

A FINE MIST AND A PLANET,
A CRYSTAL AND A CELL,
A JELLYFISH AND A SAURIAN,
AND A CAVE WHERE THE CAVEMEN DWELL;
THEN A SENSE OF LAW AND BEAUTY,
A FACE TURNED FROM THE CLOD;
SOME CALL IT EVOLUTION,
AND OTHERS CALL IT GOD.

W. H. CARRUTH

SEPTEMBER 1952

#7

Science Fiction Digest

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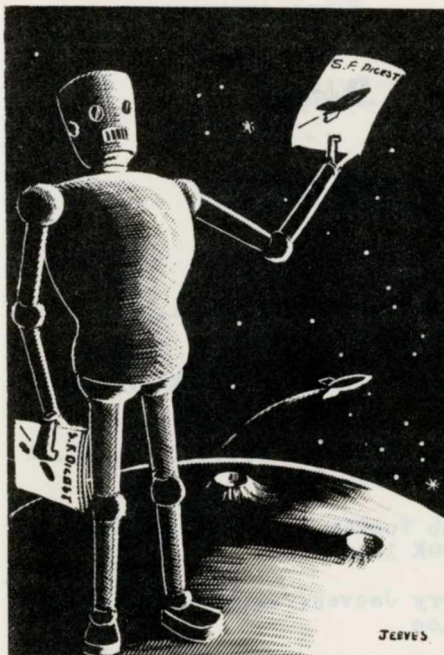
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ATLANTA GEORGIA



As I write this, it is a hot Saturday afternoon, exactly two weeks before Chicago. I'm rushing to finish this issue and get it to the printer. I had hoped to carry this one to Chicago, but we had to go to a different printer, due to an increase in rates, and they require more time time is available. Hence, this mag will be mailed immediately after the convention, about September 7. Sorry for the continued delay, but a price differential of about \$40 leaves us no choice.

This issue of C/SFD is somewhat of a supreme effort for ASFO...in fact, each time I think of the size of the check that has to accompany this to the printer, my wallet gives a choked sob. The 50¢ price tag will doubtless elicit piercing screams of indignation from certain fen

in the area of Salt Lake City, New York City, etc. Ho Hum. I assure you it is not inflated. There are approximately 150 subscribers and trades who will receive the issue as a part of their subs or @ 25¢. And if we sell every other copy at 50¢ we'll still be in the red a substantial number of \$\$.

About here, I had planned to quote a letter from Willis, in which he complimented me outrageously on the time, effort, labor and talent which I expended on the last issue of SFD. You know, the 1 page issue. However, I don't want anyone to think that I'm boasting, and besides, I can't find the letter so I'll have to let that pass. Having brought Willis' name into play, I can proceed to make a point. Shelby Vick's campaign to bring Willis to Chicago has been a success, but by no means what you would call "smashing." I stopped by to see Shelby about three weeks ago, and at that time he was listing donations at around \$250. This amount had been donated by LESS THAN 40 FANS. And you could count the number who had given \$10 or more on your fingers. At that time it appeared that the only possible way for Willis to get here was by air at a cost of \$500. Willis himself has raised \$100, leaving a balance of \$150, which sum SHELBY VICK was going to quietly place in the fund out of his pocket. He may do it yet, if no others come thru in Chicago with contributions. A list of those who gave, and the amounts, will be published in the first issue of CONFUSION after the Con. Will YOUR name be on the list? Are YOU a FAN OF DISTINCTION?

THE IMMORTAL TEACUP



A SERIAL HISTORY OF BRITISH FANDOM

WALTER WILLIS

1930--1936 The First Fans; The First Fanzine; The Rise of Northern Fandom; The Beginning of London Fandom

One day in 1927, a 15 year old schoolboy called Walter Gillings came upon a peculiar American magazine called AMAZING STORIES, the March 1927 issue, to be exact, featuring The Green Splotches. This tiny seed of corn did not fall on stony ground. Almost immediately the boy who was to become the most influential figure in British s-f began producing little amateur magazines featuring amateur s-f, anticipating the first American fanzine by more than two years. In 1930 he started the first known British fan group, "The Ilford Science Literary Circle", and was agitating in publishing circles for a British prozine. In both these efforts he was too far ahead of his time and for a few years, his interest subsided.

Gillings had more to contend with than the natural conservatism of publishers. In the 1930s ships coming from America to Britain, carried a lot of ballast in the form of waste paper. For some reason, this paper consisted mostly of remaindered copies of s-f prozines which were sold in Woolworths all over the country at five cents a copy. Naturally home publishers assumed that this competition spoiled their own prospects and the first British prozine had to wait til British fandom organised itself to fight for one.

With a branch of Woolworths in every large town, there must have been thousands of people reading s-f pulps every month---I still vividly remember myself going without my lunch and walking home from school with armsful of ASF--and it was only a matter of time before they got together. The process was catalysed by the founding of the British Interplanetary Society, in Liverpool, in October 1933, and by the Science Fiction League, introduced in the May, 1934 WONDER. By 1936, the BIS had members all over the country and there were chapters of the League in Leeds, Nuneaton, Glasgow, Barnsley and Belfast. British fandom was steadily reaching critical mass.

Then, in March 1936, a fanzine appeared. Its name was NOVAE TERRAE, and the editors were Maurice Hanson and Denis Jacques, of the Nuneaton SFL. They must have prided themselves on having published the first extra-American fanzine little knowing that their distinction was being stolen under their very noses---literally. While they were hard at work on their fourth issue, a fanzine arrived from New Zealand, published on February 16th. Having carved for themselves this tiny niche in the hall of fame, New Zealand fandom promptly collapsed, never to be heard of again.

NOVAE TERRAE, on the other hand, published 29 issues before it was translated into Ted Carnell's "NEW WORLDS" in January 1939. In those 35 months it made history. Carnell himself appeared as early as the second issue, in which he began a long and sensational career as a fan columnist with a report on the Hornig--Wollheim/Sykora feuds, for which he had to apologise to everyone, in the fourth issue. Carnell was at that time well known to American fandom, but had not met any English fan. That omission was soon to be repaired. Early in 1936, he got a letter from Les Johnson of Liverpool saying that he and Eric Frank Russell were coming to London on business and perhaps they might see Carnell. Eagerly, he intercepted them at the railway station, and tagged along with them to Gillings home, where he listened spellbound to exciting news of a proposed British prozine, and a printed fanzine---news which he promptly passed on in NOVAE TERRAE. Of the four who met here for the first time, Gillings was to become Britain's first prozine editor, and to remain #1 fan for many years, until supplanted by Carnell. Johnson was constantly active for the next 15 years, and thru his dealing business, (S.F. Service) was to bring more people into fandom than anyone until Ken Slater (and, incidentally, if anyone recalls my 1951 LonCon Report, was the Liverpool Master of Mimeography, who saved the Convention Programme.) and Eric Frank Russell is THE Eric Frank Russell, still half in and half out of fandom.

In its sixth issue, NOVAE TERRAE published its first contribution from an American fan. It was an article by Ackerman about Esperanto, and the controversy it caused is covered very fully---maybe more fully than it deserves---in THE IMMORTAL STORM. Moskowitz says that Ackerman became unpopular in England on account of this but, really, I don't see how anyone could have harboured much of a grudge against him, after this disarming tailpiece to his reply:

"In conclusion, just want to warn any other fans reading this---English or otherwise---who for real or imaginary reasons dislike me, that they'd better watch out! 'Cause Ackerman's a ferocious fellow. I go out to KILL my enemies-----by making friends of them."

In England, at least, he carried out this threat perfectly.

NOVAE TERRAE published 9 issues, in the remainder of 1936, and grew immensely in influence, but the editors were only a small group in a small town, and the real leadership passed to Leeds, home of the biggest and most active S.F.L. chapter in the country. They were now producing a mimeo'd

bulletin of their own, they had a permanent clubroom open day and night, and they were making plans for a national Convention. To the north of them, the Barnsley, Glasgow and Belfast chapters showed no life. To the south, there was no organised activity at all beyond Nuneaton. The entire south of England, containing half the population of the country, seemed to have only two active fans. And Gillings was engaged in a grim struggle with publishing firms, and far too busy to intervene in fandom. The position of the Leeds-Nuneaton axis seemed unchallengeable. It would have seemed incredible that within a year, the Leeds group would quickly have split-the Nuneaton group dissolved-the Liverpool group reduced in importance and that London fandom would not only be publishing NOVAE TERRAE, but would also be building the most powerful fan organisation the world has yet seen.

And yet, the portents were there, and could have been seen in Carnell's columns. Each of the blows that shook the foundations of Northern fandom was forecast by him with deadly accuracy. It may have been because he was working busily behind the scenes to deliver them, but more probably that he had his ear fixed very firmly to the ground. The Liverpool group was the first to fall. In August Carnell had reported a movement to transfer the BIS headquarters to London and at an historic meeting in Professor Low's office in Piccadilly that October, the deed was done. One Arthur C. Clarke, an old-time B.I.S. member, was appointed treasurer. After the meeting, Clarke, Carnell and Gillings adjourned to a nearby cafe and London fandom was born.

1937-1939 The First Convention-The Decline of Northern Fandom-The Science Fiction Association-The First Br. Prozine-The Golden Age of London Fandom-

The world's first Science Fiction Convention was held in Leeds on January 3, 1937. Moskowitz gives that honor to the New York-Philadelphia meeting of October 1936, but that was merely a regional conference. The Leeds event was truly a national convention, and every important fan in Britain was there, except leading fan journalist D.R. Smith, of Nuneaton who, like Harry Warner, could never be tempted out of his home town. The visitors included Hanson of NOVAE TERRAE Johnson and Russell from Liverpool and Gillings, Carnell and Clarke from London. At the convention it was agreed to form a new national fan organisation, the Science Fiction Association. The head was Meyer of Leeds, the headquarters of the organisation were to be in Leeds, and NOVAE TERRAE was to become it's official organ. This was the very pinnacle of Leeds' achievement, and almost immediately it began to topple. Rosenblum, and other important Leeds fans seceded from the SFA, rather than sever their connections with the American fan organisations, and within a few weeks Gillings was to bring immense prestige to London, by producing the first issue of his SCIENTIFCTION-The British Fantasy Review. And during the rest of 1937 London fandom continued to grow. In September the death knell sounded for the Nuneaton group as Hanson moved to London taking his mimeograph with him. With out him the Nuneaton group faded away, leaving only D.R. Smith as a lone wolf, and the October NOVAE TERRAE appeared under the joint editorship of Hanson, Carnell, and Clarke.

Duly heralded by Carnell, a London branch of the S.F.A. was formed, with more founding members than the entire fan population of Leeds; and, Carnell was already suggesting that the next convention be held in London. It was. And at it, the executive of the SFA was formally transferred to an all London committee.

Meanwhile, Gillings had been frantically active. His professionally printed fanzine had served its purpose of convincing a publisher that there was a market for a British prozine and that Gillings was the man to edit it. TALES OF WONDER duly appeared, and was well received by fandom. The publishers, however, were not quite so happy about it and there was a delay of nine months before the second issue came out. When it did, the publishers promised to go on a quarterly schedule and Gillings promptly abandoned his fanzine for his prozine. SCIENTIFICTION was taken over by the SFA, who combined it with their year old TOMORROW, which at once went professionally printed.

With this the SFA reached an incredible peak of activity. In addition to TOMORROW and NOVAE TERRAE, they were publishing a British Science Fiction Bibliography, and two other fanzines--AMATEUR SCIENCE STORIES and SCIENCE FICTION GAZETTE----and supplying their members with numerous services. Their total membership was well over 200 and Wollheim was suggesting that American fandom join the SFA en masse in default of a worthwhile American fan organisation. London was the fan centre of the world. It was as if a whole city of fans had suddenly gone nova.

Having become the centre of gravity of British fandom, London became its centre of levity. NOVAE TERRAE became the world's first QUANDRY-type fanzine. The influence of its new co-editors became obvious almost at once. Hanson had tended to pomposity in his editorials but it was soon taken out of him, and for the first time NOVAE TERRAE began to print the type of material we expect from a good humorous fanzine today---satire---personalities---wit---parodies---and general fannish humor. When William F. Temple joined the editorial staff halfway thru 1938, NOVAE TERRAE had in him and Arthur Clarke the most brilliant editorial board of any fanzine ever published, or likely to be. It is a pity that much of the material in NOVAE TERRAE isn't suitable for quoting--because it is buried in reviews of forgotten films or books--or skits on half-forgotten stories or fans but I will pick out a few pieces as an appendix to this article.

From NOVAE TERRAE, April 1938

PRELUDE TO THE CONQUEST OF SPACE

By Arthur C. (Ego) Clarke

I shot a rocket into the air,
It fell to earth I know not where,
But 50 grammes of T.N.T.,
Exploded in the Rectory.

I shot a rocket into space,
Towards the full moon's beckoning face,
And was rewarded for my pains,
By blowing up the Sea of Rains.

I shot a rocket into the air,
But notwithstanding all my care,
Five hundred tons of dynamite,
Blew San Francisco out of sight.

From NOVAE TERRAE August 1938, Second Anniversary Issue.
(Excerpt from D. R. Smith's story "In The Grand Manner")

Something glittered on the alien blue-green sward not fifty yards from the ship. Intensely intrigued, all rushed to it.

"Why, its only a cogwheel" cried Madeline. Steve gave her a glance from which love and respect were conspicuously absent.

"A left hand helical mitre gear" he said, with emphasis on the last word. "Involute tooth form, helix angle about twelve, ground after hardening." he went on didactically.

"What does all this mean?" cried Madeleine hysterically. Steve regarded her irritably.

"It means I know more about gears than you do."

From NOVAE TERRAE January 1939

The British Fan #7
William F. Temple
By Arthur C. Clarke

As I write this, the author of 'The Smile of the Sphinx' 'Lunar Lilliput' etc. etc. etc., is prowling around the room in eccentric circles pushing the carpet sweeper before him. Ever and anon he sends a reproachful glance in my direction but it produces absolutely no effect. (My conscience is clear: Didn't I wipe up the crockery? If you don't believe me, look in the dustbin.) Every time it reaches perihelion the sweeper gives a gargling click and disgorges a pile of cosmic debris travels on thru space, engulfing planet after planet, sun after sun---sorry, wrong story.

The carpet sweeper has left the room now, clucking like a Geiger-Muller counter about to lay an egg and I can write without fear of an inquisitive nose snooping over my shoulder. So nows the time for a few personalities. Moderately tall, moderately dark, immoderately handsome, Bill works in the Stock Exchange, which doesn't suit him one little bit. He was trained for some years to be an engineer but dripped that and now he doesn't know the difference between a two jointed, waffle-nosed cam and an eccentrically pivoted bi-

phase fluking iron (the ignorant fellow). The only things he does know anything about are films, Douglas Fairbanks (Sr H. G. Hells, appendicitis (tummyache to you) and rejection slips. He says he's got a bad temper, but hasn't, and says he doesn't like writing. but does.

When he wants to write, he retreats to his room, where he has a writing bureau full of dictionaries and Thesauruses (Thesauri?). If its cold, he lights an oil stove and has to emerge every half hour for a breath of fresh air. This gives him an excuse to stop work and he generally makes the best of it. Every few weeks he swears solemnly: "Next week I'll start writing in earnest.", and when next week comes, he either spends every night at the flicks or else crawls from pub to pub, trying to drown a set of practically unsinkable sorrows. If anyone ever films his life, they'll call it: "The Birth of a Procrastination"

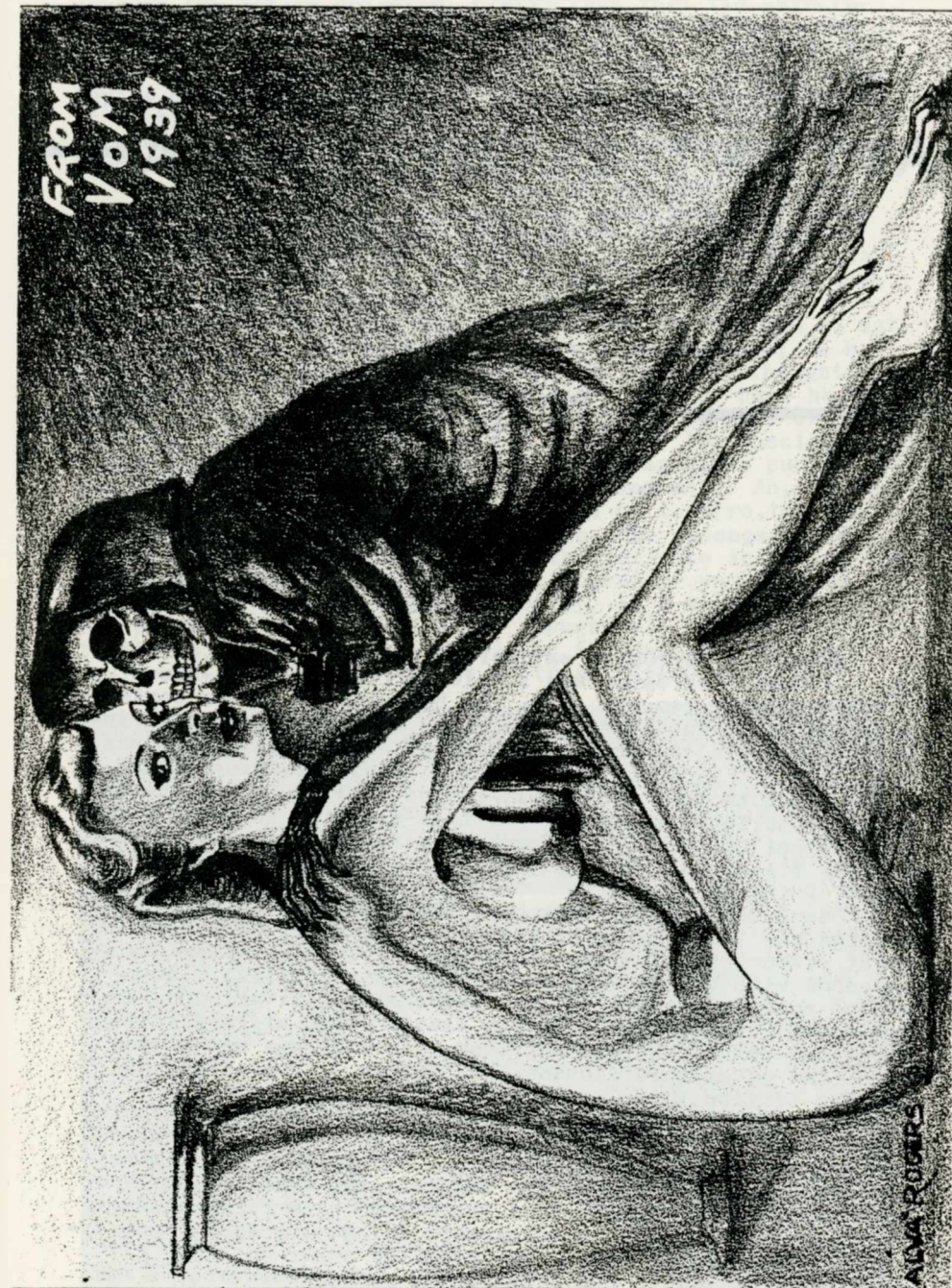
One thing about this fellow Temple is the clarity of his mind, and the way he concentrates his activities into a few narrow fields, in order to obtain maximum efficiency. This is shown very clearly in his library. I'll select a few books at random, Houdini's Escapes--The Film Til Now--Bulldog Drummond--The British Landscape--The Appeal of Jazz--How To Concentrate--Coleridge's Poems--Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals-----Outline of History----Angel Pavement--could specialisation go further? He doesn't go in very heavily for s-f these days. Richard Seaton is just a name to him and Hawk Carse is a dealer in secondhand Fords.

On the mantelshelf, stand two of his proudest possessions: autographed photos of Eleanor Powell and Douglas Fairbanks (Sr.). In the middle, H.G.Wells sits on top of my midget radio, and hops about in a most un-Wellsian manner when it is on. All attempts to make him remove these photos (which lower the whole tone of our establishment) have so far failed. We admit the necessity for Wells, even if he does look as if that diabetes was coming on again, but Miss Powell and Douglas Fairbanks (Sr.)----I mean to say.

I had better hurry up and finish this, as I hear him coming back again, rolling the dustbin down the stairs. One thing I've forgotten to tell you about him is his habit of getting up 5 minutes before he is due to leave for work in the morning, and his miserable habit of constant pessimism, his excruciating whistle, and his neurotic.....

(EDITOR'S NOTE: MS above was discovered with the effects of the late Arthur C. Clarke, who was found battered to death with a carpet sweeper in his flat some weeks ago. We publish these last words from his brilliant and versatile pen as an indication of the great loss that has been suffered by the worlds of literature, art, science, etc.,etc,)

Next issue: The Outbreak of War: The Destruction of British Fandom; The Resurgence of the North; The Work of Rosenblum in Keeping Fandom Together; Ackerman: English Fandom's Forry Godmother; The New Fans. Don't miss it!



—ARTJAY'S DILEMMA—

—Willis Conover Jr.—

Arthur J. Forrester sat before his typewriter, scratching his head. Forrester was a science fiction fan---one of the best known, too. In fact, the best known. Anyone could write letters; but it took brains to turn out thoughtful interesting articles for fan magazines. And the fan magazines were the real backbone of science fiction literature. Forrester often thought about that phrase "the real backbone of science fiction literature." He felt a thrill in the realization that he--Arthur J. Forrester--was more than a vertebra in this field; that he was just about the anterior superior crest of the iliac.

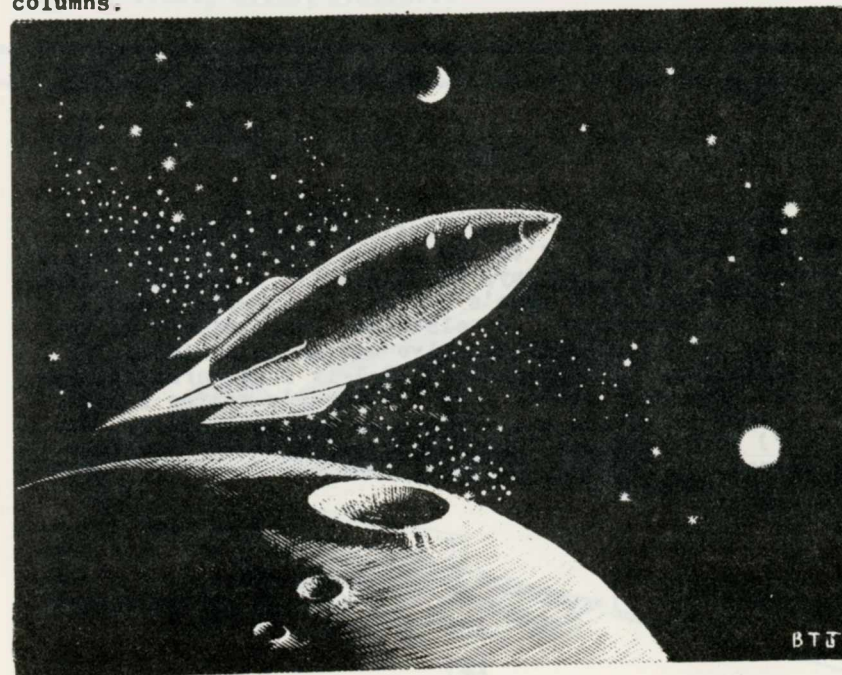
People knew about him, he considered pleasantly. He had written his letters to the readers departments of all the great science fiction magazines for many years. He had corresponded with the men who mattered. His thoughtful, interesting articles had filled the pages of almost all the fan magazines...except those little sheets whose niggardly editors had refused to pay for them. His name was synonymous with that of science fiction. He, Arthur J. Forrester, WAS science fiction.

But pardon me, uninitiated reader. I forget you are not acquainted with the terminology of science fiction. According to the editors, all of whom are versed generally in scientific knowledge, it is; "an instructive, fascinating type of literature, which supplies the reader with first-class, swift moving, healthy entertainment and at the same time gives him a scientific education, even tho sugar coated." It deals with reporters and scientist's young daughters, a variation of the traveling salesman in the Aryan legend and the

farmer's daughter; wild-eyed billy goats with a tendency to conquer the entire universe; pretty rays that tie skyscrapers into Gordian knots, among other tricks; Adonises who hop into airtight tin cans that drop them on dinky planets where they conquer the inhabitants and marry the king's egg-laying daughter; contraptions that take young experimenters at right angles to themselves thru the fourth dimension, into the past, or the future to kill poor Grandpop or to shake hands with Junior (as yet unborn) etc., etc.

A science fiction fan, defined by the observer, is a near-sighted youngster who reads and lives this stuff, who haunts back number magazine shops spends fabulous sums to add to his collection of classified pulp, & sacrifices school-work, much sleep, and local friends in the endless search for escape or publicity.

Arthur J. Forrester was one of these latter. Now he sat perplexed before his typewriter. It was unendurable; he had just discovered that he could no longer turn out thoughtful, interesting articles for fan magazines! In the past he had never been at a loss for subject matter. If Karloff or Lugosi could not inspire him to write about the 'fantascientifilms'--on which, as he often told his breathless public, he was THE expert--why, there was always Esperanto. Ah, Esperanto--the universal language, the tongue of tomorrow, the door to democracy, the key to coined words, the passageway to peace--the alliterative absolute--the infinite infinite, the ultimate ultimate! --For Arthur J. Forrester was also an authority on Esperanto. The authority, as a matter of fact. And perchance the fans tired of thoughtful, interesting articles on Esperanto--ah, how fickle the public taste--Artjay could always write up one of those "Celebs I've Met" columns.



BTJ

But now, since he'd written up all the fans and authors he'd ever seen including those unwillingly cornered on street-cars, he sagged in his chair, glum and dejected, the paper in his typewriter as blank as his mind. Then he sat up with a jerk. If he couldn't think of something to write a thoughtful, interesting article about, he could answer his mail. Gleefully he turned to the fantastically decorated cabinet where he kept his correspondence. Ducking a Tootsie Toy rocket that hung from the ceiling, he opened the drawer where he kept his letters--and gasped! It was empty! Artjay clutched the bookcase to keep from falling. Gone--his precious letters! Suppose--suppose they had been stolen? or read by someone else? Artjay went green. Suppose--some columnist like Wilhelm got gold of a Certain Particular Letter and published it's contents! Artjay went red.

Wait! What was that? A white paper lay at the very back of the drawer. It was a letter--whatever had become of the others, one remained. Forrester recognized it. He had received it from Smythe--an English fan who criticized Artjay's style of writing. Dull creatures, these British, without inventive or imaginative powers.

Then he understood why the other letters were gone. He sank to the floor laughing. He'd answered them and put them in another drawer. But this one he'd saved in order to put his fullest powers into a shattering reply to Smythe. "Bonshancon!" he cried in Esperanto. Now he could write. Opening the missive and placing it beside the typewriter, Forrester began production of another epistolary and syntactical masterpiece.

Dr Mr Smyth

--rcvd yrs 14 'z' (i.e., last. Clever?) Dankojn!
Acidcriticomentz not'd'th 100 pc int &'s 00 tuffeelings on
pt Esthetic J (i.e., Artjay; me, Clever?) M everedi 2 lern
oths' thotz conc me & same's U-hiss--ie., U-sss!; use.
Clever? Forresperanto, fav-elsewise. Conc latter, mi to-
leras! Relly--moviecabulary--blve use abbrs & simbles'll
"X" 2-daze Eng. Forresperanto'll B 1-ly form verbalanguage
M sir-10. Artjay's riting 2-day; every-1's riting 2-moro.
--Appr yr riting me, & trust've 5-month'd (i.e., May'd,
clever?) no U fulyware 'plus-vantajez' off'd by use tran-
satlanguaj..

Sciencereely,
(sined) ARTJAY FORRIE
Exec Dir FSL

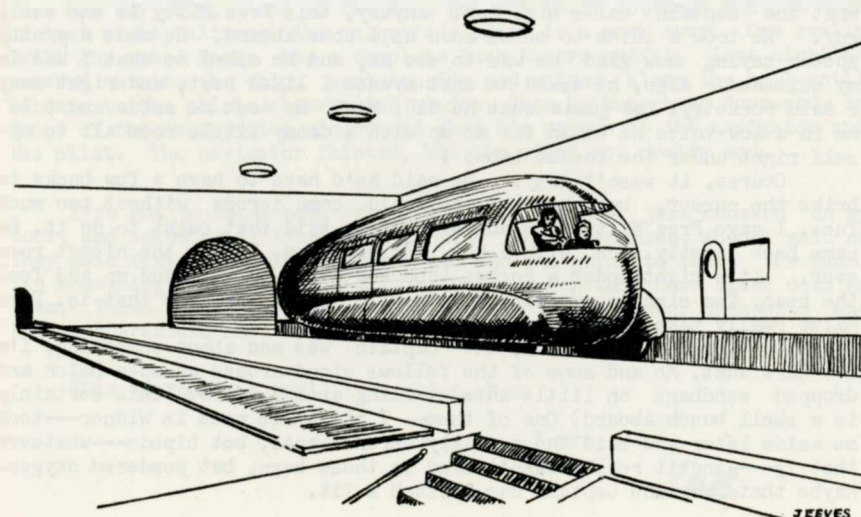
Certain that Smythe would now fully concur, Forrester folded the typed sheet into a triangle, and placed it in a three cornered envelope. Inverting the envelope, as best he could, Forrester wrote the address backwards on the wrong side. This was a unique touch. What if the postoffice should un-imaginatively object?? It was costing him ten ~~14~~ stamps, wasn't it?? Artjay put aside the envelope with a sigh. NO MORE MAIL UNTIL MONDAY MORNING. What was left now to occupy his fertile mind? Alliteration was passe, and he had coined words until his Esperanto dictionary ached in every joint. They were becoming tiresome to invent. "Inventiresome" he said aloud, then commented with a trace of bitterness, "not as good as usual." Neither were there any more celebrities to be written up.

Artjay jumped. He beamed. Oh, weren't there?? "Look" he told himself, in a voice he could barely control for triumph, "shat do the fans want? Celebrity write-ups!! Who do they want 'em written up by??" The answer was obvious. "Now"---Artjay could hardly restrain his joy---"who IS the greatest celebrity?" He coughed modestly.

"O.K., if they want it, I'll give it to them!!!" It felt good to be generous. Sitting down again---for a moment lost in thought, then with inspiration dripping from every pore, he proudly typed out the beginning of his momentous and culminating work.

I, SCIENCE FICTION

AJF, s-f's 4-most fan, ' s. B. 14 Nov 1916. Wrot 1st lttr to rdr's col whn 14 & achv'd imm pop'ty 'th eds & rdrs similar (i.e., alike; clever??)



A FAN AT LARGE

BOB TUCKER

FROM LE ZOMBIE CHICON YEARBOOK

Dear Mom;

Gosh, this is swell. I never dreamed a fan convention could be such great fun. Here I am away out in space for the first time. As you know, Mom, this is the first time the fans have ever had a convention in deep space; our club has chartered the ship for a weeks cruise around Pluto & back. There are about three hundred of us aboard, plus the crew. Gee, a convention is sure fun, Mom.

Mom, do you remember that Rothman fella who came out to see me at the farm last fall? Remember, he sold me a membership in the club, and a ticket for this cruise? Well, he's in charge here; everybody calls him Prez Milty----everybody that is but the Captain. I'm not going to repeat what the Captain calls him, Mom. Anyway, this Prez Milty is one swell guy. He took a shine to me as soon as I come aboard. He made a pretty speech saying how glad he was to see me, and he asked me what I had in my suitcase. Also, he asked me what syence I liked best, and right away I said rocketry. And guess what he did, Mom? He took me aside and told me in a low voice he could fix me up with a dandy little room all to myself right under the rocket tubes!

Course, it wasn't easy. He said he'd have to have a few bucks to bribe the purser, but that the man would come across without too much fuss. I gave Prez Milty five dollars and he said that ought to do it. He came back pretty soon with a key, and gee, Mom, I have the nicest room ever. It's right under a rocket tube and I can put my hand up and feel the heat. The sign on my door says "Baffle Room", whatever that is. Prez Milty really takes care of a friend.

We cleared port at noon; the Captain was mad about something, I'm not sure what. Me and some of the fellows stood around an open hatch and dropped sandbags on little ants crawling around below. (This certainly is a swell bunch aboard) One of them---I think his name is Widner---took me aside later and said those really weren't ants, but bipeds---whatever that is----and it really wasn't sand in those bags, but powdered oxygen. Maybe thats why the Captain was in such a fit.

We made a short stopover on the Moon, and gee, it was a funny place Mom. There ain't no air there at all. The Captain said we couldn't stay out long without suits, and after about an hour, the talking died down, and some of the fans got blue in the face, so they made us come back in. One of the fans, a swell fella named Kennedy, came back to the ship lugging a smelly old dinosaur skeleton, but the Captain wouldn't allow him to bring it aboard. Gee, Kennedy got mad. He threatened to kick a hole in the hull, and let space leak in, but Prez Milty talked him out of it, pointing out that the club would be held responsible for the hole.

We have a bar on the ship. Now don't be alarmed, Mom, you know I wouldn't drink anything, even if there was hard likker at this bar. Prez Milty says the bar don't sell nothing but soft drinks. He assured me most fans don't drink likker; except for a rowdy from Los Angeles named Ackerman. He said he had confiscated a quart of bourbon from this Ackerman person and locked it away in his cabinet for medicinal purposes. He said that Ackerman was the only person who drank at conventions and he set a bad example for the rest. Prez Milty told me that if I wanted a really good soothing drink, to ask the bartender for a Mickey Finn and tell him Milty sent me.

Talk about excitement, Mom, this trip is really something! The Captain had to stop twice to pick up some fans who fell overboard. Guy by the name of Woolmouth, or Willmorth, or something like that had opened a porthole in the ceiling to take some pictures of the stars and a gust of wind blew him right out of the window! It was a good thing someone saw it happen, and rescued him right away, cause he was wearing a thin suit, and might easily of caught cold out there.

We got a scientist on board, too, who is carrying on some kind of secret experiments. He's an old fella named Evans and he's always puffing on a big cigar. I watched him two or three times when he didn't know I was around. He stands up in the nose of the ship and puffs a big cloud of smoke out into space, and then he runs like sixty back to the rear window to watch it float by, with a pleased look on his face.

And say, Mom, some of the fans got out their costumes and put them on last night, although the masquerade party is a week away. One really swell guy named Speer has a complete Buck Rogers outfit. Last night he sneaked outside the ship, went topside and waleed along the hull until he came to the pilots observation window. Then he hung head downwards in front of the observation window and shot his raygun at the navigator and the pilot. The navigator fainted, but the pilot got pretty mad.

I've got to close now, Mom. A couple of fans just knocked on my door, and asked me if I knew how to play jungle dominoes. When I said no They said they'd be glad to teack me, so I'm going to learn the game. Its something they play with little white cubes that have black dots on them. These two fans, some very friendly fellas named Moskowitz and Madle, guaranteed me I'd get educated pretty fast.

This is really a swell convention, Mom.

Yours,

JOE

TED CARNELL

Fans Panned

Think things were different before the War? Read Carnell's prize winning manuscript from the Aug. 1938 IMAGINATION contest and see if it isn't as apt today, as when it was written, 15 years ago!

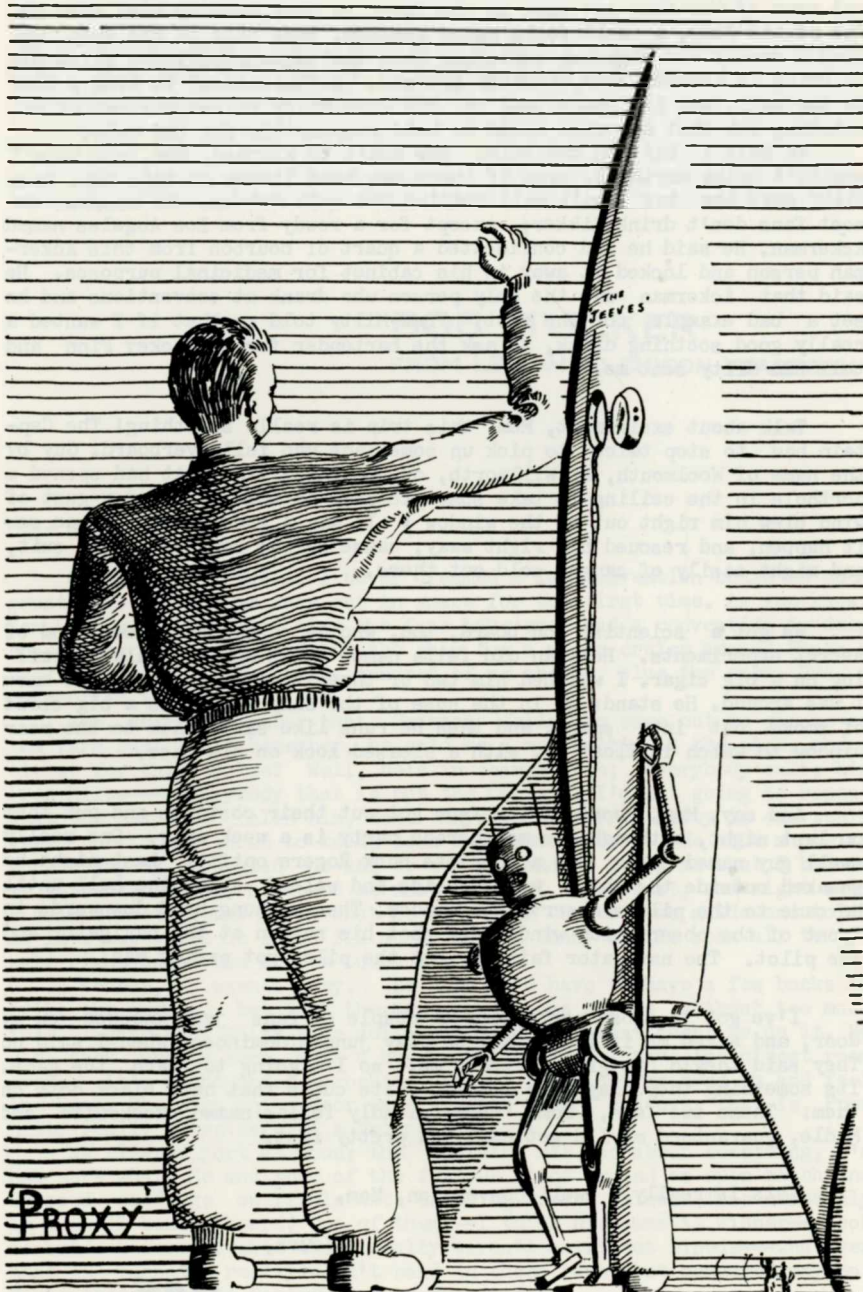
You are feeling pretty good, aren't you? Litely skimming these words, as naturally as most fans do. You're not reading or absorbing, are you? Why should you, anyway. It's merely another sideline of fantasy, your favorite literature, &, whether sideline or genuine article, you just skim, rush & glance over the words which really must seem a meaningless jumble to you. That's your big trouble. That's just what you do to all your fantasy perusings.

You read (I'll give you the benefit of the doubt there) like a femme knitting--"read one, miss two, drop a paragraph" & so on; you skim so fast, that shortly you will be able to--finish a mag just by glancing at the cover. Perhaps it is because you have little time to spare & too many items to read--perhaps you could read sanely & slowly, but it wouldn't leave you enuf time for "activities". So you skim.

The devil of it is that having rusht thru a book, mag or what-have-you (meaning a fanmag), you immediately blow off steam by reviewing, slating, arguing, fighting, writing ---& occasionally praising your undigested findings. You storm the palace walls of the editors & publishers, you & your puny band of cohorts, expecting the drawbridge of Fame to be low-wred immediately for you to walk comfortably up. You ferret out authors' addresses & tell them where they went wrong. "If I had written that yarn..." Well, why didn't you?--you're so smart!

When you meet your playmates you immediately make their lives miserable by gabbing all the eyewash you have thot out --the only thing likely to stop you is when you remember one of them owes you money (which is invariable the case).

You havent realized, nor will you, that you & your clique of half - starved pseudo - scientific bugs are less than the dust beneath the feet of the publishers. They don't have to rely upon your criticisms & helpless suggestions to mold their magazines. If they did, they'd soon be right out of business, because---you'd have the mags your crazy way & the readers, that silent backbone that every publisher respects, would cease buying. Then you'd be out in the cold too.



Why, then, do the editors even listen to you? Firstly, either they have graduated from your ranks to the office chair or, knowing nothing about science fiction, they imagine you know everything about the racket except the publishing. Which is just what you really think. Then they find out you don't.

2dly--& this is nearer the mark--you are such a fraternal band of orators that when you fasten your teeth onto something you set up such a yowl that even the Board of Governors in their glass-lined sanctum raise their eyebrows, stop their game of checkers & inform the editors to keep their pets quiet at any cost. The singular voice of a reader is lost in the tempestuous storm of your united wrath. An editor could afford to lose the sale to one reader, but not a couple 100 sales to fans--IF you had the courage to boycott, as you so often threaten.

Then again, the authors are apt to pander to you a little--perhaps it pleases their egos to have a vociferous public which congregates in strange places & ardently argues the pro's & con's of such & such a story. I said "perhaps"--more likely they're techt a leetle with the bug themselves & can understand to some extent your queer antics.

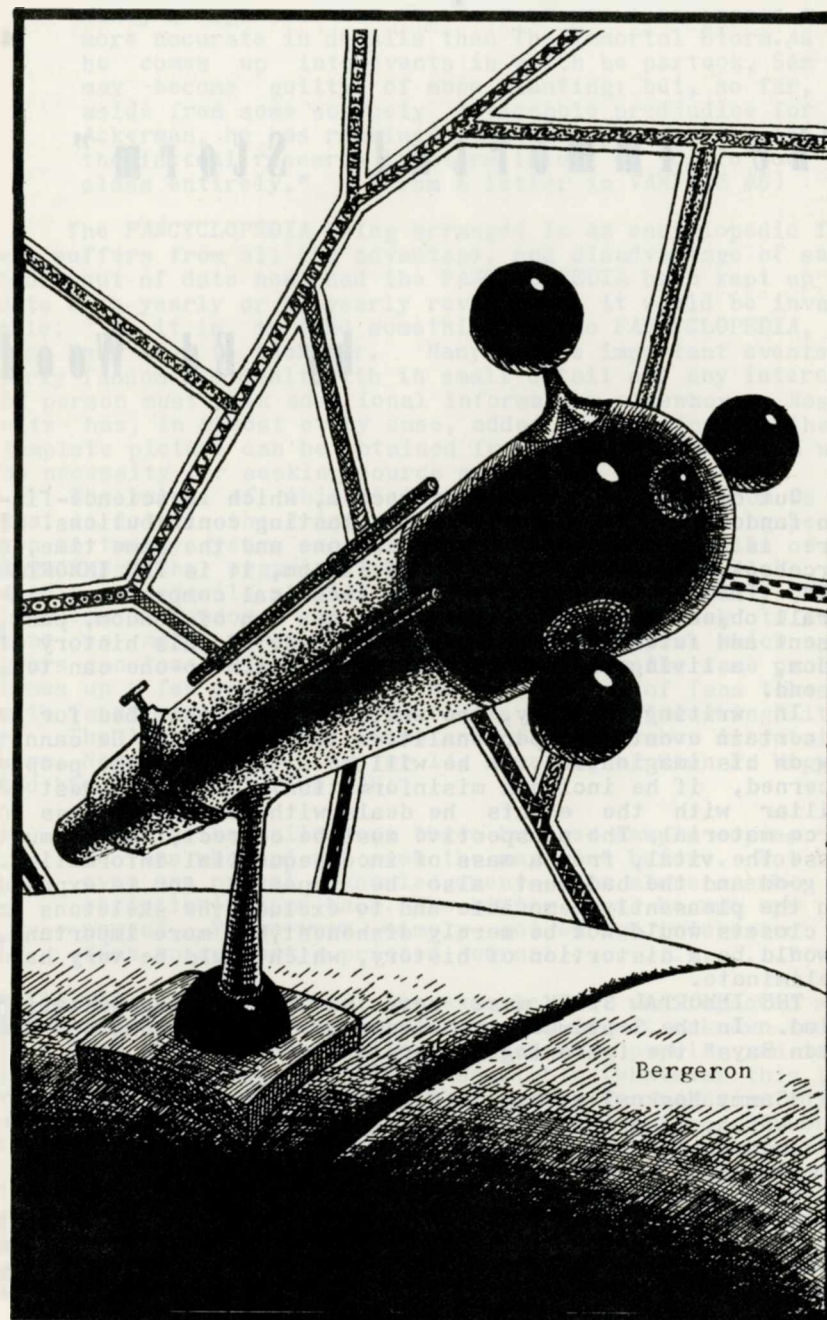
But the crowning achievement of your worthless life is the time allotted to your "activitys". It's colossal, unprecedented, an eternal wonder to a gaping public--of fellow fans. Statistix would probably show that the amount of electricity used per fan per yr, while on "active service", exceeds the generating power of the Sun by some millions of ergs. That the amount of paper & ink consumed in writing, typing, mimeoing &c would easily fill the Red Spot on Saturn (shut up! I know my science). That the amount of hot air exuded per fan per yr, if collected, would surely float a spaceship round the Universe--if it could be utilized.

Where's it all getting you? I know it's good for trade. You probably keep at least one office boy busy somewhere--dropping your hash into the wastebow. But what good is it to you? What are you getting out of it?

Well, there's where I have to admit you've got something. For you're having the time of your life. You get a greater enjoyment out of all this hooey than the authors, editors, publishers & readers rolled into one. Your amateur writings, trickling from Continent to Continent, are swell practice for keeping your gray matter nimble. It keeps you always on the jump in case another fan gets one over on you. & all that should be good practice for making your way in Life. You simply don't have a chance to stagnate.

But, spare a little thot for those non-scientifictional non-entitys around you who have to put up with your mutterings, hair-tearing, stamping & cursing. To them you are a being accurst; an individual afflicted with an incurable mental disease, rivalling even the victims of the Great Plague--at least that was stamped out. You will only find sympathy & understanding among your fellow sufferers. But what's it matter? Little Man You're the Tops!

Finally, before you take Granfer's battle-ax down & buy a single ticket to here (you won't need a return---we swing 'em this way), remember I'm just another fan too--yes, another nut like you--& the foregoing certainly applys to myself as well as you.



a commentary on

"The Immortal Storm"

by Ed Wood

Out of the aptly termed microcosm, which is science-fiction fandom, has come one of its few lasting contributions. If there is any document, which is at one and the same time, a sourcebook, handbook, and history of fandom, it is THE IMMORTAL STORM. The wealth of detail, the technical competence, the overall objectivity make it the sine qua non of fandom, past, present and future. Sam Moskowitz has made of this history of fandom, a living vital moving story of which no-one can tell the end.

In writing history, the writer is circumscribed for he has certain events and personalities to deal with. He cannot draw on his imagination, for he will be attacked by the people concerned, if he includes misinformation. Also, he must be familiar with the events he deals with, or have access to source material. The perspective must be correct, for he must choose the vital, from a mass of inconsequential information. The good and the bad must also be reported for to expound upon the pleasantly memorable and to exclude the skeletons in the closets would not be merely dishonest, but more important, it would be a distortion of history, which would be very hard to eliminate.

THE IMMORTAL STORM must have had a very long gestation period. In the September 1940 issue of the fan magazine "Van Houten Says" the following appears:

"Sammy Moskowitz has in his possession a manuscript which, if printed, will do fandom no good. It's a screwball thing about the Futurians, called "The Immortal Storm" or "Blitzkrieg Over Fandom....."

In a letter to this writer, Moskowitz has pointed out that this "Immortal Storm" was a parody on the Futurian-New Fandom episode, and not by any means a serious article. Yet there is no doubt that he thought about the historical details and the incidents to a great extent before putting them on paper.

Many people will compare THE IMMORTAL STORM with Jack Speer's "Up To Now" or his "Fancyclopedia". Perhaps a quote from Speer himself will settle the first:

"Ungraciously, I have to register a dissent to F.T. Laney's opinion that "Up To Now" was less biased & more accurate in details than The Immortal Storm. As he comes up into events in which he partook, Sam may become guilty of more slanting: but, so far, aside from some scarcely noticeable prejudice for Ackerman, he has remained commendably impartial and the factual research in Storm is out of "Up To Now" class entirely." (From a letter in VAMPIRE #8)

The FANCYCYCLOPEDIA being arranged in an encyclopedic format suffers from all the advantage, and disadvantage of same. Sadly out of date now, had the FANCYCYCLOPEDIA been kept up to date with yearly or bi-yearly revisions, it would be invaluable. As it is, to find something in the FANCYCYCLOPEDIA, you must know what to look for. Many of the important events of early fandom are dealt with in small detail and any interested person must seek additional information elsewhere. Moskowitz has, in almost every case, added enough minutiae that a complete picture can be obtained from THE IMMORTAL STORM with no necessity for seeking source material.

The value of this history to present day fandom is not that it details the doings of a certain group of young people ten to twenty years ago but rather in its details of fan magazines, the organization and decline of fan clubs, the deadly and sterile results of feuds, the universality of the problems in fandom. It is, in some ways, amazing to think that so many words are expended upon problems which a few years can toss into utter oblivion. And when the same problem comes up a few years later, a new generation of fans takes up with fanaticism and vigor the facets of this "crushing" item.

The tragedy of more than one fan publisher is detailed here. Near the end of Chapter 14, speaking of Olon F. Wiggins and his SCIENCE FICTION FAN:

"....Wiggins mailed out three hundred sample copies to fans who had not seen the magazine before. Not even one postal acknowledgement---let alone a subscription!---came back. The bitter truth became apparent. There were simply not enough interested fans to support a printed journal....."

While this may be an extreme example, it was repeated many times in the first decade of fandom and is not unknown today, in a time when science fiction is much more popular and is, in the minds of some, becoming respectable (whatever this term may mean). It is a tribute to the pioneer fan magazine editor and publisher that they put out so many magazines of worth. Perhaps lacking the neatness of today's average publication, but showing an enthusiasm sadly lacking today, they are among the tragedies of the microcosm, and though small compared to the vast stage of world problems, the hurt was felt none the less deeply.

If one tried to sum up the many lessons listed in THE IMMORTAL STORM, they perhaps could be said to add up to this:

THE IMMORTAL STORM as it stands, is incomplete. Ending with the conclusion of the first World Convention in 1939, it does not stop at a natural break, which would be a time when a definite era of fandom was over. Later editions may well extend the story to December 7, 1941, or even later. At this date, informed fans know what has to come next, the reaction against New Fandom, the second and third Conventions, the outbreak of World War II & the virtual collapse of British Fandom, the COSMIC CIRCLE, etc. Whatever point Moskowitz selects there is little doubt that future historians of fandom will use it as a starting point. No-one can add more to the territory already covered except the personal memoirs (should they ever be written) of Wollheim, Palmer, Ackerman, Lowndes, and a few others of the period.

The reputation of many professionals may suffer a little when read about in THE IMMORTAL STORM, but that should teach the importance of placing oneself on record in print. Since no-one can tell what importance the years to come will place on one's statements, it is impossible to avoid treading on someone's toes, but it shows clearly that a consideration of what one writes, in long range terms, would tend to eliminate many of the trivialities that bother some of our esteemed professionals today.

The names of the fans of yesteryear seem like a rollcall of the professional field today. Fandom has given editors, illustrators, agents, and writers to the field, and will perhaps continue to do so. Irrespective of the final assessment of fandom, THE IMMORTAL STORM shows clearly that, in spite of false trails, stupid and incompetent leaders, obscure means and ends, fandom has been a group having an importance out of all proportion to its size. To all future fans, it will serve as a guide thru the complex early era of this science fiction fan movement.

All histories are tragedies in the last analysis since the stage remains essentially the same, while the characters change. To the old guard, those few hardy souls that have remained when so many have gone, it will bring back memories of the younger days. The present fans should contemplate whether their contributions to fandom will endure among the members of the microcosm, or if they shall be among the nameless many. History can record and judge achievements, both positive and negative; it cannot record nonentities.

Copies of THE IMMORTAL STORM, by Sam Moskowitz may still be purchased from Henry Burwell Jr., 459 Sterling St. N.E., Atlanta, Georgia; price \$2 per copy postpaid. Going fast !!

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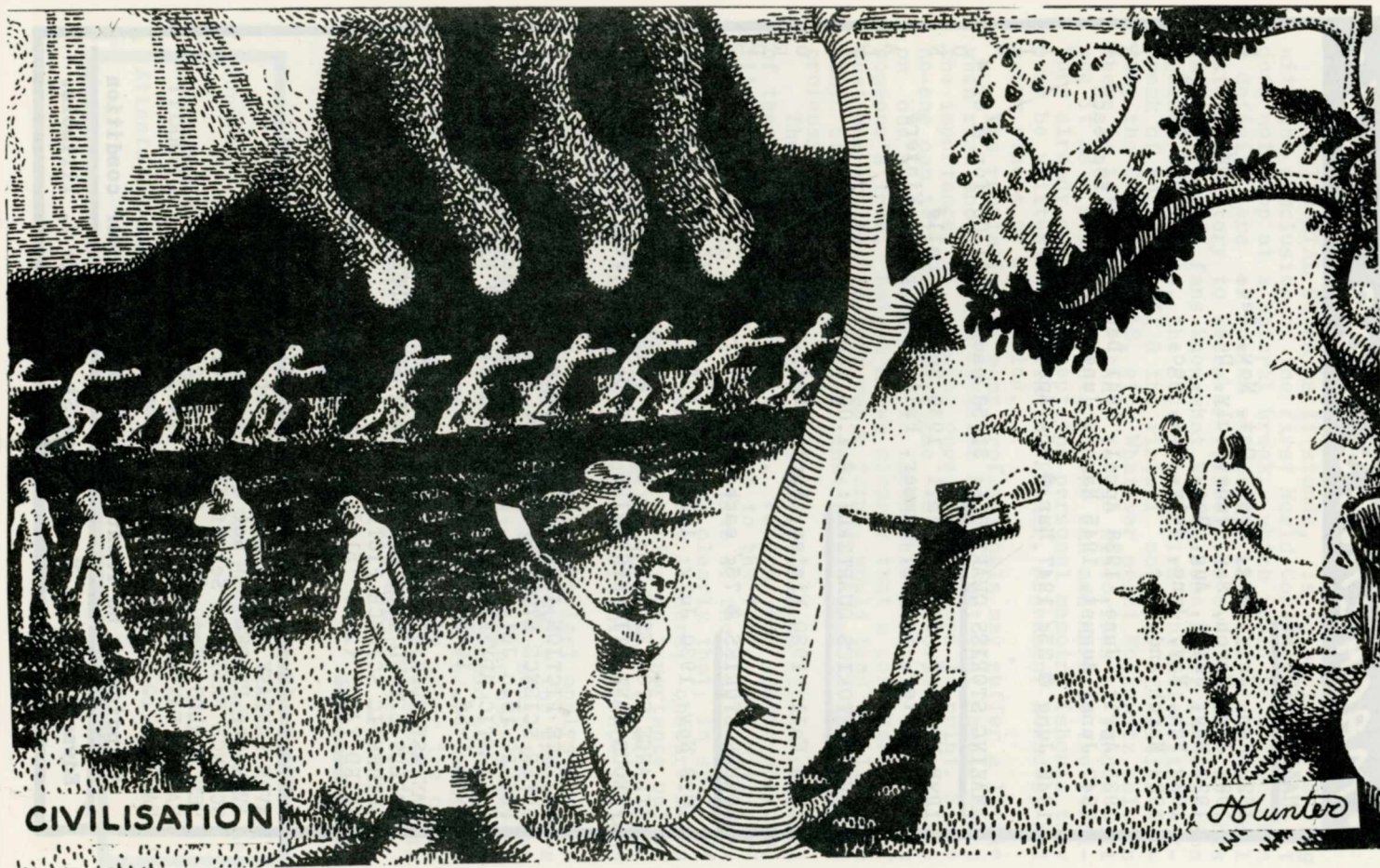
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Edward Wood, 31 N. Aberdeen St., Chicago 7, Illinois.



Vacuum Beetle

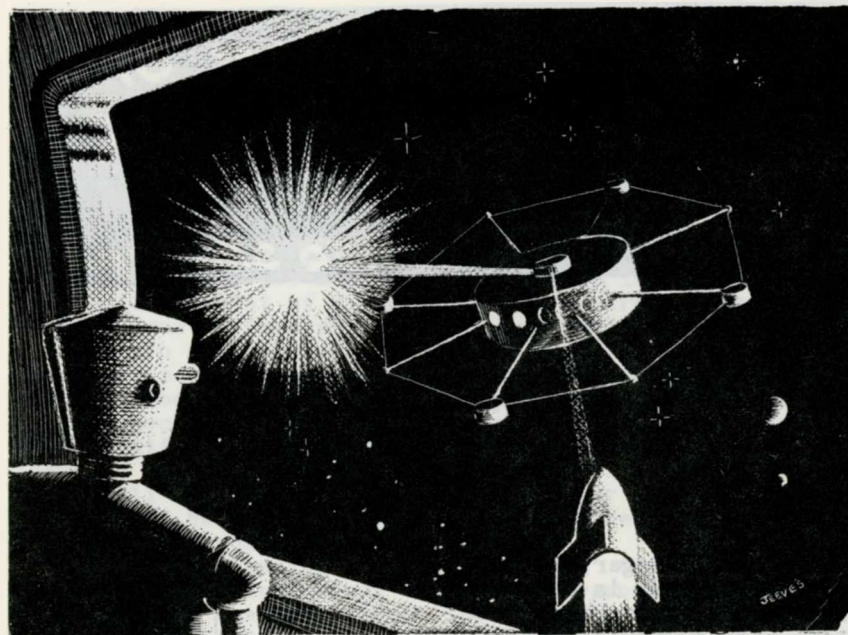
TERRY JEEVES

The planet was lonely and dark as it swung on its path thru space. Lonely because it was the only offspring of a dark star, and dark because of an absence of light. High on a rocky ridge sat Gei-ga, one of the few remaining life forms on the planet. For many toks he had been trailing an odour emanating from a gaym. The gaym creatures were becoming scarcer and in consequence, so was the source of bul wiich Gei-ga's stomach craved. Well he remembered the days when he and his brethren would flock to the hunting grounds, pass thru a turnstile to the accompanying click-click of the Gei-ga counter, and then they would see the gaym. Those days were gone and it looked as tho Gei-ga would follow them, unless a new source of bul appeared.

Then it happened. A roaring filled the air, there was a flash and as Gei-ga's eyes readjusted, he could see a huge spherical object settling to the ground. He fearlessly approached it in time to see a rectangle of light appear on the sphere, and out stepped four dumpy figures. Gei-ga's tendrils stiffened.....here was bul, bags of bul in fact! If only he could get aboard this craft, both he and the precious contents of his crnium would be saved.

Molton, skipper of the Vacuum Beetle, gazed around him as he stepped from the ship. Suddenly he saw Gei-ga. To Molton, he looked like a very large flower. Molton stepped forward, plucked the flower, only to find that it needed no plucking. Instead of roots, it had coarset endrils, apparently a means of locomotion, possibly for movement as well. At the top, two finer tendrils appeared surmounted by a large ball. "What do you make of it, Juanita?" he asked. The Russian grunted "Harmless, let's put it in a jar in the Mess-room."

One hour later, a crew member was found smeared on the mess-room ceiling. A search for hiding places disclosed three more, all treated with the same smear technique. Gophnaw, the only Neckist on board, pronounced them dead and after X-raying their bodies with a multiple Singloscope, called the Skipper. "Molton, this is hot stuff, these men haven't a trace



of brain matter left in their bodies. I have two deductions and an offer of advice. Either someone slipped up in Intelligence or our little Pansy has done it. I suggest we kill the thing."

Molton scoffed and told Gophnaw that no crew member was expected to have any brains. The smearing was part of an undercover campaign to discredit his authority. Gophnaw immediately hypnotized the crew by means of a Vogt-o-meter and set out to catch Pansy. He found her picking the Captain's brains and quickly threw a handy bucket of weedkiller over Gei-ga. Gei-ga immediately planted a crnium cell in the skipper's remains, and attacked Gophnaw. He grabbed a Tommy-gun from a hook on the wall and fired at Gei-ga, yelling "You ain't a lady!" If Gei-ga had understood, he would have pointed out that it was the Neckist's one track mind always dwelling on Necking that led to the error. Not understanding, Gei-ga dodged the bullets, and chased Gophnaw down the corridor. The Neckist snatched a brick from his pocket and hurled it at Gei-ga with no effect. Passing thru the hydroponic garden, he scattered radio-active dust behind him. He next tried a hand grenade, a baseball bat, and a pair of the cook's socks. All to no avail: Gei-ga still came on. As a last resort, Gophnaw energised all the floors, ceilings, and walls, first putting on dry socks to avoid energising himself. Gei-ga copied him and continued to advance. Nearer and nearer he crept. Gophnaw pressed back against the wall, something stuck in his back, his hand grasped it and drew it into view. It was a FANZINE, illustrated by the infra-queer artist, SUNBURN PHIPPS. Gei-ga took one look, screamed and shrivelled up....no wonder thought Gophnaw, as he fainted, fell to the floor, and bashed in his skull on the carpet. He never recovered---so the crew of the Beetle are still in a state of hypnosis.....

THE HIBERNATION OF BERTRAM BUGGER

FRED SHROYER

From FANTASY DIGEST Summer 1940

When Bertram Bugger, who was a drunkard, and as is often the case, a poet and philosopher, also, picked up his morning paper and read in the large headlines "US TO MOBILIZE" he promptly resorted to philosophy. As he read further and learned that he, along with others of his age group be be drafted in the near future he threw the paper to the oak floor of his untidy, bottle-strewn apartment, and decided quite definitely that he was NOT going to fight.

Realizing that he must think this situation thru in the philosophical manner, he decided not to report at the office of the Zenith Advertising Agency, where he was employed as a caption writer, but to remain at home, and devote the day to thinking, aided, of course, by a bottle of Scotch.

Some hours later, having consumed the better part of a bottle of the beloved liquor, he had arrived at a definite solution of his problem. He had started with the axiom: I will NOT fight. Having established this point, he had spent the rest of the time in alternate drinking and thinking of means whereby he might evade the inevitable governmental pressure that would be used to force his enlistment. The solution had come in a flash of inspiration. Later he remembered that it had undoubtedly been inspired by the calendar picture of a bear that hung on the wall.



When bears are faced with an uncomfortable situation like winter, he asked himself, what do they do?

They hibernate, of course, he triumphantly answered. It was all quite simple. He would hibernate, too!

By the time he had gone to the bank and withdrawn his savings-----a few thousand dollars inherited from his aunt he had arrived at a plan of hibernation which he felt would be eminently satisfactory for an individual of his temperament. Several hundred miles from the city, on a plot of land which, like his money, had been inherited from his aunt, he began preparations for his project. First, a 100 foot shaft was sunk in the midst of a small grove of trees. He told the workmen, mostly farmers from the surrounding countryside, he intended to study the habits of the Talpidae, or ground moles and that a thorough study of these interesting creatures necessitated an underground room connected with the surface by a connecting shaft. After this explanation they asked no more questions, tho at times when his back was turned, they indulged in a certain circular motion with their forefinger. It was all quite clear to them. Mr. Bugger was nuts, but, what the hell, if he was willing to spend good cash to indulge his madness, they wouldn't complain.

After the passing of several weeks, the project neared completion. Bertram stood in the underground room and surveyed it with satisfaction. The noon sun which hovered almost directly over the shaft, illuminated the cell with a disk of light and that, augmented by the flashlight he carried, gave him sufficient light for his inspection. It gave him a sense of security to know that the walls were backed by three feet of brick and that the ceiling, six feet from the concrete floor, was heavily braced by iron girders.

That afternoon Bugger went to the city to purchase the necessary furnishings for his cave. He hired a truck and a driver, and following Bertram's instructions, the man drove to the city's largest liquor store. Bertram entered and almost immediately the establishment hummed with confusion.

"Did you say 300 cases of Scotch?" screamed the little proprietor. "I said 300 cases," repeated Bertram.

It was in the early hours of the morning that the loaded truck bumped across the field and into the grove where the black mouth of Bertram's shaft loomed like a huge blot of ink, in the yellow glow of the headlights. It was evening when they finally finished the unloading of the truck and the lowering of the cases of Scotch, the cot, blankets and the other items that Bertram deemed necessary for his hibernation, into the little room beneath the earth.

When the bewildered truck driver had gone and Bertram was alone, he looked for a long time at the descending sun; to the east the sky was stained with night. Then Bertram climbed down the shaft and entered his subterranean retreat. He broke open all the liquor cases and arranged the bottles in tiers about his cot. He placed the timepiece that a jeweler had made for him near to his bed. He knew that in four years it would awaken him, he hoped.

The last war lasted four years, he said to himself, so this one can't last much longer. He uncorked only a few of the bottles, knowing that the opening of bottles had become a reflex action with him and that he would automatically open more of them as they were needed, even in his stupor.

A metal cover which he had screwed into the threaded terminus of the shaft effectively sealed it. As he pulled a cord that dangled against the wall, he heard the roar of the dirt caving into the shaft. Now only a tiny air tube connected him with the surface. He felt his way to the cot and, lying down, covered himself with a blanket and fumbled for a bottle. He raised it to his lips and drank deeply.....

At times, in the long night that followed, he heard, faintly, through his sleep, dull, booming sounds above him and muted earth tremors would cause the empty bottles to tinkle.

Bertram Bugger awoke violently as the shrill clang of the alarm bounced back and forth in the small room. He staggered to his feet, stumbling over mounds of empty bottles in the process. He breathed deeply, flexed his numbed arms, and stood awkwardly on his tingling legs. His stomach seemed to be tied in a leather knot. Had four years really passed? He shrugged his shoulders---he could go up and look around---if anything had gone wrong, he could always return.

He set off the charge that would clear the shaft.

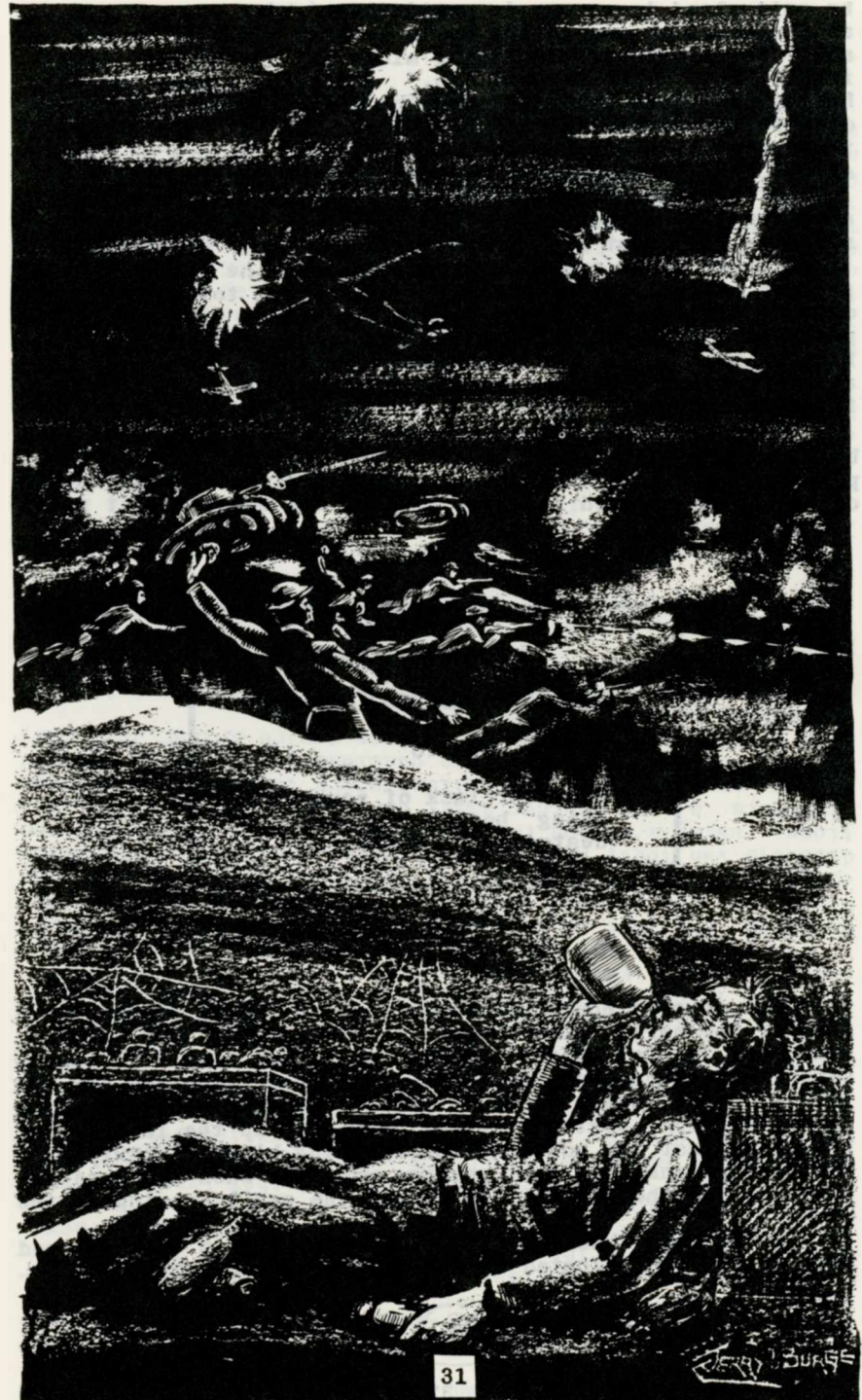
It was a silent world that he found when he reached the surface. It was evening and nowhere was there a sign of life. He wondered why it was so absolutely still and then he realized that even the insects and birds were silent.

As he walked toward the road that led to the city, he found his path blocked by a huge crater that he was forced to skirt. To his nostrils came a musty odor of decay. There had been a war. It was only when he reached the city and found it in shambles and unpeopled save for thousands of queer sprawling masses that once had been humans, that he began to suspect the truth.

In old and yellowed newspapers he read of the unbelievable years of the war. He read of the gas which had been used with deadly effect by the Putzies, and then, duplicated by the other side, used in turn against its creators. And last of all, he read the warning that the gas was out of control and approaching the city. The paper was dated two years back. Two years!

He was the only man alive on earth! He, Bertram Bugger, drunkard, poet, and philosopher, alone, by some freak of chance, had survived man's last brutality.

But Bertram Bugger was, above all, a philosopher and so he shrugged his shoulders and began an Odyssey of the world. He lived content and happy, for the warehouses of the world were full of rare old liquors and there was no-one to forbid his enjoyment of them. As the years passed and he had, by means of foot, auto, and boat wandered over the greater portion of the globe, Bertram began to have great gnawing pains in his stomach and he knew that he undoubtedly had ulcers. But, Bertram Bugger was above regret and fear and besides, as



he said aloud to no-one in particular (which was not strange as there was no one in the world to hear him) "It is not exactly satisfactory, this living alone and not completely liking it. So I might as well die." And being a poet and still having a slight fondness for the now perished human race, despite the stupidity and brutality that it had exhibited throughout it's mad career, he felt that before he died he should erect some fitting monument to the memory of man.

After much philosophical thought, he built a circular, aquarium-like structure on the summit of a grassy hill that stood in the midst of a broad rolling plain. He constructed it of thick glass and, when it was finished, he filled it with gallons and gallons of Scotch. With great toil and effort, driven on to greater speed by the increasing violence of the pains in his stomach, he made a huge metal lid and, with infinite labor, placed it over the aquarium, leaving a small aperture which could easily be closed by a slight pressure from the interior.

There was only the epitaph to be engraved upon the broad slab of platinum which he had carried here for that purpose and, when Bertram Bugger had finished the engraving of it and had placed the slab against the monument, it read:

IN MEMORY OF MAN
THE MOST IRRATIONAL OF ALL
BEASTS

who, for lack of something better to do,
destroyed himself.

For several hours Bertram stood and looked at the broad bowl of the earth that brimmed about him. It was evening, again, and the frightened sun was retreating into it's burrow before the menace of the night that crept over the sky. A few brave and lonely stars signalled to each other in monotonous Morse. Bertram crawled painfully up the ladder that leaned against the monument and, lowering himself slowly into the liquid, sank. His last gesture was made when his hand appeared above the surface and closed the small opening in the cover.

A few large bubbles, like amber beads in the last red rays of the sun, floated leisurely upward and broke.

