

"How can you contemplate such a thing?"

"Well.....continual shocks....like insulin treatment, you know".

"You don't realise what you're doing!"

"They can take it. They must be strong minded, or they wouldn't read the stuff".

"Yes, but this....this is mind wrecking! It's too utterly ghastly!"

Fellow fans...it's

S-F NEWS

No. 8

JULY 1951

1951 FESTIVAL CONVENTION BIG SUCCESS

On Saturday and Sunday, May 12th and 13th, and during the evenings of the 10th, 11th and 14th, the largest and most successful science-fiction Convention ever held in this country entertained and exhausted over 120 London fans and visitors from all parts of the British Isles and overseas.

The first preliminary meeting, on Thursday, May 10th, packed the famous 'White Horse' to capacity, well over 60 visitors being present during the course of the evening. Among many notable visitors were Forrest J. Ackerman and his wife Wendayne, from the U.S.A., Lyell Crane from Canada, Walter Willis, his wife and his partners Bob Shaw and James White of the Northern Ireland fanzine 'SLANT', Ben Abas, editor of Holland's now-defunct one-and-only s-f 'zine 'FANTASIE EN WETENSCHAP' and his wife and brother. Professor Low, famous popular-science writer, pre-war President of the 'Science Fiction Association', was present during the evening, and another notable 'first-timer' at the 'W.H.' was Doctor W.A. Gibson of Scotland, also a prominent member of the old SFA.

Authors Clarke, Temple, Beynon Harris, Phillips, Bounds Hay, Tubb, and Dave Griffiths were also present, if slightly crushed, giving some point to a pessimistic (optimistic?) fan's declaration that if Lew the Manager had doped the drinks, English science-fiction would have finished abruptly that night.

Only (!) about 40 were present on Friday evening, leaving room for the entrance of Northern enthusiasts Mike Rosenblum, Max Leviten and Rick Dalton, 'PHAN-TASMAGORIA' editor Derek Pickles and his sister Mavis (who have said some hard...and disregarded...things about London fandom, and entered with a slightly hunted and wary look), old time fans D.W.F. Mayer and Sid Birchby, and Swedish fan Sigvard Ostlund and his wife....and many, many others.

Saturday at the 'Royal Hotel' brought a dizzy round of activities and personalities. The Convention was opened by its chairman Ted Carnell, Editor of 'New Worlds'; Walter Gillings, 'grandpop' of British pulp s-f followed with a gloomy speech anent the present boom, which he thought would die as on previous occasions; famous American fan Forrest J. Ackerman (4e) cheered guests up with a detailed and interesting survey of s-f in the States, and Bill Temple brought the roof down with his speech on 'S-F Serial Writing', which involved reading the synopsis of what Bill alleged was a special serial, and in which he and Arthur C. (ego) Clarke crossed space in a giant onion, propelled by its mitogenetic rays. (!)

The roof was hastily put on again, ready to be brought down again by the hastily organised and totally un-rehearsed 'S-F Soap-Opera Company' in a 15 minute s-f skit on a 'hero and heroine marooned on a desert planet' theme. A much needed tea-break followed, giving guests an opportunity to slake their thirsts and to examine the items of fantasy art decorating the walls, and the many tables of books and magazines.

Following the tea-break, a recording was played of an interview with authors and editors at the 'White Horse' and a short discussion followed. Then came the first auction and numerous magazines and books were soon disposed of by wise-cracking auctioneer Ted Tubb, ably assisted by Charlie Duncombe.

Buffet/dinner break followed, and the last sessions began with a discussion on the 'B.B.C. and Science Fantasy'. John Keir Cross, B.B.C. producer gave a very interesting talk on his endeavours to introduce s-f into the B.B.C., and he was followed by Arthur C. Clarke, who spoke of the possibilities of televised fantasy, and related his own experiences during his tele-talks on interplanetary flight.

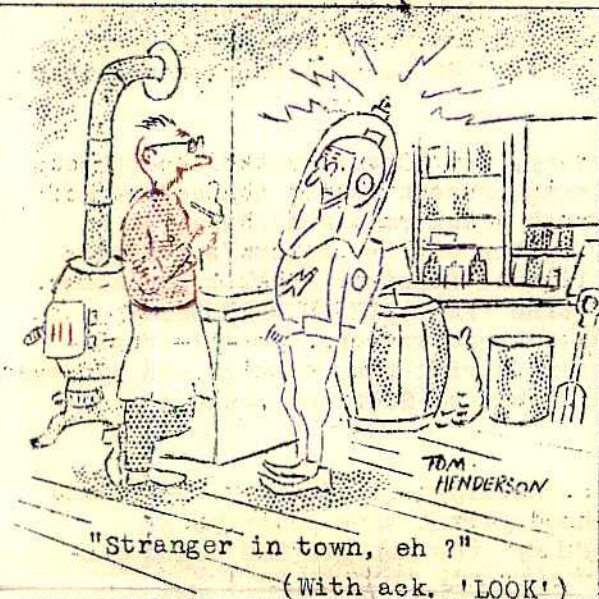
P.T.O

(The International Convention. Cont.)

Paul Capon, author of the recent BBC serial 'The Other Side of the Sun' was also present during this sessions, and was introduced to the audience, as was Bruce Angrave, who illustrated J. Keir Cross's 'The Other Passenger'.

The 'S-F Soap Opera Company' then showed the B.B.C. how it should be done in 'Who Goes Where', a wilder and, if possible, even funnier skit than the previous effort, with a cast consisting of Audrey Lovett, Fred Brown, H. Ken Bulmer, Ted Carnell, Charles Duncombe and Ted Tubb. This play was recorded, so may be heard again at s-f gatherings in the future.

The last item of the day was a showing of the 'Lost World', a film based on A. Conan Doyle's famous fantasy of a South American land in which dinosaurs and pterodactyls still exist. Made in 1925 and starring Wallace Beery and Bessie Love, the film was naturally silent, but by clever manipulation of gramophone records ('Night on Bare Mountain', 'Rite of Spring', etc), and of the volume control, Bill Temple and Arthur C. Clarke managed a very appropriate accompaniment. Fan Kerry Gaulder was the extremely able projectionist.



The Sunday morning sessions started with an informal meeting of the guests, and Ted Carnell made the only speech of the morning when he spoke of the present and future policy of 'New Worlds'. This led to a very animated discussion which aroused such interest that the Lunch break started 20 minutes late!

After lunch, the overseas guests were presented to the audience, and asked about the present state of s-f in their respective countries. '4e' gave a very encouraging report on the notice taken of well-informed fan opinion in the States by the producers of s-f items; George Gallet of France followed with some very interesting views of the French and general European views of s-f; Ben Abas of Holland and Sigvard Ostlund of Sweden told of the difficulty of getting people interested in s-f in their own country's, and Wendayne Ackerman spoke of some of the s-f and fantasy she had read during her childhood in Germany.

Lyell Crane, lately of Toronto, who is now living in this country, was a very appropriate speaker in the International Sessions, for he has edited the Canadian 'Interim News Letter', official organ of the 'Science Fiction International' society designed to promote international correspondence. He offered to act as a 'clearing house' for all fans desiring foreign correspondents, and gave his address :- Lyell Crane, BM/LRFC, London, W.C.1.

Ken Paynter then spoke of the Australian scene, and of the difficulties fans there have in obtaining s-f. Ken was a member of the Australian 'Sydney Futurians' and gave some interesting statistics in the discussion period afterwards concerning the scientific status of the various members.

Walt Willis, who rose to tumultuous cheering and cries of 'Good old Walt' and 'Slant!' 'Slant!' made the shortest speech of the Convention, giving details of a speciality for completist collectors...an s-f book in Gaelic. As the total known fan population of Ireland was in the hall to hear his speech, Walt evidently felt that any comment on Irish fandom would have been not only superfluous but egoistical!

Frank Edward Arnold, the British s-f author, who is at present engaged on a work about international fantasy, finished the speeches with comments on s-f from other European countries not heretofore mentioned, including Czechoslovakia and Italy, and mentioned Russian works in the field. He ended by expressing an opinion that all present shared with him, that any literature of an international scope, as was fantasy and science-fiction, was a means to understanding between the various races, and should be given every encouragement in this worthwhile task.

Questions were asked for from the audience, and several interesting points, such as the number of technicians and scientists who read s-f, and the proportion of woman readers (this last brought up by Mrs Murray, the editor of the girls paper 'Heiress'), were discussed.

The next item, unannounced except for a note in the programme, was the first presentation of the International Fantasy Award, the first of a series of annual awards for merit in the field of s-f writing and art during the previous year. Sponsored by anonymous London enthusiasts, the award, which consists of a model 'Bone-stell' type rocket (e.g. Feb. '51 'Galaxy' cover), mounted on a small wooden base with

(International Convention. Cont.)

a spherical cigarette lighter, was accepted by Forrest J. Ackerman on behalf of George R. Stewart, author of 'Earth Abides', and the author-artist partners of 'Conquest of Space', Willy Ley and Chesley Bonestell. These books were picked by a small Awards Committee on this occasion, but a very large number of fans from all over the world will be asked to co-operate to decide future presentations. Secretary of the Award Committee is Leslie Flood, who is using the offices of 'Nova Publications' at 25, Stoke Newington Road, London, N.16. Contributions are being asked for to enable the two awards to be modeled in silver, and we are sure that all enthusiastic fans will wish to support this endeavour to give the fantasy field an 'Oscar'.

After the Sunday afternoon tea-break, Mrs Wendayne Ackerman gave a very interesting lecture on the new psychiatric science of 'Dianetics', founded by fantasy author L. Ron Hubbard (who also writes under the names of Rene Layfayette and Kurt Von Rachen in the s-f field). Dianetics has been the cause of a good deal of controversy in the U.S. since 'Astounding S-F' made the first public announcements last year (see this June's British Reprint Ed.), especially as some American magazines have included 'ASF' in their generally strong criticism of Dianetics and Hubbard. British fans will have an opportunity to decide it's merits for themselves soon, as Hubbards 'handbook' will soon be reprinted here.

There were so many books, magazines and examples of fantasy art in the auction on Sunday evening that three auctioneers, Tubb, Duncombe and Walter Shaw, practically exhausted themselves, but the whole affair was a great success, and many fans left the hall that evening clutching a rare 'zine or drawing as their fruits of victory. It's hard to single out mentionable items from the scores offered for sale, but notable were a copy of 'Slan' with emendations and inscriptions in A.E. Van Vogt's hand (ready for it's re-issue this autumn in a revised edition) which fetched £4.15., two copies of his 'Weapon Makers' which fetched nearly as much, a first issue of 'Wonder Stories' at 45/- and a first 'Astounding' at 21/-.

Sunday ended with a film show, consisting of various 'shorts' lent by Arthur C. Clarke and '4e'. Notable shots were those taken by a rocket from above the atmosphere, and another of a V-2 exploding during take-off (in colour, too!), and those in '4e's' fan-made fragments of a trip to the Moon and of pseudo-weird (and really hilarious) happenings in a haunted house. '4e' also had a reel from an un-identified German s-f film showing a rocket taking off from Earth (from a huge viaduct), and making a rather abrupt descent on the Moon.

On Monday, May 14th, a party of fans under the guidance of live-wire Manchester enthusiast Dave Cohen penetrated the unknown hinterland of the South Bank Exhibition, and those that managed to fight their way out in time, with others to the number of 40, assembled in the 'Havelock' pub. in Grays Inn Road that night.....not, we noticed, with mixed feelings, so much to talk about the exhilarating/exhausting goings-on of the last few days, as to talk about the 1952 Convention....which is, we suppose, about the biggest compliment that they could have paid the 'Festival Convention' of '51.

AVC

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THE SOUTH KENSINGTON EXHIBITION OF SCIENCE

The main theme of an 'Exhibition of Science' can be generally descriptive of scientific progress, or of one particular scientific subject, or a mixture of the two. This exhibition has taken the subject of the Scientists view of Structure as its theme, with a half-hearted attempt in a 'Stop Press' section to include some of the latest progress.

Frankly, from the coal-mine blackness of the first section (designed to show the atomic structure of a lead pencil) to the final case showing the Universe (which during our visit was not working and invisible), the whole affair is very disappointing. It is badly laid out...you are supposed to split yourself three ways on entering...., the exhibits, a number of which are those of the 'push-button-to-see-it-work type' and which don't work, are poorly selected and inadequately labelled; the 'Structure of Living Things' section, though better looking than the others, is very superficial, and the 'Stop Press' exhibits, amongst other things, a number of un-documented photo's supposed to illustrate cosmic-rays and mesons, and some foggy lights behind glass as a pictorial representation of Hoyles 'Theory of the Universe'. The seats are hard, the buffet prices high, the programme (2/-) contains 3 full-page photo's of exhibits and 2 of Their Majesties, with whose external Structure we are already too familiar. There are some extremely interesting Waltzing Mice (no information), a cinema show we didn't have the courage to see, and, best of all, an exit into the time-tested Science Museum proper.

EDITORIAL

So another S.F.N. shudders into the light of day, but this time with a difference. Quick-witted and eagle-eyed as fans are, you will have already observed that the type-face used in this issue is far smaller than in previous SFNs. This is due to a new, secret, process carefully evolved in hidden laboratories and brought to you by courtesy of SPACY STORIES, the new, secret, prozine printed on asbestos. A full account of this Amazing (if you will pardon the expression) discovery, which will bring you More Wordage to the Inch, cannot be divulged without impugning the Honour of some of the highest names in the Kingdom.....Ben Nevis, for instance, and George Gonzola, but we are at liberty (for a time) to say that it is NOT done by scraping around the letters of an ordinary typewriter with a nail-file.....

This SFN, is, we're afraid, scrappy, inadequate, and generally reminiscent of certain minor contemporaries. The Convention has been such a dominant theme in our s-f lives during the last couple of months that everything else has had to go by the board, and at this moment we should be working on the Souvenir Booklet. But we have not only felt it right to give SFS members who were not members of the Convention Society an account of the Con. as soon as possible...and though we haven't checked, over half of the SFS were members, a very good show...but the following needed to be brought to your attention as soon as possible.

The British Science Fantasy Society has been tottering along for some time now. Rising Phoenix-like from Ken Slaters flaming enthusiasm, it was hamstrung at birth by various unexpected calls upon the leisure time of the original Committee members, and has never really overcome the essential reluctance of the British Fan to be Organised. It has helped other British fanzines, it has offered to do various things for the British fan which the British fan apparently prefers to do by him- or herself, it was a quick way of getting into touch with the most enthusiastic British fans in the Case of the ASF Subscription Rise.

But the original dues paid in by members are very near the vanishing point, and we have been debating whether it is worth while keeping up the SFS when so few appear to be in need of a national organisation, and a new development here in London has brought us to a point where a decision has to be made.

Briefly, we have had an offer to relieve us of much of the purely mechanical work in producing SFN and a very generous offer of co-operation which would probably ensure the appearance of SFN at intervals regulated only by the amount of incoming news and material. But....the continuance of SFN as the official organ of a Society would mean the continuance of that Society, with all its attendant details to work out. The 'aura' of official neutrality needed in an official organ, though productive of fairness, tends to have a deadening effect on controversial topics. Very personally, one cannot extract much pleasure from a 'duty', however light it may be, and a Society, unlike a fanzine, cannot be run by the efforts of only one or two people. If there were more to a British s-f society than the general feeling that it was a Good Thing To Have, it would obviously be worth continuing. All its present activities, however, can be continued in a magazine other than an official organ; the dissemination of news and reviews, of items about local meetings and other fanzines and many other topics that keep the far-afield fan 'in the know'.

Therefore, if you think that the SFS should continue, we would be glad to hear from you and will give every consideration to your reasons. If the general opinion is that an independant organ with the aims outlined above, a review 'zine for your opinions more than an amateur story magazine, would be a satisfactory substitute for a Society, then this issue of SFN will be the last published under the aegis of the SFS. Science Fantasy News Vol. 2. No. 1. will be an independant 'zine, and that issue will be sent when published to all present SFS members and to many other fans.

We would like to express our appreciation to all fans who have given the SFS their support and encouragement, to those who have helped produce it and to those who have offered to help but whose assistance, through reasons of distance, lack of mechanical aids, etc., we have been unable to use. We ask pardon for our sins of commission and omission.....mostly omission, and we are sure of one thing. The SFS is not the first British S-F society to rise and fall, and will probably not be the last.....but through it all, that peculiar, nebulous body calling itself British S-F Fandom goes cheerfully on, and that, friends, is practically indestructible!

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QUOTE "The blood-spattered rabbit charged up the stairs. A ray-gun was blazing death in each hand....." (Bob Tucker, 'Spaceways' No 30)

"In the hands of eccentrics and criminals who might be capable of using U-235 for destructive purposes, a weapon of extraordinary power will be available".

(Modern Wonder, Sept. 14th, 1940)



'TOMORROW SOMETIMES COMES' by F.G. Rayer (Home & Van Thal, 9/6d) published June 28th. 'VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE' by A.E. Van Vogt, 'MEN AGAINST THE STARS', anthology edited by Greenberg, & 'BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES' anthology edited by Bleiler & Dikty, to be published very shortly by Grayson and Grayson @ 8/6d....need we say more? AND.....Kemsley's, publishers of 'Cherry Tree' books, 'Daily Graphic', 'Sunday Graphic', etc., etc., are soon to publish a series of 1/6d P.B.'s reprinting U.S. s-f books. First 4 will be 'John Carstairs; Space Detective', 'Last Space-Ship', 'Flight into Space' (anthology), and 'Kid From Mars'.....all second class, unfortunately, but future selections should be better...& what a step towards good, cheap, s-f!

BRITISH BOOKS

We should, perhaps, add a word or two about 'Tomorrow Sometimes Comes', which was overlooked in SFN 7.

First book written by an established s-f author to be published here since Bill Temple's '4-Sided Triangle', 'T.S.O.' is a complex, Van Vogt-ish tale of suspended animation, a future world abounding with mutants, an electronic brain and other gadgets not mentioned between hard-covers since Stapledon's hey-day. Don't be put off by the lurid cover looking like an enlargement from a P.B., which H. & V.T. appear to think will appeal to the ordinary reader.

'The Disappearance', by Phillip Wylie, (half of the 'When/After Worlds Collide' team), published by that progressive person Victor Gollancz @ 12/6d, is a wild and whirling fantasy of each sex's disappearance from the others world. The events on the 'parallel worlds' theme, one inhabited by men, the other by women, have got the Charing X. Road boys putting it on the sexy shelf, but actually it's good, readable---and thoughtful---fantasy.

'The Rockets (Operation Manhattan)' is mostly futuristic cloak-and-dagger stuff, but ends with the atom-bombing of New York. A Thriller more than s-f, by H. Edmonds (Macdonald, 9/6d)

'The Man Who Lived Backward' by Malcolm Ross (Gollancz, 12/6d), appears to be more of a technical experiment by the author than anything else. The hero, born in 1940, slips back 48 hrs every night, eventually dies in a fruitless (natch!) attempt to prevent Abe Lincoln's assassination. The theme is interesting, but there's no future in it.

'Late Final' by Lewis Gibbs (Dent, 9/6d, coming mid-July), concerns the return of a man from Siberia in 1960 to an atom-bombed England. No other details as yet.

MAGAZINES 'New Worlds No 10, due last week of July, will have a sensational cover by fresh artist R.W.B., an experiment whose affect on fans and the general public is awaited with much interest. '10' will include write-up and photo's of the Convention, Cedric Walker and Ted Tubb's second stories, H.H. Boyesen's first, (cover-yarn), others by pseudonymous Christopher, Barclay and Rondelle. 'Science Fantasy 3' will follow shortly after.

'Science Fiction Fortnightly', monthly from No 9 for the slack Summer period (also because of flood of trashy P.B.'s occupying retailers shelves), featured a 'Man, Woman ---and Android', inhuman interest story by London author George Hay, in it's 10th issue. Duly noted and admired...Editor Campbell's remarkable technical feat in writing No 8's novel in the second person, publicity given to 'Slant' and the Convention, recognisable names beginning to appear in readers letters column.

We're glad to note that the PB flood mentioned above has also felt the heat, at time of writing has practically dried up.

QDD In addition to reprints noted above and in SFN 7, the Cummings 'classic' 'Princess of the Atom' is also scheduled for British printing. 'Check-list items' published recently include 'Written with My Left Hand', by Nugent Barker, (P. Marshall, 9/6d), weird, fantasy and humorous shorts; 'Ringstones' by 'Sarban', (Peter Davies, 9/6) five weird tales; 'Father Goose' by Chapman Mortimer (Hart Davies 9/6), surrealist fantasy in Indian setting, for off-trail devotees only.

NON-FICTION Third revised edition of Hogben's 'Science For the Citizen' now published (Allen & Unwin, 20/-). 'Human Use of Human Beings' Norbert Weiner's book on Cybernetics available from Eyre and Spottiswood @ 18/-. Four more titles in the new, and excellent, 'ThriftBooks' series. (Watts, @ 1/-), on literature, modern history, atomic energy and mathematics. 'Autobiography of Arthur Machen' (Richards Press, 15/-) gives intimate details of this great fantasy author.

The 'A's have (had) it....
our heading represents
'Astounding's initial
progress
1930 - 1950.

(Quotes, Notes, News and Reviews. Cont.)

BROADCASTING In spite of the efforts of the radio producer and the two television producers who are s-f readers, every type of fiction gets regular shows except science-f. Only news we have of future productions is that a semi-stf play called 'Spaceways' is scheduled. Author is Dave McIlwain, well known active fan of the early '40's, to whom we send congratulations. When 'Spaceways' or any other stf feature is broadcast, it would be a good idea for fans to write to the BBC and ask for more of the same.....

Which reminds us that the first time the magic words 'science-fiction' were used in that well known organ of weekend culture 'News of the World' occurred some weeks ago in an article on American television.....

EGOBOO 'LIFE' American edition May 27th ran a long article on s-f and fandom, profusely illustrated by shots from recent s-f films ('Man from Planet X', etc.), plus photo. of various fanzine title-blocks including late-lamented 'S-F Review' and 'SLANT'.

The non-appearance of 'WONDER' for many months caused it's omission from list of British fanzines in SFN 7. Mike Tealby's off-trail 'zine appeared soon afterwards.....Next ish. features 'Spotlight on the Shaver Mystery'. The price is 6d, address 8, Burfield Avenue, Loughborough, Leics. S'Funny...we thought the deros had got Shaver long ago.....

The 'LONDON CIRCLE' was packed out with semi- or complete strangers a couple of weeks ago. By a curious coincidence, a free-lance Press photographer was active there that night. Copies of 'Picture Post' and similar 'zines are being watched. Reporters from a big publishing firm have also been present recently, and s-f dealers have been talking themselves hoarse.....Meanwhile, Dave Cohen received a very good write-up in a local paper on his Manchester s-f club.

Startled 'London Circle-ites' found four of the eight (?) known British teen-age fans at the 'White Horse' one recent Thursday; Messrs Cooper, Duerr, Klein and Wilson. Phillip Duerr found a technical error in Arthur C. Clarke's 'Prelude to Space', has an autographed copy to prove it. Arthur swears it was a mis-print.....

Forrest J. and Wendayne Ackerman returned here middle of June after short Continental tour, visited Scotland before their departure for States on June 30th....two very nice people whom British fans hope to see again some day...

Canadian fan Lyell Crane (see Con. report), back in London after visit to France; will be here for some months. He'll soon be seeing fellow-Canadian Poul Anderson, author of ASF yarns 'Genius', 'Helping Hand', 'Double-Dyed Villains' etc.etc.etc.etc., who is visiting Europe this Summer. Certain fans suspect Anderson of being James H. ('Vega Confederacy') Schmitz too.....

Convention guests will remember a good-wishes message from prominent London fan John Newman, who had entered hospital for a serious operation a few days before. They and John's friends everywhere will be glad to learn he is now convalescent, and rapidly regaining health.

Sixth sense? Your reviewer, seeing 'Dr Cyclops' in company of H. Ken Bulmer, casts contemplative eye around cinema, whispers "Wonder if there are any s-f fans..." doesn't have time to say "here"...London fan Jim Rattigan ushered into next seat in front.....(probability approx 2,000,000 to 1 against that particular moment on that particular performance in that seat....)

Recommended...'Sherlock Holmes Exhibition' (221b, Baker Street)...memorials of that famous detective...his books, his room, learned comments on his cases...letters from American enthusiasts, inc. Anthony ('Mag. of S-F. & F') Boucher.

FILMS 'Things to Come' still on it's revival tour...'Cave Dwellers' or 'A Caveman's Romance', alias 'Man and His Mate', alias '1,000,000 B.C.' (U.S. title) the best of all films showing prehistoric animals, also revived. Carries realism to point of having characters communicate with grunts and gestures; Victor Mature as miraculously clean-shaven hero brought cries of "Coo, look! Samson!" at showing we attended....it's scenes of dinosaurs fighting, lava smoking down volcano's side and overwhelming fleeing cave woman, tribe fighting monster, are unforgettable, well worth seeing.

'Dr Cyclops', first issued '39/'40, features doctor in jungle lab. experimenting with radium; he summons three scientists to help; when they get inquisitive he shrinks them (with two others) to about 13 inches high. The trick photography is extraordinarily well done....party being chased by ordinary cat...trying to kill Doctor, etc. Human interest under-developed; one annoying error of having midgets speak in normal voices; left us wishing it had been at least half-an-hour longer....astonishingly, it's American made...and in colour. Revived June.

'She'...based on Rider Haggard's classic. Report next issue.

'Flying Missile' shown as second-feature recently. It is. Deals with V-2 carrying submarines and other vessels. Long review March '51 'Galaxy'.

'Unknown Island', new, like 'R. X-M', not released on suburban circuits, luridly advertised at independants. Scientist and rich girl friend charter ship to search for remote Pacific island former found during war. With ship's tough captain, and shanghai'd survivor of U.I. shipwreck as guide, they reach U.I.,

(Quotes, Notes, News and Reviews)

FILMS (Cont). fight, photograph and flee various assorted dinosaurs, with usual complications. Despite Cinecolour's yellow tinge, favouring reptiles more than humans, heroine with flaming red-hair, blue shirt, black riding breeches is Every Fan's Mental Picture of A.K. Barne's E.T.-hunting cover-girl, 'Gerry Carlyle. 'U.I.' has strong human interest... a 4-sided triangle (commission to Temple); but the monsters were so artificial that we were left wishing that producers had spent some of their budget in seeing '1,000,000 B.C.' They might have learnt something. This film for completists only.

We remarked in SFN 7 that the only resemblance between 'Who Goes There' film and story versions was in the title. At about the same time as we wrote that, they changed the title. 'The Thing', as it is now called, has had some reasonably good write-up's.... R.M. MacColl, 'Daily Express' American reporter, gave it enthusiastic review on May 17th... "One of the finest films of its kind that I have ever seen"... He later described the E.T. monster as being like an 'intellectual carrot' (!). It should be over here soon.

George ('Destination Moon') Pal has finished 'When Worlds Collide', started on 'War of the Worlds'.

U.S. BOOKS 'Dragon's Island' by Jack Williamson (Simon and Schuster, \$2.50) is a rarity.. it's not a reprint from a magazine... also, it's set entirely on Earth... in a direct imitation of Van Vogt's complicated, never-let-your-reader-know-what-your-author's-doing style, it's hero finds that a group of people have the secret of controlled mutation.. (and we do mean 'controlled'... a tree grows a rocket-ship)... are they good or bad? what about The Girl? The yarn is original, but we feel Williamson should stick to simpler stuff.

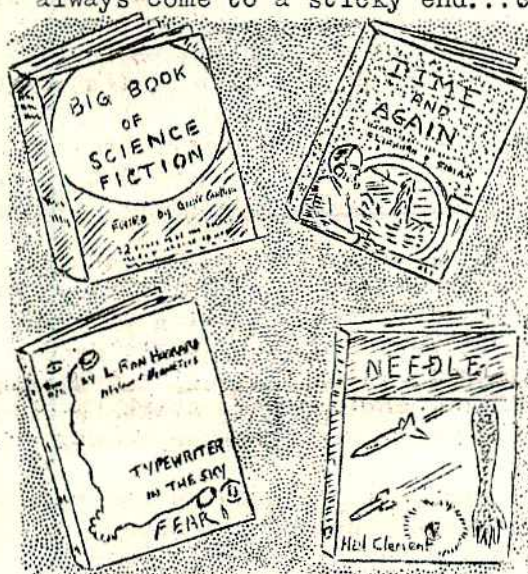
'Adventures in Tomorrow' edited K.F. Crossen (Greenberg, \$2.50), reprints 15 s-f stories of varying vintage, from C.L. Moore's 'Shambleau' to Kuttner's 'Voice of the Lobster'. Bradbury ('There Will Come Soft Rains'), Asimov, Brackett, Van Vogt ('Automaton'), 4e Ackerman, Ward Moore, Boucher, Merwin, etc also contribute. A generally good selection, which, if you do things like that, will enable you to throw away a few more 'zines and add this to your shelf instead.

'Needle' by Hal Clement (Doubleday's 'Young Modern's Library', \$1.00) has been enlarged by about a third from the ASF serial version, now giving more details of the boy hero's life on the West Indian island where the extra-terrestrial detective is hunting the E.T. criminal. A wonderful introduction to s-f for the 'young modern'. I. Asimov's 'Pebble in the Sky' is also available in series.

'Typewriter in the Sky' and 'Fear', by L. Ron Hubbard, (Gnome Press, \$2.75). Two of Hubbard's ("the founder of Dianetics" vide dust-jacket) best. Both from the late and very lamented 'Unknown', 'Fear' a psychological fantasy, an indescribably nightmarish tale, was reprinted in 'B.R.E.'s. 'T. in the S', a 2-part serial in 'Unk', tells of the adventures of Mike de Wolf, when he finds himself living in his friend Horace Hackett's swashbuckling yarn of the Spanish Main. To his horror, Mike finds that he is the villain, and Hackett's villains always come to a sticky end... can he circumvent The Author? Recommended.

'Galaxy's first 6 issues contained 2 3-part serials. Both have now been reprinted in book form.. 'Tyran' as 'Stars Like Dust' by Asimov, (Doubleday, \$2.50.), 'Time Quarry' as 'Time & Again' by Cliff Simak (Simon and Schuster 2.50)

'Big Book of Science-Fiction' ed. Conklin, (Crown, \$3.00) contains 32 stories, 545 pages, and is big value in all senses. Peter Phillip's 'Manna' and Russell's 'Dear Devil' represent British s-f; other stories by a star-studded collection of authors include Sherred's one-and-only, superlative 'E for Effort', 'Mewhu's Jet' by Sturgeon, Gold's 'Matter of Form', Bradbury's 'Forever and the Earth', Leinster's 'Nobody saw the Ship' etc etc. Conklin has a very interesting survey of s-f in the editorial. and some informative footnotes. No Campbell or Heinlein... they're booked elsewhere.



MAGAZINES 'Galaxy' 'Astounding' fight it out for s-f honours, but there's no doubt that the 'Mag. of Fantasy & S-F' is first for fantasy. Ranging from the wackiness of 'Unknown' to off-trail s-f, the stories are uniformly good to excellent. The June issue contains 'Bargain from Brunswick' by 'John Wyndham' (John B. Harris), a continuation of the 'Pied Piper' legend; 'The Extreme Airiness of Duton Lang' by Percival Wilde, (a modern version of Wells' 'Truth About Pyecraft'), others by Kris Neville, James Stephens, Oliver, Cox, Barry Pain, etc.

Arthur C. Clarke has a novelette, 'Earthlight' in the August 'TWS', which also contains stories by Pratt, Tolan, Brown, Clinton, Cartmill, Jones, and another novelette, 'Alarm Reaction' by Raymond F. Jones.

In my opinion.....

Dear Sir,

The Reader Writes:-

John A. Wiseman, of Sidcup, Kent, writes:-

I agree with A.D. MacGregor about 'SS' and 'TWS' covers---but emphatically disagree on 'ASF's' symbolic covers. Maths symbols, etc, are just the thing for most s-f stories, simply because they are s-f. Grant me that almost all s-f concerns things in the remote past or future, or in the present that science is not likely to prove for at least a few decades. We cannot possibly be certain about such things, (inventions, etc.) and one of the qualities that we can be least certain about is what they will look like. Just compare the portrayals of aeroplanes, etc., with the real thing. And even before we've got into space, the knobbly, ornamental spaceships of early 'Amazings' seem ridiculous today.

So I maintain that all s-f illos should be either vague or symbolical. By vague, I mean lacking in detail, shadowy, so that each reader can imagine the details for himself. It's useless to talk about realism in s-f art when we don't know what the reality will be like. On this count, and from what I've seen of his work, Rogers is one of ASF's best for the non-symbolical, vague, illos.

Peter Ridley, of Eltham, London, writes:-

I must take issue with A.D. MacGregor about symbolism in s-f art. Any kind of art is symbolism, some kinds admittedly more easily recognisable than others but nevertheless symbolism, as it is the representation of 3 dimensions on a flat surface. While Finlay does seem unhappy in colour he is by far the best s-f artist in his own medium, black-and-white. Also, if Mr MacGregor wants realism in his art-work, why doesn't he take a look at the covers of 'F.N.' and 'F.F.M.'? Lawrence produces some very good realistic covers, and 'STS', 'TWS' and 'SSS' also have them. Personally, I'm all for something unusual on the front of s-f mags. Haven't time to develop a reasonable argument....these are just a few of the points that occur to me.....

George Williams, of Maidstone, Kent, writes:-

A.D. MacGregor is quite right if memorability is any criterion of s-f art. I looked through some '49 and '50 'ASF's' after reading his letter, and was very surprised to discover that most of the illustrations had faded from my memory, whereas the earlier issues remain quite sharp. On the other hand, a lot of the covers like 'TWS's' are not symbolic (or weren't, anyway), but are just terrible. ASF certainly overdoes symbolism in its inside illustrations.

Robert Conquest, of Whitehall, London, S.W.1., writes:-

...I am a typical unorganised fan myself, having read s-f voraciously, (but not indiscriminately) since I can remember, but never having the slightest contact with any other. I must say I was ---and I expect others are--- repelled by the Sunday school jollity and idiocy in the fan columns of these U.S. magazines that run them (I don't mean the letter columns). I fancy it is a good sign that, as you tell me, the U.K. variety is so independent, and I should think that your S.F. News performs all the functions of a Society that are much use to anyone..

*****((Why, thank you, Sir. Re. 'fan columns', we presume you refer to the 'Frying Pan' and similar departments, which deliberately select the worst examples from the extremely large number of U.S. fanzines and quote them...in some ways a commendable idea, but rather one-sided....We note that you also want to know if Van Vogt's 'Weapon Shop' series has ever been sorted into a logical and self-consistent whole. We doubt it. Does anyone know the correct order and all the stories?

A. Gregory, of 3, School Street, Wotton-le-Wear, Nr Bishops Auckland Co. Durham, writes:-

...I have just received a copy of your SFNews No 7. There is much of it which I am afraid is 'Dutch' to me....

((We sent a free translation and glossary post-haste))

('In my opinion' Cont.)

Mr Gregory cont.....I have read and enjoyed...Science Fiction for over 15 years, and have read most...(issues)...of 'Amazing Stories' from..1928 until about '38. So you will realise I am no novice in the ranks of s-f readers.

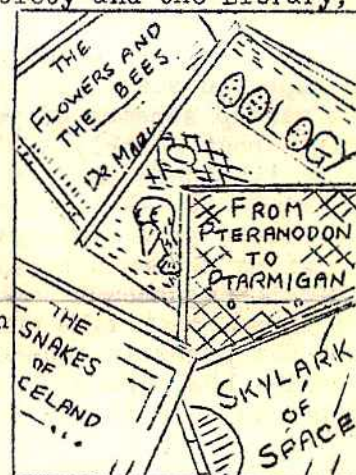
As in many another case, however, the war, to put it mildly, rather disrupted my career and life generally, and put an end, for many years, to my excursions into the realm of Fantasy (or did it?). Recently, having settled down as a (very) struggling schoolmaster, specialising in Biology and Rural Science, I decided to try again, and see what had been happening to the old 'Amazing' and 'Wonder Stories'.

I received an unpleasant shock! The first copy of 'Amazing' cost 2/6d, and the cover-----! Having cast most of the contemporary magazines into the outer darkness, I discovered that.(there was)..a firm in Liverpool dealing in s-f, (and)..one in London as well.

In the meantime, I had....heard the vocabulary of our senior boys in the science room. The words 'rocket' and 'spaceship' occurred often. I resolved then to include in their science-library some Science-Fiction (and chance the wrath of the Head).....We raised the money and bought 'Skylark 3', 'Skylark of Valeron', 'Spacehounds of IPC', 'Out of the Silent Planet', 'When (and After) Worlds Collide', 'Liners of Time', and one or two others. They were very popular, particularly the 'Skylark' series. Of course, not all the boys could digest this type of material, but most did, and are very disgusted because 'Skylark of Space' is unobtainable.

....I must say that I was delighted to have Jim Donaldson, the Society's Librarian, call to see me yesterday. ((**Jim holds Cosmos Library, BFL and the Convention Gift books...ED.)) Although I live in a most difficult district, he came all the way from Newcastle to give me the gen. on the Society and the Library, for which every credit is due to him.....(I am trying to) do what I can to stimulate activities up here in the North. There are interested people in the locality, and it is high time we tried to get together.

Finally, I must say I was pleased to hear that you would mention my name and address in SFN. If space permits, and it is not asking too much, could you ask if any soul in this Universe or Dr. Smith's has a copy of the 'Skylark of Space' or 'Triplanetary' to sell reasonably, for our school.?



I would be pleased to get into communication with anyone interested in good science-fiction, (particularly with an interplanetary bias) and try to fix a meeting in this area.....I hope that this letter will do some good for those interested in s-f and perhaps prove our sincere intentions from this part of England.

*****((We're very glad to give publicity and, where possible, help, to isolated readers such as yourself, Mr Gregory. We hope you succeed in your plans. Incidentally, conceptions of good s-f differ rather radically...we'd be glad to hear from readers what stories they consider suitable introductions to the uninitiated (of any age). A new edition of 'Skylark' has just appeared, but at \$3.00. The new British editions should help the school library expense account, and we also suggest getting the 'Galaxy Science-Fiction Novels' and having them cloth-bound locally.))

Georges Gallet of Paris, France, writes:-

.....Because of the rapid advance of scientific and technical progress science-fiction has been robbed of much of it's previous elements of wonder, and has been compelled to find new ones which seem to me utterly fantastic. The Van Vogt type of stories for instance, in my opinion, are pure fairy tales with no actual element of scientific plausibility. And this is where I think s-f ----as at present published in American 'pulp'---has lost a great deal; it has wandered too far away from science even from probable or possible science. It is just so many words put together to make the reader feel either pleasantly superior in being able to read such a lot of big words that nobody else understands, or else say 'Phooey' and return to the 'old Masters'.

In fact, this is the assumption that has led me in my choice of suitable s-f books to be translated in French for the collection that I edit at Hachette's LE RAYON FANTASTIQUE, the only s-f collection in this country at this moment. And I seem to be right, if sales are any indication. Titles now published are:-

L'ASSASSINAT DES ETATS-UNIS' (Murder of the USA) by Will F. Jenkins; LE ROIS DES ETOILES' (Star Kings) by Edmond Hamilton; 'LE REGNE DU GORILLE' (Genus Homo) by de Camp and Pratt; 'LE DEMI-DIEUX' (The Demigods) by Alfred Gordon-Bennet.

Ready for publication, probably in October:-

LES CORSAIRS DU VIDE' (Vandals of the Void) by J.M. Walsh; LE DERNIER MARTIEN (Stowaway to Mars or Planet Plane) by John Beynon Harris. (Translation by yours truly). Several other titles are under consideration. I'll try and let you know of them when decisions are reached.

(PTO)

I may add that LES HUMANOIDES (The Humanoids) by Jack Williamson has been published in a very bad translation by Editions Stock, and does not seem to have met with any success. On the other hand, LES TUEURS DE L'INVISIBLE (Sinister Barrier) by Eric Frank Russell has been serialised in the morning paper 'Liberation' with poor showing. AU-DELA DES SOLEILS (The Skylark of Space!) also serialised in the literary weekly 'Les Nouvelles Littéraires' which admitted it was a flop!

There you are with all the news in the French s-f field.....
 *****((So Brush Up Your French with s-f! Many thanks, M. Gallet, for all the news, and good luck in your venture...we hope to hear further from you.))

Walter A. Willis, of Belfast, Slantland, writes:-

Oh frabjous day! Calloo, callay and similar expressions. Oh to be in fandom now that SFN is here. The doctor says that I am strong enough to write now-- they found me, you know, plucking at three duplicated sheets with a beatific expression on my face. Weakly I called for Bob Shaw and showed them to him. Now do you believe, I say, this is the legendary SFN, renowned in folk lore and no longer to be confused with the Necronomicon. In the first instance these chaps aren't Arabs, and in the second place...well, better stay in the first place.....

((500 words of libellous comment deleted---after all, he's got one 'zine to himself))

...In the present renaissance of British fandom I'll be even more disappointed than you if this SFN doesn't attract considerable attention. As for the proposed diaryzine, it's a smashing idea, but do you really honestly think you could do it? It would mean re-organising the filing system for a start.....

((300 words later))...Been thinking over that...project of yours. I do hope you stay with it, but us sober, steadygoing Irishmen are inclined to distrust the madcap schemes of you charming but irresponsible English. I still remember something about monthly SFN's, and even more recently---But if you would only do something like this No 7. every couple of months-----

*****((This time they'll find him expression plucking at five sheets. ...Trouble with a diaryzine is that it would be horribly mixed up...untidy, in fact. The films reviewed herein would be scattered all over, as would most of the books. We just have to wait until we can weld it into an organic whole (love that metaphor). For those, who, like ourselves, think there's not enough WAW in 'Slant', the boy now has 2-3 pages in 'Quandary', pub. by Lee Hoffman, of 101, Wagner Street, Savannah, Georgia, USA. One of the brightest fanzines, with emphasis on humour, Lee generously offers to send it for letters, but we advise something in the book/magazine line as well.

Dave Cohen, of 32, Larchfield St., Hightown, Manchester 8, writes:-

...On behalf of our club, an invite has been sent by me to members of the USA air-forces stationed at Burtonwood who are interested in s-f to visit us. We are now awaiting reply---if any. Burtonwood is 15 miles from Manchester.

A local newspaper sent a reporter to our club, and he said he found it interesting. Our feminine member gave the feminine point of view, 'Taffy' Williams gave him our ideals, and I added a few words, and put in a plug for the Convention. Congratulations on the un-heard of speed my recent letter was circulated in SFN....

*****((Dave add's that he is now 'Science-Fiction International representative in Britain...Nova-fan Dave bids fair to become our most energetic fan... thanks also for the Convention write-up, Dave, now being stenoilled, and keep us in touch with Manchester affairs...What is this feminine viewpoint?..

Bernard High, of 13, Marlborough Rd, Stockton-on-Tees, Co. Durham:-

The arrival of SFNews came as a suprise..I had thought the SFS had died a quiet death. It seems to me that only you two blokes are doing your utmost to keep things going.....

*****((Alas...that gurgling sound is the SFS being put out of it's misery. Again, many thanks for your offers of help, but on the mechanical side we are at last getting some aid from London. But we do need news, we do need reviews, and articles too. And some hints as to the kind of news that you want..

STOP PRESS. or 'The Late Round-up'. Cosmos Library catalogue is being duplicated about the same time as this SFN...Forry Ackerman visited Walt Willis before departing....Scottish s-f author J.Macgregor visited London and 'White Horse' June 28th.....'Beyond this Horizon'(Heinlein), 'Gather, Darkness'(Leiber) published in dollar editions....'Great Stories of S-F' anthology ed. M.Leinster published in US (Random H. 2.95), also Van Vogt's 'Weapon Shops of Isher' (Greenberg, \$ 2.75)....over here, Methuens re-issue 'Synthetic Men of Mars' (7/6d). THIS SFN IS POORLY LAID OUT, CONTAINS TOO MUCH NEWS OF ONE KIND AND INSUFFICIENT OF ANOTHER, IS THE WRONG SIZE AND IS GENERALLY PRETTY HOPELESS. PLEASE WRITE AND CONFIRM OUR SUSPICIONS.....A.Vincent Clarke, 84, Drayton Park, Highbury, LONDON N.5.