fenwick had a hell of a time getting anyone to take their war seriously. Nevertheless, in 1956, the U.S. was invaded by an expeditionary force and unquestionably defeated by Grand Fenwick (pop. approx. 6000). So small a country must be very powerful or possess amazing new weapons? Well, no. They were virtually bankrupt when war was declared and they fought it with 14th century weapons. But let me begin, as the saying

goes, at the beginning.

Geographically, Grand Fenwick is a bit of land three miles by five entirely bounded by Southern France. (How that came about you may discover by reading the book.) Its principal source of income is from the export of a fine wine. But times were hard, in 1956, and the Grand Fenwickians thought of several schemes by which they might obtain money from the U.S. They considered starting a Communist movement with the thought that U.S. funds would be forthcoming to defeat it. That plan was abandoned as being dishonorable. In fact, there is only one honorable way to force one nation to give money to another: war. As the Count of Mountjoy put it, "We declare war on Monday, are vanquished Tuesday, and rehabiliated beyond our wildest dreams by Friday night." But such a mock war was not to be.

For, although a very honorable reason for declaring war existed (a California winery was bottling a local wine with the Grand Fenwick label), the formal declaration of war, submitted to the U.S. State Dept., was thought to be a joke and was misplaced by the government clerk who received it. Well, if their declaration of war was not even acknowledged, national honor demanded that Grand Fenwick invade the U.S., which they did—taking a bus to Marseilles, and via chartered brig to New York. But unfortunately that city was conducting an all-out air-raid practice, and there was no one on the streets to offer resistance to—or even to see—the mail-clad archers. A highly ignominious situation, indeed! And really a most unsporting way to treat an armed force that had landed with sincere intent to do battle over an issue of honor. So the archers reboarded their brig and returned home in triumph.

Oh, yes, they'd won the war. A newspaper item had led them to Columbia University and a Dr. Kokinta—inventor and possessor of the only specimen of the Q-bomb. Dr. Kokintz and Q-bomb were taken prisoner to Grand Fenwick. And this Q-bomb was quite a potent little gadget. Anyway, all the rest of the world was thereafter muchly intimidated by Grand Fenwick. The power politics in a microcosm which follow are quite as delightful as the half of the book I've described. (This book was published in Britain with the not

inappropriate title of THE WRATH OF GRAPES.)

An even better book (one of greater depth, anyway) about an improbable war is the paperbound reprint of Karel Capek's 1937 classic, WAR WITH THE NEWTS (Bantam Books, pp 234, 35¢). This, a long-time favorite of mine, suffered nothing in being reread. With mas-

terful depiction of characters and situations, Capek tells of lone small colony of intelligent giant newts. Their numbers and development have been restricted by sharks. Pearl divers, also intimidated by the sharks, begin trading knives to the newts for pearls, and the natural balance is upset. The prolific, capable newts are discovered by industrialists and exploited on a worldwide scale, whence derives the situation leading to the war.

TIMELINER by Charles Eric Maine (Rinehart, pp 249, \$2.75) is an undistinguished tale of a time-traveller who returns to his starting point by way of the far future. He jumps in time by dying and possessing the bodies of individuals of future times, over which

he has no choice of selection.

Gnome has published two anthologies, each containing enough good stories to recommend it: ALL ABOUT THE FUTURE, edited by Martin Greenberg (pp 374, \$3.50), and SCIENCE FICTION TERROR TALES edited by Groff Conklin (pp 262, \$3.50). The latter title is also available in a 25¢ paperbound Pocket Book edition. Greenberg has drawn chiefly from Astounding and Galaxy of 1952-54. including stories by Pohl, Anderson, Sturgeon, Knight, Jameson, and Miller; and (especially recommended) Heinlein's non-fiction prophecy, "Where To?" and Edward Wellen's "Excerpts From Encyclopedia of Galactic Culture", incorporating "Origins of Galactic Etiquette, Law, Slang, and Medicine". These last are great fun. In earlier times, they might have appeared in Campbell's "Probability Zero" dept .- and they are loaded with ideas that would have been enthusiastically welcomed by the editor of S. F. Advertiser's ill-fated "Spec. Dept."

If Conklin's title alarms you as, at first, it did me, you may be reassured by Conklin's name as editor. Unlike the misrepresentations we've seen in the past, these stories, which create a mood of terror, are science fiction. There are 15 of them, from a variety of sources, by Oliver, Heinlein, Leinster, Boucher, Asimov, Sturgeon, Sheckley, Brown, Bradbury, etc. Although the devices of fear represented here are many, they avoid the more childish; the authors, that is, do not attempt to scare you silly with descriptions of BEMs, nor do they employ the "weird" story trick of hinting at the Indescribable, then bare-facedly telling you it's terrifying. In general, these stories express terror through situations rather than objects—and do it variously through a considerable range of subtlety. If you don't expect the "ghost story" type of terror, if you grant that terror has its intellectual as well as its emotional side, this volume should, on the whole, not disap-

point you.

A good general discussion of its subject that is also with specific data is DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDED MISSILE by Kenneth W. Gatland (Philosophical Library, second edition, 1954, pp 292, \$4.75). The blurb says "This edition has been completely revised and greatly enlarged to include several new chapters. The author is a founder-member of the British Interplanetary Society. Chapters begin with "Propulsion" (with semi-technical descriptions of power plants) and "Research and Development", and end with "Space-Satellite Vehicles" and "Interplanetary Flight". The book contains over 100 photos and drawings and three appendices: "Telemetering Systems": photographs rendered to scale for comparison of "notable missiles"; and a 26 page "Table of Significant Powered Missiles" which is handy as a reference for comparing sizes, ranges, thrusts, etc., of "140 powered rockets from eight countries". This reviewer, who is not inexperienced at missile design and testing, discovered no significant inaccuracy.

-George D. Martindale

WHO'S WHO IN OZ by Jack Snow. The Reilly & Lee Company, Chicago, 1954. Illustrated, 277 pp, \$3.75.

I suppose you, like me, were raised with the Oz books. Christmas just wasn't Christmas, without a new Oz book under the tree. And even when we were grown up, had "put away childish things" and gone out into the world, memories of that most famous of all Fairylands lingered on. If so—well, you have a delightful treat in store. For the first Oz book in four years has just been published.

Jack Snow, sometime shortstoryist for the fantasy pulps, himself author of the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth Oz books, has

Jack Snow, sometime shortstoryist for the fantasy pulps, himself author of the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth Oz books, has compiled a mammoth Encyclopedia of Oz. It lists alphabetically all of the beloved Oz characters, places and so on, culled from the entire series—from the A-B-Sea Serpent in ROYAL BOOK OF CZ clean through the alphabet to Zunda in YELLOW KNIGHT. In all, six hundred and fifty different entries! Besides this there is 1) an introduction by Snow, in which he debates the origin of the word "Oz", 2) a list of the complete series by volume, giving a thumbnail sketch of the plot, name of author and illustrator, and date of first edition, 3) lengthy biographical sketches of all the Oz writers (Baum, Thompson, Neill, Snow and Cosgrove) and artists (Denslow, Neill, Dramer and Dirk).

The book is attractively bound in yellow cloth, with jacket in color by John R. Neill. It has around five hundred illustrations by the above named artists (including a simply gorgeous double-page drawing used as title page), and—wonder of wonders—the end-papers are an authentic and quite detailed map of Oz, showing its location in relation to the other Fairylands bordering the Deadly Desert, such as Ix, the Rose Kingdom, the Land of Ev, Rinkitink, Merryland and the Dominions of the Gnome King. This is something dyed-in-the-wool Oz fans have been looking forward to for a half-

century.

This, the fortieth and last of the Oz books, is a fitting and thouroughly delightful way to end the series. Both Mr. Snow and his publishers are to be complimented. However, in certain ways the book seems incomplete. One could desire, for instance, a section reprinting stills from the various Oz movies and photos from the play versions; pictures of Mr. Baum and his continuators; and perhaps a serious look at the Oz series as a contribution to the literature of childhood.

Moreover, the scholar and collector of Oziana will search this book in vain for any mention of such Oz-enigmas as the rare LAUGH-ING DRAGON OF OZ (Whitman Publishers, 1934), the Oz-in-comic-stripform as it appeared in Heroic Comics, or the short lived Oz radio

program of the thirties.

With all its shortcomings, however, WHO'S WHO IN OZ still serves to underline and emphasize this reviewer's lifelong opinion: that L. Frank Baum was the greatest writer of children's fantasy since the death of Hans Christian Andersen, and the Oz books the very finest series of children's books in the history of literature.

—Lin Carter

The June issue of If is here for review so, briefly, the stories: "The Strangers" by Budrys (a novelette) was impressive—certainly entertaining. Budrys does very well with people so that, sometimes, they come out people. But in this case they don't, the majority of the time, imerge from the painted backdrop; and the story is shallow—not that a lot of thought and observation weren't necessary for its writing. But all of Budrys' thought, planning, observation of people and imagination were only a framework—he failed to build the house and, more important, he failed to put anything in it. "Bright Islands" by Riley was a perpetration of false emotions for the purpose of supporting an ideal. The rest of the stories were incidental, with the exception of "The Twilight Years" by the Drussais which, though disjointed, was very good. The magazine: Recommended as one of the better s.f. magazines.

—Ron Smith



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WARREN DUNN 4408 B Canton Ave. Lubbock, Texas



Dear Bill:

there comes a time in the affairs of writers when they must make a stand must sav: this I believe and this is right and, as is the legacy of all artists, they must fight-for they must see and tell of what they see and what they see is not always nice it is sometimes frightening and indeed the smile of the sphinx may hide the utmost uglinessand a pretty girl on a flashy cover may likewise cover decadence perhaps it is true that an artist must believe he is on the right side of truth: but never that truth is on the right side of him I laugh at what we try to be am uplifted by what we really are and shudder at what we pretend to be and what we hide from silently quietly crying shuddering but as I said: they must make a stand for the writer's purpose is (if you will forgive me) encouraging thought is communication of his ideals of his eyes' beauty of his idea of truth: a writer cannot write but that he have a reason deep and terrible and important and foolish: he sees a vision and he must create that vision see in front of him molded from his hands what he had before seen in his mind only and of course art does not usually make money: but if we have created a man, an ideal, if we have walked a step in the grey room and have lost a fortune we can say one thing at least: we fought. And it is a bloody fight.



Do you know the name of one of the most popular science fiction magazines ever published?

You won't believe me.

The digest Fantastic. It wasn't popular with fans, but since when did the opinions of fans make that much difference? We aren't so goddam important.

And circulation figures aren't the keystone either, but in this case they don't need to be avoided. I understand <u>Fantastic</u> was doing pretty well there for awhile (just not well enough to support the fantastic production costs). However something that is popular is something that is well liked by the people who read it taste it or see it or what have you).

And it is my opinion that Fantastic was popular with the majority of the people who read it—that its subsequent decline has been
because of the item mentioned above (is too high production costs))
coupled with the limited appeal of science fiction—even Browne's

brand of science fiction.

And even if it wasn't, it should have been.

And if it wasn't it was because the people toward which it was slanted didn't happen to pick it up off the stands.

And it should have been because it was a fine magazine.

And it is my contention that the quality was two-fold: stories, and editorial ideas.
We'll start with the stories.

The issues that I'm including in these statements are the first

six. After that came the decline.

The first issue was not the best as far as stories go, but there were some good ones. And, most important of all, I think, there weren't any bad ones (in fact, there wasn't a "stinker" in any of these six I'm reviewing) and differing tastes, intelligences, and opinions taken into concideration each one would probably be concidered best in different corners.

SIX AND TEN WERE JOHNNY by Walter Miller, Jr., was a story would have expected to see in Astounding. It posed a problem: A spaceship is surveying a planet and a crew is sent down to make tests and what have you and they find Johnny-who tells his story of being ship wrecked. Then people begin to disappear. Talking over the "ship to shore" communication system, the leader of the party begins to "forget" certain members of the crew—to him they were never there and when those on the ship insist they were he tells them theyre crazy. It becomes evident that soon everybody is going to disappear and that no one has any intention of coming back to the ship. The problem: How to get them back. They don't know-and

their final solution is far from satisfactory.

THE RUNAWAY by Louise Outlaw and THE OPAL NECKLACE by Kris Neville were very good pieces of writing; the latter a very good piece of fantasy. Both of them concerned psychological conflicts and shouldn't stories, including science fiction, usually be about people (you "oh, for the old days" boys be damned). The first employs a concept of fate - when we don't do what we were meant to do in childhood there is a part of us always wanting to go back along that other time track, a conflict within us, a part of us trying to break free, and so you never quite grow up until you do. May's trouble was that she could see the childhood part straining out of her husband's shoulders, waving, groping, seeking to fulfill itself. And May thought she was crazy until the psychologist told her she was crazy-then she knew better. In the end her husband finishes his boyhood by doing what he had failed to do-what was meant to do. This is an occult idea, but not unworthy. It is an idea.

finishes his boyhood by doing what he had failed to do-what was meant to do. This is an occult idea, but not unworthy. It is an idea.

As a side note I would like to mention an article in the February PEON by Sam Sackett, in which he says the important thing in s. f. is that, more than any other popular form of literature (discounting the literary journals), here we are concerned with ideas. This is the important ingredient of s.f. -- not science, but ideas. Here you can say things, sometimes things you aren't normally supposed to say—in the popular magazines you say the things you are supposed to say. Period. And you never concern yourself with ideas. A s.f. story is hardly ever a fine piece of writing—but it quite often concerns itself with idea, with thought. But in THE OPAL NECKLACE we have an exception.

This is a fine

piece of writing; a fine, believable, psychological horror.
FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE by Sam Martinez is good satire. It points out that sometimes the "believers" believe so hard they forget what they're believing in and concern themselves merely with the rituals. We must convert, we must cleanse -- but who among the converters and the cleansers takes the time to understand and to live the

philosophy of Christ?

THE SMILE was far from Bradbury's best-but here we have s.f., Bradbury critics to the contrary. We're running pell mell toward an atomic bomb crater and pretty soon we're going to find our feet on empty air—a long long fall and splash! In THE SMILE we've already done so—and isn't it human nature to blame somebody or something for failure? Science and Technology and Art-Culturebrought about the downfall of course. It wasn't us—it wasn't because we grabbed at "security" with all the gusto of drowning rats -blind rats, lost rats. It was because culture was intrinsically at fault -- but, in the story, we overlook the fact that we are intrinsically culture. We, speaking for the Mass, aren't responsible for those things that are the prophets of culture, true. We don't write Literature, we aren't responsible for Art, nor for "scientific progress". But, to misquote an old axiom, Culture is as good or as bad as the people who make up the society which makes use of the culture. If Science causes our destruction—as the scientists will tell you—it's not Science's fault. It's our fault because we misused it. That's Bradbury's prime message—the misuse, the abuse of Science—and perhaps you're tired of hearing it. But, obviously, no one of impertance has heard it. At least no one is doing thing about it. We grow more commercial and more witless every day. So as long as it needs to be said, I won't complain at Bradbury's repetitions.

And I have a word for Bradbury's critics. I rather feel that most of you, when you complain about his "repeating the same story over and over", are putting up a defense because you haven't really heard him the first time. Perhaps not-only you know how much you

Now we come to the second issue. THE SIN OF HYACINTH PEUCH was of outstanding quality. A fine piece of writing by Eric Frank Russell, it is a tale, told quite well, of an idiot. And lest it be thought that this is meant to reflect an opinion of life let hastily ammend that it is.

Other good stories in the issue: ANGELS IN THE JETS by Bixby

and I'M LOOKING FOR JEFF by Leiber.

But the best, the decanter of red wine after a full meal, was MIRIAM by Truman Capote. Now what objection could you have to this story except that you don't like literature? Are you, a science fiction fan, betrayed by a sign of quality? Poisoned, because this is not science fiction, nor even fantasy? Here you are reading a science fiction magazine and you come upon a story by one of the best of modern writers—a story of twisted human emotions, and our fight against ourselves—a real story—and what do you do? You groan. Because this is not science fiction. Am I then to suppose that you read science fiction to escape, and a story that needs some thought to understand is to you a thorn in the side? I don't suppose that of most of you because as I've said I think Fantastic was a popular magazine, but some of you are no doubt the idiots your ravings in various fanzines indicate you to be. You see, although you didn't know it, there is something else besides science fiction. There is other writing that is far more worthwhile, far better written, than the sweeping novels of interplanetary war you so often label as "Classic" in your bi-monthly letter to your favorite magazine. And MIRIAM is an example of the best of that "other writing".

In number three the worthwhile stories were two in number—TO FIT THE CRIME by Matheson and THE MOON OF MONTEZUMA by Woolrich.

In number four MAD HOUSE by Matheson, THE MAN WITH THE FINE

MIND by Neville.

and THE WORLD IS SO PEOPLE by Evans, which again, lest we stray too far from the track, was fine science fiction. It is social-religious commentary, and it is not with out very obvious foundation. It too concerns the misuse of science and extrapolates to an end, that in my own opinion, is far more likely than Bradbury's. I do not forsee the end of the world by atomic distruction, nor even the collapse of the American society due to an atomic war. I do however forsee an end to American society by the simple means of putting itself to sleep. By gourging itself on luxury until there is no more luxury and no more individuals to appreciate them (you see, luxuries are not enjoyed by those who have them, but by those who have so few of them that simple things are luxuries, and by individuals who can place them in their proper perspective). Perhaps Evans exagerates the inevitable point a bit, and also perhaps not. Perhaps, like the Romans, we shall find in time that too many grapes produce one hell of a headache.

grapes produce one hell of a headache.

And in number five we have the Fantastic masterpieces—THE THIRD GUEST by B. Travan and ROOT OF EVIL by Shirley Jackson. I won't presume to say much about these stories because whatever I

should say, they ve said it much better.

Of course I could, for instance, involve myself in pages of discussion concerning ROOT OF EVIL and its criticism of Capitalism and free enterprize (they are not beyond criticising, you know) but that would get me on a tangent that strays too far from our purpose: to show why Fantastic was a popular magazine. I recommend, with a suggestion of purple adjectives, that you read the story if you haven't.

And of course I could write a book about THE THIRD GUEST.

Number six had two very excellent stories, THE ROLLER COASTER, for one, by Bester. A nice psychological horror concerning people of the future who come back to experience the thrills of "Passion. Emotion. Screams and shrieks. Loving and hating and tearing and killing." for the same reason we enjoy the primordial excitement, the illusion of danger, of our monument to "the good old days"—the roller coaster.

And ROOM WITH A VIEW by Esther Carlson. Not, and it will probably be a shock, science fiction. No. Not even fantasy. Just a story about a guy like hundreds of other guys—like you maybe, and maybe like me although I shall have to wait a few years to find out—who believes himself an artist, but who is not an artist. You know the story about how artists suffer—other people suffer too. Especially people full of dreams and ambitions and loneliness, but no talent. And for every Joyce, how many people suffer as much and are never heard of—who struggle to create and become immortal and succeed only in wrapping themselves in a grey wrapping of a world of their own making—a world, a lonely world, a solitary world, dirty and empty, tortured and horrible, a world, where they are great? There is more suffering in the world than there are happy

endings—and endings infinitely more happy than ever dreamed of in the Post's philosophy. At least Joyce had his reward. He wrote ULYSSES.

But there I go misquoting again—and without credit at that.

Now I have listed 18 stories in six issues that were either very good, excellent or outstanding. Taste, intelligence, and fear-of-self vary—so will the opinions of the stories in Fantastic.



Doin the Zombo

But, even by my strict standards (as outlined in #7, without alteration). I would hesitate to label any of the stories in these issues as lousy. Some of them weren't good, some of them were experiments that failed (i.e. THE OPENER OF THE CRYPT by Jakes), some of them could be condemned by one set of rules, some by another. But none of them were completely hopeless, if only for the writing—for the writing was always good, when you concider the fact that it was appearing in a science fiction magazine.

So, at least to my own satisfaction, something has been established: Fantastic was of acceptable quality in the way of stories in its first six issues—it failed to hit rock bottom very many times, and sometimes it hit a peak rarely reached before in the s. f. field. Most of these "peak" stories were not, however, science fiction. And you should not at all be surprised.

Merely examine the obvious—the writers of those particular stories were people who could write.

Now that we have established our first critique of quality,

let's go on to the second: editorial ideas.

Let's hop back to the first issue and try to divine what Browne was trying to accomplish. First glance at the contents page might lead you to the conclusion that it was just another first issue—crammed with the biggest names and the best stories (determined by the editor's faste, bias, and supposed knowledge of the field) obtainable by so much money (determined by the publisher): Bradbury, Asimov, Miller, Neville, Gold, and Fairman. But there are two names, one of them on the cover, that spell out a difference: Raymond Chandler and Louise Outlaw. Raymond Chandler writes detective stories, and the story in this issue is no exception, although it makes a feeble pretence at fantasy. Louise Outlaw is a slick writer, and this story (again no exception) is an off-trail piece, not really belonging in a fantasy magazine. Not in the Weird Tales tradition at all.

So what's the world coming to? Well, Browne had an idea. Something he should be praised rather than condemned for—ideas are hard come by and bloodily fought for. Browne fought. And lost.

What was his idea? Perhaps it can be summed up thusly: Bring readers outside of s.f. into the field by printing stories of the type and by the authors with which they are familiar. At least that's the version I've heard expounded most often. But Browne's idea could have been this: Expand s. f. out to meet other fields, whereby you have a merging, and everybody's happy. If Browne's intention was the first, I think his idea was a few degrees above impossible of succeeding. If it was the second, he had a chance. If it was the second (and I believe it was), why did he fail?

First let's demonstrate how this idea worked a bit more.

The second issue was more elaborate and more expensive, with the addition of color. In this issue we have MAN IN THE DARK, a mystery that makes absolutely no pretense at being a fantasy. have MIRIAM from Mademoiselle. We have THE TELL-TAIE HEART poor choice because too many have read it). We have a portfolio of drawings by Kley (truly masterpieces). And we also have lots of

sex. We stir well, put on to boil...
and what do we come up with? A portion of the magazine to satisfy mystery fans. A portion to satisfy those more interested in literature and good story telling. A fantasy by Poe because great many people have read Poe, a great many people like Poe, and maybe some of them will be entired into buying the magazine on the assumption that "there are more stories like Poe's in here?" We have art, real art, for people who can appreciate things other than their own navels. And we have sex for everybody. (And you "sex doesn't belong in science fiction" boys, some of you, have the right idea. Sex for sex's sake doesn't tend to make a good story, because the writer is writing for money solely, and when you don't give a damn but that you make money, you don't write good science fiction. You don't write good fiction. But sex for life's sake is a different matter—we need less "brains" in s.f. and more heart. But commercial sex does make money, because most people either don't have enough of it or have too much of it don't know what to do with what they've got, and so being confused and socially contained they go elsewhere to find satisfaction. They read stories and imagine themselves in the roles of the characters and why! everything's fine. Until they put the book down and go to bed ...) Of course we also have three science fiction stories, two fantasies and one more murder yarn disguised as s.f.

With the third issue. Browne played with all cards wild and came up with five aces. His ace in the hole, of course, was THE VEILED WOMAN by Mickey Spillane. You say Spillane's a lousy writer? I won't argue with that, although he does much better than some. You further put forth that THE VEILED WOMAN was lousy science fiction, was not actually science fiction and, in fact, was lousy fiction, period? Perhaps you're right. But Spillane found something. In his writing you find that roller coaster mentioned awhile back. Consequently, since we are all children at heart, and therefore savages, Spillane sells. He sells real good. Lotsa people read him. So run a Spillane story in <u>Fantastic</u> and lots people are going to buy it—and I'll wager lots people did—and maybe you'll be able to hang on to enough of them after they see what this s.f. is all about to support regular issues of the magazine. It's a gamble,

but it's a good one.

Of course in the same issue we have THE CELESTRIAL OMNIBUS by Forester, which I doubt would appeal to many Spillane fans. I doubt that Poe would appeal to many either. In fact, I'm afraid nothing in the issue would likely appeal to Spillane fans except the Spillane story. And I'm absolutely certain the Spillane story wouldn't

appeal to s.f. readers.

Browne should have left Spillane out, you So what went wrong? say? Oh no, I don't think so at all. I think it was a good idea—
he should have done that part of it just like he did. It's the
rest of the contents—the s.f. and fantasy—that was the mistake! Obviously, if you're going to increase circulation substantially you've got to appeal to other people besides regular s.f. readers. Surely you'll agree that there aren't enough of the latter to support a magazine comfortably, especially one as expensive as Fantastic — hell, you'll have to agree, because that's the way it is. So Browne wanted to please other readers.

If he was going to do that he should have been more subtle-he should have printed more of the Spillane type fiction (preferably of a higher caliber such as Manhunt does), at the same time keeping a well rounded variety. And then he should have slipped the good s.f. in quietly, and the good literature (THE THIRD GUEST, MIRIAM, ROOT OF EVIL) in sparsely. Most important of all: he shouldn't have limited himself to s.f. as much as he did. Because no matter what it's form s.f. just doesn't have the appeal. In other words, <u>Fantastic</u> should have been a low-brow publication with the purpose of instructing it's readers. The sex magazines that feed the public a food to satisfy an ever present appetite tend to degrade the public taste rather than improve it and the literary magazines that present chunk after chunk of esoteric literature with no attempt whatsoever at making it understandable to the uninformed are equally worthless. <u>Fantastic</u> could have been and should have been the compromise.

Another mistake was the title Fantastic is not likely to appeal to people who concider fantasy a nasty word, which is most people. And still another was the covers. The one on the third issue was appropriate enough. And the ones on four and six were artistically done. They were all, technically, of high quality. But they were not the type to appeal to most people, primarily for the same reason "fantasy" doesn't appeal to most people. No self-respecting conventional intellectual-moron under the control of society, who is pushed this way and that by social pressures, is going to read

fantasy if he knows it's fantasy before he buys it.

So if Browne wanted a magazine that would appeal to the general public, my only criticism is that he didn't go general enough. Perhaps he wanted to and couldn't—there are such things as publishers and they have to be consulted. Perhaps he was wary and wanted to go into the thing slowly, feel things out first. But he who hesitates doesn't raise circulation figures high enough, or

something like that.

But Browne did come close to doing what I've outlined above. I've pointed out what I thought were a few mistakes. There are probably others, and possibly my opinions wouldn't hold under actual battlefront conditions—on the newsstands. After all, I'm not an editor nor a publisher. I'm not on the inside—so I don't know all there is to know and I can only make general suggestions and

voice general opinions.

I do think Browne had a good idea though. And in trying to entice general readers he didn't just print crud like THE VEILED WOMAN. He printed good stories, non s. f. most of them, the field has seen little to compare with. He ran good covers and good artwork—with the use of color he tried to make it attractive and slick looking—the theory there being first impressions are always the best. You see, the reader doesn't know what the stories are like until he buys the magazine. And he's not going to buy the magazine—in a majority of cases—if it's not attractive, if it doesn't catch his eye and pull him in. If it doesn't have a nice appearance.

Browne tried other editorial ideas—the art portfolios, THE LIGHTHOUSE by Poe and Robert Bloch (mostly Bloch), THE OPENER OF THE CRYPT by Jakes (a sequel to THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO), the reprinting of "classic" stories (which in some cases were). And as I've pointed out—the bringing of names from other fields (Chandler, Outlaw, Capote, Spillane, Collier, Traven, Jackson, Rose,

Carlson) into the magazine.

These ideas, I repeat and repeat and repeat, are not intrinsically at fault. I have suggested why they did not succeed, and I've also suggested that there are probably other reasons. I have said that, probably, the main reason the idea didn't succeed was the

failure to disguise the s.f. content enough.

And because of these ideas I say <u>Fantastic</u> was popular—it appealed to people; to s. f. readers—not fans—but readers; to detective readers, sex readers, and just plain readers—people who like to read anything and everything as long as it is, to them, good. The general reader; the one who should have bought the maga-

zine. The one for whom it was intended.

And on the basis of this I wish to make two points: 1) Browne's idea could have been successful had it been handled differently. (2 Browne's idea was successful to a high degree. The Spillane issue. I propose, probably sold more copies than any other single issue of a s. f. magazine. If it didn't it came damn close. The other issues of the magazine probably had a high circulation—probably equal to the leaders in the field at that time, and possibly a little better.
So why has Browne given up and gone back to s.f. and appealing

to the fans like all respectable s.f. magazines should?

My friend, Browne didn't get stories from people like Spillane and Traven and some of the others for peanuts. He paid through the nose. He paid a hell of a lot for those covers. for the many spot illustrations, and for the color. In other words, plain and clear. Fantastic just cost too damn much. Even with the high circulation (for s.f. magazines) I've supposed it to have it didn't make enough to pay the production costs. And, finally, those production costs weren't warranted because <u>Fantastic</u> failed to rise above its companions, in size of circulation, far enough to reach the respectable standards of the average general magazine. So they dropped the production costs. They went back to s. f. And after that their circulation dropped—you can bet on that.

That's my opinion. I don't know that I'm right of course. But there's one man that does, if he would care to clear matters up one way or the other. Mr. Browne, am I right or have I got rocks

in my head?

As a final word, I would like to point something out to Bill Hamling, who was kind enough to answer my article last issue on Imagination. Bill, you might take Fantastic as an object lesson. although you did, in your article, accuse Browne's "literata" of being "more to the rococo than significant". Not simply because Browne succeeded in getting some top-notch stories for the magazine (more in six issues than you have had in 38) but because of the way Browne got them. Now you have different ideas of what constitutes a good s.f. story, and I rather think your ideas are bet-ter than Browne's, because I suspect that Browne doesn't like s.f. But, whatever your opinion as to what constitutes a good s. f. story, I still hold that you could get them. Browne got what he wanted by digging for them He didn't sit back on his fanny waiting for writers to send him stories—he went after them. He wrote let ters to authors, and he got results. You could do the same. And I think you would get results-if you wrote to writers, the ones you think are capable of what you want, and told them what you wanted. If you thought up some intelligent promotion ideas (your "pinup" covers are not cases in point—you have to respect your readers, Bill). Campbell does it - and the stories in Astounding are a damn sight better than the ones in Imagination.

It's true that your idea of s. f. doesn't jibe with Campbell's

either. But that doesn't matter a very good god damn.

And I think your main trouble right now is this: I got a very definite idea of what kind of story you wanted by reading your remarks in the letter column issue after issue. Your main message was: we want stories that entertain. (In the same breath you condemned such intellectually entertaining stories as REVOLT OF THE DEVIL STAR, which, the author reports, Palmer bought.) Well "entertainment" must have a different meaning to you than it does to most people. At least as I understand the common usage of the word it means formula. No thought, no ideas—formula. (Overlooking the fact that even a mathematical tretise is entertaining to some people.) And this idea I got of your editorial policy was the same and identical with the type of story that soon began to appear in Imagination. Couldn't it be that a lot of writers misinterpreted

you too and sent you what they thought you wanted -- formula, idea barren stories? I think that must be the answer because, although all the magazines do in almost every issue print at least one "stinker" everyone of those magazines has a higher average of quality than Imagination. I don't blame your taste in stories necessarily, nor do I propound to have a better one. I do blame it on your sitting back and waiting for good stories to come in rather than going after them, and the wrong impression you've given in the past.

I do admire you for not telling me to go to hell. Bill. but being the generous soul I am I have hereby given you another



It took me quite a few years, as a Consulting Industrial Engineer, to learn that the failure of any endeavor almost invariably came as a result of a point of view, a philosophy. Like others, at first, I could not see beyond the superficial excuses for failure in business—under financing, cut throat competition, excessive union demands, loading of key jobs with incompetent relatives, crooked partners, world conditions, the war in Nepal, the phase of the moon-anything except one's own fault.

Every man believes his point of view to be the right one, else he wouldn't cling to it. It is therefore almost impossible for him to see the movement of pattern from such cause to its inevitable effects. Many men literally prefer failure to a reexamination of the validity of their point of view. Men grow extraordinarily ingenious in pointing the finger elsewhere as reasons for their failure; and even after that inevitable failure has come about. they still can see no place where their convictions were wrong.

All this is stimulated by Bill Hamling's article, THEY DON'T HARDLY WRITE THEM NO MORE!, in the March issue of INSIDE. For in this article, without realizing what he has done, he has given the basic reasons why not only science fiction but all fiction has slumped in reader appeal, why the authors don't hardly ever write great stories no more, and how certain editorial points of view are choking and destroying the very thing they wish to advance-sci-

ence fiction.

In analyzing the pattern of inevitable failure which this editorial point of view is creating, I am making no personal attack upon Bill Hamling. Bill Hamling may personally be a very nice guy; I've never had any dealings with him, I don't like his magazine and therefore I don't try to write for it, I don't know the man at all. But I do know, only too well, the editorial philosophy which he represents in his article. Even when I quote directly from that article, again I am taking no personal potshots at Bill Hamling. I am using such a quote simply to show the inevitable results which stem from such points of view. It is of no consequence who holds to a philosophy, the importance lies in the philosophy and how wide spread its prevalence becomes. Philosophy creates civilizations, and philosophy destroys civilizations. Often it is the same philosophy which does both—for that which works well at one point

of time may be most destructive at another time.

Without any further repetition that this is not a personal attack, let us examine the first point. Didactically, positively, unequivocably, and with an attitude that there can be no argument about it, he states, "Science fiction—like all fiction—is not first intended to make one think, but to entertain as the escapist literature that it is."

Here we have the expression of one side of a schism which has existed as long as art itself. Down through the ages one faction has held that art is meant solely to entertain, the reflection of a culture. The other scism has held that the purpose of art is to provide nourishment for the growth of the human soul. Which philosophy is right? The history of literature answers us quickly.

The great literature, which has become classic, and the great ages of literature, have all stemmed from the latter point of view. The great writers, whose names are known throughout the world, had a mission to accomplish—they preached, they exhorted, they instructed, they sermonized, they flailed their audience with verbal clubs—and the audience loved it, and grew on it, and thrived on it.

Those editors and writers who select certain pieces of fiction from the classics and say that they are "pure entertainment" are taking them out of the context of their times. It is true that today we are not conscious of the "loaded messages" in such work, because we have adopted those points of view and accept them without question. But at the time they were written, they were far more than innocuous entertainment. Take Aesop and his fables. Surely no more innocent and "acceptable" thought could be found—yet he was put to death for his heresies:

Indeed the whole history of art, in all its forms, follows a similar pattern. Even today, in a decadent period of art, that art which is most fondly loved is that art which has a message to convey. And each time, down through history, when the art degenerated into nothing more than escapist entertainment, the peoples' inter-

est in art languished and died.

What makes a writer write? Certainly it isn't money; often he could make more money standing in the unemployment line. And it isn't fame, because he's a fool if he doesn't realize that almost any other phase of human endeavor brings him a greater chance for real fame than writing. A writer writes because he believes that he has something to say, something which needs to be said, something others will want to hear. He believes he has had a glimpse of some phase of the truth, and he wishes to communicate it to others. He is internally motivated by the same urge which drives a



scientist to slave over his laboratory table for untold years, with little reward and little recognition, because he believes he is on the trail of a truth which mankind should know.

To adopt an editorial attitude that the writer is nothing more, and can be nothing more, than a paid entertainer, whose sole purpose is to weave words in such a way that he can provide a few moments of light relaxation, is to strike at the very heart of what makes a writer tick in the first place, to set up a frustration within him which either dries him up altogether or turns him into a cynical craftsman who is simply out to earn a few bucks. To tell a given writer that, in spite of his personal ego, he really

doesn't have anything to say worth hearing is one thing; but to tell him that no writer should even try to say anything with mean-

ing is quite something else again.

Sure, I agree that a story should entertain-but whom? And on what mental level? The WIZARD OF OZ is superb entertainment-for a ten year old. And the most of us find entertainment in numerous levels, from the dirty story to the sublime contemplation of the A man can find a vast entertainment in a math formula, if he is equipped to follow its reasoning.

This is one of the most appaling, even frightening, things about the philosophy which Bill Hamling has expressed. It implies that thinking connot be considered entertaining. It implies there is no difference between the science fiction reader and the western pulp reader. It implies that the human being cannot evolve an intellectual capacity beyond that of a ten year old. It implies that thinking is and must remain an onerous chore, to be escaped at the earliest opportunity. This is a healthy attitude for the growth and development of great science fiction?!!!

I call attention to the already obvious consequences of this point of view that the writer is a paid entertainer and nothing more. Since this editorial view has become prevalent, the reading public has turned away, in great droves, from fiction entirely. The slick magazines, desperate at their unaccountable loss of circulation, replaced the story with a fact article—a sure admission that the reader wants something more rewarding than escape into light nothings. The motion picture holds its audience only by gadget trickery, and providing a cheap way for the family to get out of the house for a couple of hours, and a dark place where lovers can have some illusion of privacy. The pocket book market, which showed such a tremendous mushroom growth has been badly hit—and for one basic reason, the reader is not finding what he wents and for one basic reason, the reader is not finding what he wants and needs in this literature, and he is turning away from it. Even here we find the classics and the significant literature out selling the escapist writings. The pulps, once flourishing, died an ignominious death.

It is currently fashionable, although weak, to place the blame for the sick'state of fiction's health upon television. But this is a superficial excuse, on the order of those in my first paragraph—the excuses of a philosophy failure grasping at something or someone else to blame. True, fiction is in competition with television, and if it offers nothing more than television offers then it will go the way of the buggy whip, for it takes more effort to read than to watch. But the very fact that television offers only the most trivial of entertainment is both a hope and a challenge to today's writer and editor. All the more reason why we must give the reader something he cannot get from any other source.

Of greatest significance, but generally overlooked, the tremendous surge of science fictions popularity came coincidentally with the death of the pulps. It is not difficult to see what motivated it. The public had heard, vaguely, of science fiction, and how it was "different" from the rest, and so the public turned to it, hoping to find there a depth and meaning which it could not find elsewhere. It did not find it in science fiction either—and so the consequent slump. When your product stops supplying the needs of a man, he stops buying it.

And why didn't science fiction give him what he wanted? The answer here is simple. Most of the editors in science fiction are graduates of the old pulp school, either as writers or editors in Unable to see that it was the basic purpose behind pulp magazines which brought about their death, they brought this already proved worthless philosophy into science fiction. And with the exception of one, or possibly two magazines they have attempted to impose the literary standards upon the field of science fiction

which had already brought inevitable failure elsewhere.

It is a sad truth that some of the leading editors in science fiction know little or nothing about science, and apparently even less about what the readers of science fiction want from their

favored literature. Let me cite a personal example.

For something over a year I have known about a new concept in theoretical physics. Every reader of science fiction is acquainted with the paradox posed by explanations of energy forms. Einstein. himself, has said that there seems to be an irreconcilable difference between the particle theory of matter-energy and the field theory. This new concept seems to make that reconciliation, seems to show us why some evidence supports one theory and some supports another. If the expected evidence proves out, it will throw an entirely new light upon the construction of the universe. As may be imagined, this is something of tremendous excitement to the scientists, and many of the greatest names in the world are working on it.

I knew it would be of tremendous excitement to science fiction readers also; and that they would enjoy my playing a game with it -the real purpose of science fiction, to take a new idea and weave it through the dramatization of its pattern. I finally devised a story which would carry it, a story which, for full meaning, depended upon it. Perhaps, as I often do, I grew a little dull in setting up all the new concepts which the reader must have if he is to understand the new theory. (I try not to be dull, but how can a person grasp a new concept without at least a little explanationand are we to eliminate all new concepts from science fiction?)

The editor liked my story very much, and agreed to take it if I WOULD CUT OUT ALL THAT "PSEUDO SCIENTIFIC DOUBLETALK":

Here we have it. To some of the greatest minds in the world, here is a concept which has them in an excited tizzy. To this editor it was "pseudo scientific doubletalk". Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the actual scientific laboratory has pulled ahead of science fiction.

What did I do? I did just what all the other writers are doing. I betrayed my readers, and myself. I cut out all the unwelcome double talk. I used one of the oldest cliche mechanisms in science fiction to explain my phenomena. I knew the editor would be familiar with that -hell, he used it himself when he was a writer, so it must be all right. I did more than that. I resolved not to give him any more stories which contained real thought.

But not content with destroying the basic reason why a writer writes, this editorial policy goes farther, to the destruction of the writer's pride in himself and his work Quoting again from Bill "Or, if I as an editor, bought a weakie and Hamling's article.

strengthened the story editorially in spots to make it acceptable, you should hear the outraged wails of wounded pride."

Would the editors following this destructive philosophy deny the writer even any <u>pride</u> in his work? And, of course, we wail with outraged pride. Like the badly placed commas in the above quote, these editorial "improvements" are often badly done, so are often badly done, so badly done, so juvenile and pulpish in their intelligence level, that we are ashamed to see them printed under our name, and to know that if they should survive in spite of editorial meddling, we are the ones who will be credited with this shoddy workmanship. Of course, from the standpoint of this basic philosophy, that we are slavy entertainers only, then perhaps we have no right to pride of accomplishment.

But here again, a deliberate campaign to destroy the writer is

functioning with inevitable results.

It is not surprising at all that about a hundred worthless manuscripts cross Mr. Hamling's deak each week. The only surprising thing is that such editors complain about it and publicly point the finger of blame at the authors. This editorial policy can give him nothing else but worthless crud. What else can be expected

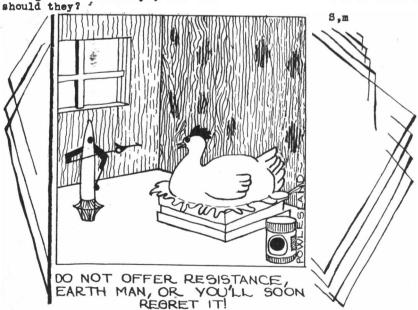
when the prime drive of the writer has been thwarted, when he has had it drilled into him that he is no more than a literary hack and will never be anything more, when even his pride of accomplishment is derided and scorned? The editors are getting only what they, themselves, have created; they should at least have the

grace not to try to put the blame on somebody else.

We have had great literary periods in the past. Not generally known, but the evidence is there, every time we have had a burst of great writers, we have also had, working behind the scenes, great editors. It takes greatness to recognize greatness, and to know what must be done to foster and build that greatness. The writer who strives to achieve something new, something which has never been done before, is sensitive and uncertain. He needs the utmost in encouragement, perception, understanding; not cynicism and destructiveness. To be a great writer, even a passably good one, a man must have a purpose for writing, a belief that his work is of significance, a hope that the world will be a slightly better place because he lived and spoke and was. It takes a great editor to give him that. What does it matter if the writer should become an egotistical, overbearing, arrogant s.o.b. out of his vanity in pride of accomplishment? We have his work, don't we? And it is great. And the world would have been a poorer place if he hadn't lived!

I have no hopes that this long tiresome analysis of the effects of a philosophy upon current science fiction will bring about any utopia for writers where they can grow, expand, and recapture the purpose which has been taken away from them. As I said at the beginning, most men prefer to go down into complete and destructive failure, rather than reexamine their convictions.

We have had great literature before and we will have it again. We are probably due for some dark ages, but eventually the holders of this destructive philosophy will go into the inevitable failure their pattern provides; and in the younger editors which come into being, who are more capable of believing that a story is worth writing, we will recapture the spirit which once made science fiction great. But nowdays, THEY DON'T HARDLY WRITE THEM NO MORE. Why







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INTRODUCTION BY JACK WOODFORD

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES MOMBERGER





"Ysonde, you know there is a God?"

"God and Xange are one."

"Have you ever heard of Christ?"
"No." she answered softly.

"Ysonde," I asked again, "do you believe in sorceers?"

"Yes, the Kuen-Yuin are sorcerers; Yue-Laou is a sorcerer."

"Have you seen sorcery?"

"Yes the reptile satellite of the Xin ---"

"Anything else?"

"My charm, -- the golden ball, the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin. Have you seen the reptiles writhe--?"

"Yes," said 1 shortly. "Still God lives and sorcery is but a name."

"Ah," murmured Ysonde, drawing closer to me, "they say, in Yian, the Kuen--Yuin live; God is but a name."





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a novel of horror

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS



ion hartt

Arthur J. Burks was born in Waterville, Washington, on September 13, 1898. That means he's becoming what newspaper writers, referring to suspects in murder cases, call "balding". He entered the Marine Corps in 1917, became private, corporal, sergeant and second lieutenant, and was ordered into the reserve in 1919. He began writing, or what he called writing, in 1920. That means he is now going into his thirty fifth year as a hack. He has, according to F. Orlin Tremaine, once one of his editors, sold 30,000,000 words. I believe it, but that's more words than I intend to check.

Burks spent twenty months as a civilian in the Bureau of Census under one Herbert Hoover, where he began writing-and not selling. He did sell \$4.57 worth in his first year, and postage and paper didn't cost him over \$300. Somebody, advising writers, said every writer, before and after arriving should write 2,000 words a day, so Burks did. His first sale was to a California newspaper-his one successful item-for \$1.58, in 1921. In 1922, when he had been returned to active duty as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps and was on duty at Barahona, Dominican Republic, he ran his take up to \$125, most of it juveniles for religious magazines, at prices as low as one tenth of a cent a word. He went to \$525 in 1923, still juveniles. He was selling possibly an eighth of his output; and he refused to think of anything but what he did sell. In 1923 he got a check for \$60 for a serial and sat looking at it silently for hours-his biggest for sometime.

Shavetail Burks was ordered to San Diego with his wife and three children in 1924. He encountered Waird Tales when he stepped ashore, and attached himself to it, remaining off and on until it went into bankruptcy just a few months ago, owing Burks for the last story of his it used. He didn't mind. He'd have worked for WT for nothing, because its former editor. Farnsworth Wright, in Burks' early writing days, had "discovered" him, and believed in Burks almost as much as the big Shavetail believed in himself.

chestnut that the Burks never did believe in the writer writes of what he knows only. He's never written well about Marines, about whom he knows most, nor about the West, wherein he was born and reared. A very famous writer of air stories used to get his fans together in New York City, and once asked Burks to attend. Burks was introduced, and later some of the fans got around him and one made this remark:

"You're the writer of air stories whose technical details are always correct. I've never found fault with a single technical detail in any of your yarns."

"If you'll look closely," said Burks, "you'll note that you find no technical details either."

Burks had sold around 10,000,000 words of air stories without ever having held a wheel or a joy stick or having even been interested. But his first air story hit the stands about the time Lindbergh hit France, so it did all right, even if it was called JERRY THE HAWK and there was nobody in it named Jerry. This faker of technical details wrote reams of air tales for every magazine that

used them, especially those devoted to air stories.

But the Prolific Hack made the most noise, and did the least, in science fiction. He couldn't read the s.f. tales of others with patience, but he enjoyed writing them. One of his first, as nearly

patience, but he enjoyed writing them. One of his first, as nearly as he remembers, was THE INVADING HORDE published in Weird Tales in the late twenties. Then he skipped a quarter of a century and wrote for WT: THE WIZARD OF BIRD-IN-HAND, THE INNER MAN, THESE DEBTS ARE YOURS, SHALLAJAI, BLACK HARVEST and others.

EARTH, THE MARAUDER was sold to Harry Bates of Astounding Stories when that magazine was Clayton's. Bates asked the hack to do it, told him he wrote too fast, to take his time. But first, a way had to be figured how, logically, the earth could be thrown out of its orbit. Editor and writer conferred, surrounded by desks containing other editors. Bates asid suddenly, enthusiastically: taining other editors. Bates said suddenly, enthusiastically:
"I'll tell you how to throw the earth out of its orbit!"
Other editors whirled, looked stunned, began to tiptoe out of

the big Clayton office.

Burks did EARTH THE MARAUDER in three days, held it for a week, had his secretary turn it in. The girl did, but in a return addressed envelope, so it came back the next day. The Hack was stunned until Bates asked him where the hell the story was. It was published in three parts. After it, or maybe before, the guy doesn't pretend to remember, came MONSTERS OF MOYEN, featuring television as s.f.

Astounding went to Street & Smith and a variety of editors, one of whom, F. Orlin Tremaine, bought tales of sorts. Same editor bought THE GOLDEN HORSESHOE, but published it in, Burks believes, Top-Notch. Came then to Astounding one John W. Campbell, Jr., of whom the managing editor later asked Burks what he thought. If he hadn't believed in Campbell, the guy might have been out, and the whole face of s.f. changed, or left as it was. Campbell suggested Burks do the Josh McNab stories, and Campbell provided name and idea; it was a successful series. THE FATAL QUADRANT may have been Campbell's idea, too, Burks again doesn't remember, except that Campbell got ideas and called in writers he believed could do them. One such, JASON SOWS AGAIN, dealt with the idea of everything in a great junk pile being turned into men Shortly thereafter came

trouble and Burks never sold Campbell again, though he tried.

Between his atheistic literary youth and his profoundly religious maturity, something of great moment happened to Burks. He related it in Fate for December 1953-THROUGH THE BARRIER, which

has given him a host of friends around the nation.

Where do I get all this? From Burks himself who's more enthusiastic about writing and, he confesses, seeing his name in print, than he was thirty four years ago, which is saying a lot. He appeared on the covers of eleven magazines simultaneously in about 1930 and almost killed himself trying to make it twelve. He wrote everything—adventure, air, air war, weird, fantasy, science fiction, sport—for such magazines as Action, Air Stories, War Stories, War Stories, War Stories, Soldier Stories, Clues, Popular, Sea Stories, Ainslee's, Spot, ALL S&S magazines except the love and westerns, all the Thrilling and Better Publications except the westerns, most of Pop Pubs magazines, Argosy. Adventure. Horror, Terror. Detective Tales. Super Science, all the old Hersey magazines, also MacFadden's when that outfit had pulps.



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The hack wrote for all the s. f. magazines and magazines using s.f. He did THE GREAT MIRROR, an outgrowth of the experience narrated in THROUGH THE BARRIER. which no magazine would buy. Many years later in 1953 it appeared in paperback in England and was a best seller. Fantasy Publishing Company. Los Angeles, owns Ameri-

can paperback rights.

What percentage of his output did Burks sell? He doesn't know. though he sold a million words a year about. He resigned his commission as first lieutenant in 1928 and devoted the next fourteen years to writing, getting, he believed, less per word than most other pulp writers, and writing more copy to make more in sum. Did brief stents in Hollywood, very brief, writing himself out of a job before he could get started. There he wrote SURVIVAL, in which he believed more than in anything he had done. Its rejection by Campbell was a real shock. Later Bob Erisman of Marvel Stories took it, and it did all right, but Campbell told Eurks he still wouldn't have used it. Something unscientific about "inertia-massratios" or something equally foreign to the Burks high school experience. Erisman got a sequel out of Burks called EXODUS. The hack has had requests for paperback rights to these, but Erisman can't release them, save for a special 1000 copy edition put out by fans which didn't get put out.

Burks was president or vice president of the American Fiction

Guild during the five years of its life.

He collaborated with Princess Der Ling and other "names" on books which Dodd-Mead and other good publishers took, "ghosting" at the same time for other "names", material which appeared in virtually all the magazines Burks couldn't hit with his own stuff. The editor of one such magazine broke her habit of sending Burks rejection slips to inform him he would never be able to hit her market-at which exact time he had a series running in her magazine, three of which were mentioned honorably in famous prize awards. Burks insists his stuff hadn't been edited any more for the big magazine than it usually was for pulp magazines; but pulp editors gasp at this, for some have made a living editing man's material.

Burks is ho author, and says so. He says he's a "writer". there is any difference. Not entirely jesting, he says that authors borrow money from writers, but I'm reminded of the fox and the sour

grapes.

He had bad luck with a book collaboration and wrote in Writer's

Digest that he would never ghost or collaborate again. Since that time he has done nothing else, practically!

Some of the works he "ghosted" can't be listed, since the ghost is not supposed to talk, but he collaborated with General S. D. Butler on WALTER GARVIN IN MEXICO, Dorrance; Sergius Martin Riis on YANKEE KOMISAR, Speller (This one after all these years is being considered for the movies.), who also published his RIVERS INTO WILDERNESS under the name of Burke MacArthur. It appeared simultaneously with LAND OF CHECKERBOARD FAMILIES, Coward-McCann, 1932.

The Hack is all for current s. f., fantasy and the like, but hasn't the time any more to tackle it and risk too many rejections. An occasional story appears in Spaceway which may, if it gets enough backing, publish most of the Hack's s.f. in book form some day. Right now Shroud, Publishers is making the attempt on an amateur level—and doing a good job of it. The guy has a book length or two he isn't pushing because he has other books scheduled which will make more money. At fifty six he feels he should make sure of some sort of an estate instead of investing in goldbricks, a normal investment for authors, none of whom ever know enough financially to go out in the rain.



It had been under the burned-out house Richie was quite certain it was the last one. For all he knew it might have been the first one. But something singular, of that he was certain. It was

only one he had ever seen, and of that he was sure.

Book. The word was one of those scratched on privy walls he knew it well. "Johnny reads books," the walls read, or "Alice does it reading a book," or if they disliked someone: Burris." So the word wasn't unknown to him.

Richie had been going through the rubble of the charred building, kicking aimlessly at clods of mud and the dirt streaked chips that had been furniture. He wished wildly for a miracle so that his goddam home would be smashed flat or something. That goddam father of his was just skirting the line of treason, and Richie was scared white thinking what might happen were the PeepToms to get wind of it. Richie was seriously considering turning his old man over to the Cartel Cops and getting a reward, as well as relieving the tension, when he kicked over the rotting boards saw book.

It was book. It was last book. Richie knew it was last book because he got around. He was a member of the Sage Street Muckers and an Advance Guard of the 4th Section Regimental Knockabouts. He got around, and no one—absolutely no one—had ever mentioned seeing a book. Even though he was thirteen, Richie had experienced thrills and sins an earlier world never even knew existed.

Richie made sure no one saw him pick up book. He bent quickly, shoved it under his jumper, hauled himself over the fence at the end of the empty lot, scurried through a maze of alleys and came

out on the hill overlooking the Tube House.

Just thirteen, but he knew the thrill of a forbidden possession.

It was book and by Chrize he was gonna read it.

Back of the Tube House, where the commuter-tubes began their runs every half-hour, he snuggled down in the dirt of the hill and

looked at book.

His world outside, back around the other side of the Tube House, would have been more than shocked had they seen Richie looking at book. They were rather strict these days about such things. Gang fights with glass hooks on the ends of a five foot pole. Okay. Seduction of the little girl with the bows in her hair as initiation to the TV Non-Virgin Club. Okay. Book. Uh-uh.

Too many people found other ways to think about the things they were supposed to think when they read book Then it cost the Cartel more to put them back in line, which in turn got Government mad at Cartel, which made Cartel angry, and cut off the good things they could provide, like TV sets and jelly apples and scented kitchen

cleanser, and all manner of wonderful-necessary-things.

So book was out.

But Richie had come up with book, and he was goddamed if he wasn't going to read it. Wait'll the next meeting of the Muckers. He'd rack 'em and swow 'em! Man, they'd plow when they eared his find. Man, he was a topboy with this. So Richie read book.

He opened the warped and matted cover and looked at the title. It made no sense to him. Such words were gibberish. But Richie was

determined to indulge in what he knew to be a sin.

He bent his head, squinted his deep-hued eyes and ran dirty hands through dandruffed blonde hair. The more he read, the more he was embroiled by the senselessness of the thing. What did this mean? What was a...what was it?

The boy closed the back cover of the book, having skipped much,

but still following a twisting passage through the pages of the

volume. There was no comprehension.

Ah, to hell with it! Even if he didn't know what the hell it was all about, still he had read it, and wait till the Muckers heard about this. Man, it was top-top secret, and if it got out there'd be real heaps to clean!

The Muckers met on a Wednesday night, and Richie had two hours of school three days a week, and Wednesday was one of them. So he was compelled to keep the news of his find in back of his eyes,

tied up in a small sack in his mind, and wait.

The school was a big thing. It reared up in the center of Town and was hardly ever used. Tardiness and absenteeism were no longer evils, they were mainstays. But Richie got a large-charge out of going to that queero school to hear that zagnut of a teach ask them questions. Teach wasn't a bad sort even if he was a demoted PeepTom. They'd demoted him from Section A of the PeepToms for missing an ex-college prof that had lived right in his own houseblock, and he'd missed him completely. So now teach was PeepTom of Town School, and Richie liked to listen to the jerko questions he popped.

So Richie always went to school. He was never tardy and never missed a day. He sat in the best seat, way in the corner at the back, and looked at the rest of the kids with their knives (carving the names of their clubs in the desktops) and their rubberbands (stick a sliver of coke bottle glass in and shoot that, man, that's real cool!) and watched them carefully, till teach asked a

question.

Ch, teach asked some whingers, he did. Like, "When was the last pre-Cartel government purged? Chollie?" And Chollie would answer in his squeaky voice, "Who the hell gives a muckin' damn, teach?" And teach would answer, "Very good, Chollie." Or he'd ask, "Who was the biggest traitor of pre-Cartel government? Herb?" And Herb would spit once at Jenny in the seat next to him and lisp. "Which-ya want, Jawge Washington or my old man? They got him in '85." The schoolroom would rock with laughter and teach would snicker and say, "No. Washington will do. Thanks, Herb." "Which-

It was Wednesday, and teach was up front with his earphones on, peeping for whispers that might give him a clue to something that might get him re-instated in Section A.

Then came the first question.

Richie wasp't listening. He was mulling over book. There hadn't been much in it he'd understood, but one phrase had stuck with him. Teach asked, "Where is the capitol of our Great and Glorious Democracy located? Richie?"
Richie's mind muttered to itself. He said what was in his mind.

He shouldn't have.

"Twas Brilling, and the slithey toyes did gyre and gimble in the wabe..." Then he caught himself. "Uh, what the muck ya wanna

know for, ya lost or somethin'?

But the damage had been done. The class's collective necks were twisted and craned at him. Teach stood with his mouth open. "Very, uh, very good, Richie. Excuse me a moment, students, I'll be right back." He bolted from the room, while Richie sat and sweated cold.

What had he said. What?

Ten minutes later they came in through the classroom door. big men with the black suits, skin tight.

Richie leaped up on his seat, backing off it onto the floor, against the wall, "No, ferchrissakes; lemme alone."

They took him by the arms, above the elbow, and carried him from the room, kicking, screaming, muttering gibberish that the other students could not understand:

"You are old father William, the young man said ... "

Pretty soon, even that faded down the tiled halls, and they went back to spitting at each other.

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