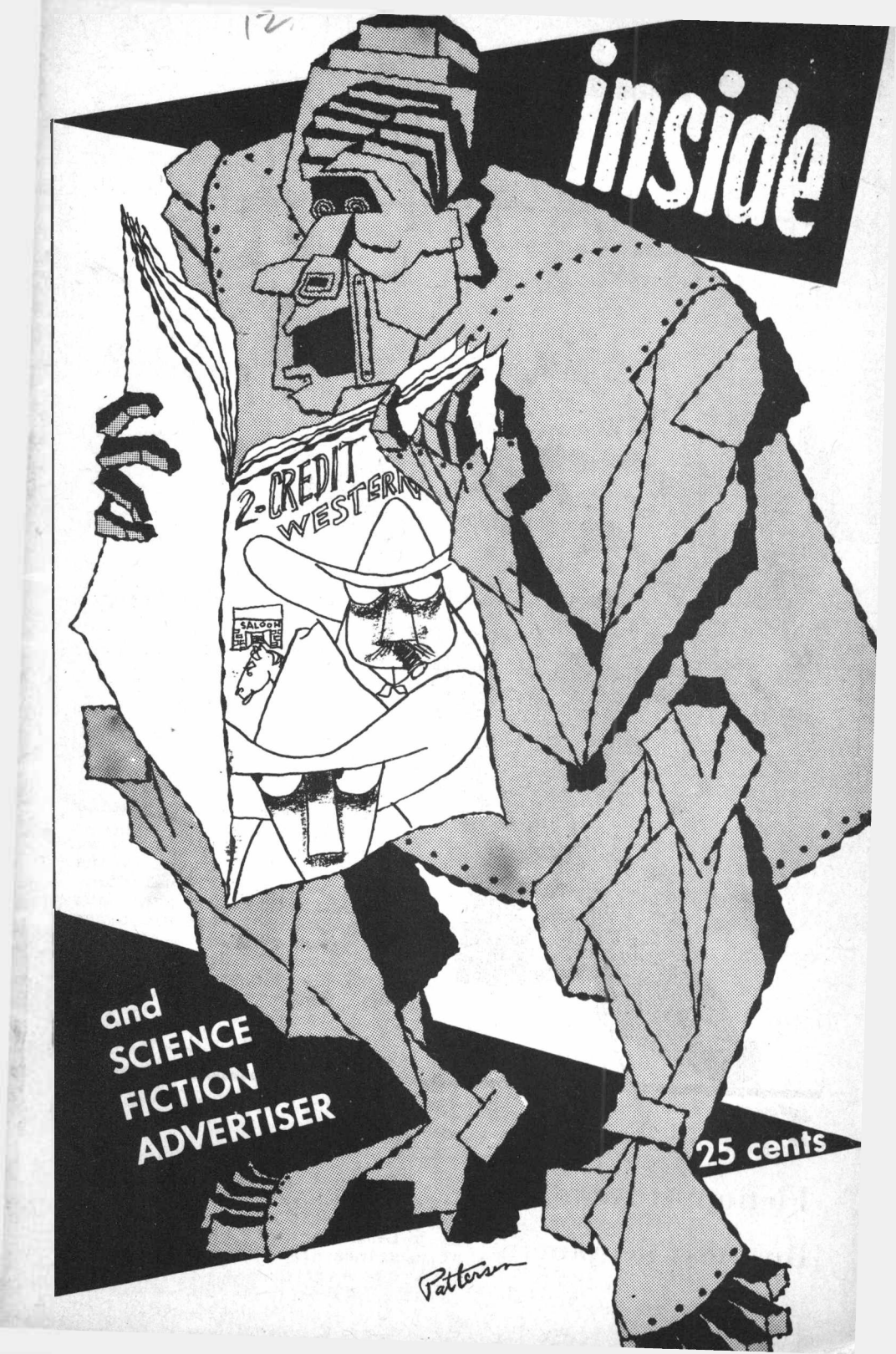
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fire the critic...

ready?

continuing the discussion...

This time in three parts:

I. There's no money like old money.

II. You may have all the necessary qualifications, but you can't get to the moon without a spaceship.

III. What is it you can't do without because you don't know what it is?

I The Strange Science Fiction Attitude of the Business People

Somewhere, somehow, somebody got the idea that you can make money publishing science fiction. By E. E. Smith's ancestors I don't know where—but the delusion is real enough in the fogged minds of some men.

Let's start off by asking which magazines have made the most

money and when. Amazing Stories back in the 40s. Astounding in the thirties and the late forties, up until now (and probably in the early forties, at times when Amazing was at low ebb). The digest Fantastic, when it first came out.

What sold Amazing Stories? The fact that it was pulp adventure.

What sold Astounding in the thirties? The fact that it was pulp adventure.

What sold Fantastic? It wasn't, I assure you, the science fiction.

What sells Astounding? The fact that it is good science fiction.

Now you may think I've contradicted myself, but you're wrong.

No, s. f. is a literature of ideas—good s. f., "adult" s. f. (which term currently includes many stories that it, by definition, shouldn't). Understand, that is no definition of s.f. It is a description.

The fact that s.f. is a literature of ideas is its only saving factor, because few s. f. writers are decent writers. Some of them are competent, two or three even have an outstanding degree of writing talent. But, generally, science fiction is poorly written.

And it would be the worthless trash most people still think it is, if it wasn't for its saving factor—ideas.

(By ideas, I don't mean "gimmicks". I mean concepts of all forms which stimulate thinking in the reader.)

The one magazine that sells adequately—and I did say "adequately"—these days, does so because it is the only magazine in which science fiction's only worthwhile ingrediant is present in strong doses—it is a magazine of ideas. It is Astounding Science Fiction.

A few of the adventure science fiction magazines are jumping in circulation. It is quite possible that they will outdistance Astounding. For this simple reason: An idea story will sell, if it's extremely well told, to a large number of people—literature will sell to a large number of people. But an idealess story, if it's well told, will sell even better—if it's escapist entertainment. An idea story will sell to a few people, when it is poorly told, or competently told. An idealess story will sell better when it is poorly told—if it's escapist entertainment.

Astounding sells, then, because it is good science fiction.

Amazing sold more than Astounding in the past because it was pulp adventure. It is likely to sell more than Astounding again.

But now, why did I say you can't make money off science fiction?

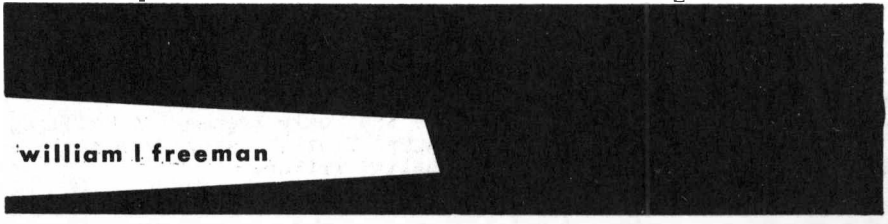
Well, you can of course make a profit. What you can't do is make more than a small margin of profit. Science fiction magazines can never hope to challenge the real money makers.

This is true because only a few writers are good enough to write popular stories with purpose, with idea content, with "message". Not enough to support a magazine of any type.

So any magazine that, primarily, prints imaginative stories that require thought isn't going to sell much over 100,000 copies. It's not entertaining enough! (Is that right, Mr. Hamling?)

Now there is absolutely no doubt that adventure science fiction will outsell the Astounding type of story. By a wide margin.

Sometimes you can make a fabulous—from a science fiction editor's viewpoint—amount. Witness Howard and Burroughs.



Those two made money—one of them after he was dead. Back in the old days Argosy and Blue Book made money—and their descendants are making money now. But they were in the same position then as now: They aren't science fiction magazines, they're adventure magazines. A general adventure magazine can make money.

But an adventure science fiction magazine can't equal them. It can't get the writers because it can't pay them.

And even if a magazine of that type came out with a large editorial budget, it wouldn't work.

There is a greater market for straight adventure magazines featuring westerns, detectives, jungle epics, adventures on the high seas, etc. (with a little s. f. thrown in once in awhile). So why bother?

Then, as you can see, it works this way: In science fiction, the most money is in adventure (call it "sense of wonder", "space opera" or what you will—they're all slightly different concepts of the same thing). But no s.f. magazine can afford to pay enough to get good adventure writers. And even if one could, a good adventure writer is not necessarily a good science fiction adventure writer. So, not only isn't the money available, the talent isn't available, even if the money was. Now, because of the nature of science fiction, even the adventure variety—unfamiliar backgrounds which confuse readers with little imagination and strain others' credulty, ideas, fantastic premises—straight adventure fiction is a better money maker. I won't argue with the selling power of Burroughs or Howard, but I am talking about the average popularity of the two types—however, there are straight adventure writers that equal, and no doubt surpass, the selling power of these two.

Therefore, no adventure science fiction magazine is ever going to equal, in circulation, the straight adventure magazines, because of the nature of s.f. and the relatively poor writing.

And idea science fiction will never come up to the adventure type.

And all those abortions in between that appeared during the "boom"—well, I don't have to surmise as to the fate of those, do I?

So, in my opinion, science fiction is going to remain in the rut it's in and has always been in. No science fiction magazine is ever going to make a great deal of money. Profit, sure, but if you want to make real money in publishing—try something else.

And that, Mr. Moskowitz, is why so many of the editors run their magazines like a hobby. They are hobbies. The editors edit them for the love of science fiction.

You can bet a Martian krubel that they don't do it for the love of money.

But let's get back to my early premise. Yerby is good idealess fiction. Yerby sells—in the millions of copies. Faulkner is good idea fiction—when he's not writing just for the money. His books don't sell as well. But he makes a great deal of money.

Amazing Stories nowadays is poorly written adventure science fiction. It's not up to Astounding yet, but I expect it to take the lead circulation-wise.

Astounding is idea science fiction. From the viewpoint of the science fiction fan, it's great. From the same viewpoint, it runs stories that are damnably well written. But if you go outside the field and take a look at the popular thought-provoking writers, you'll see the lack. But it's good science fiction.

Because of its ideas.

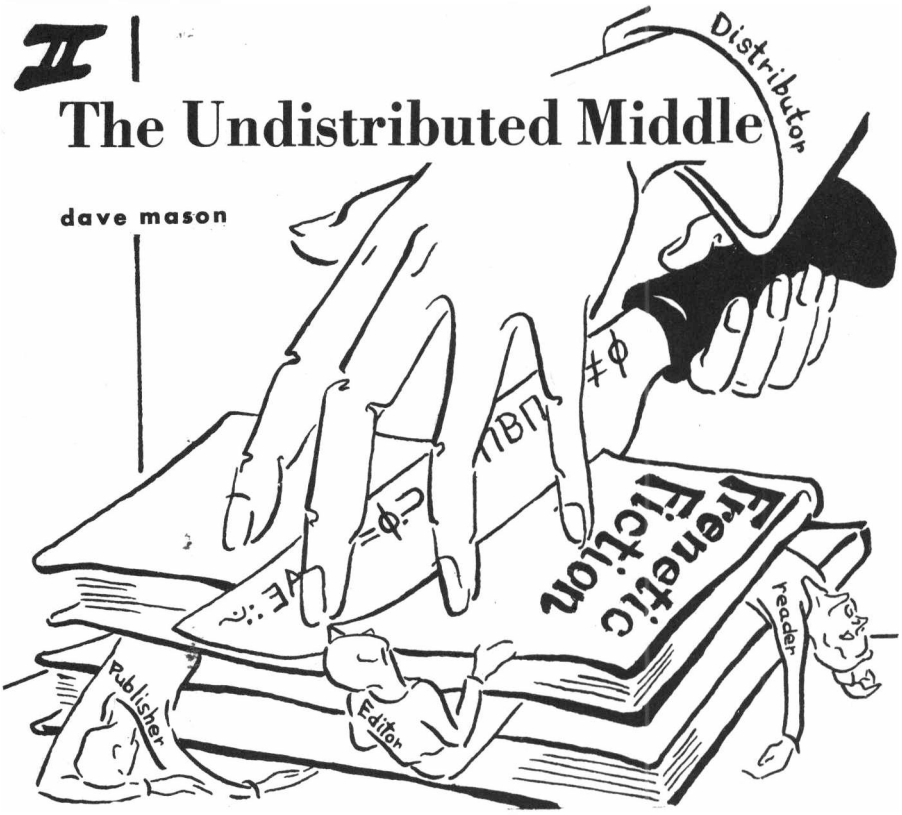
And this is my point: The only good thing about science fiction is the good, solid, thought-provoking ideas. There are writers who are exceptions to this rule, but damn few of them.

For you see, science fiction is the only branch of popular (relatively speaking, you may be sure) fiction where you can express your ideas without being a quality writer.

Generally, in the commercial field today, you have to arrive before you can get away with the things science fiction writers get away with all the time. That's why Bradbury cut his teeth on Planet and Weird Tales.

So, if you want to edit a magazine or write stories that are worthwhile, you have to be satisfied with a smaller pile of gold dust than the "entertainment" boys. But just the same, in science fiction it doesn't matter what you print, you ain't gonna get rich.

Money? Money's a handy invention. But you can't write science fiction with it.



I am getting awfully tired of this whole silly argument, chums. And I do mean the argument about what's with the boom/bust/bwah of poor old science fiction. Look, I ain't no lit'ry type, see? I wrote a story, and it got published by a fella named Shaw in a magazine called Infinity (adv't), but nobody invites me to pro parties, and H. L. Gold doesn't know me from Hubbard. And I never edited any magazine, so maybe all of the editors use the throw-it-down-the-stairs, or Council of Nicea, method of assembling a magazine, or maybe the poor sons all work as hard as Larry Shaw, fixing their own typewriters and making their own secretaries by hand, practically.

Me, I don't know nuttin' about any of those things. I'm practically an illiterate, almost enough so to be a fan. When you start using words like characterization and social approach around me, I go "duh".

But there's one phase of this silly business I do know about, dammit. And it's the one thing that all of the brilliant editors,

publishers, authors, and such who've been belaboring each other in these pages appear to know very, very little about, and care less. And that, fellow weeblies, is a thing coarsely known as distribution.

I get paid for knowing something about it. Not as much as Horace gets for editing Galaxy, not even as much as an apprentice printer gets for running his fingers across the web to create that interesting smudged effect Beyond used to go for, before Beyond went annual. But for the mysteries whereof I am adept, I get a small purse of gold, which may or may not prove that my services are worth something to somebody.

The firm for which I slave is a small one, and one of many such; it's generally called, before ladies, a publisher's representative. This means that magazine publishers, on being confronted with the dark jungle that lies between the printer's shipping room and the customer's cash, cry aloud for a white hunter to guide them through, defend and preserve them, and lend them comfort when the Umbola drums beat loud. That's us. We bedevil, pursue, and harry newsdealers; we ceaselessly shove excess copies about the highways and byways; we stick up posters, enchant with smiles and soap, make endless statistics, and perform similar mantic arts to the end that nowhere in the civilized world may any man, woman or fan step into a newsstand and be confronted with the absence of a magazine we represent.

Now, these arts are a dark mystery to nearly all editors and publishers. When they are handed the plain and simple results of a great deal of legwork, and those results fail to correspond with some airy theory they may have about their publications, the genii simply ignore them. Thereafter follows trouble, such as now and for quite a while has beset science fiction.

To cite an example: There is, upon the lists of my firm, a Certain Magazine, which we shall call Exasperating Tales. The publisher of ET pays us for our services, but apparently is not sufficiently interested to find out exactly what those services are. The editor, nobody's fool otherwise, does not even know we exist. I know, because I met him once and mentioned that I worked for the firm that represented his publication. He appeared to think we had something to do with printing it.

Now, Exasperating is slipping. It's slipping so badly that it's a mystery as to how it keeps going. On the other hand, earnest efforts by us help keep it going. (no, we don't want gratitude—we get paid.)

It doesn't take much research to find out why. There is a strictly limited market for the magazine in question and too many copies are going out. But it wouldn't be quite such a limited market if a few touches were added; the covers could be better, for instance, and certain other things might help. And, although we don't advise on editorial policy, if enough newsstand buyers are saying the stories stink, we hear about it and report the fact. Mind you, we don't say that we think they stink, but that newsstand buyers do.

And this, together with other information such as the way the magazine sells, where, and during what part of the on-sale period, is reported to the publisher. If he does anything about it at all—and he often doesn't—he seldom if ever mentions anything to the editor. The editor works in a great vacuum, with only a few letters to tell him anything; and those letters are usually from rabid fans, who aren't representative of the general reading public.

But now, just how does this whole set-up I'm speaking of work? What be these mysteries of which editors are blissfully ignorent? How is it that the vintner sells? Well...

You have thirty thousand nicely printed copies of Frenetic Fiction, Volume One, Number One. You are a publisher.

You aren't going to wait around until enough people mail you subscriptions. You're a publisher, but you have some sanity left. What you need is a distributor who will put copies on newsstands and in stores. You take a look at what's available.

There are a few small time distributors who carry a few very popular magazines to routes in various areas. Those we don't even think about. Then there are a couple of so-called Independents (since one man's family owns 'em all, the term "Independent" is by courtesy) and there is the Big'Un, American News. Your decision on which to use is based on the kind of magazine, the number of copies to be sold, its expected popularity, whether you can afford American News' rates for national distribution, etc. Once you've made up your mind, the favored outfit gets your 30,000 hunks of deathless literature and proceeds to wreak.

The distributor's method is usually to examine your mag and, after uffish thought, to decide that Frenetic Fiction is very like The Quarterly Fetishist, on the basis that the same sort of moron buys both. However, since the lad who makes this decision is probably a guy who moves his lips when he reads, and who thinks Amazing is science fiction, he can quite easily be fooled into using Boot and Shoe Industry as a comparison magazine for Boats and Ships.

Once his usual slightly-wrong decision has been made, our distributor's expert proceeds to make a distribution. He does this by opening up his lists of dealers and saying, "Well, Gooha's Stationery Store gets six copies of The Quarterly Fetishist, sells four. Give him eight of Frenetic Fiction, on account we got twict as many copies to get rid of." Thereafter the distributor using these figures carries copies of Frenetic, along with all the other magazines he handles, to Gooha, and to all the other stores and stands called for.

Gooha opens the bundle and sees a new magazine among the others. Gooha, you must remember, is a high grade moron, much smarter than the average fan. He is in the magazine business because at an early age his Aunt Tchasha bought it for him; she cor-

rectly figured that books and magazines were the only stock in trade he wouldn't try to steal. He hates the magazine business—all newsdealers do. They make much more on candy bars and reefers, and they only keep magazines in the place so the cop on the beat can have something to paw over when he comes in for his weekly ice.

Gooha cannot read, but he can recognize a new magazine. He resents the very idea of a publisher trying to make him sell something. He grunts and flings it under the counter, to be returned at the end of the week without ever having been visible. If you ask Gooha about Frenetic at some other time, he will say, quite truthfully, "Duh, it didn't sell." That's right, it didn't, none of his customers having X-ray vision.

The magazines are given to Gooha and his anthropoid brethren on consignment, which means he only has to pay for what he inadvertently sells. He has to pay a very small carrying charge and he has to keep a small sum on deposit with the distributor; also, he must return a magazine which has not sold in order to get credit. The dealers resent these various small curbs on what they would like to do, which would be to evade their bills, swindle everybody involved, and possibly sell the unsold magazines for pulp.

Now, among other things, I make up distributions for publishers. Having personally visited Gooha and a thousand others of his ilk, I know him well. I know what his stand looks like, his habits, his prejudices, what sells well and what doesn't. Judging by this, I try to give him enough copies so that he will have to return only two or three.

If he "prematures", or returns copies before the end of sale period, or if he sells out rather quickly, I will find out about it. If, for instance, I don't see Frenetic right out there in front, I'll ask him where it is. I may try to do him little favors like adding up 3 and 7 so his accounts will come out straight. But with smiles and soap I'll get copies of Frenetic out in front where the madding crowd can see it. If he returns copies, re-orders will appear in his mail the same day. If he tries to sell them out

fast, I'll be there with more. And, as returns come drifting back to the distributor, I'll be there waiting with a list of dealers who have never received Frenetic, to whom returned copies can be sent, thereby making certain that no copies stop moving till the end of sale.

Now, there's more to promotion than this; I'm not writing a book on the subject. But the whole basic concept of promoting is the same anywhere, in all fields. It's this: Make a noise. Beat on a tin pan in the market place and cry loudly "I have oil and wine, o ye Faithful!" And whether the wine be good or bad, the loudest pan-beater sells the most. Being an idealist, I would prefer that the loudest pan-beater also be a good wine-maker, but there's no necessary connection.

Slump? Don't let it worry you. Just beat the pan a bit louder. Go into newsstands, ye fans, and when you're quite certain that you can't see a copy of Zipp Science anywhere, demand it loudly. (Don't worry if you've already got a copy. You're promoting, not buying.) When the newsdealer says he hasn't got it, cast dark aspersions on the way he runs his stand. Since he has suspected for years that there might be buyers for this stuff, he will rush to his phone and demand a single copy. (Just one, because he doesn't take BIG chances.) I, or somebody like me, will ship him ten, to keep his spirits up. He will eagerly display them and quite possibly sell a couple. We'll never know if he could sell 'em or not till he shows 'em, anyway.

In other words, fans can promote, too. And promote newsstand sales, which are what count. So make a noise. Let the dealer know not only that you buy science fiction, but what mags you buy. If you think a certain mag—and I won't mention Madge—smells, tell him so. Help push down the junk to make room for the good stuff. Try rearranging a rack from which you've just pulled a mag and leave only the things you like showing.

That's promotion. And it works.

I shall now make some highly radical statements. Number one. I know, better than—certain other parties—what kinds of science fiction will sell, which will sell best and which will not sell at all. Now, when I speak of promotion, I don't mean that lousy stuff of the S F Plus or Amazing variety will naturally sell better than Astounding or Fantasy and Science Fiction. It doesn't, unless, as in the case of Amazing, the enormous push of a big chain publisher's sales and circulation staff are put behind it. Rap didn't make Amazing into the leading seller single handed, and he didn't do it simply by making it the awful crud that it was; he did it because Ziff-Davis knew how to make magazines sell. That's nothing in Rap's disfavor—it's easy for him to think he was the prime mover, because, as usual, the editorial department lived in Parnassus, above the madding throng of circulation men.

On the other side of that coin, S F Plus, which did its best to be much worse than Amazing, and succeeded to a large extent, was a tee-total newsstand flop. That was not merely because it was as bad as it was, but because there was hardly any shadow of an attempt made to circulate it properly. It's doubtful if any amount of promotion could have helped that item, but it might have; you can never tell.

Second radical statement. Science fiction—real science fiction, and good fantasy, adult stuff—will never have a really large market. On the other hand, there's a good steady small market for a few magazines of quality. Unless you publish the kind of thing Imagination does, which simply cannot be classed as anything but comic book stuff, you aren't going to get large sales. So don't try.

Which is to digress into another phase of the lunacy that is the publishing business. Whenever anything appears to be selling well, there will be seventeen other publishers, most of them of the sort that operate out of their hats and strictly on credit, who will rush to supply the obvious public hunger with seventeen imitations of the successful item. There are three or four imitations of Mad on the stands now; there will be ten or fifteen imitations of Shock as soon as the other publishers find out how well it's been selling. And every time there's a slight upturn in s.f., there are seventeen hungry impresarios waiting to turn out imitations.

Naturally, in something like s.f., surfeit means sudden upchuck. Five or six mags, and the market's healthy. Ten or twenty, and everybody starves. Get the hell out of this lifeboat, chums, there just isn't any room.

Third radical statement. Fantasy and Science Fiction and Astounding are going to last just as long as Boucher and Campbell feel like running them. But I wouldn't be at all surprised if Galaxy suddenly went poof. I'd be sorry, because I like it. But I don't think s.f. in general would feel the loss.

My reason for comparing Fantasy and Science Fiction and Astounding with Galaxy is this: Boucher and Campbell know a great deal about their public, and have been giving them a pretty consistent diet of what that public wants. Gold, on the other hand, is a guy who knows what he likes, and that's what he's going to publish. If you happen to share all of Gold's personal tastes—which would be damned difficult—you'll like Galaxy all the way, every issue. If you don't, Galaxy will ultimately begin to bore you. It's beginning to bore a good many people now.

So, from an illiterate, hairy-hoofed, harrier of dealers and juggler of distribution, these words of wisdom: One of these days there will come out of the deserts a Great Man, some editor-publisher who will know how to put together a good general s.f. magazine, an editor who will put as much effort into promotion and distribution as he does into fan convention activity and fanzine reviews—some day. And then, we shall see...

The Cents of Wonder

james blish

I suppose I have heard SaM calling for stories with a "sense of wonder" less often than have most people in the field, since I attend very few conventions; but I did hear his statements on the subject at the New York Fan-Vets' gathering, and again at the Metrocon. At the former meeting, I asked SaM from the floor whether or not this "sense of wonder" he says has disappeared from modern science fiction might not be, instead, something that he himself had lost over the course of many years of reading.

I gather that I was far from the first person to have put this question to him, but his answer certainly stunned me.

"A sense of wonder in a story is a very easy thing to measure objectively," he said. I quasi-quote that out of sheer caution; actually I believe it is entirely accurate. He went on to say that if he found a scene in a story where stars were zipping by a spaceship like pickets in a fence, while the people on board casually sipped cocktails and paid no attention, then that story had no "sense of wonder".

There wasn't the opportunity, from the floor of a convention, to explore this extraordinary stand further, but perhaps SaM would care to elucidate now. As a writer who has been publishing in this field for 15 years, I have some reason to be interested in just how I go about putting a "sense of wonder" into a story; in looking over my shelf of pre-tested ingredients, I just don't seem to find that particular condiment there. If it is an easy thing to measure objectively, as SaM claims, then one ought to be able to measure it by the tablespoon, the cubic centimeter, or the old-fashioned soupcon, and prescribe just how much of it has to go into a given story and at what point. But I confess that I don't know how to do that; since SaM thinks he does, perhaps he will explain it to me. This is, after all, the heart of the problem; editors are not going to buy "sense of wonder" stories until writers write them.

SaM's Fan-Vet example is not sufficient. Making characters in a spaceship exclaim over the wonders of the

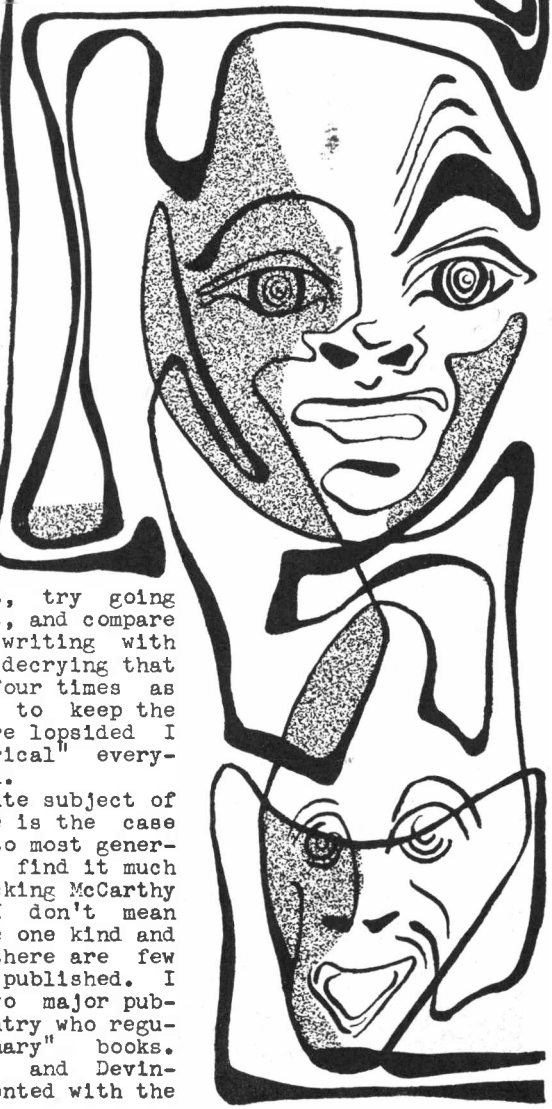
stars and of their voyage is, after all, the kind of trick you can only do once; if all characters in every spaceflight did this, it'd be deadlier than the indifference of which SaM complains. Furthermore, it would be dishonest; it would involve the writer in the pretense that technological marvels do not become commonplace with time, whereas myriads of airplane travelers can testify that they do. SaM's example, indeed, fills me with dread; it makes me suspect that his prescription for the "sense of wonder" is going to turn out to be the simple one of restricting writers to using their ideas on a one-shot basis, so that the fine bloom of wonder at their newness won't get rubbed off.

And as a matter of fact such wonders as the spaceship were never anything more than a story-telling device for getting characters from one place to another; the days when the mere fact of traveling through space was marvelous enough to carry a story, all by itself, are too long gone for even SaM to remember. To involve characters in hoots and hollers of awe over such matters these days, I suspect, would fill readers with a truly stupefying boredom.

It seems to me that Horace Gold (with whom I passionately disagree nine times out of ten, and who has shown no signs of blacklisting me yet) comes closest to meeting SaM head-on, when he asks the man to specify what he dislikes about modern science fiction. SaM has parlayed this "sense of wonder" phrase into a sort of minor religion, but I have yet to see any sign that anybody else understands what he means by it. In all the show of superior knowledge in his article, there is still not a word of explanation of the phrase; there is only an elaborate defense of his rightness in applying it. Nobody, it seems to me, is going to be able to judge whether this defense is justified or is 100% beside the point until Moskowitz settles down and spells out for us, in complete detail, how he wants us to go about putting a "sense of wonder" deliberately into a story.

After that, perhaps, we'll have the opportunity to see whether or not such an approach sells more magazines.

The Phony Hysteria



This little polemic has been brewing in me for a long time. It was finally brought to a boil by George H. Smith's "The Paper Foxhole", in the July issue of INSIDE.

I am not concerned with the literary merits of Mr. Smith's story, but only with his basic assumption that intellectuals ("eggheads") are being in some way persecuted. He is far from the first to so assume, but he supplied the last necessary push to get me behind the typewriter.

While this subject is not itself science fictional, it has supplied the basis from which many s.f. stories have been extrapolated, so I think a discussion of it might be of some interest.

To begin, I don't believe there is any such great anti-intellectual hysteria in this country. It is fashionable in science fiction, among other places, to talk about witch-hunting and book-burning and how academic freedom is being lost, but when I look around me at the real world, these horhors are singularly hard to find.

Just for the hell of it, try going through the public prints, and compare the amount of "hysteria" writing with the quantity of wordage decrying that "hysteria". I find about four times as much of the latter, and to keep the ratio from being even more lopsided I have to accept as "hysterical" everything which is so denounced.

To introduce the favorite subject of the anti-hystericals, there is the case of Senator McCarthy. Go into most general bookstores and you will find it much easier to buy a book attacking McCarthy than one applauding him. I don't mean the bookstores play up the one kind and hide the other; I mean there are few pro-McCarthy books being published. I believe there are only two major publishing firms in this country who regularly bring out "reactionary" books. (They are Henry Regnery and Devin-Adair.) We are thus presented with the

unusual spectacle of a lynch-mob which is both outnumbered and outgunned by its prospective victims.

If America is suffering from thought-control, as we often hear, it is assuredly the most ineffectual control of which I have ever heard. I had always understood that any proper, self-respecting censorship would as a matter of course not allow any criticism of itself. Not so here. The alleged suppression seems to stimulate free criticism.

Here's an example from my personal experience. During most of my military service, in 1952 and 1953, I worked in the Army Chemical Corps' scientific research offices. The majority of the personnel were civilians, under Civil Service regulations. All of us, civilian and military, were under strict Security controls, with clearance for "Secret" required. Despite this multiplicity of regulations, no one hesitated to express himself fully on Communism or any other subject. I may say that adherents of Senator McCarthy were a very small minority, and whenever they opened their mouths they were verbally trampled by their more liberal colleagues. There was much talk of how the Congressional investigations were demoralizing the Civil Service, and how free speech was being stifled. Yet no one seemed to curb his tongue on that account. No one really feared being denounced to the FBI. No one feared the descent of Congressional committees. No one glanced over his shoulder to see if the security officer was around before he sounded off about politics.

For a nation supposedly stifling under a pall of fear, there is a most amazing lack of circumspection in those who speak out against the fear. One would suppose that, under the postulated conditions of hysteria, thinking men would be very cautious how they spoke, lest they call the lightning down upon themselves. But are they? Hell no! We seem to be blessed with a race of heroes who can wax eloquent in the very face of censorship, whose typewriters work better under the threat of book-burning.

It would seem to me that the very fact that the "liberals" can so freely publish their tirades against hysteria is a very good indication that the "climate of fear" is mostly in their own imaginations. Someone—I forget who—put it most succinctly, "People screaming at the top of their lungs that they aren't allowed to speak above a whisper!"

You must not understand from the foregoing that I believe there are no attempts at censorship, or that there is no anti-intellectual feeling in America. There are both, but the amount is no justification for the immense outcry about hysteria.

I believe that censorship in this country is no worse now than it has always been, with one important exception. That is the requirements of military security. Yet, even that is really nothing new. Military information has always been closely guarded. The difference is that in this era of scientific warfare, the area of militarily useful information has expanded to cover a great deal of science. We in science fiction have long predicted the coming of superscientific war. We failed to see that the natural consequence and concomitant of that would be the extension of standard military security practices to envelop that science.

Then there is the matter of academic freedom, which allegedly stands in great danger now. What academic freedom? Academic freedom, in the sense that the teacher should not be accountable for

nis opinions, has never existed. (I refer you to the Scopes "monkey trial" in Tennessee some thirty years ago.) And teachers, especially in the lower school grades, have always been subjected to many restrictions. As an example, up to perhaps ten years ago, how many teachers would have dared admit being atheist, to say nothing of daring to teach atheism? Perhaps some college instructors, since few people had the slightest interest in what went on in colleges. But in grammar or high schools? Hah! Now Communism is coming to be regarded in much the same light as atheism was a few years ago, with the predictable result that it is being restricted in the same way. Since, as a matter of fact, Communism is a religion, it is not surprising that the emotions of religion should be applied to it.

All this is of course no excuse for not fighting censorship and all other attempts to stifle free expression of opinion. I thoroughly disapprove of many of the restrictions on teachers. But let's face it: the situation is not much worse now than it has ever been, and it is a good deal better than at many times in the past. (Has anyone yet been lynched, or even tarred and feathered, for being a Communist?) This is not some new monstrousness which has burgeoned in the last few years; it has been with us always. Demagoguery was not invented by McCarthy, and neither was censorship invented by the Comics Code Authority. (If you want some really one-sided reading, try some grade-school history books.) The fight for free speech is continual, and it's hard enough without the so-called liberals making the enemy out to be ten times worse than it actually is.

In short, there is no flood of anti-intellectual terrorism engulfing the country, as one might surmise from reading Elmer Davis and Eleanor Roosevelt, and others of that stripe. The recent survey, "Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties", by Samuel Stouffer, indicates that the wide majority of Americans are merely indifferent to the whole affair.

Nevertheless, I admit that there has been some rise in "anti-intellectualism". And I am forced to say that while it may not be

justifiable, it is certainly understandable. The intellectual leaders of this country, most of them, fell down on the job miserably in the last twenty-five years. This particularly applies to teachers and scientists, who are the intellectual group with which we are most concerned.

The teaching and scientific professions are righteously indignant about being required to take loyalty oaths, and similar infringements on academic freedom. Without trying to justify the restrictions, I must say that they brought it on themselves. I refer to the days of the "popular front", in the '30s, when Communism was a sort of fashion among many of the intelligentsia. In that period many pedagogues seemed to regard Russian Communism as a "noble experiment" and American Communism as a sort of superliberal movement whose prime fault was that it was too advanced for the benighted public to appreciate.

True, the educators were far from being the only intellectuals who were beglamoured by the Red conspiracy. That, however, does not mitigate their offense, for teachers and scientists (especially scientists) are supposed to be our best thinkers, and their failure to perceive the danger is correspondingly less pardonable. Some few did see where the Reds were going, and spoke out against them. One such was Dr. William Wirt, superintendent of schools for Gary, Indiana. An incredible amount of abuse was heaped upon Dr. Wirt for daring to assault the popular myth of Red liberalism. And not the least of his castigators were his colleagues in education. (Though I suppose most teachers were merely indifferent.) Where then was "academic freedom"?

There was no lack of opportunity to discover the truth about Communism. The blueprints for conquest were freely available in the works of Lenin and later Stalin. The methods of Communism in Russia were known—the mass starvation of the kulaks, the deportation of ethnic groups, the Ukrainian massacres, the secret police, the slave labor industries—all the evidence was at hand for anyone who cared to look.

It is difficult to believe that so many undoubtedly intelligent people could have been so stupendously gullible and naive, and therefore many have assumed that they are either treasonous or very liable to become so. Consequently, loyalty oaths and other unpleasant restrictions have become the order of the day. I wouldn't believe in such immense gullibility either, except that my occasional studies in psychology have shown me the truly fantastic self-deceptions of which people are capable.

Had the intellectuals, and particularly the educators, lived up to their responsibilities, Communism might have been strangled aborning. They failed miserably, and the price of that failure is to be subjected to investigations and to have their loyalty questioned. The longer people are deceived, the greater will be their fury when at last they realize the deception. And an uncomfortable proportion of that fury inevitably falls on the sentinels who did not give the alarm.

It's a damn shame that the innocent must suffer with the guilty, but—"who lies down with a dog gets up with fleas". The flea powder is used rather indiscriminately and it itches like hell, but that's what you get for not chasing the dog away while you had the chance.

Even such anti-intellectualism as there is might have been largely averted if these teachers, scientists, and others of the intelligentsia had supported and aided the various investigations of the Communist conspiracy, instead of striving mightily to pass the stinking mess off as a "Red herring". To be sure, the intellectuals who obstructed the investigations were a minority, but they were—and are—an exceedingly vocal minority who have given a bad name to intellectuals in general.

And I honor the man who is willing to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think,
And, when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will risk t' other half for the freedom to speak.

—James Russell Lowell
from A FABLE FOR CRITICS

The groping pseudopod of the Amoeba has enveloped another victim. INSIDE and Science Fiction Advertiser has taken over Kaymar Trader, which was the only other existing adzine in fandom. Those of you who were subscribers to the Trader now know why you're reading this. In the future, it is hoped you will direct your subscriptions and ads to the address on the contents page.

Kaymar Trader has had a long and hectic history. Started in 1946 by K. Martin Carlson, it has since seen Jack Irwin, Paul Cox, J.T. Oliver and Gary Labowitz as editors, but we owe most of the credit to Carlson who has nursed it along through 9½ years of publication.

Kaymar Trader was a success because fandom needs an adzine. The same may be said for Science Fiction Advertiser. (But there were many other reasons for the latter's popularity.) Now that they are both a part of the same magazine, we hope their success will be proportionate. Because we need a market place. A single market place. There should be a fanzine where a collector or dealer or publisher can advertise and know he will reach all those science fiction readers who are actively interested in his wares; where a collector or reader, desiring an addition to his collection or information on current books in the field, can turn and know he will find what he wants, if it is available.

There's no purpose in 21 different advertisers advertising in 21 different fanzines. When someone is looking for something—be it book, magazine, or calendar—how will he know where to look?

INSIDE & SFA offers a complete coverage of new s. f. publications. All the new books are either reviewed or listed in these pages. And we offer our pages to those of you who feel the need, as we do, for a science fiction trade journal.

If you have something to advertise, advertise it with us, because, of one thing you may be sure, if there's a buyer for what you have to sell he reads INSIDE & SFA—we have a larger circulation than any other fanzine.

The articles in this issue by Freeman, Mason and Blish are not self contained, since they are continuations of a discussion began last issue. Those of you who are receiving INSIDE & SFA for the first time may wish to know what it's all about. If so, copies of the last issue are still available at 25¢ each or as a part of your subscription. (Subscriptions: 5/$1.)

The Price article is in answer to a story in the July issue and to various editorials, here and elsewhere. All issues of INSIDE & SFA are available. RS

GEORGE W. FIELDS: An orchid to Mark Clifton for his short and sweet letter in your issue #11. He expressed exactly what I was thinking in fewer words than I could have possibly used...The fact is that Mr. Budry's stories are all spiced with that ingredient undefined. The thought of the story is only a by-product of this spice. I'm sick and tired of hearing everyone from mud to Ray Palmer complain about science fiction's present lack of "sense of wonder". As you said, Ron, this is not due to the concept of Modern Science Fiction but of the writer, himself. Personally, thinking, to me, is ENTERTAINMENT. And I would like to say that Mark Clifton's stories, whether with a certain Mr. Apostilides or Riley or by his little ole self, turn out to be masterpieces of thought. How about another as well done as "Sense From Thought Divide", Mr. Clifton? And, to Mr. Budrys, I have yet to see him duplicate his first piece of science fiction.

EDWARD WOOD: Some comments on the September issue of INSIDE & SFA.

The outstanding item was, of course, "Fire When Ready, Critic!" This is probably the best article of the year. I agree most heartily with Sam Moskowitz because I have always believed that the best state to have between the professional in science fiction and the intelligent critic is that of a "friendly hostility". I had to laugh at Cleveland when talking to a few professionals who claimed they had seen the crash ahead of time but didn't say anything because they didn't see how they could do anything about it. I won't call them liars, but our civilization does not work on the principle of rewarding those "who knew but didn't talk". Regardless of the correctness of his reasoning there is no question that Moskowitz did ahead of the event forecast the present state of magazine science fiction...I did not think that H. L. Gold would go so far as to mention Moskowitz's connection with Science Fiction Plus. Should one bring up Beyond or the breathtaking success of Galaxy Science Fiction Novels to show that Gold has his weaknesses? If a magazine folds, one should seek causes and effects. There is no reason to hold it up as an example of stupidity. Consider the 3 issues of Worlds Beyond—a very large proportion of the stories in it and announced for it have appeared in anthologies. Therefore, should one consider Damon Knight a bad or inefficient editor? I think not...Some years ago I was engaged in studying some of the better fan magazines of the 30's and 40's and I copied down some of the astute comments that I ran across. Perhaps some of the readers of INSIDE & SFA will like to read them: "Tricky writing in the manner of James Joyce, Saroyan, or Feodor Dostoevski is out of place in a science fiction magazine. It makes good literature, but s. f. readers won't read it and s. f. editors won't buy it. A straight, fast-moving, simply written yarn sells ten times as fast as a psychopathic study of three lesbians and an introverted schizoid discussing the probable effects of life on an asteroid, however well written the latter be."—Frederik Pohl, "Perk, Melpomene!", Spaceways #8, October 1939, page 7. "...he (referring to Donald Wollheim) doesn't speak for all readers, because magazines that go significant go floppo. People don't like their fiction dressed-up propaganda, or 'socially significant' if you want to call it that..."—John W. Campbell, Jr., "A Reply to Moskowitz", Spaceways #11, March 1940, page 12.

RAY SCHAFFER, JR: I believe that Des Emery did not receive the full implication and meaning of a statement I made in INSIDE #10, in which I said that "although many maladjusted delinquents read comics, they were maladjusted to begin with." Des says that such is not the case because maladjustment is not usually provoked into actuality without some outside agency acting for it. Well, this is true in the sense that the reading of comics by some individuals who have inherent maladjustment tendencies will result in the release of the maladjustment in the form of delinquency. But Des should stop and evaluate what I said for a moment and he will realize that my statement implies that maladjustment is located within the boundaries of the human mind. For that matter, the statement made by Des is indicative of the same thing. Thus, a mind with strong inherent maladjustment tendencies is capable of falling prey to any evil of society, and therefore could just as easily be affected by life itself. Should we prohibit such individuals from witnessing the miserable forms of life that exist on "skid row"? Should we make such localities off-limits to these individuals? Should we ban reports in the newspapers describing violations of the law, such as murder, rape, brutality, etc.? Now, to do so would be not only to deprive these same individuals of their freedom of action, but also would result in censorship of the press which is the foundation of this land's liberty. When the free press disappears, so goes democracy. Actually, I sincerely believe that these "clean" and "moral" comic-burners want to preserve this na-

tion's liberties and that they desire to retain the freedom of the press. But I also believe that they are not evaluating the situation in the light of good, sound logic. I believe that they are so obsessed with the idea of preserving decency and a high moral standard that they are shuting their eyes to reality and the consequences of their actions. Now, the following is what Des and everyone interested in censorship should consider. If we are to prevent inherent maladjustment tendencies from leaving the subconscious minds of individuals, which is, in effect, to prevent these tendencies from entering the conscious minds, then we would have to eliminate all the evils of society; which, without question, is impossible in this era of racial and national prejudice. Therefore, what good does the censoring and banning of comics and other so-called "obscene" publications achieve? It does this—it lessens the opportunities for maladjustment tendencies to enter the conscious mind of the individual. But it does not eliminate the possibility for these tendencies to be released by exposure to other social evils—and sooner or later these inherent tendencies will enter the conscious mind of the maladjusted due to the mind's encounter with other social evils. Now, thank God, the vast majority of the human race has only small, minor tendencies toward maladjustment. Thus, when an average individual encounters a social evil, the strength and will-power of the individual's mind, plus his social background and education, will determine whether or not the maladjustment tendencies are weak enough to remain dormant in the subconscious mind, or strong enough to come to life in the conscious. But this is straying from the main point of consideration, which is: although we lessen the number of social evils by destroying evil breedin' comics and other obscene periodicals, we do not lessen the number of delinquents burdening our society. So, there is no real social gain to be had by banning and censoring; instead, we are faced with a social loss because of the danger to the freedom of the press that results from banning and censoring.

DES EMERY: I can follow pretty well all of your argument in your editorial, but how do you think you'll be able to defend a statement like "...censorship is unavoidable, and...must be avoided at all costs."? Ray Schaffer: you should know that power is the basis of all tyranny. Not censorship, though it may give power, or rather, protect power. However, I certainly agree that history is history and should not be tampered with...You can hardly expect the Church groups to applaud the anti-religious facet of s.f. You yourself are incensed that anyone would like to see it suppressed. You can't blame them for wanting it suppressed. It's very necessary to see and understand the other fellow's point of view, even if you don't agree with him.

((Let's picture again the imperfect statue the two men have molded with their hands. They both realize it is imperfect, but one of them is very unsure of himself. He makes himself believe it is perfect. He has to, because it would be painful for him to change and he has learned over the years how to protect himself from pain. It is easier for him to fight change than it is for him to change. The second fellow is in conflict with himself also. He resolves it by deciding to change the statue. And, despite objections by the other fellow, he manages to make a little progress. What is the viewpoint of the first fellow? Change must be avoided at all costs. The viewpoint of the second? We must have change. One is the viewpoint of the integrated individual; one the viewpoint of the segregated individual. Conflict brings pain, out of the pain comes change and out of the change, progress. But first you have to face and resolve the conflict—and it's much easier to drift with the current than to try to paddle up stream without oars...))

On the morning of May 16th a small, slightly bald man walked down out of the clouds over Los Angeles, went to the Biltmore Hotel and registered under the name of Henry 57.

At eight o'clock that evening he came down from his room, bought seven late edition newspapers and retired for the evening.

With just the twitch of a smile Henry sat down on the edge of his bed and unfolded the first newspaper. The headline read "New Secret Weapon Disclosed". Methodically he went through every page of every newspaper.

Carefully he folded them up, laid them on the chair and went into the bathroom. Henry 57 stared back at him from the mirror. "Well, what now?" he asked himself. There was a hesitant knock on the door.

"Yes?" He smiled as he opened it.

"I'm the manager here, sir. It seems there's been a slight mistake. I have it down here that you registered under the name of Henry 57."

"That is correct."

"We really should have your last name, sir."

"That is my last name."

"Just...Fifty-seven?"

"Yes, you see I'm the fifty-seventh Henry to come here from the planet Altura."

The man stared at him for a moment, blinked, tried to smile, then left. Henry uttered a sound that was suspiciously near a giggle.

It was almost fifteen minutes later when the young man carrying the brand new briefcase arrived.

"Your name is Henry 57, I believe?"

Henry liked the man immediately. He was studious, well dressed, and seemed to know what he was doing.

"That is correct. What can I do for you?"

"I'd like to talk to you. My name is Dr. Boswell." He drew into his almost mechanical mind a thumbnail sketch of the patient. Small, balding, impeccable, with a tiny scar over his right eyebrow.

"Come in, come in. I take it you have the details from the clerk. Oh, won't you sit down?" Henry pointed to a chair and Boswell sat down. "Now, either (A) you don't believe me, or (B) you believe me. Which will it be?"

Boswell smiled. "Go on, this is interesting. If I thought you were

mentally unbalanced, I wouldn't say it, so go ahead."

Henry shook his head knowingly. "I'm the fifty-seventh Henry from the planet Altura to invade--rather, to visit the earth. That's all."

"If this is true, why are you telling me?"

"Oh, it's been checked. There's not a chance you'll believe me, not one."

"I see. And why didn't you come in a space ship or something? And why didn't you use force?"

"An excellent question." Henry lit a cigarette, then stopped, as if he had remembered something. "You're a psychiatrist, aren't you, Dr. Boswell?"

"That's right."

Henry took a well worn notebook out of his pocket, turned to "P", and silently read for a moment. Then he looked up and smiled. "Dr. Boswell, this is all a publicity stunt. I'm from the Altura Cleaners. I thought someone would notice me this afternoon, but apparently people are hardened to any type of advertising stunt. Sorry to have caused you all this trouble."

Dr. Boswell got up. "I see. And what is your real name. And your address?"

"2654 Lindell Street, Inglewood. And my name is...Jones."

"I'd like to see you again sometime."

"You are welcome anytime..."

"Well," Dr. Boswell said as he opened the door, "if you ever have any problems, here's my card."

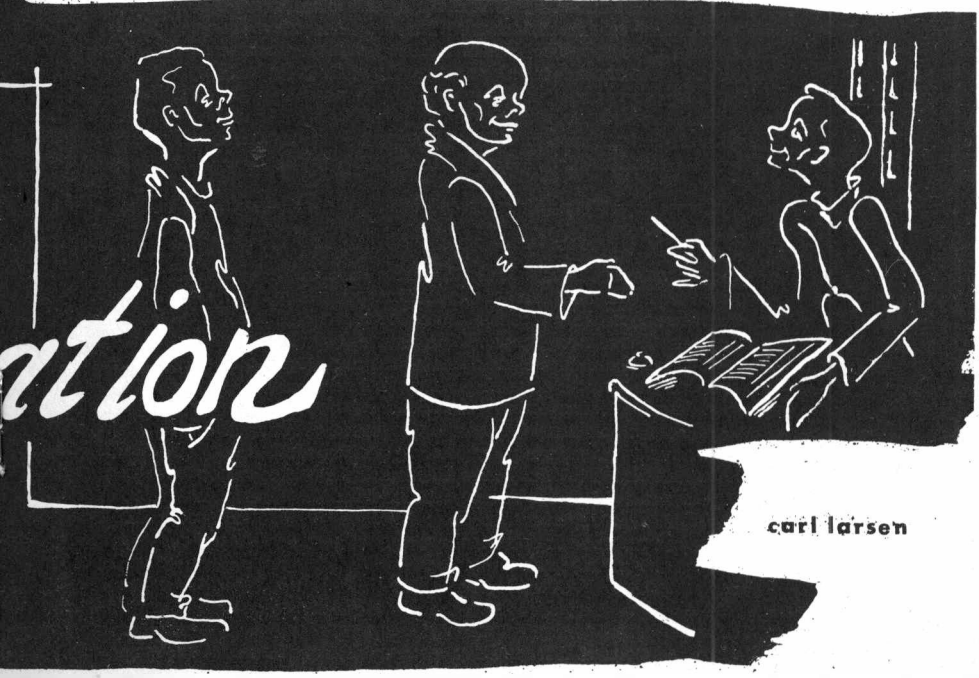
"Thank you. I'll remember you."

Promptly at 8:15 the next morning, Henry 57 checked out of the Biltmore Hotel.

On the morning of June 14th a tall, dark haired man walked into a small south side hotel in Springfield, Illinois.

"Your name, sir?" asked the clerk.

"Henry 58," he said.



ANOTHER KIND, Chad Oliver (Collection); Ballantine, 170 pp., 35¢.

It is not too many years ago that Chad Oliver was just a popular letterhack, whose witty and charming letters appeared with clock-like regularity in the columns of Thrilling Wonder, Startling and Planet. And then, like many another, he blossomed overnight into a superb s.f. author.

This, his first collection of short stories, is the second best author collection of the year, even finer than Kornbluth's THE EXPLORERS. The seven stories collected here are, almost without exception, of the very finest quality. They are anthropological science fiction. Among them are "Rite of Passage" from Astounding. "Scientific Methods" from S F Plus, "Night" from If, and "Transformer" and "Artifact" from Fantasy and Science Fiction. Two stories in the book are new: "The Mother of Neccessity" and "A Star Above It".

Mother is a future vignette: extrapolated future culture holds an annual contest for different plans of civilization—the one that wins remakes the current culture pattern. What happens when one proves so popular that it overruns the world? Illogical and unconvincing, but the familiar Oliver word-magic makes it utterly delightful and absorbing.

The second new tale is the best in the book. "A Star Above It" tells of a future where time travel is perfected and legalized. Then an unadjusted professor bribes his way back to pre-Cortez Mexico and tries to introduce horses to the Aztec Empire. If he succeeds, the entire future of the world will be drastically changed: for with a mounted cavalry, the Aztecs might very well have won over the Spanish Conquistadores. The story is well told, in a balanced, polished prose. Exciting narrative, excellent characterization, fascinating and authentic picture of the ancient Aztec culture. This is one of the very finest stories of the year, and probably Oliver's finest story to date.

TIME BOMB, Wilson Tucker (Novel); Rinehart, 246 pp., $2.75.

This is Bob Tucker's eleventh novel, and it's a good one. A decade or two from now Ben—backed by his fanatical Sons of America movement—seems destined to storm his way through the elections and into the White House. But someone is trying to stop him. Mysterious bombings have accounted for many important leaders in his campaign. And it's the job of Lt. Danforth of the Illinois Secret Police to stop them.

This is a good, smooth, convincing and absorbing melodrama involving immortality, telepathy, time travel and other gimmicks. Gilbert Nash—the immortal man from THE TIME MASTERS—plays a part in the story, and there are references to Paul Breen from WILD TALENT. This novel, then, sort of interconnects with Tucker's two best previous ones.

TIME BOMB is nothing world-shaking, but it is good entertainment.

REPRIEVE FROM PARADISE, H. Chandler Elliott (Novel); Gnome Press, 256 pp., $3.00.

This is an attempt to do what Al Bester did in THE DEMOLISHED MAN: to write a stunning, inventive and imaginative novel. It fails ultimately, but it was a good try and is not entirely without some merit. Laid a couple thousand years from now (the exact era is not given), it pictures a curious and quite original culture, dominated by Polynesians. To support it's multi-billions of population, every spare inch of the Earth is used to raise food. Grasslands, forests, jungled areas, all have given way to high-yield croplands. About eight-tenths of mankind have become semi-intelligent submen, their lives completely ritualized, their language degenerated to stock responses, their lifetime devoted to procreation and production. But Pahad tuan Konor, born of the submen, has raised himself to the standard of Scientist. His keen and unconventional mind realizes Man is going downhill, back to the ape. When he discovers the Earth has slowly tilted on its axis during millenia and realizes this means a gradually increasing loss of croplands before the ever-rising sea level, he attempts to rouse Man from his lethargy, but finds his every move blocked by The Hierarchy.

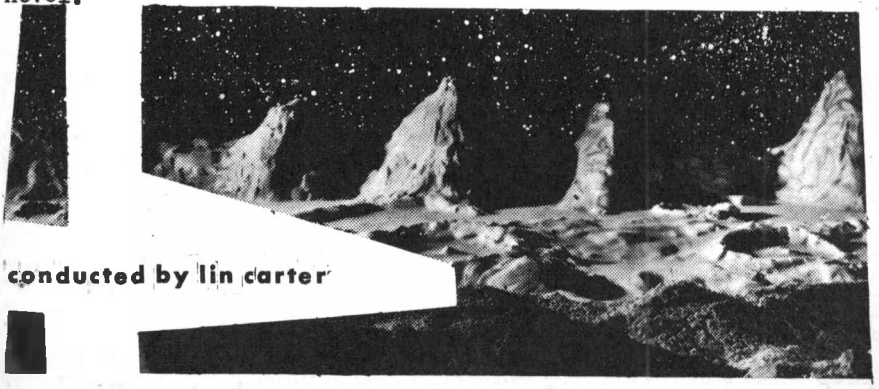
Fleeing, he joins the rebels in the Antarctic base and becomes one of the dedicated band devoted to breaking the stultifying grip of the Hierarchs over mankind.

Now, this plot is clever and original and the concept is rather fascinating. But, where Bester crammed a book-shelf full of ideas into one novel yet kept a balance and control over his material, Mr. Elliott does not. His digressions and his multitude of ideas run away with the story time and again. His writing style, attempting originality, is too confusing.

Moreover, Mr. Elliott unfortunately neglects one of the major conventions of the extrapolated future novel. We expect at least a thumbnail sketch of what has happened from our era to that of the novel. Did our cold war become an atomic one? How, and why, did our culture degenerate into the one he portrays? Neither of these questions is ever answered. And, for a good half-dozen chapters, we are not quite sure whether the story takes place in the future or the distant past! There are cryptic references to a former "Atlantean period" which tend to confuse an already over-confusing book.

REPRIEVE FROM PARADISE has its good points, however. For instance, some of the most delightful non-humans of recent books make their appearance—the semi-civilized seal folk of Antarctica.

Mr. Elliott shows promise, and I will look forward to his next novel.



conducted by lin carter

THE LONG TOMORROW, Leigh Brackett (Novel); Doubleday, 222 pp., $2.95.

This is another of those After-The-Bomb stories. Laid some sixty years after the Destruction, it portrays in elaborate (but limited) detail the rural, city-fearing, religious-centered culture that grew up as a consequence of The Bomb. Amendment 13 to the Constitution has outlawed the building of cities and mankind (in America, at least) has gone back to the farm-and-village-1890-type society, which fears change and innovation. The country seems to be divided up into small religious groups and the story centers around young Len Colter of the New Menonnites.

Eager to learn the "forbidden" sciences, Len and his cousin steal a radio and certain scientific texts. Punished for this, they leave home and set out on a long wandering journey in quest of the half-legendary Bartorstown, a refuge for scientists set up in secrecy before the Destruction, and still rumored to exist. The novel is the story of their search for it, and of what happens when they find it.

And it is not a very good novel. For one thing, it's hard to believe Leigh Brackett wrote it, since it lacks even a trace of the emotion and poetry that mark her finest writing—SHADOWS OVER MARS, THE SEA KINGS OF MARS, THE STARMEN OF LLYRDIS. Poetry there is, but of a rural, earthy sort. The narrative is slow, depressing, uncolorful. The story is unexciting: you don't much care if Len finds Bartorstown. There is no climax, no real pattern to the plot. The over all effect is unsatisfying and downright dull.

SCIENCE-FICTION THINKING MACHINES, Groff Conklin (Anthology); Bantam, 183 pp., 25¢.

This selection of twelve stories from the Vanguard Press edition is better than the original, since careful editing has preserved only (what seems to me) the better of the stories.

Here is Asimov's warm vignette "Robbie", Poul Anderson's superb "Sam Hall", Sturgeon's "Golden Egg", and a top-flight line up which includes Eric Frank Russell, Clifford Simak, William Tenn, Walter Miller and others—all ably represented with superior stories.

I always thought this book hung together better than the other Conklin "idea" anthologies. So, if you haven't read it before, pick up the Bantam edition—it's the cream of the crop.

THE MAKER OF MOONS, Robert W. Chambers ("Novel"); Shroud, publishers, 78 pp., $1.00.

Robert W. Chambers, who died in 1933, was a best-selling American novelist, author of innumerable historical novels, love stories, and the like. He is remembered, at least by us in the s. f. field, as the creator of a handful of truly excellent fantasy and supernatural tales, the best of which at least equal (and possibly surpass) the best of Lovecraft. His tales have long been out of print, and now a few publisher brings us again one of his finest.

THE MAKER OF MOONS is the title of his second collection of fantasies—in which he was trying to recapture the poetry and imagination that made the first, THE KING IN YELLOW, a classic of imaginative literature. His failure is one only of degree. This book, although advertised as "Robert W. Chamber's THE MAKER OF MOONS" and as "a novel of horror", is actually neither! It is <u>not</u> the original Chambers book, but a reprinting of one story from it, the title yarn. Nor is it a novel, but a brief novelet.

However, the tale is one of the best Chambers ever wrote—a poignant and moving, atmospheric, poetic story of gathering evil, a weird and incomplete love story set against a background of Yue-

Laou, the Maker of Moons.

The book also features an excellent and informative brief essay on Chambers, his life, personality and works by Ken Krueger.

DEEP SPACE, Eric Frank Russell (Collection); Bantam, 165 pp., 25¢.

Bantam has here selected some eight short stories from the Fantasy Press book of last year which is by now something of a best-seller in our field. Among the stories reprinted are "The Witness", "Last Blast" and "Second Genesis" which are certainly among Mr. Russell's best.

If you—like I—have often wished that someone would publish a collection by the author of SINISTER BARRIER and DREADFUL SANCTUARY (two of the finest s. f. novels ever written) you will be delighted with the present book. Mr. Russell has that rare and completely undescribable quality in his writing—one which I have previously only found in Heinlein and, curiously, in Herman Wouk and Thomas Costain—that makes you follow his stories with an absorbed, almost hypnotic fascination. I wish I could put it into words: somehow, no matter what he writes about, the very texture of his prose is so completely enthralling that you are willing to re-read almost any of his stories several times.

If you didn't get the Fantasy Press book, don't miss this one!

INSIDE THE SPACE SHIPS, George Adamski ("Non-fiction"); Abelard-Schuman, 256 pp., $3.50.

This, a sequel to Leslie and Adamski's THE FLYING SAUCERS HAVE LANDED, is perhaps a little more coherent and better written than it's famed predecessor. In the present volume, Mr. Adamski claims to have been transported out into space close to the Moon on several different occasions, and to have conversed at length with Saucermen from Mars, Venus and Saturn.

Moreover, he claims: (1) the Moon has an atmosphere, cities, lakes, clouds, forests and living things—it must have an atmosphere (says he) because our own science says it has temperature, and without an atmosphere nothing can have temperature (!); the Moon also cannot be a dead world, because if it were lifeless it would long ago have "disintegrated"; (2) all planets have atmospheres only slightly different from that of Earth—presumably including Jupiter, Saturn and Neptune, whose methane and ammonia atmospheres have been thoroughly analyzed by our spectroscopes; (3) Christ was a Saucerman, reincarnated in mortal form after voyaging from another world in the spirit; (4) Earth in ancient times was settled by men transported hither from other worlds, the scum and degenerate criminal element of the Universe.

Here and there in his narrative he drags in ESP, reincarnation, telepathy, the Bible, Ancient Egypt, and so forth.

The photographs in this book are, in general, even less convincing than in the previous one. He gets around explaining why he didn't take any photos of the interiors of the ships by saying the "magnetic radiation" in the ships is likely to damage his film.

You can read it for laughs, but there's nothing worthwhile in it.

—Lin Carter

PREFERRED RISK, Edson McCann (Novel); Simon & Schuster, 248 pp., $2.75.

Edson McCann's PREFERRED RISK is the very model of a Galaxy serial. It has a good, twisting plot, a young, sympathetic protagonist, fast action, a dash of sex, a Change of Heart. It has everything, unfortunately, except life and vigor, which qualifies it as 1955's biggest disappointment. Surely something more vital should be put forth as the winner of the Galaxy-Simon and Schuster $6500 contest for, the jacket says, 1955's "best work of science fiction," than this second-hand rehash of Kornbluth and Pohl.

Second-hand is indeed the word for the story. It seems to have been based largely on a careful study of THE SPACE MERCHANTS—but the difference is that the Kornbluth-Pohl work arose out of very real and vehement opinions about the nature of contemporary society, specifically contemporary advertising, while the McCann novel has nothing more at its heart than a vehement desire to be a Galaxy serial. THE SPACE MERCHANTS, despite its unconvincing ending, stands out as one of the truly great science fiction novels of recent years; PREFERRED RISK is merely competent, and mere competence is not enough.

The story is told first-person by Tom Wills, a Claims Adjuster for the Carmody Company, a vaguely-defined insurance company which rules the world. At the top of the Company is Millen Carmody, who is held in superstitious veneration. Wills is in love with an enemy of the Company who brings him to her point of view.

Compare:

The story is told first-person by Mitch Courtenay, a Star Class adman for Fowler Schocken Associates, an advertising agency which has great political power. At the top of the Company is Fowler Schocken, who is held in superstitious veneration. Courtenay is in love with an enemy of the Company who brings him to her point of view.

From there it goes on; when Wills naively asks the reader, "Who in all the world would challenge a rule of the Company?" we are prepared for him to pull a Courtenay and go over to the other side.

The action runs smoothly, but McCann is no Kornbluth-Pohl; the background is just a vague blur, not the sharp, unforgettable world of THE SPACE MERCHANTS (remember the people sleeping on the stairs in the office buildings?). The workings of the Carmody Company are never too clearly explained, probably because the basic premises of McCann's society would thereby show up as being as unworkable as I think they are. The minor characters are handled fairly well, but never with much solid motivation or resolution: for example, Zorchi, that curious totipotent, wanders in and out without ever making much sense.

PREFERRED RISK is a severe disappointment; it's a good story, but hardly deserving of the honors heaped upon it.

BRAVE NEW WORLD, Aldous Huxley (Novel); Bantam, 177 pp., 35¢.

This classic anti-utopia novel has been re-issued by Bantam in their larger 4 x 7 format. There's not too much that can be said about this brilliant novel except that it's required reading for anyone with any interest in science, fiction, or science fiction.

NEW CAMPUS WRITING, ed. by Nolan Miller and Judson Jerome (Anthology); Bantam, 294 pp., 50¢.

A collection of new material done in writing classes in American colleges and universities, including, in all, 18 short stories, a goodly number of poems, and (sadly) no critical essays. Though some of the contents will undoubtedly be regretted in later years by the authors, most of the book is quite good, and there are one or two really fine short stories. None is science fiction, and only one might be called, grudgingly, borderline fantasy.

—Bob Silverberg

PLIF, Myrl Edwards (Non-fiction); Exposition Press, 102 pp., $3.00.

PLIF stands for "Postdeath Life Is Fun" and to quote the author, "it is better factually than the former hazy half-guesses and explanations that ministers, rabbis, and priests have given us about it; and it is a little different, too."

Here, for the first time, is the story of Mrs. Myrl Edwards McMahan's psychic experiences, of which she says, "I have had so many psychic experiences that I could not record half of them in a book three times this size."

The book is dedicated to her descendants, "in the hope that they—some of them, or one of them—will invent the inevitable mechanical plif detector."

After telling about some of her psychic experiences in the opening chapters, Mrs. McMahan analyses them. For example, a study of a series of ESP card tests revealed:

"...the total score for the twenty-six ((runs)) was a discouraging chance average of 123—a minus 7.

"In another book, YOU'LL BE A GHOST SOME DAY (still unpublished as I write this), I explained a system of 'psi-economy' reading I have been taught by a postdeath man. It uses phonetics, symbols, and code. By psi-economy reading the score becomes 1,2,3, which in turn symbolize A, B, C: the beginning—the beginning of counting for me, too—and the letters phonetically are 'Abie see'. Abie who? Abraham Lincoln is as much of a postdeath person as are Jefferson and Roosevelt—both Presidents Roosevelt, for that matter."

Mrs. McMahan also tells of how her ESP card scores dropped off prior to the death of her kitten. This kitten was killed "on a date which had long held significance for my father and his parents (all postdeath people) and the same date which is the anniversary of George Washington's death as reckoned by the Old Julian calendar".

With the fifth chapter, "Quicker and More Convincing Than ESP Cards", the book really gets into its stride as the author tells of her experiences with automatic writing.

"My first surprise came when my hand started moving almost as soon as I would sit down every time I'd start testing. I tried not to move it but could not tell whether I was moving it or not. It did not seem that I could be supplying the motivation myself, and if I was, it seemed that I should have produced more legible scribbles than I did, because I can write legibly without looking at the paper when I try.

"At another time at the very end of another illegible line was the clearly written word 'boo'."

In this chapter we also meet her friend "Joe Scottsman", a postdeath person whose real name she is withholding. She says, in regard to this, "Explanations of the necessity for using a pseudonym—other than his continuing insistence that I do!—are too lengthy to include here and are unnecessary as well."

Chapter six is called "Don't Say 'Good-bye' at a Funeral: Listen Instead" and Mrs. McMahan tells of five consecutive days of "lessons" of a most unusual sort, as well as "pinpoint light flashes which I had been seeing for several years, at least, but without thinking of them as being anything psychic."

Chapter seven takes us from automatic writing to TV. The author reveals how postdeath people can affect television sets, communicating with the living by picture-fade, blink, and snow-out.

Succeeding chapters develop this theme. In "Abraham Lincoln and TV", Mrs. McMahan tells how she was contacted by a postdeath person who called himself Abraham Lincoln; and in "Secret Messages by Television", she reveals what he told her.

The book climaxes with "If You Test", in which Mrs. McMahan admits that she has "omitted many clever messages received by TV, and have worried about including this, that, and the other inci-

dent and TV message which I have included or considered including. When worrying especially along such lines one evening, I received one of the most comforting and most truthful of all TV messages. It was simply, 'It's larger than that—in any way.'"

And indeed it is.

—Joe Schaumburger

THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES AND NOVELS, 1955, ed. by T. E. Dikty (Anthology); Frederick Fell, 541 pp., $4.50.

This omnibus successor to the Bleiler-Dikty annual short story and novella collections (Bleiler drops out on this one) is mammothly disappointing. The book opens with an all-inclusive survey of 1954 in science fiction, done by Dikty—which, interesting though it is, is a comedown from the brilliant essays by noted authors which used to serve as prefaces for the series. The volume closes with Earl Kemp's painstaking and useful compilation of hard-cover s.f. books published in 1954.

What comes in between, though, is another story or two. As a matter of fact, there are twenty of them, and if they represent the "best" that appeared in 1954, it was a sad year indeed. The magazine breakdown is this: Astounding 4, Fantasy and Science Fiction 6, Galaxy 3, Amazing Stories 2, Fantastic 1, Saturday Evening Post 1, Imagination 1, Science Stories 1, and one original (by Arthur Porges).

There are two novels, Simak's Galaxy story, "How-2", and E. B. Cole's "Exile" from Astounding. Also present are two long novelets from ASF, Frank Herbert's "Nightmare Blues" and Tom Godwin's superb "The Cold Equations". The sixteen shorter works are divided among 13 authors, with Walter Miller, Robert Abernathy, and Raymond E. Banks each having two stories. These include some distinguished stories—especially "Memento Homo" by Miller and "One Way Street" by Bixby, both from Amazing. But at least five of the other stories are strictly mechanical journeyman work, competent but hardly deserving immortality.

It's when we consider the omissions that the value of this anthology as a record of the Best of the Year falls down. Where, for example, are "Beep" by James Blish or Randall Garrett's "The Hunting Lodge"? How about Margaret St. Clair's "Short in the Chest", Arthur Sellings' neglected gem, "The Departed", Damon Knight's "Special Delivery"? There's Edmond Hamilton's "Sacrifice Hit", Bester's "5,271,009", Simak's "Dusty Zebra", Michael Shaara's "Wainer", and plenty of other stories which have been either ignored or snapped up by shrewder anthologists. The absense of these stories, and the presence of the ones that did creep in, make the 1955 volume the least distinguished of the long series.

—R. S. Montague

THE CAVES OF STEEL, Isaac Asimov (Novel); Signet, 192 pp., 35¢.

Originally published in Galaxy and then by Doubleday in hard covers, this is, in my opinion, the finest of Dr. Asimov's novels.

Some critics have said that Asimov's books tend to cover too long a space of time, that they jump around from viewpoint to viewpoint, and that they all take place somewhere out in the stars. Books like the three Foundation novels, THE STARS LIKE DUST, CURRENTS OF SPACE, and PEBBLE IN THE SKY were criticized for these "failings". I, personally, like that sort of thing, but Dr. Asimov evidently decided to shut his critics up once and for all.

THE CAVES OF STEEL takes place on Earth, over a period of a little over two days, and it sticks to the viewpoint of Detective Elijah Baley throughout.

The Spacers, humans from the fifty Outer Planets, have come back to the mother planet, Earth, and have set up a small colony

of their own, Spacetown. Earthmen don't like the Spacers and don't like the robots that live with them.

Robots, as a matter of fact, are putting so many people out of jobs that Earth's economy is threatened. There is, therefore, considerable anti-robot feeling.

Then a Spacer is murdered. The Commissioner of Police assigns "Lije" Baley to solve the crime and gives him, as a partner, R. Daneel Olivaw—and the R stands for Robot.

Baley, knowing that he must solve the case or lose his job, must find some way of doing it before the lightning-fast computer brain of the positronic robot can do so. The way in which he does it makes for one of the finest s.f. novels ever written.

INVADERS OF EARTH, ed. by Groff Conklin (Anthology); Pocket Books, 257 pp., 25¢.

Groff Conklin, who might well be called the Old Master of s.f. anthologists, always manages to come up with a group of fairly readable stories. This edition contains fifteen of the twenty-two which appeared in the Vanguard Press edition that came out three years ago.

This is another "idea anthology". Every one of the tales concerns itself with aliens coming to this planet from some distant world. The results of this limitation in choice vary as widely in quality as they do in alien types—from the vaguely gaseous, through the ugly blobs, to the almost-human.

Theodore Sturgeon's "Tiny and the Monster" is a beautiful piece of poetic emotion, and very convincingly told.

"Minister Without Portfolio" by Mildred Clingerman is a neatly-told character study of a color-blind and somewhat scatterbrained grandmother who saves Earth because of her homey simplicity.

Katherine MacLean's scientifically accurate "Pictures Don't Lie" is very logical proof that very logical thinking doesn't always give the right answer if all the data isn't available.

Eric Frank Russell's story, "Impulse", is from a 1938 Astounding, and concerns an alien virus which is able to take over the brains of human beings. He did it better in "Call Him Dead".

"Angel's Egg" by Edgar Pangborn is cute, but it's a little too much on the "fairies in the garden" side of the fantasy fence to suit me.

As I said, the stories are all readable, but I can't say they are all topnotch. But, then, what can you lose for two bits?

THIS FORTRESS WORLD, James E. Gunn (Novel); Gnome Press, 216 pp., $3.00.

Every once in a while, a book comes along that completely knocks the props out from under one's concept of what a science fiction book should be. And, oddly enough, it usually is by someone who is well known in the field, but who, for some reason, still hasn't unleashed the power at his command. Then, quite suddenly, he lets go, and the brilliant blast of sheer writing ability which results is an amazing thing to see.

James Gunn's novel is such a one. The jacket blurb refers to it as "Science-Literature", and my inclination is to agree.

After the fall of the Second Galactic Empire, humanity is again divided. A well-fortified planet can hold off any space fleet, no matter how big. It isn't worthwhile to try to conquer another planet. So each remains a law unto itself, completely autonomous. Roughly divided into four classes—the nobles, the Church, the Peddlers, and the Agents—the upper strata of society rules the citizens of the Galaxy like serfs.

William Dane, a young man studying for the priesthood, has no knowledge of the outside world; he has spent most of his life in

the sanctuary of the Cathedral on the planet Brancusi. One day while he is conducting the services, a beautiful, frightened young girl comes into the Cathedral. Outside are two Agents, free-lance killers, who have obviously been hired to get the girl. She drops a small, egg-shaped, transluscent pebble into the collection box and when she leaves, the Agents cut her down and carry her off. But it soon becomes obvious that they were not after the girl, but the pebble. Four Agents actually violate the sanctity of the Church in order to capture Dane and get the pebble.

From there on, things get hotter and hotter as Dane, trying to protect the mysterious pebble, is shot at, cursed, lied to, tortured, and loved. It might be called a "chase story", but it's more than that, a great deal more. It's a story of living people and how they think and love and hate and desire.

There's the Abbot, whose kindly exterior hides a wholly different kind of mind; Freida, whose courage is high—and who breaks pitifully under pressure; Sabatini, a man of cold determination and ruthless desire for power, who is only a little boy with a big nose; Laurie, an "entertainer" whose love and sense of duty fight with her own desires. And, lastly, William Dane himself, an acolyte, ignorant in the ways of the world, who is forced to learn to handle himself against the forces of his whole society.

It's a magnificent novel—I wish I had written it.

—Randall Garrett

THE SANDS OF KARAKORUM, James Ullman (Novel); Bantam, 151 pp., 25¢.

What does it mean to have faith? And if one should have faith in something, what insurance is there that that faith is warranted —that it won't be suddenly shattered by a chance circumstance or by life itself?

John Bickel wondered. He had been a missionary in China for over ten years, driven by a psychological need to do good in atonement for having done bad. His faith was his security, his reason for living. He believed in the Chinese people, and he believed he could help them. But the wars changed that, his faith in God shattered by the realities of life. He thought for a while that there might be some hope in Communism. Then chance dealt him an ace of spades.

All that was left him was the distant, urgent call within his mind. And that which was beyond the Black Sands...

This then is the story of John Bickel, told from the viewpoint of his friend, Frank Knight. It could be called a fantasy, but it is a fantasy only by accident. It is an accident like 1984—in this case, Ullman uses a "fantasy" device for saying what he has to say, but the important thing is what he has to say—it will leave you stunned—and how he says it—he keeps you interested.

The first chapter is a sure-fire attention getter, beautifully done. The narrator, Knight, then introduces you to the Bickels. The first half of the book is concerned with Knight's search for the Bickels; the second half with the quest for Karakorum and the secret beyond the Black Sands. Although the tracking down of the Bickels becomes a little tiresome after awhile, once Knight finds them you are continually interested and intrigued.

It's a marvelous book. The suspense is tense, the writing smooth and, at times, emotionally moving, the theme, faith, subtlely woven into the fabric of a story you won't forget—a story that encompasses the past and future of mankind, and, in the end, resolves the question of the reason for existance in this world that is about to end. The answer is faith, but there is only one thing left that we can have faith in.

It is a book you will reflect on often, when you sit in a room, alone, and the winds begin to blow...

POTLUCK POGO, Walt Kelly; Simon & Schuster, 179 pp., $1.00.

I don't have to tell you that this one is good. Kelly's reputation for wit, and for subtle and bitting satire on men & morals & politics (a thing separate unto itself) is known to you all.

I will only say, in passing, that this collection (a reprinting from the daily comic strip) is not nearly so good as his last one, THE POGO PEEK-A-BOOK, which was an original. In that volume, Kelly had a purpose, he had something he wanted to say, and the result cut like an incisor into the heart of the problem of censorship—he pointed out the inconsistencies in man's reasoning and made you laugh at yourself. There is no finer comment on one of man's supreme inconsistencies—his love for freedom and his selfish regard for his own opinions—than THE POGO PEEK-A-BOOK.

While POTLUCK POGO is amusing and entertaining, it is a letdown. It is too much of Kelly, the joker, and not enough of Kelly, the satirist.

None the less, you won't want to miss it. Even if you've been following the strip in the newspapers, I suggest that you avail yourself of this opportunity to again be amused by all the characters of Okeefenokee. It's intellectual entertainment by one of America's finest humorists.

—Ron Smith

ALSO RECEIVED FROM BANTAM:

THE ART OF ITALIAN COOKING, Maria Lo Pinto (Cook Book); Bantam, 158 pp., 35¢.

This one has Cindy's stamp of approval. Treat yourself by buying it for your wife (or vice versa).

BHOWANI JUNCTION, John Masters (Novel); Bantam, 371 pp., 50¢.

Recommended.

THE SECOND HAPPIEST DAY, John Phillips (Novel); Bantam, 309 pp., 35¢.

Recommended.

HONEY, I'M HOME, Marione Nickles (Cartoons); Bantam, 113 pp., 25¢.

A mediocre collection of cartoons from the Post.

GIVEAWAY, Steve Fisher (Novel); Bantam, 140 pp., 25¢.

Another story of mixed-up teen-agers lost in the evil vortex of a "world they never made". Of little interest.

THEY WENT WRONG, Croswell Bowen (Non-fiction); Bantam, 196 pp., 35¢.

Case histories of six criminals. Recommended.

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF FIRST AID, John Henderson, M.D. (Non-fiction); Bantam, 333 pp., 50¢.

THE TIME OF THE GRINGO, Elliott Arnold (Historical Novel); Bantam, 310 pp., 50¢.

THE SPIDER KING, Lawrence Schoonover (Historical Novel); Bantam, 399 pp., 50¢.

Undoubtedly Schoonover's best. A very vivid picture of medieval

France and how Louis XI helped to upset this society and start the march to modern times. He emerges as one of the most interesting figures of recent historical fiction.

published

ADVENTURES IN SCIENCE, ed. by Bertram Brookes; Roy, 299 pp., $3.50.
AGE OF THE TAIL, THE, Harry Smith; Little, Brown, 167 pp., $3.00.
BEAST THAT WALKS LIKE MAN, Harold McCracken; Hanover House, $4.00.
BOY WHO DISCOVERED THE EARTH, Henry Felsen (Juvenile); Scribner, 140 pp., $2.25.
BULLARD OF THE SPACE PATROL, Malcolm Jameson (Juvenile); World, 206 pp., $1.00.
EXPLORING THE MOON, Roy Gallant (Juvenile); Garden City, 63 pp., $2.00.
FRONTIERS OF ASTRONOMY, Fred Hoyle; Harper, 376 pp., $5.00.
HESTER AND THE GNOMES, Marigold Hunt (Juvenile); Whittlesey, $2.50.
MAN WHO UPSET THE UNIVERSE (FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE), Isaac Asimov; Ace, 254 pp., 35¢.
MOONRAKER, Ian Fleming; Macmillan, 220 pp., $2.75.
NEW WORLD OF TOMORROW, THE, Daniel Reber; Vantage Press, 267 pp., $3.00.
SALAMANDERS AND OTHER WONDERS, Willy Ley; Viking, 303 pp., $3.95.
SECRET OF THE MARTIAN MOONS, Donald Wollheim (Juvenile); Winston, 217 pp., $2.00.
SOUND BARRIER, Neville Duke and Edward Lanchbery; Philosophical Lib., 140 pp., $4.75.
SPACEWARD BOUND, Slater Brown (Juvenile); Prentice-Hall, 213 pp., $2.75.
STAR GUARD, Andre Norton; Harcourt, 247 pp., $3.00.
STAR SHIP ON SADDLE MOUNTAIN, Atlantis Hallam (Juvenile); Macmillan, 182 pp., $2.50.
STARS ARE OURS, THE, & THREE FACES OF TIME, Andre Norton and Sam Merwin; Ace Double, 318 pp., 35¢.
SWIFT AND CARROLL, Phyllis Greenacre; International Univ. Press, 306 pp., $5.00.
TUNNEL IN THE SKY, Robert Heinlein (Juvenile); Scribner, 273 pp., $2.50.
VALLEY BEYOND TIME, Vaughan Wilkins; St. Martin's Press, 304 pp., $3.00.
ASTRONOMY MADE SIMPLE, M. H. Degani; Garden City, $1.00.

forthcoming

FLYING SAUCER CONSPIRACY, THE, Major Donald Keyhoe; Holt, $3.50. Nov.
FORBIDDEN PLANET, THE; Bantam, April 1956.
GHOSTS IN AMERICAN HOUSES, James Reynolds; Farrar, $12.50. Nov. 14.
GOLDEN KAZOO, John Schneider; Rinehart. Jan. 23.
MARTIANS, GO HOME, Fredric Brown; Dutton, $2.75. Nov. 14.
OCTOBER COUNTRY, Ray Bradbury; Ballantine, $3.50. Nov. 16.
RACES AND PEOPLE, Isaac Asimov and William Boyd (Juvenile); Abelard-Schuman, $2.75. Nov. 29.
ROCKET MAN, Lee Correy (Juvenile); Holt, $2.75. Nov.
SCIENCE FICTION MUTATIONS, ed. by Groff Conklin; Vanguard, $3.75. Nov.
SUPERPOWER: THE STORY OF ATOMIC ENERGY, Frank Ross, Jr. (Juvenile); Lothrop, $2.95. Nov.
200 MILES UP, J. Gordon Vaeth; Ronald Press, $5.00. Nov. 24.
UTOPIA 1976, Morris Ernst; Rinehart, $3.50. Nov. 3.

micro ads

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HEREMON THE BEAUTIFUL - The Countess of Cromartie (Heath Cranton, London, '30, 1st. Very fine copy) 2.00

MOONCHILD - Aleister Crowley (Mandrake P. London, '29, 1st. Very fine copy) 3.50

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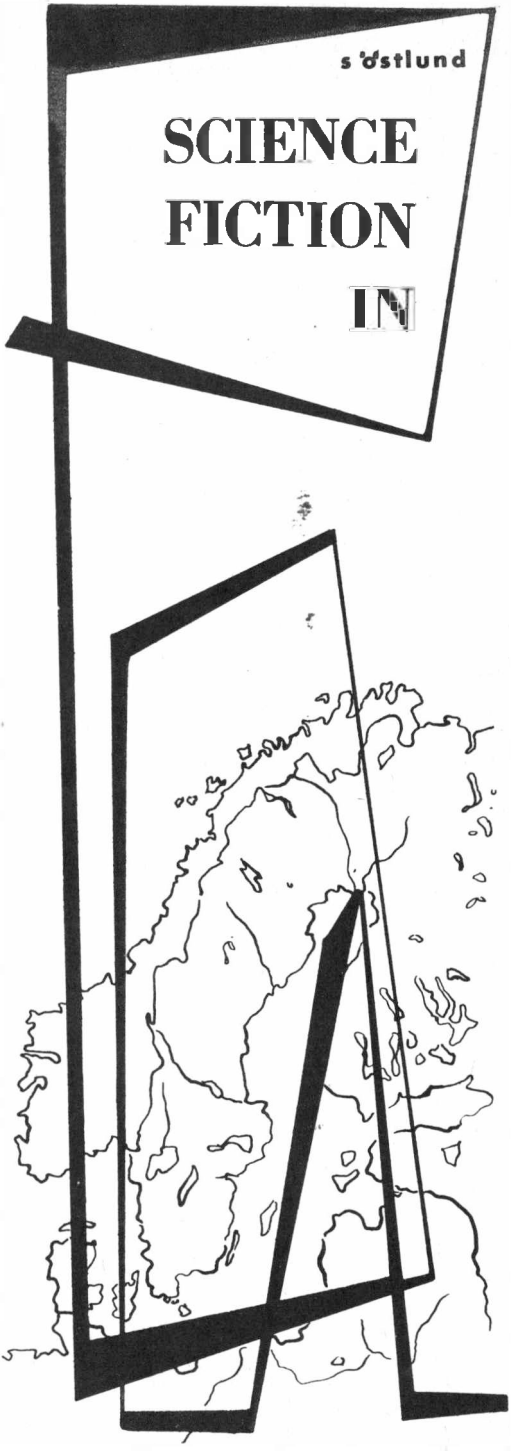

Science fiction has arrived in Sweden to stay. This is the honest opinion of those people who were the first here to become cognizant of this enchanting and thought-provoking branch of literature some ten or fifteen years ago. I feel proud to belong to this group, the veterans in the field here. Our love for science fiction has driven us to active propaganda for our special hobby and our belief in s. f. has not proven false. Today, in Sweden, with its rather small population of 6-7 million, 10,000 persons read monthly our only s.f. magazine, Hæpna! and not less than four publishers have tried their hand at s. f., in most cases with gratifying results.

The background to this may warrant a few words.

In Sweden, as well as in many other countries, quite a lot of national fiction, which even according to present standards could be classified as good s. f., has seen the light of day. Such, for instance, is the novel OXYGEN AND AROMASIA by Claes Lundin, printed in 1878. This novel, in a setting of a super-Scandinavian state, with Gothenburg as its capital, is the first one in my experience describing "aromatic symphonies", where the tones of music are substituted by various olfactory sensations. Another novel, by Gustaf Jansson, printed in 1914 and called THE CATASTROPHE, is based on the theme of a world-state ruled by the hundred richest men and women in the world; the set-up, an oligarchy on the top of a slave caste, was wrecked by a small group with a new invention of destruction, heat-rays, and only two human beings, the new Adam and Eve, were allowed to live in order to inaugurate a better race and world. Yet another and more recent novel is KALLOCAIN by the poetess Karin Boye, written in the thirties on rather the same theme as the later 1984 by Orwell, and quite as terrifying —and well written. Several other books could be mentioned

but, in my opinion, these are the most interesting ones.

In 1939 a Swedish s. f. magazine, Jules Verne Magasinet, was started. It was a weekly and contained mostly translations from the U.S. contemporaries. The magazine was, more or less, a juvenile one and contained also comics of various kinds, sports articles and other miscellaneous items. Later on the name was changed to Veckans äventyr (Adventures of the Week), subtitle still Jules Verne Magasinet. Wild West stories began to appear and the magazine expired ignominiously in the beginning of 1947.

About one fifth of the Swedish s.f. fans read and write English and, of these, most subscribe to one or several U.S. prozines and buy American and British s. f. books. For the rest of the fans translations of U.S. and British novels are being published. For instance, Asimov's I, ROBOT, Bradbury's THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES, Wyndham's DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS, Duncan's THE BLACK PLANET, etc.

In a competition, sponsored by our biggest publisher, for the best juvenile s. f. novel, the first prize, or the equivalent of $3,000, was won by the Swedish author Sture Lönnerstrand for the novel THE SPACE HOUND. Mr. Lönnerstrand has written various s. f. short stories for several magazines, among them Häpna! THE SPACE HOUND is a novel about the first journey to the planets. To American readers, this may seem rather uninteresting. As I have read most of the novels on that theme I must, however, declare that Mr. Lönnerstrand has a very fresh approach to the subject and a more fertile imagination than most of the authors I have read before.

The first Swedish fan club, Futura in Stockholm, was started in 1951 by four or five "veteran" fans, myself included. The chairman was, and is still, Sture Lönnerstrand, the author mentioned above. In 1954 the club expanded rapidly and counts now some 50 members who meet regularly once or twice a month. At about the same time several other clubs were formed in some of the provincial cities, as for instance Club Cosmos in Gothenburg, Club Meteor in Malmo, Space Club in Örebro and the as yet unnamed club in the twin cities Jönköping-Huskvarna, where Häpna! is published. The activities of these clubs are the usual ones, apart from Club Meteor, which is ambitious enough to have produced a couple of s.f. films, strictly amateur of course, but none the less the real thing in spirit.

On a cold and dreary November evening in 1953 my phone rang and when I answered an unknown voice asked me if I would be interested in discussing some plans about publishing a s.f. magazine in Sweden. Will a cat lap cream? So that is how I came into contact with Mr. Karl-Gustaf Kindberg of Jönköping-Huskvarna, the man behind Häpna! We had some very interesting talks and a few days later Mr. Kindberg left for the U.S. on business, during which journey he was to contact some prominent s. f. people there. Well, he did it all right, and here is where we Swedish fans should hand a bouquet to our untiring helper and supporter in the States, Forry Ackerman, who has been exceedingly generous to Swedish s.f. Without him Häpna! could not have reached its present, if I may say so myself, rather high level regarding the story material.

The magazine was lucky enough to secure as its first serial van

sweden

Vogt's SLAN. This classic was enthusiastically received by the Swedish public. The short stories in the first issue were Ross Rocklynne's "Interplanetary Tincan", Kris Neville's "Old Man Henderson" and Charles Eric Maine's "The Repulsive Factor", the latter from the British Authentic. The first issue of Häpna! was published in March 1954.

Raymond F. Jones is represented with "Utility" in the April issue and Cleve Cartmill with "Punching Pillows" in the May issue 1954. Kris Neville has a couple of stories, namely "Wind in Her Hair" in the May issue 1954 and "Underground Movement" in February 1955. The July-August issue 1954 contains Sewell Peaslee Wright's "The Forgotten Planet", H. L. Gold's "The Perfect Murder" and van Vogt's "The Enchanted Village. Others by van Vogt are "The Rulers" in the October issue, "This Joe" in November, "Far Centaurus" in the December issue 1954 and "Not Only Dead Men" in March 1955. As yet we have had only one by Isaac Asimov, "What If..." in the January issue 1955 and one by Ray Bradbury, "The Fire Balloons" in May 1955. By Forry Ackerman we had "The Mute Question" in May 1954.

In the September issue 1954 came the first instalment of Jack Williamson's THE LEGION OF SPACE, also a very popular one among the readers. The next issue presented our first by Arthur C. Clarke, "Captain Wyxtpthlls Flying Saucer". Others by Clarke were "Superiority" in June 1955, "The Breaking Strain" in January 1955, "History Lesson" in February, "Hide and Seek" in March 1955, "Expedition to Earth" in April and "The Sentinel" in June 1955. Other British authors are John Wyndham with "Opposite Numbers" in March 1955 and "Survival" in April, William F. Temple with "The Two Shadows" in January 1955 and "Way of Escape" in May, Peter Phillips with "At No Extra Costs" in February 1955 and E.C. Tubb with "Pistol Point" in September 1954.

Lafayette's (Hubbard) "Ole Doc Methuselah" came in the May issue 1955 and will be followed by others in the same series. The new serial after THE LEGION OF SPACE is going to start in the October issue 1955 and will be Siodmak's DONOVAN'S BRAIN. As a shorter serial this autumn Häpna! has also secured the first of Asimov's Foundation stories, "Bridle and Saddle".

The Swedish author Sture Lönnerstrand is represented with several stories. The first one was "Barbaretos" in April 1954, another was "Shock" in the June issue 1954 and finally a time travel story, "The Man Who Bathed With Napoleon" in June 1955. Jack Ramström, a teen-age author, did rather good with his "Scene on Mars" in the December issue 1954, and a Danish contributor, Edmund L. Hansen, has had "Nemesis" in October 1954 and "The Sky Isn't Blue on Mars" in the July-August issue 1955. Another Swedish author is Y. Engzström with "The Ninth Member" in the September issue 1954.

Apart from fiction, Häpna! has had a lot of science articles by various authors, Hollywood film reviews by Forry Ackerman, book reviews by Roland Adlerberth of Sweden, fan and librarian, and a small fan's column by myself.

What is the aim of Häpna!? Well, it must be kept in mind that—as regards sf., of course—my countrymen are singularly uneducated.

From pure space and other kinds of opera, with plenty of action, etc., we try to lead our public to more adult science fiction. Most of our readers are still in the gadget phase, but we try to interest them in the human behind the machines and humanity in the future. But this is a long and tedious process, though we can—thanks to the

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experiences in the United States and in the United Kingdom—take a few short cuts here and there. Our present policy is to choose the best of the inevitable action and space opera stories for our public and—now and then—try some modern, high-class s.f. for size.

Another policy of Häpna! is to encourage Swedish and Scandinavian authors to try their hand at science fiction. As mentioned above, we have had a few already, and I am reading quite a lot of new manuscripts each month. In time, we hope, the contents of Häpna! will be about equally divided between Scandinavian and foreign authors.

We haven't as yet tried to hold a s. f. convention in Sweden. Perhaps we are going to do so, however, next year, if the response to a tentative roll call is good enough. In such a case, we'll try to get some foreign visitors, too, especially from U. K., France and the Netherlands, and, of course, from the other Scandinavian countries, Denmark, Norway and Finland. Naturally, there is very little hope that any Americans will be coming, but all of you are of course welcome, should you find yourself in Europe at the time.

Well, that's all, folks, and I hope that I have been able to interest you a little in the activities in a—from a science fiction point of view—rather remote corner of Terra.

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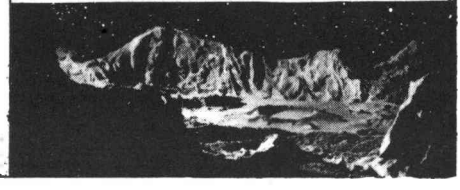

SCIENCE FICTION NEWS LETTER

EVANSTON, ILL: Frank Robinson has assumed the post of managing editor of William Hamling's new male magazine, ROGUE. The first issue of that periodical appeared in early October. Robinson has also sold his first s-f novel, THE POWER, to Lippincott for publication next year.

CLEVELAND, O: The Cleveland Science Fiction Association held an open house at the Manger Hotel on October 29th, to look backward at their very successful 13th World Science Fiction Convention, which occupied the same premises over the recent Labor Day week-end. Four Hundred people had attended the convention, some of whom appeared on local television and national radio programs to spread the gospel. Newspaper coverage was adequate and conservative. Convention-goers heard Isaac Asimov declare "If God had wanted basketballs to fly, He would have given them wings!"

Willy Ley, discussing government plans for launching an artificial satellite, was suspicious of the announced cost of ten million dollars. He thought that sum was not nearly enough if they were starting from scratch, and so believes that a great part of the project is already at hand --- something already exists, and the ten million will merely provide the cash to prepare the "shoot."

Steve Takacs read a paper denouncing a science fiction book club, and declaring that it was putting the newsstand magazines out of business --as well as bookstore operators like himself. Ray Van Houten, publisher and manager of Fantasy Times, said that he had been holding up the Takacs' onslaught for several weeks while an attorney checked it for publication.

A new newspaper, SCIENCE FICTION WORLD, appeared at the convention in printed format, with an initial circulation of 30,000 copies. It offered the usual mixture of news, reviews, fiction and advertisements, and was a stepchild of Gnome Publishers. Tucker and Robert Bloch are the co-editors while Martin Greenberg pays the printing bill. The paper is designed for bookstore distribution.

International visitors to the convention included several Canadians, an Australian, plus Ken and Pamela Bulmer of England, who asked that the convention come to London in 1957. New York City will have it next year.

SHARONVILLE, O: Don Ford, American representative of the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund (Taff), revealed that three Yankee fans have already been nominated to travel to the British convention next year, expenses somewhat paid. The nominees are: Kent Corey of Enid, Oklahoma; Lee Hoffman of Savanahh, Georgia; and Dr. E.E. Smith of Des Plaines, Illinois. Smith later declined the nomination, pointing out that he will retire after one more year of work and travel is out of the question until then.

TAFF is an international fan association which collects funds, and later conducts a balloting, to determine WHO will go to WHAT convention as the official representative of the nation. The Fund builds up until enough is on hand to defray the transportation costs. Ken and Pamela Bulmer were the winners this year; some American fan will go to London next year or in 1957. (Ford's address, for those wishing to participate, is 129 Maple Ave., Sharonville, Ohio.)

NEW YORK CITY: Dell First Editions will launch next spring an annual collection of science fiction short stories and novelets, under the title, SCIENCE FICTION --- THE YEAR'S BEST. Judith Merril is the editor. The paperback collection will present "the finest short stories and novelets in the field of science fiction and science fantasy that have been published in periodicals during the previous year." Miss Merril has asked that carbons and tear-sheets of 1955 stories, here and abroad, be sent to her at the Dell address (200 Fifth Ave., New York.) Probably 35¢.

HOLLYWOOD: The next "science fiction" film awaiting release is THEY COME FROM ANOTHER WORLD, ready in November from Allied Artists. The picture stars Kevin McCarthy and Dana Wynter; it was originally entitled "Time Slip."

After that, but not yet bearing release dates, are these spaceoperas: WORLD WITHOUT END (Allied Artists) Hugh Marlowe and Nancy Gates; FORBIDDEN PLANET (Metro) Walter Pidgeon and Anne Francis; BEAST OF HOLLOW MOUNTAIN (United Artists) Guy Madison and Patrica Medina; and ON THE THRESH-HOLD OF SPACE (Fox) again with Mr. Madison.

About five months ago, Lippert Productions released a picture called KING DINOSAUR. At a conservative estimate it set science fiction back 50 years. For your edification and amusement, we are reprinting herewith a thumbnail review of the picture taken from the pages of Boxoffice, the industry's leading trade paper:

> "The offering was made under the banner of Zimgor, Inc., a partnership between Al Zimbalist and Bert I. Gordon. They also collaborated in writing the original story, while Gordon directed. As producers, they utilized considerable stock footage and some adequately staged special effects involving battles between prehistoric animals. Performances by the principals (there are only four speaking roles) are acceptable within the confines of the script.
>
> When a new star settles in the earth's galaxy, a half-year's rocket flight away, plans are made to send an expedition to visit it. Making the trek are Bill Bryant, a physician; Wanda Curtis, a chemist; Douglas Henderson, a botanist; and Patti Gallagher, a mineralogist. After a 10 million mile journey, they land on the star, to find the terrain similar to earth's but inhabited by huge animals and reptiles. Henderson and Patti, while exploring an island, are trapped by a dinosaur and other prehistoric beasts. Wanda and Bill assist in the rescue of their friends and the four prepare for the return to this planet, after setting an atom time-bomb that destroys the predatory dinosaurs."
>
> This editor maintains the bomb destroyed the wrong animals.

-Bob Tucker

Inside This Issue

FIRE THE CRITIC...ready?

closing date

for copy to be in the next issue:
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ART EDITOR: Cindy Smith

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Bournemouth
(Subscriptions 7/6)

AUSTRALIAN AGENT:
John Gregor
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NOVEMBER 1955
ISSUE NUMBER TWELVE

Interior illustrations by Cindy, Dollens and Price.

INSIDE and Science Fiction Advertiser is published bi-monthly at 611 West 114th Street, Apartment 3d-310, New York 25, New York. Subscriptions five issues for $1. Please make all checks payable to Ron Smith and not to the name of the magazine.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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