

#1

THE *new* FUTURIAN

SPRING 1954

VOL. I. NO. 1.

Dedicatory Poem. TO MICHAEL WITH LOVE	D. R. SMITH	3
Vignette LOVE FOR A ROBOT	RALPH MILNE FARLEY	3
Fandom THE GLAMOROUS DREAMERS	WALTER H. GILLINGS	4
Bibliography LOOKING BACKWARDS	ERNEST C. STERNE	8
Book Column BUT IT STILL GOES ON	R. G. MEDHURST	10
Nostalgia WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THEM	HARRY WARNER Jr.	12
Research THE PREHISTORIC BRADBURY	RON BENNETT	14
Talking Point A WHO'S WHO FOR FANDOM?	J. M. ROSENBLUM	18
Critique on "THE TWENTY-SECOND CENTURY"	ERNEST THOMPSON	20
Viewpoint FANTASY AND THE FUTURE	JOHN F. BURKE	21
Book Reviews on Pages 7 & 17 by J. F. BURKE and W. R. GIBSON		

Editorial Pages -- 22 & 23

THE NEW

FUTURIAN

SPRING 1954.

After a break in publishing of some eight years; The New Futurian resumes the tradition started in Leeds with the Leeds Science Fiction League's Bulletin in 1937; leading on to The Futurian in 1938/40; and continued during the war by Futurian War Digest. Sole responsibility must be accepted by J. Michael Rosenblum, who is to be reached at 7, Grosvenor Park, Leeds 7 (Tel. Leeds 41704). Publication will be Quarterly. Subscription is ninepence per copy or three shillings per annum. Contributions most welcome and accepted on the understanding that if not used for The New Futurian, they can be passed on to Orbit; the organ of the present Leeds S. F. Association. Letters of comment likewise welcome but our projected readers section will use the old name of Argumentative? and will be confined to such parts of epistles which contain points of differing opinion or information. Book reviews are especially asked for. Exchanges Welcome also exchange adverts.
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ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

WALTER H. GILLINGS has sometimes been called "grandpa" Gillings which is only a way of complimenting him on the long association he has had with science fiction and its attendant fandom. Wally waged a long hard struggle for many years almost on his own, to interest professional publishers in the medium; edited and produced (and it is sometimes not realised, financed) the classic British amateur magazines - it would be practically a misnomer to term them fanzines - of both the prewar and postwar eras in "Scientifiction", and "Science Fantasy Review". He is a lifelong reporter and editor, at present with the Press Association, has been married long enough to have a son who has done his service with the RAF. Pressure of work has caused Wally to lose touch with stf in recent years but the interest could not be submerged for long and he is resuming such activities as his commitments will allow.

ERNEST C. STERNE is by no means the usual fan type (if there is such a thing) A Leeds schoolmaster by profession, he has been trained as an historian but has other interests in scouting, youth-hostelling, table tennis, bird-watching, stamp-collecting and Hebrew scholarship. Age, in the Thirties, married, his wife being also a schoolteacher. Ernest has read stf for many years although he only has a nodding acquaintance with the US magazines, and he writes here about his especial love -- the pre-historic fantasy.

RICHARD GEORGE MEDHURST will be well-known to anyone who has read my publications before, and indeed to all bibliophiles in the fantasy genre. Londoner born and bred, research physicist by occupation, left wing in politics and a book-collector of many years standing. He has recently astounded us by disposing of his collection though it was for the noble object of providing a home for his wife and son. But the bug has bitten deep and we doubt if the habit of half a lifetime can be easily shaken off. George will continue to write in the Futurian, we hope, on the bookish topics of which he has so unrivalled a knowledge.

RON BENNETT lives a few miles outside Leeds and is one of the newer members of the Leeds SFA. Not quite 20 years as yet, he is now at a teachers training college, and he comes to fandom through the unusual road of an interest in the contemporary short story in which medium he considers Bradbury to be an epic phenomem. He is never tired of telling us about this.

TO MICHAEL - WITH LOVE.

Happily examining my Christmas Mail
 One card I came across - 'twas yours Michael my friend,
 Eagerly I opened it and perused the message therein,
 But then, like Brandy Marlo, I gotten a red mist before my eyes,
 O God! O Grosvenor Park!

"Am thinking of reviving the Futurian" it said,
 And in language curt these two words added
 "Co-operation requested" - no more, no please, and what's more
 The first and only message from your noble pen for years,
 O God! O Grosvenor Park!

Now when I read this I was wroth and I said "Bloody cheek!"
 Am I this Rosenblum's dog that I should thus be ordered by he,
 Am I his servant, his slave, his clown, his performing ape,
 If he addresses me thus how fares his wife?
 O God! O Grosvenor Park!

Now I say to you Michael that I am a man of parts,
 I have a position of command and when I say do thus men obey,
 I am also a man of possessions, having a car, a lathe, a set of
 Encyclopedia Britannica,
 I am not one to run to heel at the lift of your finger,
 O God! O Grosvenor Park!

Message ends.

Apologies to Samuel Butler.

LOVE FOR A ROBOT

by RALPH MILNE FARLEY

Originally written
 for "The Futurian"

War! War! Our country was at war. Democracy must be protected at any cost - - -
 even at the cost of sacrificing Democracy itself.

And so our beneficent dictator decreed that all robots must be turned in, to be
 turned into fighting men.

Now, in our city there lived a nice old lady named Sophronisba Gaunt. She lived
 alone with one robot servant, whom she had had since the day when he came fresh
 from the factory of the Homoid Corporation on Beaver Island. She had trained him
 from the start -- everything he knew, she had taught him. She loved him with
 that same deep mother-love which she would have bestowed upon a human son.

And so, she determined to defy the dictator. Her robot boy should not be scrap-
 ped, for conversion into a fighter.

She did not raise her boy to be a soldier !!!

"The Futurian"; Summer 1939.

THE GLAMOROUS DREAMERS

The Story of British Science Fiction Fandom.

by WALTER GILLINGS.

WE ARE happy to present for the first time, in this series, the story of modern British science-fiction and its devotees, as told by one who has been at the centre of this unique activity since its beginnings 25 years ago. Besides being one of the founders of organised fandom in this country, Walter Gillings was the originator of the first regular s-f magazine published on this side, and has been responsible for the introduction of many British contributors to the field. Since the days of Tales of Wonder he has launched three other magazines, one of which, the internationally-acclaimed Science-Fantasy Review, did much to bring about the present burgeoning of British science-fiction--yet, alas, could not continue to participate in it. Today, by way of relaxation from his work-day job as a Fleet Street news editor, he merely reads and writes s-f; and now, yielding to persuasion, has agreed to record especially for THE NEW FUTURIAN the history of magazine s-f's painful development in these isles.

1: FIRST ENCOUNTERS

LET ME warn those who may be interested in this story at the start that it must be, to a large extent, autobiographical. For more than half of my modest span of 40-odd years I have spent the best part of my spare time with science-fiction; not so much in reading it as in writing it, helping others to write it, or presenting it in printed form--so that those who cared might read it. Alternatively, I have written about it, written to other writers about it, and talked to other readers--and non-readers--about it. There was a time when I used to make long speeches about it; but since I considered my old, cynical friend William F. Temple's criticism that I always made the same speech and that everybody was bored with it, and I decided that he was right (as he invariably is), I have not been so anxious to inflict the account of my early endeavours for British science-fiction on long-suffering fans at their annual assemblies.

However, a sufficient interval has elapsed since my last recital on this theme for a new generation of fans to grow up in ignorance of those pre-war days when Tales of Wonder was reprinting John Beynon Harris and Clark Ashton Smith from Wonder Stories, A. C. Clarke was writing exclusively for Amateur Science Stories (and helping to cut the stencils), and John Russell Fearn had amassed no more than half-a-dozen pseudonyms. Those were the days when the S.F.A. was thriving, when fans bowed down in reverence to Professor A.M.Low, and the B.I.S. was the subject of cheap gibes in the Fleet Street newspapers -- when it could get any mention at all. New Worlds was a duplicated fanmag, and fan conventions were held without the aid of microphones or tape-recorders--or the inconvenience of raygun water-pistols. They were, on the whole, more serious days; perhaps we were all a little too serious with ourselves.

But let us go back to the beginning and see how it all started. And if you find the narrative too personal, bear in mind that to me, as to most of the isolated readers of those days (and to some of us even in these days), science-fiction was an extremely personal matter; a newly-discovered treasure we kept to ourselves only because there were none willing to share it with us, at least within hailing distance.

The British s-f fan of today, who takes his pick of a dozen magazines and is lured by the products of as many book publishers, can hardly imagine what it was like to have to rely on a single magazine to supplement his borrowing from the public library of no more than Wells, Burroughs, Verne and Conan Doyle. To those secluded enthusiasts of a quarter-century ago, the discovery of Hugo Gernsback's Amazing Stories in a backstreet bookshop or upon a market stall came as a revelation from the gods--even though it might consist largely of reprints from Wells and Verne.

My own initiation, as it turned out, was typical of that of embryonic fans in Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and every big city where a few "remainder" copies of the one and only "Magazine of Scientifiction" chanced to percolate. It was in an East End shop window that I first saw my fate, in the cover of the March 1927 issue illustrating T.S. Stribling's "The Green Splotches". I was irresistibly attracted; I spent fourpence on it, was enthralled, and went back for more. Having already exhausted Burrough's tales of Barsoom, I revelled in "The Land That Time Forgot." Then, in a junk shop where I had bought my mixed lots of foreign stamps, I found the issues containing "The Moon Pool."

After that there was no escape. Though I fancy there was an interval of months while I was engrossed with the monster book of Well's short stories, loaned by a well-meaning friend, I was soon enticed back to Amazing by "The Skylark of Space"; thence to Amazing Quarterly (sixpence from the junkshop), by Coblentz's "The Sunken World" and A. Hyatt Verrill's "World of the Giant Ants". Every issue that came my way I hoarded, after reading every word; and soon I set about securing the numbers I had missed from other British readers who had been enslaved before me. Though they were not averse to parting with their copies, they had been so impressed as to write to Editor Gernsback lauding his enterprise, or I would never have been able to get in touch with them through the correspondence columns which, by the time I was captured, had become a regular feature of the magazine.

The first letter from England had appeared in the September '27 issue, signed by A.M.D. Pender, of Surbiton; and in the April '28 issue was the first of several epistles from R. A. Eades, a Londoner whose name old-time fans should remember. With such as these I did business, by post, in days when there were no specialist dealers; no inflated back-number prices either. Had I realised that for more than two years Amazing had actually been available in mint condition

It was not long, however, before impecuniosity compelled me to fall back on the vast resources of Leather Lane, where, on a stall jam-packed with every possible variety of American pulp, I unearthed Gernsback's second magazine, Science Wonder Stories, and its companion Air Wonder Stories, with which it was fated to combine as Wonder Stories. So we proceeded to Dr. Keller's "The Human Termites," Hermann Noordung's "Problems of Space Flying"---and readers' prize letters on "What Science-Fiction Means to Me."

It was about this time, just before the third of the "Big Three" magazines of science-fiction, Astounding Stories, appeared on the scene, that the first stirrings of organised fandom in America became evident. Having established a symbol for s-f (which might well have been adapted to a lapel-button) before leaving Amazing to the mercies of a new publisher, the enterprising Gernsback began to whip up a missionary zeal among his own readers by running in Science Wonder Quarterly another letter contest on "What I Have Done to Spread Science-Fiction." To Raymond A. Palmer, who was destined to rise to editorship of Amazing when it was relinquished, years later, by Dr. T. O'Connor Sloane, and who subsequently established his own publishing set-up with Other Worlds and Fate, went one of the \$100 prizes for his efforts as secretary of the Science Correspondence Club, which had sprung out of a mutual interest in s-f between widely separated fans. A closer group which held club meeting, organised in New York by Allen Glasser, Julius Unger, Mort Weisinger and Julius Schwartz, all of whom were to develop a professional interest in the field, also received Gernsback's blessing; while he gratefully accepted the suggestion of Indiana fan Conrad H. Ruppert for a Science-Fiction Week during which all the converted would spread the gospel among the uninitiated, and duly scheduled the great event for the Spring of 1930.

Constantly, in his editorials, "Uncle Hugo," as he came to be called by his affectionate followers, harped on the theme that out of the diligent reading of s-f would come a better appreciation of the capacities of science to improve man's lot. At the same time he regretted that, in spite of the growing popularity of the "new" literature, the public appetite still inclined to Western stories and sexy thrillers. Yet"..... the Editors have never believed so firmly as they do now that science-fiction will one day sweep the country. But until that day comes, there is the steady winning of new converts... year after year building substantially the great army of s-f fans."

All of which, plus Wellsian dicta and Coblentzian satirisations, gradually worked its effect on my adolescent mind, so that I felt compelled to share my own enthusiasm for science-fiction with someone similarly disposed. A letter in the June '30 Wonder Stories from one L.A. Kippin, of Ilford, gave me the opportunity. The writer responded to my overtures by promptly calling upon me at my home in Leyton; and so began the first of many firm friendships which have been among the greatest satisfactions I have derived from science-fiction through the years. So developed, too, the Ilford Science Literary Circle, through which I made my first contacts with English and American s-f writers and my own journalistic incursions in the field.

(To be continued)

Author: Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon.

Type: Humorous Fantasy.

Title: NO NIGHTINGALES

Pub. Michael Joseph; 1943; pp 251; 9/6.

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Synopsis of plot: Two ghosts living in house in Berkeley Square, watching pageant of the centuries until they are released by a royal visitor.

Reviewed by John F. Burke.

There are, complains the prospective buyer of the house, "No Nightingales" in Berkeley Square. But there are ghosts - two army officers of the days of Queen Anne who are condemned to haunt the house until a royal visitor comes, when they will be released. They attempt to interfere in human affairs to bring about such a visit, but it not until the 1914-1918 war that they have any success and are allowed, gallant old warriors, slowly to fade away.

Anyone who is familiar with the hilarious work of Brahms and Simon will know what to expect. These ghosts come in contact with the notabilities of every generation. As in DON'T MR DISRAELI (of which there is one amusing echo in this book) the authors poke fun at everyone and everything; Doctor Johnson produces a bad witticism that is spurned by Boswell; Mrs Siddons is plunged into difficulties; the baby Thomas Carlyle demands to be taken to Paris to see the beginning of the French Revolution; Captain Bligh is half-way home before he realises that he has forgotten to have the mutiny on the "Bounty" . . . no-one is spared.

You may regard the presence of the ghosts as no more than an excuse to provide a succession of amusing incidents loosely strung together. As a devotee of these magnificent humourists I would accept any excuse for such a feast of merriment. After a slightly ragged start the book gets under way and kept me reading avidly to the end. There is a divine lack of logic, a freedom from worries about anachronism, that must appeal to anyone with a well-developed sense of humour. Some of the scenes are as delightfully inconsequential as a good shaggy dog story. Even without the ghostly theme this book would be classed as fantasy, and for those who have a fondness for what is loosely called the "whacky" type of humour, is definitely indispensable. Those who know Brahms and Simon will find echoes of previous farces - the above-mentioned Disraeli episode and one reminiscence of A BULLET IN THE BALLET. Humourists can add those books to their want list even though they are not fantasy.

Written originally for "BROWSING"; the FAPA publication put out by J.M.R.

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THE TRANSATLANTIC FAN FUND

A Personal Statement.

Firstly, a word of thanks and appreciation to Ted Carnell of his nomination of your humble servant as a candidate for the representation of British Fandom at this years American Stf Convention. However; owing to personal reasons mainly concerned with my business partner's state of health, I find it absolutely impossible to spare the necessary time. May I, therefore, request any participant in the fund organisation (2/6 to Walt Willis - advert) who had intended to vote for me; to consider Walter H. Gillings as first choice. Walter is a pukka founder member of Anglofandom who has always been actively furthering the movement, even though he has been behind the scenes during the latter years; and is a mature personality suitable to seriously represent us in the States. With no disrespect intended to Vince Clarke who would also be a first-class choice; had Walters earlier years of endeavour not given him a prior claim. JMRosenblum.

LOOKING BACKWARDS

by Ernest C. Sterne



If you made an attempt to get people to define what they mean by "Science Fiction", you would no doubt find that the large majority of those who could define it at all would say: "Science Fiction, well, yes, oh that is writing about the future and about space travel, is it not?" or words to that effect. And that is not really so surprising, for the search for the future has always appealed to most people and is, no doubt, largely responsible for the popularity of Science Fiction to-day. Science, to most people, is something essentially progressive, something modern, something that is the spirit of our days. Most of us, under the influence of the past century have been taught to consider Science as the only reliable guide which will lead mankind steadily to better and better life. Lately, however, after the atomic bomb had demonstrated too clearly the fact, people have begun to realise that Science perhaps is not the "Open Sesame" which will bring about this brave new world the Victorians so definitely predicted. And so we have had the spate of stories which bring either warnings or prophesy defeat. But they still fall into the category of futuristic stories which, apart from sheer fantasy, seem to most people to be the core of Science Fiction.

Yet there is another type of story which takes its rightful place with these other tales in the world of Science Fiction. These are the stories which deal with the early days of man on this earth and his adventures on his way to the present age. To me they have always appealed more than the futuristic tales. That is no doubt due to the fact that I am a historian, for that makes me believe that you must know the past before you can understand the present or the future. To me the development of any situation has always had as least as much fascination as the event itself and the consequence it may have. And I am sure that many other people must have similar ideas. Why is it then, that prehistoric tales are less popular?

I can see why many writers have fought shy of writing pre-historics. Unless they intend to write a straight forward adventure story with a more or less accidental prehistoric setting, they can be checked and found wrong in their facts somewhat more easily than if they write about the future. Little as we know about our past, there is still a sufficiently great amount of knowledge available which makes research and care necessary for any but the worst pulp writer. For that reason, perhaps, we find that the real successes in "serious" prehistorics - as opposed to the adventure story - are written by people who have achieved fame as writers well beyond the Science Fiction sphere.

Luckily for the writers there are sufficiently conflicting theories amongst the pundits to give any body a large choice of ideas to pick from. Mention "Atlantis" or the name of Hörbiger and his theory of the creation of the earth at a gathering of experts and you will find that the proverbial apple of Eros which set off the ten years' war for Troy is as peaceful as the armistice talks at Panmunjon compared to the resulting argument. But just the same, writers have to use a certain amount of care to appear really

convincing (I do not mean to say, of course, that futuristic writers have not to use some care, too, but not to this extent), because they can be somewhat easier contradicted by any really interested reader. But it is precisely that fact which makes the reading of prehistorics so exciting for me.

To come down to brass tacks - what books are there which justify all this pseudo-scientific, philosophic stuff I have put down here?

First of all, the adventure story: Rice Burroughs, of course he always pretends to be very scientific and always gets his names and facts hopelessly wrong. Moreover, at least to my mind, he has another fault. If you have read one of each of his series of stories, you have read the lot. Still, for all this, I enjoyed the "Eternal Lover" and some of the other stories well enough. Of course, the story is only a yarn that makes little sense, but somehow Burroughs contrives to keep you interested. Another author in the adventure story genre is Fowler Wright who escapes claims of science by the old dodge of inventing new worlds. But my favourite tales of this kind are the Conan stories of R.E. Howard who created a whole geography to suit his stories and to whom the adventure, and not the prehistory, is the thing that matters.

Of the people who achieved fame outside the strictly science fiction or prehistoric tale line and who also wrote some good prehistoric tales I would just like to mention Rider Haggard, Jack London and Conan Doyle. Rider Haggard's tales of the Ancient Egypt like the "Morning Star" or "Ancient Allan" are superb reading. Maybe that his science is not always up to date, but then Egyptology of his day was less developed, than ours is in these days, and he used what there was extremely well. I liked his prehistoric tale "Allan and the Icegods" even better, because somehow he makes his hero quite plausible. Jack London's "Before Adam" which I read years ago in a German translation has always stuck in my mind, because I was so intrigued by his explanation of the fact why we always wake from our dreams of falling before we hit the ground... I shall not give his answer here, for the story is worth reading and its psychological arguments extremely interesting. Of Conan Doyle's stories I would just like to mention my favourite one which I found at the end of a huge omnibus volume. It is called "Point of Contact" and is the sort of historical speculation which delights me.

Now what about the people with theories? There are, naturally, too many of them to mention even a representative choice. Therefore I will be satisfied just to write about a few whose stories I have been reading lately. My favourite author of this type is Francis Ashton who makes good use of Hörbiger's theories in the two Atlantis stories "Breaking of the Seals" and "Alas! The great city!" Then there is the old story of the fight between the human and artistic Cro Magnon and the sub-human Neanderthal men. Although this theory of the artistic and superior race has been somewhat exploded, it makes too good a background to be disregarded. There are many of these stories. I rather liked E. Marshall's "Dien of the lost Land" and Mitchell's "3 go back", although both stories could have been improved quite easily by a less abrupt end. Some of Taine's stories I liked, especially "Before the Dawn", because it has no human hero, but however, once again, I am not giving the story away. The

one story I liked best of those I have read recently was Tooker's "Day of the brown horde." The reason for that is simple. In the story the theories are taking a backseat so to speak. There are no long philosophical intervals to stop the flow of the story and yet there are plenty of ideas in it, even if some of them can hardly have any factual foundation, and are more fantasy than theory.

I am well aware that there are many more names you might mention. Many even, whom you will find on the shelves of your public library - Vardis Fisher, for instance, although the books do not belong to my favourites. But then, I did not intend to prepare a check-list of prehistorics for your benefit, but to put it to you that there is a field of Science Fiction well worth exploring. So I will leave it at that, hoping that many more people who read Science Fiction will learn to like prehistorics - have a try!

BUT IT STILL GOES ON ---

BOOK COLUMN

or the Notes of an Ex-Collector by R. G. MEDHURST

If Michael continues to employ me as a regular contributor, I shall probably hereafter write largely of s.f. items and aspects that seem to me to have intrinsic interest as befits a retired collector. This time, however, since there is a great and pressing urgency, I cannot stop to take thought, and I must fill up with random jottings about the debris that collectors prize.

First, a couple of lost civilisations, which really would have better stayed lost. Both unknown to blacklist, I imagine also to the bulk of contemporary humanity (except, presumably the omniscient Mr. Harold Martlake). One is by - G. McIVER - "Neuroomia: A New Continent A Manuscript Delivered by the Deep" - 1894, Swan Sonnenschein, London, pp. 307,

This has everything: lost civilisation in the Antarctic with highly advanced technology (flying, etc.), longevity, "advanced" social system, some account of Lemuria, life on Mars, and all. And it is such sad stuff. The "science" is vague and unhappy. (times and distances, for example, are bandied about in a random way: thus the author has no hesitation in giving the Neuroomians a history dating back two hundred million years) One find Captain Perwinkle, the discoverer of Neuroomia, climbing mountains in a casual sentence or two as though they were steps, and learning the language in an odd few days. And the unfortunate narrative is given no help by Mr. McIver's choice of style. Typical is his account of the decease of the first mate during the preliminary voyage:

"He happened to be sitting carelessly on the bulwark, chewing tobacco, and ridiculing the idea of even temporarily leaving the vessel, when he was suddenly tossed high into the air, spun round a few times, turned upside down, and then disappeared, but not before he had invoked a few blessings on the volcano in his usual rhetorical style."

The other lost civilisation item is as follows:

MRS. LODGE - "A Son of the Gods" - 1898, Digby Long and Co., London, pp 284 + XV price 6/-.

This concerns one Charlie Beverstone who, in Chapter XIX, is shipwrecked in the Persian Gulf, and, after some further arid chapters concerning his relations and attachements in England, rides into the lost city of Elhazsar, unusually enough on a bicycle. This city was founded twelve centuries before by "Sadick, the son of Gezdegred, the last of the line of Artaxares" who "fled before the Saracens, who overran Persia with fire and sword". Sadick and five hundred followers with wives and children, closely pursued by Saracens, escaped into a plain surrounded by mountains, the pass obligingly closing behind them. Subsequently, they were unvisited by the outside world until Charlie arrives on his bicycle. He is, actually, in the lost city for 49 pages. By chapter XXIII he has escaped, and we are brought back to family affairs in England. To give you an idea of the quality of these, I quote from two pages before the happy ending:

"Eva withdrew her hand.

"I cannot break my faith," she answered, in a low clear voice. 'I have pledged it to an honourable, true-hearted man, and cannot go back from my word. However much we may grieve over the dead past, we must fain bury it out of sight.'

'Let the dead bury the dead!' he exclaimed passionately. 'It is my fate to move you with an undying flame, that burns and tortures, but does not consume. Farewell, Eva! and farewell happiness and hope also! I leave Hazeldene tomorrow, never to return!'

An item that is border-line from a collectors point of view but can be well recommended as reading material is FRANK L. PACKARD'S "The Miracle Man" (1914). This should be comparatively easy to find, since it was put out in the cheap Hodder & Stoughton sevenpenny series. It is concerned with an aged recluse in whose presence miraculous healing occurs, and the story centres round a group of criminals who stage a fake healing in order to found a profitable sect. Genuine miracles complicate the scheme, as well as bringing the novel into the fantasy field. The writing quality surprised me, and I found the developement unusually satisfying.

Here is another oddment. Everybody knows about H. de Vere Stacpoole's solitary futuristic novel, "The story of my Village", which for some reason, I found rather a bore. And I gather from Michael that "City in the Sea" isn't of large fantasy interest. But don't be put off a very pleasant little story about an animal-hating plant called "Deep in the Forest", in the collection called "The Vengeance of Mynheer Van Lok & Other Stories", Hutchinson, London (1934), pp 286 + 56. This could be one of the lesser items in an anthology of s.f. from non-magazine sources - quite a rich field, did Mr Conklin and others but know it. Perhaps the readers of The Futurian might care to make their own suggestions in this direction.

By the way, in the publishers list at the end of this volume is an item called "War upon Women" by Maboth Moseley. Does anyone have ant data on it?

Just two lines for JMR to say, "Yes" to this; I have it, but cannot recommend it. Anti-war enough for me; but from a parochial, sentimental viewpoint of how the poor women suffered in past wars losingslovers, and having to work at mens jobs; and how they will have to do this in the fictional war presented; if Britain doesn't police the continent.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THEM:

No.1 HARRY WARNER, JR.

INTRODUCTION

We have been wondering for some considerable time what was the next chapter in the stories of some of the "Big Name" fans of circa 1940 - the time of this magazine's previous incarnation. We thought others too might be interested, and so to find out we tried the simple method of just asking -- and here is the first of our replies.

HARRY WARNER Jr

of Hagerstown, Maryland; edited and produced almost single-handed what was one of the most regular and dependable fanzines ever - consistently voted the all-round favourite of the period, in "SPACEWAYS". Harry always had an intelligent, detached (being something of a hermit, perhaps) and feud-neutral viewpoint on fandom; and it would not be going too far to say that both he and his magazine were beloved by all. He was a founder member of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, and I believe, of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. We are very glad to have him in our pages.

If it becomes necessary for you to bisect a snake, you may notice a disturbing delay in the snake's acceptance of its destruction. The half containing the head may be kicked to one side, but the eyes will continue to glare for some time, and the tongue may even lick back and forth in menacing fashion for a brief period. The other half will wiggle and squirm in the most disconcerting fashion, as if this portion of the snake were trying to convince itself that it didn't really need a head after all.

Something like that happens when you make a break with science fiction fandom. Take me, for instance. It was in the fall of 1942 that I proclaimed the annihilation of Spaceways. More than a decade later, I am still dropping my fannish commitments. I keep telling myself that I'm really withdrawing from fandom, and that the length of time involved has been due to my desire not to be stampeded into a rash retreat. It must have been about 1945 that I stopped buying the prozines regularly, around 1948 when I cut communications with most of my correspondents, and only a year or so ago that I began refusing to acknowledge the receipt of sample copies of fanzines.

I'm glad now that I didn't disappear completely or quit fandom without post mortem writhing, a thing that can happen, just as a snake can be pulverised by an atomic bomb or squashed by a steam roller without taking its time about giving up the reptilian ghost. I've disentangled myself from fandom without leaving any bills unpaid, without making anyone angry who wasn't angry with me while I was in fandom, and with pleasant memories that aren't ruined by guilt over writing a nasty parting article that unloaded all the spite and grievances I felt, as some fans have done.

My gradual withdrawal from fandom came about in 1942 through a combination of circumstances: illness in the family, loss of interest in fannish things in general, mental depression over the war, and the

realization that I was spending too much time at a hobby. One year after I discontinued Spaceways, I changed from railroad work to newspaper work, and have been a reporter ever since. My current exalted position as news editor, music critic, second assistant sports editor, photographer, news broadcaster, and thermostat lowerer for the Hagerstown Morning Herald can be attributed mostly to the fact that the Editor and Publisher yearbook lists the names of the persons who hold about fifty positions on each newspaper; we have only ten people on the news staff, so each person gets an assortment of official designations. As I enter the fourth decade of my life, I'm still a bachelor, living at home, and quite anxious to get married, in order to relieve uncertainty over how long I'll be able to remain in my present prosperity and satisfaction with life.

It's fairly easy to ease out of activity in a hobby. But it's much more difficult to go through the coming years without something to fill the place vacated by that hobby. It wasn't long before I fell hook, line and sinker for music, after dropping Spaceways. Music provided emotional release during the war days that science fiction was impotent to give; moreover, it had a number of advantages - it didn't involve the danger of wild-eyed people suddenly deciding to drive a thousand miles to visit me unannounced, or hectic weeks spent in trying to locate twenty-pound mimeo paper. I've built up a rather large collection of phonograph records in the past eight years, my library of books about music is about as large now as my stf. book library used to be, and I sit hypnotized by the FM radio every Saturday night, listening to the Washington station that may present anything from an hour filled with nothing but different recordings of Caro Nome to the complete recorded Parsifal without a commercial.

The snake metaphor in the opening paragraph may be misleading, unfortunately. Since I've never had a very exalted opinion of myself, it might be best to change the snake into the earthworm. Because if you cut the earthworm in half, likely as not you will obtain not two dying segments of one earthworm, but a pair of very much alive, somewhat abridged earthworms. I bring up the earthworm because during the past year, I've begun to sell science fiction, of all things. I don't quite understand why I should be able to sell the stories now, when I seldom read a magazine and don't really know what modern science fiction stories are like. Forrest J. Ackerman is the agent who has achieved the wonder for three stories to Lowndes and one to Hamling. I've already had one story rated the best in the issue, one story rated the worst in the issue, and a third published without receiving anything more exciting than exact middle spot in preference. I have mentally plotted a novel, and have promised myself that I will start writing it the instant Forrest sells a fifth story for me.

The address is still unchanged - 303 Bryan Place, Hagerstown, Md., - in case any of the old crowd should feel the impulse to write and indulge in senile reminiscing.

THE PREHISTORIC BRADBURY

by Ron Bennett

Michael Rosenblum was directly responsible for the survival of fandom during war years and it is he who has been a leading light in the reformation of the Leeds S.F. club (now the Leeds S.F. Association). He started all this and I introduce him early so that if you do not like what follows you can lay some of the blame on to him.

To the older (or more mature) few, I should explain that they need not read further. They know more about what follows than I do, in fact in addition to reading Bradbury's early works, they most likely wrote them.

I am a Bradbury fan. I read Ray and I collect his stories. Occasionally when the various charitable organisations to whom I write begging letters, fail to cough up, I even eat Ray too. Ah, Bradbury my pet. I love you so. "Why?" did you ask. Most probably for the very reasons many dislike him. He's imaginative, near-poetic prose, tapering endings and all. I should explain perhaps that I first read Bradbury in a non-SF short story magazine and that I went on to S.F. as a whole new field of literature by searching for more. Perhaps this accounts for my daring to stand up and say "Bradbury is best."

Still, it wasn't just for my especial benefit that Michael brought down to the LSFA a pile of old decaying fanzines. However, I quickly became interested in them. Whilst slaving over the duplicator turning hundreds of lovely clean blank pages for ORBIT - they always come out like that, or so I'm told (Egad and Ghu - I just gave our mag. some egoboo. I'll have to mention it again) ORBIT, ORBIT, ORBIT, ORBIT, ORBIT, ORBIT, ORBIT, ORBI (O.K. Ron, calm down or I won't let you hold my new copy of "Fahrenheit 451" - Uncle Michael) T.

Whilst I was thus occupied came a combined whoop from the far corner of the room where Michael and other members were looking through the old fanzines mentioned about 8 lines up. These fanzines were all issued from Los Angeles during the early war years. "Hey Ron, come and see this", I did, twas a story by a chappie called Raymond D. Bradbury. This was the first time I knew Ray had a middle name, but it was obviously the Ray - Los Angeles; science fiction - it couldn't be any one else. I was immediately interested. When no one was looking either my way, or at the 'zines in question, I hurriedly slipped on my jacket, coat, socks and shoes and sneaked out of the building with the said fanzines under my arm.

When read through in some sort of order, in my case chronological, they are very interesting. Much of the material is dateless, whilst by having a run of the mags one can come to know as a personal friend such people as Paul Freehafer, Walt Duaherty, Bruce Yerke, 4SJ, Morojo, and of course Ray Bradbury, then a struggling amateur of twenty.

This article is therefore something of a survey, not of the Los Angeles fan activity of the perios as a whole, but rather an appreciation of Bradbury's early activities. Approximately a quarter of the magazines features Bradbury, whilst about a further quarter makes at least some mention of him.

The earliest magazine to feature Bradbury is the second issue of Paul Freehafer's "POLARIS". Brad., at this time turning out his own fanzine "FUTURIA FANTASIA" (of which unhappily no edition exists in this collectionette) ((if you had told me beforehand, Ron, that you were investigating so closely; I might have looked out the copies I took out of this particular file some time ago, and allowed you to handle them with due reverence - Michael)) is featured in a story written in collaboration with Bob Tucker. This tale "The Maiden of Jirbu" is little more than a sketch, covering less than a side. Ray, who polished up Tucker's theme

tries to attain to the fluency of diction which was a characteristic of the ancients. He isn't too successful. Anyway, what the story had to do with science fiction (even as interpreted by Bradbury) I fail to see.

Three months later (June 1940) comes the third issue of POLARIS - ran a story by Hilary St. Clare, but the lead story was a five-side piece of imaginative horror based obviously on Edgar Allan Poe, and by Ray Bradbury of course. Poe, I think, would have been proud of this. The unhealthy atmosphere of a living nightmare, an atmosphere that was essentially Poe is recreated admirably, though the suspense and general sense of the mysterious is strained and a little artificial. Why this never made "Weird Tales" I just don't know. It only needed that extra superlatial but so important polishing. The flame of Ray's sense of the unusual image is here kindled. "Small almond holes" for eyes, the "pock-marked face" of the moon. Bradbury for certain. To describe water, even swamp water, as "chill liquid" is nothing but pedantic, however. The story was "Luana the Living." Edgar Allan Poe at his best!

Polaris No. 4 dropped out somewhere on the long road from LA 1940 to Leeds 1954 and the next 'zine on the pile is the October 1940, SHANGRI-LA, a recognised fanzine and not the news bulletin, "Shangri-L'Affaires" which was to come later. Walter J. Daugherty who also was, responsible for "The Rocket" was the editor. Besides a full page ad. for his own 'zine, Brad. is featured in a caricature section of Los Angeles fan editors and also features with a short short tale called "fan-tastic", a typical fan sketch, which apart from its humourous connection is little away from the ordinary.

In December 1940 came the second issue of Bruce Yerke's "The Damn Thing" (a favourite of mine after reading half a dozen or so copies in this collection). This one actually had wait for it..... a Bradbury cover. Now I can see life through his eyes. Evidently "The Damn Thing" No. 1 ran a Bradbury yarn called "The Last Man" for the readers' letters section contained various nasty remarks about such a story. One reader "failed to see the O. Henry ending" to the story, whilst another said it "was positively nauseating. Take it away and bury it deep." So Ray had his critics even in those far off days. Personally I don't wonder if "The Last Man" was anything like his article in this issue, "Tubby, We Love You" which appears to be a private joke between Ray and Yerke, and incomprehensible to the uninitiated (i.e. me).

Besides the cover "The Damn Thing" ran a story by Ray - "Genie Trouble" by Ray Douglas Bradbury" (now I know what the D. is for). Evidently Yerke blackmailed Ray into writing the story, or at least letting Yerke have an old many-times rejected tale, by threatening to "revive Hollerbochen." Who or what Hollerbochen is I've no idea, but no doubt many of the more adhesive (to Fandom) fan know the story backwards.

Draw your own conclusions, for in the very next "The Damn Thing" there appears a story "Hollerbochen Again" by one Lothar Penguin telling how the voice of Bradbury haunted a radio-phonograph-recorder. Also a much later ad. suggested the reader should send 5¢ for a pamphlet "Hollerbochen Comes Back". I'd sent myself if I thought that after 13 years it would do any good.

"Genie Trouble", by the way, was a very amusing story of a man who found a genie in his bath. Ray was criticised here for plagiarising himself. For when he described the genie he wrote "not a BIG genie. That would be silly. But a little genie." Evidently he had done pretty much the same in a story, "Tale of the Tortlewitch", in another fanzine, Spaceways, a year earlier.

In the Feb. 1941 issue of "D-Thing" (yes, the one with 'Hollerbochen') comes a story, "How Am I Today, Doctor?" based on a story in Thrilling Wonder Stories. However Ray changed the original ending. In Ray's version the doctor becomes so tired of the nattering hypochondriac that he kills him. I enjoyed this one. Another piece of fiction in the same 'zine mentions that in "1955

Ray Bradbury, the comedian, was Radio Star of the Year", an interesting insight into the character of the 1941 Bradbury. In addition to a stock of rejection slips he evidently possessed many a corny joke. This is the same writer about whom the "The New Statesman and Nation" (13 March '54) can say "he holds no hope for the future."

"The Damn Thing" of March 1941 featured what Yerke called "a bit of whimsy". This was the amusing "The Trouble with Humans is People", a tale in which Ray goes back in time, and also gets killed. This is the first time I have ever heard of an author killing himself. This approach was even better than that Saint yarn where Simon Templar gets killed. Novelty, novelty.

"Voice of the Imagination", Ackerman's own mag. gave Ray a mention in a letter, "U noe, evn tho so many carikatoors r publisht ant Ray Bradbury, I styl sort of think he's $\frac{1}{2}$ way gud luking." This was in May 1941, when the "Damn Thing" came out with the startling news, "Bradbury hits the Pros." When it was announced "Ray is in a delirium of joy. He has sold a story." This was the first. I can well understand his feelings. I've been trying for years now without result.

The summer 1941 'zine, "Sun Trails", edited by one Arthur Louis Tognel. This actually had a cartoon in by Bradbury using a theme which is indicative of of his later cynical turn of mind.

In Jan. 1942 "Shangri-L'Affaires", edited by Ackerman, noted that Ray had made his first solo sale, "The Piper." Did this mean that the story sold the previous May had only just been printed, or did it mean that this was in fact Ray's second sale? I wonder.

By this time Ray had practically disappeared from the fan field. Many actifans had enlisted, and as a result fandom, and with it the many 'zines Los Angeles had been so proud to produce, had folded. "Shangri-L'Affaires" for December 1942 noted that Bradbury had moved to one of the beach towns and was therefore virtually out of communication with the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society, the group responsible in one way or another for Polaris, This Damn Thing, and VOM, amongst others.

"Shangri-L'Affaires" No. 10 for May 1943, edited now by Phil Bronson, gave the next news of Ray and that simply that he was doing well writing regularly for "Weird Tales". Obviously by this time he was a fully-fledged pro. Whether he was in the armed forces or not I do not know - Ackerman was, Private first class, too (equivalent to our lance corporal, I believe: in rank, if not in pay).

In the September issue (someone must have been working overtime to produce the 'zine regularly in wartime. What is more, it was improving.) edited by Walt Daugherty it was noted that nineteen former club members were by now in the armed forces. 4SJ was now a corporal. It was noted also that he ran across Bradbury at a revival of "The Lost World."

The next issue came out as late as April 1944 and is the last in the file. It records the death of Paul Freehafer, the editor of the now-defunct "Polaris". One of the appreciations dedicated to this twenty-eight year old, was by Ray Bradbury, the last mention in the file of 'zines.

What else is there to tell? From a struggling amateur, writing in the fan press (and who doesn't) Ray has progressed to become one of America's leading short-story writers of the day, and not only in the fantasy field. It reads like a fairy story come true.

Fantastic!

Book review - "The New Pleasure" - cont'd from Page 17.

The change is seen through the eyes of a series of characters who are clearly and sympathetically depicted, and who are used to make plain the course of the change without having their own stories interrupted. The author carries his fundamental idea through to a logical and rather complete application.

BOOK REVIEW

Author: John Gloag.

Type: Chemical Discovery.

Title: "The New Pleasure"

Pub: London, Cassell & Co. Price: 7/6.

Synopsis of Plot: A harmless, habit forming drug gave its addicts a hyper-sensitive sense of smell. The story of the impact of this upon all aspects of civilization.

Reviewed by: W. Robert Gibson.

I have read several of John Gloag's works, "Tomorrow's Yesterday" is pessimistic about mankind, "Manna" carries hope, frustrated it is true, but real. "The New Pleasure" achieves - by drastic means, perhaps - an utopia it would be a pleasure to live in, in many ways. There was no curtailment of freedom...quite the reverse.

A scientist lets his friend try a pinch of pinkish powder, taken as snuff, that he had developed and used for years. It was rather pleasant, and the friend scented commercial possibilities, while commenting on the odors of the traffic. It was explained to him that it improved his sense of smell.

Shortly thereafter the stuff appeared on the market. Very cautiously. It was proven harmless; it was boosted by various takers; it was preached against and for.... The tobacconist and confectioners sold it in inexpensive packets.

The tobacco interests found it dangerous... sales were dropping. People couldn't stand the smell. Delicate perfume and bathing equipment boomed. Whispering campaigns and outright attacks were launched by big business. No taker stopped taking it. No one, once started, would stop. When the law threatened the people making it broadcast the formula and instructions. Since it was simple to make, of readily available ingredients, addicts need never go short. The ban fell through. Sales barely dropped. People need not bother to make their own ... and didn't.

Smell became a major factor in life. The army went on strike for separate rooms and daily baths for all ranks. And got them. The cinema industry recognized the change - alone of industries - and built properly ventilated theatres. Personal odor became the major factor in the choice of mates. Tourist trade lapsed ... people could not tolerate the smells in those quaint, foreign places. Shipments of the drug were sent to such, reform followed immediately the local population awoke to the horrors of their accustomed (by the new standard) stench. And the tourist toured again.

Meanwhile the population deserted the cities. Whatever they did, people in the mass were unable to bear one another, or were driven by an urge to seek fellows with compatible smells. This led to vast numbers of city dwellers adopting a gipsy-like life for which they were totally unfitted, to the breakdown of food distribution, and to the death by exposure of a huge percentage of the population in densely peopled areas. The survivors - after all there were many - settled down to a form of rural or semi-rural life, or became nomadic. Internal combustion engines had become unpopular, but some others - inoffensive olfactorily survived. The thinning and spreading of the population - by loss of the unfit and the increase of personal freedom - and the discarding of many inhibitions that took place during the upheaval led to a very large increase in personal happiness and contentment among the survivors. These, in Britain at least, were largely rural to begin with, and the end result was a population addicted to simple pleasures, outdoor sports, jest and with a strong touch of philosophy, firmly based on agriculture, and with industry greatly curtailed.

Continued opposite.

A Who's Who for Fandom? jmk

1 INTRODUCTION from ANGLO Science Fiction FANDOM DIRECTORY issued by A. V. Clarke in September 1953 ...

"Although various lists of Club members, etc., have been published in fanzines from time to time, I only know of two previous Anglo-fan Directories. The first, edited by Mike Rosenblum in '45, was mostly concerned with British Fantasy Society members, but considering the difficulties brought about through the constantly changing addresses of serving fans, was a magnificent piece of work. It listed approx. 200 fans. The second was John Gunn's recent photo-lithed list; this concerned mainly the British fantasy Library. It was a remarkable single-handed effort, but marred by reliance on out-dated lists" ...

And that, my friends is my text for this dissertation. Whether fandom in this country has an overall organisation (from which, naturally, some fans will conscientiously abstain); whether the present type of local group gives a number of separate foci; whether fandom groups round fanzines of differing characteristics or if we remain magnificently chaotic; one of the basic services we need is a reasonably comprehensive address list.

I am well aware that this subject has been considered at length by quite a number of people over quite a number of years. Well, isn't it time something definite was done about it?

But to me there seems to be an associated point requiring consideration; and I have been wondering whether two birds could be killed with one stone. Many years back - before the war in fact - I started a collection of little cards filled in with various details about fans. Their ages, birthdates, occupations, other hobbies and so on. In short a sort of potted biography a la "Who's Who".

Now what I should like to throw out as an idea to the thinkers and the doers amongst us; is a regular issue of such details, plus of course the names and addresses of everyone connected with fandom, in a standard format and capable of being collected together by those wanting to have such things available. Either in the form of sheets which could be put into a loose leaf folder, or on cards which could be kept in a card index file.

Personally I favour the latter idea; and I give a version of what seems to fill the bill on the opposite page. But the floor is available to all, and lets discuss the question from as many angles as we can think of, and then lets try to do something about it. Points worth considering are ... overall size -- should it be postcard, or to fit on a 5 X 3 record card, or half a quarto page, or what?

Details to be covered if possible -- naturally if anyone does not wish to mention any of the items, no one would try to force them, but it won't harm to give plenty of guidance as to what we would like to know about our fellow fans.

Issuing of these records - should one person (or group) do the collecting and collating, or should anyone pop up with persons with whom they are in contact. Should one person or group or fanzine publish them or should any publisher produce as many as he (they) can. The latter envisages that all fans will receive these

various publications; but would they? Should these cards or what have you be issued with regular fanzines, or as an entirely separate item? Periodically?

All right, come on and tell me if there is anything worth while in the idea. Herewith follows my idea of a "Who's Who" card entry.

<u>Name</u>		
<u>Address</u>	- leave room for changes -	
<u>brief fan history</u>	- how introduced to stf & fandom etc. -	
<u>member of</u>		
<u>ex-member of</u>	- defunct organisations -	
<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Education</u>	
<u>Age or date of birth</u>	<u>married</u>	<u>children</u>
<u>physical description</u>	- general idea of appearance -	
<u>other interests</u>	<u>ambitions</u>	

THE LEEDS SCIENCE -----
 --- FICTION ASSOCIATION
 =====

Meets regularly at the ADELPHI Public House
 Leeds Bridge, on Wednesday Evenings.

Anyone interested in stf. and living within
 reasonable reach of Leeds will be very wel-
 come as a member, anyone living further
 off is cordially invited to look in on us,
 anytime they are in the vicinity.

Meetings are informal (very) and member-
 ship charges are most moderate; 2/6 per
 year being the present level. We have a
 room of our own, on the top floor (bring
 oxygen masks) available during licensed
 hours to all full members who can obtain a
 key if they wish. A library is being built
 up, and other facilities would be created
 if there was the demand.

Lets make Leeds a leading city in fandom
 once again.

The Leeds S. F. A.

puts out a fanzine which is
 worth getting. Entitled -
 "O R B I T"

enquiries should be addressed
 to George Gibson,
 Little London,
 Aberford,
 near Leeds.

Our Bradford Friends, Tom
 White and Mal Ashworth are
 also perpetrating a thing
 called for some reason of
 their own ... B E M and
 available from 3, Vine St
 Cutler Hights, Bradford 4.
 at ninepence per edition.

We beleive there are also
 a few other fanzines put
 out in various outlandish
 places -- lets swap adverts.

+++ ON LOOKING INTO JOHN CHRISTOPHER'S
 ===
 +++++ THE TWENTY - SECOND CENTURY
 =====
 By ERNEST THOMPSON.

EDITORS NOTE. The writer of this viewpoint is a Senior Librarian of the Leeds City Libraries. He has had some twenty five years experience of all types of books, reviewing, classifying, evaluating them. He is still a reader for pleasure, and he is not an enthusiast as regards science fiction. But he is probably more knowledgeable as regards the books published in this country of an stf. type than most so-called fans. Here, he has given his genuine reaction to a recently published book, well known to fandom. Readers are welcome to comment and disagree with Mr Thompson. During your editors last conversation with Mr Thompson, the idea of letting him read some of the generally-accepted classics of American science fiction (the Skylarks, Weapon Shops, City stories and so on) and then publishing his unbiassed opinion, was bruited, and we should be pleased to try this out if readers think it a good idea. Fan reactions would be interesting.

Having promised to read this selection of science fiction stories, it became necessary to read some of them again, for having received information that the author was an Atlantic Award winner it was assumed that this was a result of his having some literary or other distinction which had definitely escaped my first reading. The second dipping did not give me any more than the first reading had achieved.

It is difficult to understand the hold this type of literature is making on the public today. The power it holds almost from the cradle to the grave is beyond comprehension. From Captain Marvel and Superman through all the 'higher' flights of fancy there seems little to cause such a stir. Do not imagine that because a book is labelled 'science fiction' I immediately become 'contrary' and 'anti', but please, do have some consideration for the intelligence and ability of the reader who is expected to travel with the author on his peregrinations.

This leads to the question of what is science fiction? Is it the attempt to be the gathering in of a new type of writing? This surely cannot be! There has been too much written in the past for it to be a new kind of literature. Then again, the accepted leaders of the movement are themselves unable to agree as to what constitutes science fiction. Some consider that it is fiction concerned with the future; some, that it is fiction which emanates from scientific concepts; some, that it is a conglomeration of all fantastic and futuristic writings. Perhaps the knowledge of what science fiction was would enable the reader to judge what he was getting, even though he might not be able to appreciate it.

In order to induce the scientific background it may perhaps be necessary to insert phrases which mean nothing as does Mr. Christopher, when he introduces his super super-man - 'Max sat indoors, smoking his special brand of Virginian mixed with aromatic Martian lubla...' Is this getting atmosphere? If so, to me the atmosphere was getting a little thick.

Fortunately the second section of the book contained stories of a more interesting and imaginative calibre, otherwise this would have been one of the books I just could put down. Even so, being unable to read all I should like to do, I shall wait until Mr. Christopher has reached the more polished standards of such writers as John Wyndham and Ray Bradbury.

FANTASY AND THE FUTURE

by John F. Burke.

It is wrong to write with posterity in view. Disappointed young Writers invariably console themselves with the reflection that although their contemporaries ignore them, the world to come will bow down and worship. Osbert Sitwell has satirised those who pretend to be ahead of their time in his excellent short story 'Friendship's Due', included in the volume "Triple Fugue", which can also be recommended to avid collectors as containing two fantastic stories. No really great writer concentrates on the next generation; he may look ahead and may, indeed, be more advanced than the people about him, but he will nevertheless write for his time. It is the writers who are most representative of their day who, for some peculiar reason, become immortal - "timeless". They reflect eternal values. Do fantasy writers present eternal values in a way that will penetrate to the normal readers mind?

I do not propose to go over the ground so often covered before by fans who, on the verge of growing up, write bitter articles and letters about the monotonous inhumanity of magazine science fiction. The only thing more tiresome than the enthusiastic readers banal letter is the attitude of those who repudiate science fiction as though it were a fad of which they are now asamed. All I wish is that every person who reads a magazine in preference to a book (there are many fantasy fans who do so) shall ask himself these questions: is this saying anything? allowing for the fantastic circumstances, are the characters and their actions credible? and, if possible, what will these stories seem like to our descendants?

This last is a test that is hard to apply. No man can say what the next generation will admire or scorn. The history of literature shows so many critical errors that we should be very wary of making any pronouncements. That mysterious quality that makes one work of art immortal and lifts it above the rubble of its own time cannot be detected by those who are closest to the artist and his work -- those who cannot see the wood for the trees; or would it be more appropriate to say, - those who cannot select the live tree from the forest of dead and dying trunks? Remember Keats and Shelley and beware. Remember Handel and Bononcini, and the great Jonathan Swift's comparison of them as "Tweedledum and Tweedledee" ... why did just one of them survive? We dare not prophesy that our own favourites will live. But I think it safe to prophesy that the man of the future will not be as likely to call science fiction magazines as 'progressive' or enlightened as their devotees would seem to expect.

Science is not enough. Wells made some commendable forecasts, but Kipps and Mr. Polly will live longer than all of Wells' science fiction. Stories of a fictional future may fall down in their factual background, but they will fall much more heavily if their characters do not live. Stapledon's "Last and First Men" is not accurate or even probable, but it has something that will keep it alive for quite a time. Certainly after the Heinleins, de Camps and Campbells have been forgotten. Poetry? Characterisation? It may be style, or convection, or its picture of the age - a book may live for any one of a dozen reasons: it has an indefinable quality. What is it?

So my final question is - has science fiction anything to say? And if you think not, isn't it about time that you looked somewhere else.

(Originally published in "FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST" for May 1943 and still appropriate)

AND SO, AT LAST, WE COME TO YOUR EDITOR'S P E R S O N A L P A G E

HOW THE NEW FUTURIAN WAS CONCEIVED. It was about eighteen months ago that I was leading a fairly normal sort of life, when Derek Pickles of Bradford told me that he had had a letter from some people in Leeds who were in process of forming an stf fan club. He thought I ought to know of it. Well, they formed it and I joined and once again started getting into discussions, arguments and flights of fancy. In brief, the old brain currents were flowing in fannish directions once more. Then we got a new member namely George Gibson, who said we ought to have a magazine and before the rest of us knew where we were, there it was in the shape of Orbit. And that was when the magnetism of printing ink drew me towards the mighty Gestetner and it came to pass that I had announce the impending arrival of this publication.

CHAPTERS OF ACCIDENTS But the forementioned eighteen months were not devoid of incident in mundane business life. I told the sad tale in the last issue of Orbit. Even during wartime I had said that it would take some years after the end of the war before I could absorb my everyday work and have spare time available. These years were considerably extended by the fact of getting married and acquiring a brace of offspring interlaced with the very upsetting and wearing illnesses and subsequent deaths of both my parents. But eighteen months ago the way ahead seemed to be clear. December 1952 brought a blow in the discovery that my brother-in-law who is my business partner was seriously ill and had to have a major operation and long convalescence. That meant I was doing two peoples work for half of 1953. By the autumn things looked better and that was when the project of the New Futurian was broached. December was the evil month again - my brother-in-law had a recurrence which lead to a second, though much slighter, operation in January 1954 and three months away from the office. He came back as our secretary-clerk left, and we were; and still are one person short in the staff of a small office.

WHAT THE MAGAZINE IS Once again the old cliché that a magazine is what its readers make it into. And this applies with quadruple force to a fanzine, as its readers are (we hope) its contributors. So what The New Futurian will develop into depends on you and you and you. But it is primarily aimed at the sections of fandom at both sides of the Atlantic who are interested in books and bookish topics; in reasonably sober discussion of items appertaining to fandom, and informative dissertation on any of those outlandish subjects that fans invariably seem to gravitate to. Humour is by no means banned - but we should try to keep it at an adult level.

CONTRIBUTIONS THANKFULLY RECEIVED When the impending birth of this magazine was announced, there were a considerable number of promises of material given in a wild flush of enthusiasm. Inevitably most of these promises have not materialised (that's quite a good pun but quite unintentional) as yet but we are still hoping and it more than possible that people wanted to be sure of the magazine before they took the trouble to put pen or typewriter ribbon to paper. All the more honour then to Wally Gillings who had the first instalment of his record of British Fandom in my hands within a week or two of his promise. Now that the magazine is in existence, I would appeal to those to whom its basis appeals; to keep us well supplied with a varied selection of material. I think there is room for us, do you?

LETTERS WELCOME Comments and criticism will be received with open arms, and I do envisage the inclusion of a letter section in later issues. But let's make clear straight away that letters just saying this or that is good - or otherwise - will not be published. What I should like to see are reasoned comments, information and news. If the contents warrant it, I don't mind how long the dept. is -- in fact, I still recall with nostalgic affection the letter section in Sam Youd's *Fantast*, Doug Webster's *The Gentlest Art*, and the all-letter fanzine of the war years from Los Angeles - *Voice of the Imagi-Nation*.

PUBLICATION is planned to be quarterly and this schedule will be attempted. Warning must be given, after the continuous hiatus (!) that a fan magazine is contingent upon business and family commitments.

APOLOGY SECTION Some of these stencils have been typed by my secretary that was and some by myself. No prizes are offered for guessing which is which - I think that her spelling mistakes and my mistypings just about balance each other out. Now let us have a moan together about paper. Why, after one has used up a consignment of duplicating paper (I buy by the dozen reams, but use for other purposes as well) do one's suppliers only have another type of paper available that varies in quality and size. Of course the council of perfection would be to stick to Gestetner paper all through but you look at the prices - certainly more than a hobby warrants. Which leads me on to an associated subject where I have been wanting to get something off my chest for a while. I do get -- shall we say -- peeved, when I note pontifical comment by reviewers on the cost of a fanzine. It does not appear that these persons have the slightest idea of what the costs to the producer are. Take a 20 page, 100 copy zine; there is £1 in stencils alone, ink would be nearly 10/-, 20/- to 30/- for paper according to quality -- say £3 with incidentals. Don't bother allowing anything in respect of depreciation of duplicator, typewriter, stylus and so on; but there are expenses in writing to both contributors and subscribers. Then take the number of Deadheads in consideration, and also, especially, that there is postage to pay on every copy. So cost to the producer would be 9d. if he sold every copy and had no spoilages. Well, you work it out for yourself -- and let me know if anyone ever made any profit on a fanzine.

IMPORTANT :: DON'T MISS THIS In an attempt to make book-keeping for this thing as simple as possible, I am trying out the idea of the coupon below. NOBODY WILL RECEIVE THE NEXT ISSUE UNLESS THEY FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IT IN. I do not think this is too much to ask from anyone who has interest enough to want to have the magazine.

To J. Michael Rosenblum, at number 7 Grosvenor Park, Leeds 7.
or number 2 Brunswick Street, Leeds 2.
or c/o The Leeds Science Fiction Association, The Adelphi, Leeds Bridge
Leeds 1.

Please see that I am sent a copy of *The New Futurian* number 2 because

- (a) I enclose a subscription herewith.
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- (d) As an exchange copy for my/our fanzine
- (e) I enclose - have sent - a literary contribution.
- (f) I am so important a fan that it is essential I have a copy given
- (g) We are - were - such pals you really MUST send a copy.

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To C. R. Harris esq -

"Carolyn"

Lake Avenue

Rainham, Essex

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