

SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW

No. 1

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"Science-Fiction: Seeker of a Better To-morrow"

Special Pre-Convention Issue

Monday, May 15, 1939

ROCKETS FOR WAR USE!!! B.I.S. IDEALISTS NEW IDEALS?



Prof. A.M. Low seen
by Alfred Wolmark

It is revealed that SFA and BIS President, Professor A.M. Low is shortly to urge the Air Ministry to co-operate with the BIS engineers in order to carry out experiments with rocket-driven stratosphere planes for war purposes. Professor Low goes on to refer to the BIS working with the Air Ministry "for the

public interests". We are to take it, then, that the invention of even more methods of wiping out human beings is in keeping with the "idealistic" spirit of these noble pioneers of the British Interplanetary Society?

In various publications of this praiseworthy body we are informed at some length that members of the BIS are "idealists" and that they possess an "instinct to serve some cause which will outlast us". We also hear that the only thing that (continued Page 4)

SFA CONVENTION

The SFA Convention will be held on Sunday, May 21st, in the Hall of the Ancient Order of Druids, London. Apart from the usual happy reunions of fans from all over the country, there will be discussions on the big changes in the Executive Council, which are undoubtedly necessary, to supersede the old "system" whereby most of the work devolved upon one person, the Secretary, G.K. Chapman.

Although full details are, unfortunately still not forthcoming, it is presumed that the general programme will follow the same lines as last year - general business and reunion during the afternoon; talks by s-f celebrities after tea.

Among prominent people present will be leading science-fiction authors and editors in this country, with the exception of Eric Frank Russell, who is on his way to USA, and (don't believe it, but we've heard) John Russell Fearn, who was so caustic about others who could not attend!

The AOD Hall is in Lamb's Conduit Street, near High Holborn and not very far from Euston Station. Cheap trips are run from most large provincial centres, so roll up, fans, to the best Convention ever!

SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW
: Every OTHER Monday :

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EDITORIAL

Possibly there is a new era dawning; an era of co-operative instead of wasteful competitive effort. Whether or not this is a development in world affairs, certainly it is becoming so in the realm of science-fiction fandom.

The Headquarters of the Science-Fiction Association (SFA to the initiated) has started the co-operative production of NEW WORLDS and the joint management of the affairs of the SFA itself by a kind of Cabinet control; now the Liverpool Branch follows suit with the SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW in which it's a case of all-hands-to-the-pumps.

Originally announced as Weekly, SFR, until production difficulties have been more closely studied, will appear Fortnightly, and it may be as well to mention here that this is a non-commercial enterprise distributed on a non-profit basis by the Science-Fiction Service.

SFR will have a definite policy based on the belief of most of its contributors that Science-Fiction is the Seeker of a Better Tomorrow. And this does not mean a Better

To-morrow merely for Science-Fiction: it will be for the health and happiness of the peoples of the world.

Widespread lack of creative thought and action is probably the primary cause of to-day's trouble and strife, coupled with distortion of real interests and lack of moral strength due to narrow unimaginative thinking. And improvement can be brought about in this state of affairs by the unobtrusive influence of science-fiction. To this end we dedicate the production of the SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW. . .

In the meantime, contributions will be welcomed, but it would be as well to note that we specialize not so much in long articles or diatribes as in ~~one~~ or two-column contributions, which must be essentially "newsy" and of topical appeal. They must also bear in mind the policy of the SFR and, of course, have direct science-fiction interest.

In conclusion, we urge all our readers to do their utmost to attend the SCIENCE-FICTION CONVENTION to be held in London on Sunday, May 21st under the auspices of the SFA. Full details are given on the front page of this issue of the REVIEW.

ASTOUNDING May - Very poor issue - cover bad, illustrations bad, stories bad. Miller's "Coils of Time" is a bad let-down after the style we used to get from him.

REMAINDERS - DYNAMIC SS No. 1 now a remainder, with "Lord of Tranerica" a delightful Coblenz satire. Also MARVEL SS No. 3, with "Faster than Light", a pleasant little shot by D.D. Sharp. - JFB

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REVIEW PREVIEW

by BURKE

The short novel idea in THRILLING WONDER STORIES seems to have proved popular, for one is scheduled every issue from now on. August will have "Race Around the Moon" by Otis A. Kline, illustrated by Finlay. In October, John W. Campbell, Jr. will be featured with "Planet of Eternal Night". Same month Kuttner & Barnes in a Carlyle-Quade collaboration; also collaborating under the pen-name of Kelvin Kent for "Roman Holiday" in August issue... "Via Venus" is the first of new Giles series in October issue.... Coming shortly we get "Hero" by Horace Gold, and also a story by English fan Gerald Evans "Upward Bound". F. Orlin Tremaine will shortly appear with "True Confession", a robot story.

Next issue of MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES will be first Anniversary, and will feature Kummer's "Dark Invasion", and shorts by Eshbach and Winterbotham.

WEIRD TALES bring back Keller with a science-fantasy, "Lords of the Ice Age" shortly. September WEIRD will feature Hoffman Price's "Apprentice Magician", which will cop the cover, an illustration of the goddess Sekhmet in the flames P. Schuyler Miller also scheduled to appear soon with "Spawn".

ASTOUNDING - July issue will feature "Heavy Planet" by American fan Milton Rothman, under pen-name of Lee Gregor.

TOMORROW is no more. large printed fan mag has ceased publication, due to lack of support. We hope this fate never overtakes us.

SPRIGG HAILS S.F.R.

T. Stanhope Sprigg, Editor of FANTASY, British s-f magazines, in a special message wishes SFR all possible success and welcomes our publication. In return we hope FANTASY will hit the news-stands again shortly, bigger and better than ever.

Editor Sprigg states fan publications are of great service in gauging popular taste and that praise and criticism are equally welcome. S-F REVIEW intends to give assistance in this direction Readers, burg in those letters ...

SO WE CAN'T TAKE IT?

Sam Moskowitz, leading US fan, lands English fans one in the eye in long article in NEW WORLDS. In brief, he complains that when no British s-f magazines cheered our optics we wept much and often, swearing fealty to American s-f, but moment our publications appear we start to develop a superiority complex. Also English fans don't support US fan-magazines like they do ours.

J.F. Burke, British fan-mag editor, replies in the affirmative thoroughly upsetting fandom this side of the Statue of Liberty.

Only way we can reply is to shower letters to US mags and subs to fan-mags. Also contributions. Another method-help British publications to success and show US we can do it.

DON'T BELIEVE IT BUT

We heard TALES OF WONDER is to go monthly and Editor Walter Gillings will break glad tidings at Convention. Idea is now stated to have been shelved. When are we going to get that monthly?

ROCKETS FOR WAR USE (cont. from Pg.1)

hampers their activities is the ridiculous Prejudice of the general public, and the "scorn of those who are suspicious of all progress". It must indeed be a terrible thing to be so far behind the times and so antagonistic to progress as to show nothing but scorn for a society that, for want of funds, is apparently on the verge of becoming involved in the country's war machine.

Professor Low is to advise the BIS engineers in a few weeks to give up their ideas of space travel for a time, and ask them to work in the cause of war. Let us wait and see how the "idealists" and "enthusiasts for progress" take the proposition.

SFR REPORTS SFA PRESSSFR REPORT

The SFA have decided upon yet another change in their publications. NEW WORLDS, recent innovation in place of NOVAE TERRAE, will cease to be monthly and become quarterly. Arrangements have been made with Editor J.F. Burke to issue SATELLITE monthly to all members.

NEW WORLDS QUARTERLY will be large-scale effort running to 30 pages and will feature fiction, starring W.F. Temple in first big appearance.

Both publications are requesting contributions. Address as under:-

NEW WORLDS:

17 Burwash Road
Plumstead
LONDON S E 18

SATELLITE:

57 Beauclair Drive
LIVERPOOL 15

If you wish to see science-fiction in ARMCHAIR SCIENCE write the Editor at
93 Long Acre, LONDON W C 2

KEY-NOTES.(1). The KEY-Critique

In science-fiction as in all other literature and indeed in Life, it is necessary to "Observe the Triangle". For instance, one must consider the Writer, the Reader, and (however reluctantly!) the Publisher or his Editor. There may perhaps be MORE to consider than this triad, but there will be no LESS than three factors. The reader of a science-fiction or other story would be well-advised to consider his reactions to it on the same plan. "Do I like the story? What do I like in it? and, Why do I like those features . . . ?

Three questions, you see.

Here's a suggestion. Try marking each story after reading. Allow a maximum of 210 marks; comprising 70 for the IDEA, 70 for the adequate EXPOSITION of the idea, and finally 70 for the qualities of writing.

Make up the separate seventies from sub-divisions according to your own particular tastes, of course. If you compare notes with other critics, it is advisable to maintain the same maxima and the same order. You will then understand that when I give my marking for a certain story as 190::61-64-65, it is clear that I like that story for all three factors, and give my opinion of their relative values. If your markings of the story were 180::65-50-65, and another critic gave 165::50-50-65, we should all see how our points of view differed or coincided. - ELG

UNKNOWN June- Better than the May issue, but still not up to the superb No. 2. "Flame Winds" is an adventure story of the Conan type with a vitality that Howard always failed dismally to achieve. It has no place in UNKNOWN, though. The shorts are better on the whole, but a bit futile. Coley, de Camp, and Evans are good. -- JFB

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