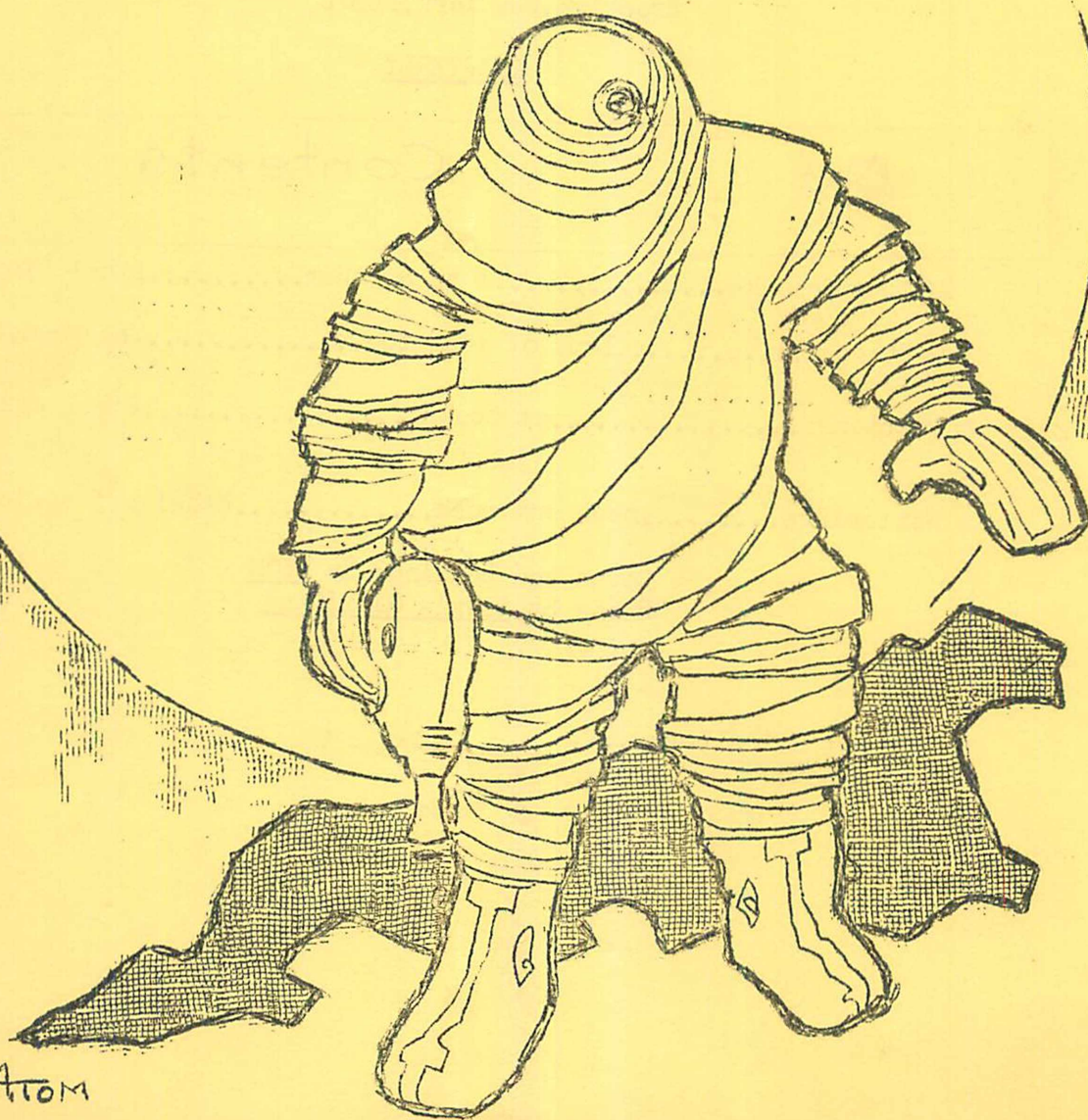


SCOTT



ATOM

Scottish 53



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QUARTERLY



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Cover and Headings by ATOM
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ACE paper backs

Ace Double. Toyman by E.C.Tubb/Fear that man by Dean R.Koontz. 23140.60¢

Toyman: The planet of Toy is ruled by the Toyman - a ruler who is evil. To the planet comes Dumarest who becomes involved in the life of Toy. First as a fighter, next as a slave. There is a medieval amount of pain, cruelty, and fear and the author's imagination is given free rein in describing the results of unbridled power.

Fear that Man: This is an odd sort of book; it postulates the existence of God as being the cause of disaster to mankind. We follow the action through Sam who finds himself in a ship loaded with weapons in a galaxy that has forgotten war and where men cannot kill. God is killed twice over in this story which is grippingly told.

Ace 95960.60¢. The Zero Stone by Andre Norton. This is another in Norton's excellent range of science-fantasy tales. It features Murdoc Fern the gem trader whose possession of an unusual ring has made him the object of a hunt by both the Guild of Thieves and the Guild Police. Fortunately he joins up with Eet, a mutant cat-like creature, whose strange abilities added to Murdoc's own courage brings them both eventually to freedom. Enlivened by vivid pictures of alien planets.

Ace Special. 67800.95¢. The Preserving Machine by Philip K.Dick. This is a collection of stories written over a period of almost 20 years. I notice on the cover blurb Harlan Ellison is quoted as saying "If there is such a thing as 'black science fiction' Philip K.Dick is its Pirandello, its Beckett and its Pinter. No other creative intellect qualifies." Now I do think that "Black SF" is a very good description for these stories; I've quoted it because the best that I might have come up with would have been "horror stories". The majority have very down-beat endings. Most horrific (or black SF, if you will) is CAPTIVE MARKET the story of Earth's last group of humans at the mercy of a greedy old woman. The last story PAY FOR THE PRINTER has the light of hope at the end but only after a very dismal reading of what human beings are capable of in their greed. One of the stories I would argue against is THE CRAWLERS. In this a "radiation laboratory" is responsible for children being born with human faces and the bodies of mole-like creatures who tunnel underground. I reckon if radiation were to cause anything like this - we'd know it by now. But the reaction of humans to this and the reaction of the Crawlers to their children is very shrewdly observed. Each story shows brilliant imagination and I shall not soon forget some of the images invoked. Some that leap to mind - Silvia surrounded by thirsting "angels"; the Biltong dying in the service of humans who will beat it to death; John Cupertino battling to get out of the fantasy which he imposes on himself; Johnny who falls in love with the woman he must kill.

Ace Double. 37250.60¢. The Brass Dragon by Marion Zimmer Bradley and Ipomoea by John Rackham.

Ipomoea: I guess a good story can never be told too often - and this

one can claim THE TEMPEST for its ancestry. Yet it is a fresh re-working of the theme of ancient alien knowledge found by one who becomes corrupted by its power. The central character, Sam, is a sociologist whose father calls for help from the planet where he has a financial empire. Reluctantly Sam answers the call and finds himself drawn into a dangerous and exciting adventure. A very well told tale; the author's writing appears to me to improve rapidly with every book he writes. But I wonder why Sam is such a favourite name with SF authors?

The Brass Dragon: This has a marvellous start with the puzzle of a young man with amnesia and what he takes to be hallucinations in the form of SF films that he's seen. I thoroughly enjoyed this - the main character - Barry - tells his tale in likeable fashion. The brass dragon found in his pocket is the clue to his adventures with aliens, spaceships, and a voyage to Mars. Barry is found suffering from amnesia wearing overalls of a strange material. His father arrives to take him home; a father he cannot remember anymore than he can recall what has happened in the 18 months that he has been missing. Convincing dialogue.

Ace.67900.60¢. The Prisoner by Thomas M. Disch. This is based on the successful TV series made by Patrick McGeehan; and is the tale of one of the adventures in the Village. In this episode "No 6" is again the main character. If you read this hoping for explanations - they are not here. The only fact that is made more explicit is the fact that No 6 has previously been in the Secret Service. This starts with the Prisoner having escaped and then been re-captured and returned to the Village but with his memory tampered with. I feel that once this business of memory-tampering is brought up, afterwards all logic flies out the window. But then it never was a logical series and this was its main fascination. Recommended to devotees.

Ace.659701.60¢. Perry Rhodan, No 1 by K.H. Scheer and W. Ernsting. This series which stars Perry Rhodan, commander of the spaceship STARDUST has been a highly successful publication for 8 years in Europe. The reaction to this has been even more dramatic than the American reaction to STAR TREK; as there are now over 500 flourishing fan clubs. This first adventure tells of how Perry becomes the first man to walk on the moon, his meeting with aliens, and how he becomes the "first Terran". It is a well told tale and Perry appears to be more of a character than I first expected.

Ace.75455.75¢. Science, Numbers, and I by Isaac Asimov. This collection of essays should be snapped up by all SF fans. The science is explained in such a delightful and entertaining fashion as to make it very palatable. I will confess though that what I enjoyed most were the amusing jokes and stories that ease one into each article. The last article in which Asimov tells something of himself is particularly good.

Ace.91352.95¢. World's Best Science Fiction. 1969. Edited by Donald A. Wollheim and Terry Carr. 19 stories are presented here and I think it is the best yet of these collections. Each story is very worthy of inclusion. Robert Sheckley's STREET OF DREAMS, FEET OF CLAY takes the saying "the voice of the city" and shows a future in which the voice acts the part of a particularly nagging wife. Burt Filer, a new writer in SF, comes up with a new idea in time travel and tells it with humanity. Poul Anderson in KYRIE tells what is

easily the most shuddersome tale of the lot--a real touch of horror. Robt Silverberg has GOING DOWN SMOOTH revealing what can happen in a future where psychiatrists are computers. Brian Aldiss paints an alien world with his usual skill in THE WORM THAT FLIES. MASKS by Damon Knight has a contemporary flavour with so much about transplants in the news lately; for this deals with a time when an entire body can be replaced. TIME CONSIDERED AS A HELIX OF SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES by Samuel Delany is on the HUGO ballot. This demonstrates well Delaney's ability to paint with words a teeming future. HEMEAC by E.G.Von Wald is the story of a future university rigidly controlled by robots; this one I thought just too far-fetched. Colin Kapp has THE CLOUD-BUILDERS a struggle for the re-birth of technology story. R.A.Lafferty in THE GRAND CARCASS was a bit of a disappointment to me--strictly an idea story this. Sydney Van Scyoc writes a hospital story A VISIT TO CLEVELAND GENERAL; I suppose if this was another I did not find believable it is mostly because I would dread to think such a hospital would ever come into being. Laurence Yep's THE SELCHEY KIDS takes two ideas--the current research with dolphins and the current worry with California's San Andreas Fault - and produces an absorbing tale. Let's hope it doesn't come true though! Vonnegut as usual has given a new twist to our thinking about the way humans behave in an amusing and moralistic tale WELCOME TO THE MONKEY HOUSE. Terry Carr's story THE DANCE OF THE CHANGER AND THE THREE is also on the HUGO ballot; it is a strange story of alien life that is quite unlike anything I've ever read before. H.H.Hollis writes SWORD GAME and has fun with a tesseract. Aldiss is again represented in ALIEN ENVIRONMENT where he describes a Tower that was used in an experiment to see what would happen if population in a confined space was allowed to go on unchecked. THE SQUARE ROOT OF BRAIN by Fritz Lieber had too choppy a style to hold my interest. Fred Saberhagen in STARSONG has a 'beserker' story which gives new life to an old legend. Lastly Katherine Maclean in FEAR HOUND has a 'psi' story with a difference. Yes, 19 stories --more than your money's worth!

Acc.78901.60¢.Strange by Brad Steiger. This is one in the series of books on occult subjects put out by ACE. However this one confines itself to describing poltergeist activity; makes quite an impressive list - 35 in all cases of reported activity. I must admit I am much more interested in poltergeists than ghosts.

Acc.49025.60¢.A Look Through Secret Doors by John Macklin. This one is concerned with ghosts; and although interesting in a way; to me the stories are not believable.

Acc.65971.Perry Rhodan No 2.The Radiant Dome by K.H.Scheer & Walter Ernsting In this instalment Rhodan has returned to Earth with his spaceship and declared it independant of the Earth nations. This makes the nations join each other in trying to eliminate the STARDUST. At least this leads to peace between each other; and leaves Rhodan free with his self-imposed task of making mankind worthy of entering space.

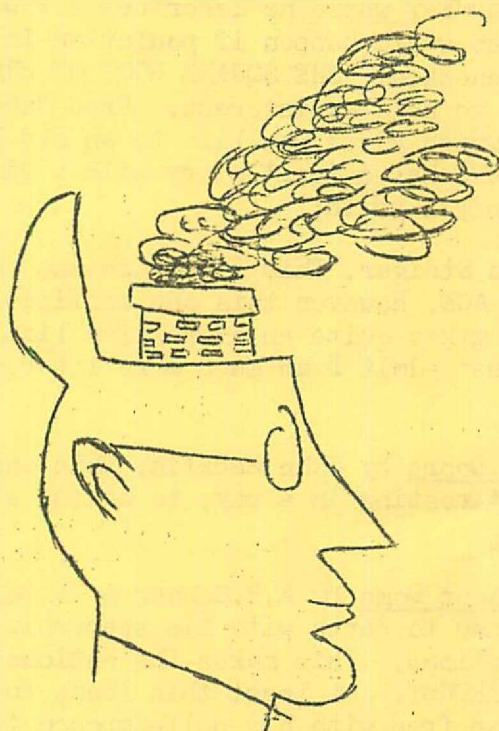
Acc.37425.75¢.The Island Under The Earth by Avram Davidson. This one is pure fantasy and it is couched in the language of fantasy. In this world there are centaurs and many others of the realms of fantasy. It is well done with plenty imaginative touches and if you like fantasy this is the one for you. Quite frankly I had a hard time to finish it.

Ace Double.77710.75¢. The Eyes of Bulsk by Robert Lory and The Space Barbarians by Mack Reynolds.

The Eyes of Bulsk: At first I enjoyed this story of a man who is forced to change from being a secret service agent on Earth to being a man charged to kill on a distant planet. As the story wore on, however, I found the style of telling irritating. The device of inserting bits from a Handbook was distracting, and one no sooner became interested in one set of characters than another lot took their place. The hero is a man to whom things happen--fascinating things maybe - but on the whole I was disappointed by the time I had finished this story.

The Space Barbarians: This was the better half of the double as the story increased in enjoyment as time wore on. The leading character John of the Hawks, remains interesting throughout and his development is believable. At first I was pretty scornful-- for John is a 'clannisman' on a planet filled with the descendants of colonists from "Northern Britain". The customs of the tribes are described and I read them with incredulity. Later the author explains that the way of life is according to the few Holy Books which had remained and one of those books was by Sir Walter Scott! Realising that the author knew what he was doing alright; I had to admire his ingenuity! A jolly good tale divertingly told.

Ace.8100.75¢. Time and Time Again by Clifford D.Simak. Asher Sutton is the main character in this book. He is a man who wrote a book and in a future



time there is war over the book he wrote. But - first he has to write it and there are men from the future who are determined that he shall write it their way. This future has man spread very thinly through the universe; sided in running it by robots and androids. The latter are known by the tattoo on their foreheads and are very much second-class citizens. It is their future that depends upon the writing of the book. A very interesting theme and told in engrossing fashion.

Ace.64460.60¢. Out of the Mouth of the Dragon by Mark S.Gesten. I just did not like this one. It is the story of a young man who, after hearing a prophet, sets out for the Wars, to the "Armageddon in which all the forces of Good and all the forces of Evil would meet, would clash, would decide the fate of the already doomed world." I hate war stories; even if they are anti-war ones.

Ace Paperbacks 5

Ace 21801.60¢. The Eternal Savage by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Original title THE ETERNAL LOVER. Not a Tarzan story, of course, although it takes place upon his lands in Africa. Nu of the Niocene meets Victoria of Nebraska; but it is no mere imitation of the Tarzan theme; and there is no happily contrived ending.

Ace 65972.75¢. Perry Rhodan No 3 Galactic Alarm by Kurt Mahr and W.W. Shols. Continuation of Perry's adventures and his endeavours to open communication with Earth and the Arkonide Empire. As usual, fearful Earth nations put a spanner in the works.

Ace Special: 71435.75¢. Mechasm by John T. Sladek. This maintains the Ace Special's reputation for originality. It starts when a doll factory that is losing trade aims to recoup by government-sponsored research. This produces a self-sustaining system based on metal which rapidly gets out of control. It is funny, ridiculous, exasperating at times, and rewarding reading. Highly satirical and full of the most incredible characters. I really think you should read this one.

Ace Double 81680.75¢. Tonight We Steal The Stars by John Jakes//The Wagered World by L.M. Janifer & S.J. Treihich.
Tonight We Steal The Stars: This is the third story in a series featuring "11 Galaxy"; which means it is one of those outer-space adventures. The hero is Wolf Dragonard (the name is a hint to the style) who becomes embroiled in the theft of some precious jewels.
The Wagered World: Tells of Angelo who gatecrashes an alien party and wins an alien as a party favor. The style is deliberately jaunty and it has its amusing moments. Of all the zany characters in this I liked the alien best. He was no more believable than the others; but his actions produced the most entertainment.

Ace 75830.60¢. Secret of the Lost Race by Andre Norton. This has an accompanying article by Lin Carter & PROFILE OF ANDRE NORTON in which he reveals that she has written 52 books in 32 years! All that I have read, including this, are written well. I find this one a little too predictable for my own taste but undoubtedly excellent for the juvenile market at which it is aimed. There is one of those treks across an alien landscape which I begin to find tiresome; but then, my goodness, how many of these have I read? Joktar is the protagonist who finds himself caught up in a series of adventures without realising that he himself is the core of them. He is grabbed for an emigrant spaceship; sent out to a very rugged planet and becomes involved with outlaws. Plenty of action apart from the trek.

Ace 80200.75¢. Teenocracy by Robert Shirley. I confess that I approached this one with reluctance; the theme of the misuse of teenage power has been used more than once lately and I tend to deprecate it. I dislike seeing any lot of individuals grouped in a generalisation. I feel, too, that there are enough "oldies" afraid of teenagers without a rash of novels adding to the fear. I will admit though that I found this a book I could not put down. The author plunges one immediately into a future where the President of the US is called The Fab and "teenster" power is in the ascendant. "Oldies" do not have the vote. The story is told through Ken, the Vice-President. He is a teenster in power, yet he lives on an island farm with his wife and family. His wife loves to cook, he is an authoritarian father to his children who have their TV watching restricted. In short he seems totally apart from the way of life that surrounds him. He is presented as the man who, more

than anyone, is responsible for the Teenster Revolution which caused the present cuture. His springs of motion are never clearly defined. Why he started in the way he did is never explained. Probably because of this the book is very thought-provoking; although I hope that its gloomy view of humanities inability to use leisure would be proved wrong. This is speculation at its finest.

Ace.36990.75¢. The Improbable Irish by Walter Bryan. You won't get past the dedication in this without at least grinning and you won't get very far on without laughing aloud. Having decided that I ought to take a second opinion on this I lent it to an Irish Sister. She handed it back saying that it was very funny but very exaggerated. The funniest bit of all is this extract... "If Oifig an Phuist doesn't mean Gentlemen" Charles Harris said on his first visit to Dublin. "I did a very silly thing in the Post Office this morning." The whole of it, however, is highly humorous and highly recommended.

Ace.76385.75¢ Special. The Silent Multitude by D.G.Compton. This has the unusual setting of the cathedral city of Gloucester in the 1980s. An alien spore has the effect of making buildings crash down; and it is drifting in the direction of the city. Only three people remain and there is a very haunting quality in this story of how they reacted to the events around them. Ranks very high.

I am running out of space so will quickly list the last four Ace releases....

Ace.91501.60¢ THE WORLDS OF ROBERT A HEINLEIN.

Ace.66901.60¢ THE DIRDIR by Jack Vance

Ace.65125. THE PANDORA EFFECT by Jack Williamson.

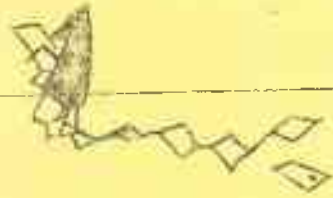
Ace Double.12140.75¢ CRADLE OF THE SUN by Brian M.Stableford and THE WIZARDS OF OF SENCHURIA by Kenneth Bulmer.

I wanted to save this space to mention the new British SF magazine VISION OF TOMORROW. I am very happy to report that I saw it for sale in a local bookshop! I was so astonished that I forgot to ask the salesman how it was selling. This is Issue No 1. price 5/- dated Aug.1969. From:Ronald E.Graham(Publishers) Pty.Ltd.135 Rookwood Rd.Yagoona.N.S.W.Australia.Editorial address:Philip Harbottle,32 Tynedale Ave.Wallsend.Northumberland. It has an eye-catching cover by James. There are three novelettes by Wm F.Temple, Ken Bulmer, and Jack Wodhams; plus four short stories. There is also a special article THE IMPATIENT DREAMERS by Walter Gillings which tells of the early days of fandom in this country. Of all the contents I liked best ANCHOR MAN by Jack Wodhams. This is about a murder hunt of the future. The idea in it is not particularly novel but the characters are well drawn and believable.

I have not seen NEW WORLDS on the newstands for quite some time. However I did find No 193 in a shop at Notting Hill Gate. It was tucked among copies of IT and OZ and some others of the same. I think this is one of the troubles with NW. It has edged into a market that has a plentitood already. The whole issue bored me stiff. You can get it by sending £2.10 or \$8 for one years subscription. The price per issue has been reduced to 3/6d per copy. Send to - New Worlds,271 Portobello Rd.London.W11. I see that Charles Platt is now in the editorial chair; with Moorecock still as advisor.

E.L.

letters



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Didsbury, Manchester
M20 0ND.

"The character in STAND ON ZANZIBAR whose job is to read things and practise 'synthesis' could be excused his misery. Such an art, which exists already, of course, is half the job of any true scientist, and while nothing is more satisfying than the thrill of the chase on one's own pet project, it would be deadly to do it to order, and hand over to someone else after a time. Which I suppose to be what happens in the book. I really must look out for this. As I have found out in my own small way many times, lots of things are waiting to be discovered, if only one can piece together existing data. The analogy of a jigsaw puzzle comes to mind. The individual bits are before us if only we can select the right ones to make a complete picture. At times I feel that any problem one cares to name could be solved if the whole of human knowledge could be picked over and the right fragments assembled. Sometimes I dream of the day when every bit of knowledge has been fed into a computer, or rather an information bank. I do mean everything. Not only the contents of this week's issue of 'Nature' but those of 'Tit-bits' for January 1894, the unpublished works of Roger Bacon, and the bits about old motorcars on the backs of pre-war cigarette-cards. Everything! If that day ever comes, one will only have to press the right buttons, and out will come 50,000 bits of data, which, when correctly meditated upon will reveal whatever one is searching for...levitation, winning the pools, three new ways to extract cube roots, star-travel without tears, or how to locate Atlantis. One may be inclined to laugh at the idea, or think it a hopeless pipe-dream, but I don't think it is. As I said, I've done it in a few small non-computerised ways already, and it works. The only thing is that it takes a lot of mental sweat, and for me this comes hard! If only a machine could do it for me. Synthesize, I mean. Just to give an example, I've lately been doing a lot of research into Runic script. Last week, I went into a museum in Portugal and saw two inscribed stones that had been found in the district of the Algarve. Some of the characters looked like Runic ones, so I made a copy. The curator said that translation was very difficult, but that a Spanish professor had done some work on it. I then remembered that I'd seen a book in Didsbury Public Library by a Spaniard on the pre-history of Spain and Portugal. When I got home I looked it up, and found that about twenty of these inscribed stones have been found in the last century, but nothing much done about them. They are called Tartessian, which is a term strictly from ignorance, being based on the lost city of Tartessus in Southern Spain. In the book was a table compiled by someone else which compared resemblances between the Algarve characters and those of Early Greek. I already knew that Early Greek had affinities with Etruscan

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script, and that this in turn was allied to certain pre-Latin scripts in use in North Italy about 200BC, where Runic script originated. So I can now put the Algarve inscription into Roman characters, and lo and behold, it makes sense! This is only a minor example, and I am afraid rather uninteresting, but it shows, I think, what can be done, if one has the right type of magpie mind.****But wouldn't you say that most fans have magpie minds and are liable to be fascinated by something like this? I would!****

Roy Tackett

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Albuquerque, N.M. 87107

"Lots of goodies in the LoCol but mostly there is Billy Pettit's letter which contains some points that need amplification and/or argument. Generally Billy is quite correct in saying that the bulk of the people here have access to more than one newspaper, radio station and television station. The larger newspapers always have more than just local circulation. Taking New Mexico as an example: the largest papers in the state come from the largest city. The Albuquerque JOURNAL and the Albuquerque TRIBUNE. These two are not only sold in Albuquerque but through the state competing with the local papers. In addition the gigantic Denver POST can be delivered to your door with yesterday's news today if you want it. Albuquerque's 4 TV stations (three commercial and one public) cover the state from their transmitters on top Bandia Crest, 10,000 feet up. Radio stations by the dozen. On the surface it would seem that we have a rather large choice. BUT we really don't. The bulk of the 'news' in the papers, on radio, and on TV is furnished by the two wire services, the Assoc. Press and the US International. I would estimate that 80-90% of what is printed or sent out over the air comes from those two sources. AP and UPI are tweedledee and tweedledum. They edit, they censor and they slant the news. And what is worse their writers seem to be abysmally ignorant ~~and~~ unable even to get correct such things as basic geographical facts. History and science are beyond them. But they keep informing us. Americans are probably the best informed ignoramuses on Earth. So Billy is quite correct when he says that American news is tightly controlled. Computerised newspapers? We have them, you know. AP can send out its stories on punched tape that is fed into a computer which translates the tape into type. The local editor doesn't have to do a thing except make room for it. We are probably fed more propaganda and less straight news than any country in the world. To be sure, as Billy points out, one can always turn on a short-wave set and listen to news from abroad (South Africa certainly devotes a lot of hours to the US these days) but only a very small minority of Americans have short wave receivers. American Communications--the mass media--are remarkably efficient and the people are content with the crap they get from the wire services. Heh. It even applies to the local news. Every morning at 06.15 radio station KGGM comes on with this announcement: "Here is the latest state and local news brought to you from the complete news-gathering facilities of the New Mexico Broadcasting Company." About two weeks ago the station announcer followed the recording saying that he was sorry but there wouldn't be any local news that morning as the station's AP wire was out of order.****Heh! I thought that last bit real funny too. I know all about AP and UPI..this is what I hear quoted all the time when I listen to the news broadcasts from AFN. I guess we would agree that the best way to take all 'news' is with a large grain of salt.****

Robert Coulson,
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Indiana, 47343

"Enjoyed Patrizio's article on pedlars. We had one pair who came by selling bibles and religious books. I pointed to a bookshelf containing a couple of Bibles, an Apocrypha, a Book of Mormon, a Talmud, and several books on Greek, Hindu

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and African myths and told them we didn't need any religious instruction. They stayed awhile, but it sort of deflated their pitch. We also had a copy of Wood's HEAVENLY DISCOURSE on the shelf, which I assume they took to be another religious book. Well, it is, sort of...Mervyn Barrett has a fine letter, but he fails completely to make his point. He says he disagrees with Singleton's comments on people who use the word "fuck" continually, and then he talks for a half-page about using it in special cases. Nobody ever offered to ban it completely, Mervyn. (Nobody in this discussion anyway.) I think Mervyn has a personality hangup on dirty words....(I shouldn't say things like that; he doesn't know me and might think I mean them literally.) And while it is a sweeping generalisation on his part to claim that all oldtime fans had personality hangups, it's just as sweeping and even less defensible to say that the younger ones don't have. The percentage of crippled personalities is about the same in the two generations judging from the way they act. I suspect that Mervyn is judging from the way they talk, which is not the same thing...Brunner is quite right about the US exclusion of Jews. And of course Negroes are still excluded from the 'better' places - in this country and Britain, I'm told. It's getting better; in 1953 I was denied a room at the Midwestcon because there was a Negro girl in our group; at the last Midwestcon there was an interracial couple present and the hotel apparently made no objection at all....A lot of the cities in this country which have two or three newspapers have only one newspaper owner. Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin are two that I know about personally; there are numerous others.... I suspect that John ignored radio, Billy, because there is damned little on radio that doesn't duplicate newspaper and tv coverage, except for shows on local problems. As for how the religion of tourists was checked, Bill, it wasn't. If you signed the register as Mr Smith, there was no problem. But if your name happened to be Greenbaum and you didn't feel like lying about it, you were out of luck....Harry Warner; before last year's pro football championships there wasn't the slightest doubt that NFL football was vastly superior to the AFL brand, either. Somehow it didn't turn out that way, and I would be chary of making sweeping statements of US baseball superiority when there is no actual team competition with other countries. Sometimes the things that nobody has doubts about turn out to be wrong.**** I do hope we aren't upsetting Harry here..but I have to add that when British football was exported to other countries..they soon found they could be beaten.****

Richard Geis "HAVERINGS 38 arrived with SCOTTISHE 52. Fifty Two! That's
PO Box 3116 staying power! That's determination. That's not trying to
Santa Monica do too much and burning out. Wish I had so much wisdom. At
Cal. 90403. the moment I have fine material coming out of my ears and a
frantic desire to do right by it. Yet it takes time to put out an issue as
big as SPR, and I'm forever falling behind arbitrary "schedules" of work I
set myself. Sigh. I wish I lived near ATOM so he'd do me some nice, delicious
cartoons covers like he does consistently for you."****Ordinarily I don't print
letters like this..I just hug them to me. Only I did want to point out that
the only way one can go on producing a zine for 14 years is by having acquired
the terrible feeling that you can't stop! I've also learned to type whilst
watching TV although Brian Varley won't believe it. On behalf of ATOM -
thank you for the compliment. He really owns a half of SCOT****

Alan Rispin "So we know a lot more about the moon-tectites after all
27 Nelson Terr. that. I'm amazed at all the controversy(possibly press-
Chopwell. contrived)about the two moon theories; volcanic and impact.
Newcastle-on-Tyne. Can't see why both methods of crater formation cannot have

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played a part in forming the moon's surface. The tectites lead one to believe the impact theory, but the appearance of the rock leads one to normal volcanic theories. I suspect both theories are true. Much more shattering has been the Mars photos. Gone forever all our martian fantasies. Coupled with more Venusian probes, the remote exploration of the planets, etc. I think we're beginning to feel awfully lonely on this beautiful blue earth. Little did I think, ten years ago, that I'd be watching the first man on the moon on TV, or that Patrick Moore, of all people, would be giving the TV commentary!....I too think new fans today give impression of not wanting contact with older fans. This is because it seems there are more young people coming in, who naturally quickly form friends of their own age. It seems people come in groups now, whereas previously it was a case of the lonely social outcast type convert. Inevitable as SF passes from the abnormal to the everyday.****Careful...that's adding fuel to Mervyn's theory! Numbers has a lot to do with it too..the Globe nowadays is jam-packed and it is impossible to get to know all the fans there. I notice that huckstering is rising too.

Andrew Porter,
55 Pineapple St
New York, 11201.

"I was recently amazed to learn that there are only 400,000 University students in all Great Britain. Why, there are probably that many in New York City! Take 125,000 at the City University, another 45,000 at New York University (private institution) and another 150,000 at the various other Universities around NYC (Columbia, Fordham, St John's, and the other 60 or 70 colleges and universities in the city limits) and you have quite a lot of students. There is also the separate State University of New York, with an enrollment of about 450,000. And yet I understand that a major University -building program was under way in the UK after WW2 (what I understand are called the Redbrick Universities). My idea of an Educated Britain has been rudely shattered. 400,000 out of a population of 55 million really isn't so hot. Maybe the 'usual' British stance of calmness and erudition made me think that you had a high percentage of college attendees, but like I said, gee whiz.....The committee working on the idea of a North American SF Convention have brought forth the idea of changing the name of the (US)WorldCon to the "North American SF Convention", maintaining the numbering and the HUGO system. It looks like it will pass at St Louis, throwing the four or five-year rotation system out of the window, and opening the way for holding worldcons all over the world year after year, not just every 4th or 5th year.****As far as education is concerned I wonder if it would be a better way to reckon our standard by having the figures for the average age of leaving school? I do not seem to meet many young folks nowadays who plan leaving school before 17 yrs. I really think, however, that someone a bit more knowledgeable about our present-day educational system than I had better answer Andy. Ken Cheslin? Terry Jeeves? Frances Varley?..to the rescue? And of course there is the matter of quality...****

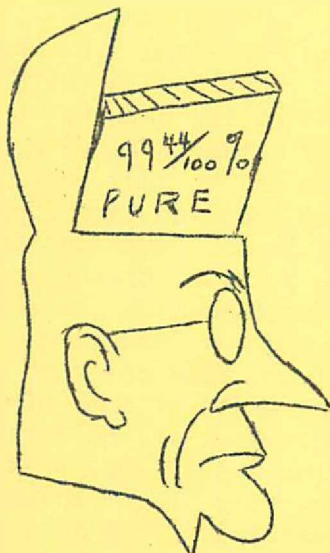
Roger Waddington
4 Commercial St
Norton, Malton
Yorks.

"There was an interview last night on Yorkshire TV with one of the old pedlars. An old pram with washing strung out along it, and inside, the whole bag of tricks from needles to shoe laces; and the owner sporting a resplendent whisker-filled face. Said that he used to sell razor blades, but gave it up when one of his customers asked him if he could recommend them! And he seemed happy enough...One point about British newspapers I'd like to see made is that the publishers don't see them as a public service. If a paper sells more copies because of the amount of home news it contains, the publishers aren't going to drop any and extend the coverage of foreign news; they know when they are onto a good thing. Just take a look at the DAILY EXPRESS, up

among the best-sellers with only half a page of foreign news.****I've always liked the Duke of Edinburgh since he was reported as saying that the DAILY EXPRESS was "a bloody awful paper." That half-page of foreign news is typical of it. Just before the American Presidential election they announced that they were sending a team of men to cover it. Then they stuck to their half page throughout the campaign. Yet they had the gall to get that team to publish the first book on the campaign. Haven't read it so I can't comment on it****

Harry Warner,
423 Summit Ave
Hagerstown
Maryland, 21740.

"I certainly don't want to get between Billy Pettit and John Brunner for the duration of this exchange, because I might get hurt. But maybe I could offer one minor suggestion that might clear up one point at issue. I suspect that what Liebling really said involved half the United States population living in a city with only one newspaper publisher. Maryland, for instance, has six cities with daily newspapers. Only two of these cities, Annapolis and Salisbury, have only one newspaper. But three of the others, which have two newspapers each, have only one publisher each, because the same firm owns and produces both the morning and afternoon papers which have different names, different staffs, and sometimes slight differences in personality. Hagerstown, Frederick and Cumberland are in this situation, which happened in each case because one publishing firm bought another firm but retained the separate identity of the two newspapers...I don't know if I mentioned it in my last letter, but I can guarantee the existence of anti-semitism in Hagerstown, and surrounding countryside. The best country club here will not vote into membership a Jew under normal circumstances; the only exceptions have been a few men whose occupation made it difficult to exclude: a black-balled expert doctor might decide not to accept as patients a lot of rich gentiles, I can imagine the WASP membership of this club theorizing. The president of the board of education can't become a member because of his Jewish blood. A smaller town a couple dozen miles west of Hagerstown had only one hotel and no motels for many years, and the sole hostelry was run



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by a man who made no secret about his refusal to accept Jews as guests. There seems to be less discrimination when it comes to hiring employees, but I imagine this derives historically from the fact that so many non-Jews derived their income from working at large stores whose owners were Jews, and the bulk of the public feared hiring reprisals if employers gave jobs only to gentiles. But things are improving slowly around here. The newspaper company has even hired a Negro girl to sell classified advertisements, after decades of bigotry so severe that it wouldn't even make the exception to segregation in the form of Negro janitors that most local firms admitted...The ATOM illustrations for this new SCOT are even above his normal superb level. I wonder if I am right when I detect Vaughn Bode influence on the critter on the third page? Or was Vaughn influenced by ATOM and I am just recognizing aspects that I've been seeing a lot of during the recent wealth

of Bode drawings? Whatever the answer, I still contend that nobody anywhere in the world can get quite the same black heavy lines on a stencil as British fan artists. Not even the electro-stencil machines."

Mary Reed
5 Park Close
Longmeadow
Herts.

"Bill and John's exchange is really a personal thing, so I won't butt in. Bill knows that I think GB is the best country in the world, despite its faults. The interesting thing about Enoch is this: when he made his celebrated speech, there were a great many people who came out in support of him, as well as the many against him. I belong to the latter category, although I think as far as immigrants go (and I mean here any colour or religion) that it's only fair to themselves and the country that they a) have a medical before they come in and b) have a job and somewhere to live before they arrive. I wonder how our regulations on entry into this country compare with other countries rules? Be interesting to compare them. I've no information, unfortunately, on this, although I'm told that Australia won't let 'coloured' people in. I presume this applies to the Negroid races only? Howsoever, it's a sticky problem. I was reading recently that during the early Middle Ages in particular the Jewish people here were persecuted - although I don't think there were many actually lost their lives. I have a feeling this was due to their money-dealing activities, which were forbidden to the others due to their religion, although I'm not clear on that point. Then there is the legend and songs about Hugh of Lincoln: did these give a factual basis as such, or was it a representation, as it were, of a number of incidents persecuting the Jews? Oh lor' and I said I wouldn't butt in!... Darroll's comment that the New Wave of 1963 deliberately set out to isolate itself I found particularly thoughtprovoking, the more so because it never occurred to me to see it in this light. I arrived just before the Wave, and consequently have never counted myself as a part of it. Could Darroll expand his comment, possibly? I'm sure I'm not alone in wanting to examine further evidence on the matter. Guess who read an Elery Queen book yesterday night?"

Donald A. Wollheim: "Re the discussion between Billy and J.B. about our US newspapers. Billy is presumably technically right when he cites statistics (like a good data man) to show that only a few US cities have but one paper. John is culturally right however in that in many cities the two competing papers are identical in all respects politically and in many cases owned by the same publisher. And you are right in saying that you find US papers deficient in world news and provincial. I find it so. But consider New York itself, the nation's major metropolis. We have but two morning papers and one evening paper (if you exclude regional abominations like the Long Island Press, etc. which are no-merit stuff). One is the New York Times, possibly one of the best papers in the world with a vast and fine coverage of international news--basically a national paper in the sense of some of your major British papers (and one of the few American papers that can be termed such). The other, with a circulation of millions, is the Daily News, a vile chauvinist jingist rag, full of shoddy sex, racing results, very slight coverage of news either national or international, and mostly features. This is also a national paper, and will be found in one edition or another all over the country. and that's the lot for New York. Nothing in between. No Labor Journal or middle range intellectual level journal. In the evening, there is now only the New York Post, a tabloid with moderate Democratic leanings but slipping steadily towards the sensational too. A fair amount of national and international news coverage and heavy with features also. There were once three or four evening papers, now there is only one. This tendency is going on all over the country

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and since the papers are generally owned by wealth and responsive to corporate advertising, they rarely represent the true feelings of the country politically--they are always further to the right than election results indicate...Billy seems to get hot in the collar about John's reference to the exclusion of Jews from Florida resorts--he wants to know line and page. Well,****, as they say. No one can cite line and page, but John is right and Billy simply stuck his head in the sand. The exclusion of Jews from a great many posh American hotels and resorts(prior to current Laws)was done exactly by listing such phrases as "exclusive clientele" or "churches nearby", and other significant phrases, which were intended to warn the Jewish ad reader that if he presented himself there and attended that hotel or resort, he might not be barred, but he damn well would be ostracized. This is how it was done, not legally. Jews are not exactly insensitive...they know and accordingly went where they felt themselves wanted. In Florida, for instance and to this day there are sections where Jews go and sections where they do not go. For instance, Miami and Miami Beach--Jewish. Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach, non-Jewish."

Archie Mercer,
10 Lower Church Lane
St.Micahel's
Bristol.BS2 8BA.
"Regarding my LCC printed in SCOT, I would just like to mention that when I say "the late PADS era" I mean exactly that - an era(as such is fannishly reckoned). Not just PADS itself, but the period during which PADS flourished declined and suddenly vanished up the bourne from which. You yourself put out a few issues during that era of course - but PADSzines and "might-have-been-but-weren't" PADSzines accounted for the bulk of British fanzine publishing at the time...Mervyn Barrett's letter was - uh - very humorouslyput, I thought."

Greg Benford: "I had a strange reaction to the moon landing-interest in the technical end, but a touch of sadness that it's turning out to be, from an SF point of view, rather dull. Chances of life are, of course, vanishingly small. A monolith remains a chance, but a small one. I never really thought we'd find anything, of course, but still...the chances of our contacting aliens or finding an artifact are very small, within my lifetime. The Apollo flight only reminds me of this...I tend to agree with Terry Carr's view that changing our society is more important for SF than space flight -certainly! But it's harder to make interesting and therein lies a great deal of the trouble with a great deal of recent SF. Another is that a number of people concerned with the large scope of society can't write. Spinrad is lousy on the sentence level, for one. BUG JACK BARROW is best read very quickly, for the gross structure and "message" is more rewarding than his style or insight into individual characters."

Richard Labonte,
971 Walkey Rd
Ottawa 8.Ontario
Canada
"Every so often an article comes up which I feel I can show to my friends as an example of the good writing to be found in fanzines, and Terry Jeeve's THIS STATELY CRUMBLING ENGLAND is that sort of article..something that redeems me in the eyes of the immediate world, which wonders at the piles of stapled paper stuffed into the mailbox..And I liked it because it was another example of the sort of wit the British show towards the difference between their past and their present. Dick Schultz, reviewing another British fanzine, called it "the old English flair for inserting taste and flavour and content into their journals". It was fun...You are one of the few people I've seen or heard of or read who has expressed a liking for the writing of Robert F.Young. Most

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people deny he writes well, deny he even writes sf or fantasy...so I was questioning my enjoyment of his stories. You have made me feel less ashamed of my enjoyment...The comments on your relation to the new people in British fandom were interesting to me..last year I was in England and I thought of visiting with you, but hesitated because I didn't know what you would think of a strange teenager popping in for an unexpected visit...maybe its not that the younger fans don't want to meet older fans, but that they don't know how they'll be received. It's hard to tell.***Oh poof..don't let anyone put you off what you like! It is easy to solve that dilemma of could you visit or not..write ahead of time. You know, even non-fans are not so hot on the unexpected visitor..but if you write to say you will be near a fan ten to one you will receive an invitation to call. I know I would have liked to have met you - I don't get the opportunity to meet many Canadian fans****

The next letter is for old readers of SCOT who wondered what had happened to MachisVarley: "A few words from me to make your happiness complete, at a considerable sacrifice to myself and my general well-being. I say this with a depth of feeling unusual even for me. However despite the battered limbs, aching back and general state of virtual collapse the almost unbearable pain is tempered by a glow of satisfaction. I will delay no longer in sharing with you the achievement of which we (for Frances has helped equally in the gigantic, nay Herculean task) are so proud. Today we glimpsed for the first time the bungalow we have bought here in Cumberland.

A month ago yesterday, when we arrived to take possession we were unable to find it. Alarmed we made enquiries and were answered by neighbours that it was there-somewhere. Somewhere inside a forbidding impassable jungle of sequia-like weeds.

Armed with only a spade, fork and wheelbarrow we began the task of finding our bungalow. Day and night we battled on with only the sound of the drums of the native Broughtonians to remind us that we were not alone! Frances was once almost lost to a man-eating oildrum which cunningly concealed itself under the black shadows of a creeping buttercup. Another time I was as good as dead, smothered by the silent descent of black polythene from the sunbathed tops of the towering daisies. Fortunately a wandering tribe of friendly natives, the unpredictable "Doostmen" came to the rescue and carried the flailing beast off in their "doostcart". I gather that black polythene is something of a delicacy in these parts, but Frances has not been able to get their recipe, due to initial language difficulties. Our worst experience though was to be trapped in a quivering mass of builder's sand. However with great forethought I had provided myself with half a dozen sacks of cement. We duly opened these and by madly churning our legs we rapidly brought the mixture to a sufficiently stiff consistency to permit us to step out. At the same time we automatically provided ourselves with a new concrete patio. Thus, through many adventures, we arrived at today's joyous conclusion. Mind you it's very dark in here, the mountain of dying weeds blocks out all natural light and our oil lamps flicker fitfully. Should you come to pay us a visit, seek the Ordnance Survey team who are surveying the new phenomena to establish whether Scafell Pike is no longer the highest peak in England.**** It really would have been a shame to have kept such a letter to myself, dear Brian, will ye no come back again?*****

We also heard from: Leigh Couch, John McCallum and Arthur Hayes. There was also a long and interesting letter from Chris Priest which will have to be held over till the next issue. My thanks to all who wrote. Ethel.

Nibblings



ANALOG 6: Dobson Books. 30s. Edited by John W. Campbell. Fourteen stories from Analog are presented here and give a good example of the range of this magazine in its 36th year. The best, I think, is LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS by Bob Shaw which features his fascinating conception of "Slow Glass". My other favourite was CALL HIM LORD by Gordon Dickson as I was intrigued by the idea of an "Emperor of Worlds" who sends his son and heir to Earth to see if he would be fit to rule the Empire. Most amusing was John Berryman's SOMETHING TO SAY in which a technician beats a linguist when they contact aliens. This story was the most typically 'Analog' in style; scientific knowledge is the key to opening doors. THE EASY WAY OUT by Lee Corry has aliens being diverted from attacking Earth by an encounter with a wolverine; which is another typically 'Analog' theme. On the whole the characters in all these stories are subordinate to the ideas - though one might make the exception of Manuel Ramirez in Piers Anthony's THE MESSAGE. The ability of Manuel to talk himself out of a sticky situation makes a satisfying story with a good amount of suspense. Otherwise emphasis here is on problems and how to solve them; and they scan from Laumer's men who baffled the Insurance Actuarial tables to Norman the chimpanzee composer. There are planets that pose puzzles like the one inhabited by a people with highly developed psychic powers, and the one where the people have teleporting ability. The story that impressed me least was by Hank Dempsey about an organisation dealing with "screwball inventions". It may be part of a series and suffering from being yanked out of the middle. There is one scientific article which tells me more about meteors than I care to know.

THE WEATHERMAKERS: by Ben Bova, Dobson Books 25s. This book deals with the subject of weather control. It describes five people who become involved together in attempting to make a breakthrough to the day when hurricanes can be broken up, tornadoes be diverted and a perfect day be given for a UN ceremony. The five people are Ted and Tuli the weathermakers, Ted's girl-friend who is a mathematician, and Jeremy the rich boy who narrates the story. At first the characters promise to have some depth - but they soon follow predictable lines. There is the dedicated scientist who puts his girl friend second; there is the girl who will still follow him loyally; and there is the rich boy who will at first lightly and then devotedly help, Tuli never comes to life at all. All are submerged in the idea of weather control and the trials and tribulations of getting Ted's ideas put into practise. This is as 'pure' an SF story as I've read for a while. The theories of the how of weather control have been carefully studied. Male readers, particularly those who go gliding, will enjoy this better than I.

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THE WITCHCRAFT READER. Edited by Peter Haining. Dobson Books. 25s. I do not believe in witchcraft or magic but I in no way allow that to detract from my enjoyment of a good witchcraft story. This has eight stories. TIMOTHY by Keith Roberts starts the ball rolling with a young witch who is bored enough to make a scarecrow breathe with life; and in the end run from her creation. It is well enough told to evoke sympathy for Timothy. THE WITCH by Van Vogt was a surprise to me; I had not realised he wrote such things as this story of a young couple menaced by a sea-witch. Fritz Leiber is naturally represented being well-known for his witchcraft stories. Chosen here is THE WAR LOCK and it is quite chillingly different from his Mouse stories. The longest tale is ALL THE DEVILS IN HELL by John Brunner which tells of a woman who has complete power over men coupled with a complete lack of compassion. In FROM SHADOWED PLACES Richard Matheson tells of a voodoo curse and how it was removed; this was spoilt for me by the author being too coy with the details. Sturgeon is represented by ONE FOOT AND THE GRAVE; a tale of enchantment. This has a girl with a satyr's foot as a start; it is not only a tale of enchantment but is enchantingly told—easily the best story in the book. Then there is Robert Bloch who has BROOMSTICK RIDE which takes witchcraft out of our planet and whirls it into space; this too is delightful. The last choice in this interesting volume just had to be Ray Bradbury's THE MAD WIZARD OF MARS with his conception of Mars as being the place that was a last refuge for the writers of 'superstition' awaiting the arrival of the spaceship of scientists who would be their doom.

NEW WRITINGS IN SF: No 15: Edited by John Carnall. Dobson SF. 18s. This edition contains 6 stories. It begins with Vincent King's REPORT FROM LINELOS. It is difficult to discuss this story without giving away the ending. It certainly holds the interest as one puzzles it out. Having done so, I must confess that I would class it as one of those anti-technology stories with which so much new writing appears fascinated these days. Not that this story has merely to do with things mechanical; it also explores the world of paranoia. Christopher Priest in THE INTERROGATOR is also mulling over the problem of sanity. He is more interested in that than the explanation of the dividing line between jailer and jailed; consequently he crams his explanation into a few lines at the end. WHEN I HAVE PASSED AWAY by Joseph Green describes an alien world where death literally means "somewhere in the sky". I found this concept hugely interesting; but consider the story finished too soon. I hate short stories that leave me wondering what happened next. Now STERILITE, by Michael Coney, pleased me better for it considered laws of survival and how chance often changes the way humanity will go next; and yet had a story with characters both human and alien whose story had a logical ending. THE TRIAL by Arthur Sellings has the situation where man and aliens have met and not been able to agree too well. The discovery of a human who has 'gone native' promises propaganda in Earth's favour when he is tried for treason. Only it doesn't work out like that! The book finishes with Keith Robert's THERAPY 2000 in which a man who cannot stand noise lives in the days when it has become all-pervading. This was the story that struck the most responsive note in me; I hate loud noise.

Dragonflight: by Anne McCaffrey. Rapp & Whiting. 30s. The author won both a Hugo and a Nebula award for her marvellous conception of the dragons of Pern and the dragons with whom they have a telepathic affinity. This story concerns the planet of Pern which, every 200 years, is threatened by a sister planet swinging close. As this planet comes near, there comes the menace of the

Nibblings 3

Threads. Only the Dragonmen know how to combat the Threads; but 200 years is a long time and inevitably the reasons for certain precautions become forgotten or are mistaken for mere myths. As the story opens the ordinary Pernese have certainly forgotten, only one Dragon Weyr is still inhabited and the dues to this become less and less. The Dragonmen are on their Search for a Weyrwoman to accompany the Queen Dragon who will soon be hatched. At their head is F'lar, one of the few Dragonmen who believes in the Threads. He is quite sure that the word.. "Dragonmen must fly, when the Threads are in the sky" is more than just an old saying. It is a stirring adventure that shows just how right he was. Much of the story is told through the eyes of Lessa the new Weyrwoman. From this point of view the story is a delight to me; at last a heroine who is more than cardboard, who is more than just a backdrop to the hero! I found many of the details of the ways of the dragons; the hatching, the Queen and her mating; and the sympathy between dragon and human quite marvellously described. I would recommend this very highly.

2nd IF Reader of SF: edited by Frederick Pohl. Rapp & Whiting. 25s A good representation from THE WORLDS OF IF magazine. The choice of IN THE ARENA by Brian Aldiss I found oddly unconvincing. It is a tale of an arena of the future in which a man and a woman have to battle aliens before an alien audience. Then there is Isaac Asimov's THE BILLIARD BALL which is one of his mystery stories. I much preferred the third story by J.G. Ballard THE TIME TOMBS as his story of tomb-robbers in the future is imaginatively described. Algis Budrys has DIE SHADOW! - this has a pedestrian beginning in the crash-in of a spaceship and a brilliant finish in a fight between two gods. Hal Clement's THE FOUNDLING STARS had too much technical data for my taste; but David Kyle gave me a nice grue with his TOYS FOR DEBBIE. Keith Laumer is represented by a Retief tale, FOREST IN THE SKY. This is one of the more amusing encounters of Retief with the Grosci. AT THE CORE by Larry Niven points up, I think, the great disadvantage of the short story - no time to establish a character deeply so that the 'idea' is all. Here the idea concerns the core of the galaxy; an exploding galaxy; and the difference between human and alien reactions to this. Pohl himself has a longish story UNDER TWO MOONS. It tells of Gull, a secret agent of the future. This one is a real space opera! Lastly Fred Saberhagen has a good story in MASQUE OF THE RED SHIFT; with a firm grip on characterisation. Nogara, a Lord of the future, berserker machines that are fighting mankind; and a man and a woman caught up in the events. I would say this last story was the best in the book.

Science Fiction Oddities: edited by Groff Conklin. Rapp & Whiting. 21s. This has been chosen as a collection of SF with an "odd little twist." First Alan Arkin has an amusing PEOPLE SOUP in which Bob makes a "serum" and his sister Bonnie aids the experiment. WHAT IS THIS THING CALLED LOVE by Isaac Asimov has aliens who are unisexed trying to discover how humans reproduce; sly fun by the good Doctor. CALLAHAN AND THE WHEELIES by Stephen Barr. Frankly the thought of the "Wheelies" I found quite scary. Never did like the thought of machines independent of man. The light-hearted treatment calmed me some. MRS POPPLEDORE'S ID by R. Bretnor is a poltergeist tale, I found it too broadly farcical to be believable. THE TEETH OF DESPAIR by Avram Davidson and Sidney Klein has a TV contest in which poor professors are in league with a man who can receive the answers through his false teeth. I found the ending ridiculous. No one would be so stupid as this man is made out to be. THE GALACTIC CALABASH by G.C. Edmondson is the ingenious story of the treatment of a "weather station" dumped on Earth in the unusual setting of a chicken farm run on the conveyor belt system. SPACE-CRIME CONTINUUM by H.F. Ellis manages to poke fun at both

the SF and mystery fields. More of an exercise though than a story and certainly deserves the title of 'oddity'. THE CHESSPLAYERS by Charles Harness I found the best. It is the absorbing story of a rat who could play chess and the reactions of chessplayers who live in a world of their own. All fans should love this one. Lastly WHAT'S THE NAME OF THAT TOWN by R.A. Lafferty tells a chilling story of a time when man must induce forgetfulness of the terrible things that war has done. I think 'oddities' is a fair title for this lot; odd enough for any SF fan to investigate.

ENGLAND SWINGS SF: edited by Judith Merrill. Doubleday & Co. \$5.95. After I stopped laughing at the title, I opened this with interest. It is quite a large collection, 27 pieces in all. The production has been planned with care and an eye to overall effect. First, the jacket with a contemporary cover and then the interior layout in keeping with the spirit of the collection. It is sub-titled 'Stories of Speculative Fiction'. Instead of the usual blurb about the author and the story being run first; in this volume that comes after each piece. They are also more lengthy than is usual; for instance the account of Michael Moorcock is given 6pp. Many of the stories come from NEW WORLDS but by no means all of them do. This is certainly the pick of the type of story that, for better or worse, has come to be known as 'New Wave'. Brian Aldiss has STILL TRAJECTORIES; a small slice of life from his conception of the effects of the 'Acid Head War'. Enough of these fragments have appeared in NW to make me want to read the completed novel. Charles Platt is usually closely linked with NW; but with TOTAL EXPERIENCE, he proves this has not made despise plots. Apart from an ingenious extrapolation from the music industry of today; his plot can only make sense by the use of new devices in the future. THE SINGULAR QUEST OF MARTIN BORG is another story with a strong plot line by George Collin; time travel paradoxes pale in comparison to this tale of a man who became his mother, father, and then gave birth to himself. Some of the stories are depressing such as THE ISLAND by Roger Jones; three survivors with only death facing them. Or THE MOUNTAIN by Moorcock which treats of the same theme. Some are just snippets like John Clark's SAINT 505, a vaguely anti-computer piece. Some are highly intriguing like WHO'S IN THERE WITH ME? by Daphne Castell which describes a group of men who have taken a trip into their subconscious. I was highly taken with the punchline... "And how would you like it if you thought there was a dead man floating about somewhere in the refuse pits of your mind?" Thomas Disch is represented by THE SUIREL OAGE a chilling piece whose symbolism is rejected by optimists like myself. Things I disliked were the poetry; THE BAKED BEAN FACTORY by Michael Butterworth and THE HALL OF MACHINES by Langdon Jones. These three things are no doubt meaningful to their authors but they left me shrugging my shoulders. Life is too short for me to try to untangle their subconscious stream of thought. Chris Priest has an anti-war piece; apart from agreeing with the general sentiment (who doesn't?), I received nothing new from this. ALL THE KING'S MEN by Hilary Bayley is one of the few pieces featuring aliens; I liked this but it left me with too many unanswered questions. I know the idea of this technique is that I should be able to grasp all the unwritten bits of information; but I'd honestly rather read them! Ballard is given three pieces - YOU ME AND THE CONTINUUM, and the two well-known pieces that feature the Kennedys. I didn't like any of them; the last-named are too offensive to me personally for me to be objective about the writing. The story that I liked best of all was by Keith Roberts entitled MANSCARER. This is the name for a huge super-mobile being erected by a colony of artists in a future which has England covered by one large city with only a few spaces around the coast left free for the colonies. I liked this best because it is full of characters that tug at the imagination.

There is a hilarity and warm-heartedness in the story that is often singularly lacking in 'New Wave' stories. I would put this story head and shoulders above the rest for this reason. I would except Aldiss from this judgement, however, after all his piece is merely a part of a novel and can only be reckoned on its whole. I think this collection was well worth doing. It ought to silence the critics who will sweep a lot of different authors under one title of 'New Wave'. There is only one thing these stories have in common and that is a determination to avoid the beaten path, the cliché, the hero, the heroine, and the tradition of SF. Sometimes, I think, they miss the mark. When, however, as in MANSCHAMER, the idea and the technique combines by an author with some heart, then there is really worthwhile reading.

Flesh: by Philip José Farmer. Rapp & Whiting. 25s. Publication date: Oct. 9th. I opened this with some curiosity as I'd heard that Farmer felt he could now write SF with more freedom. Peter Stagg returns to Earth after 300 yrs space exploration; and finds that his planet has been through an upheaval which has completely changed the culture. It's back to an emphasis on fertility in the birth-rate; and an anxiety about the regeneration of the soil itself. Once again power lies with the Earth Goddess with a few twists that time has added; notably in the use of fraternities - the Moose frat, the Elk frat. Yet there is enough advance in the surgical science to enable the people to make Stagg literally their Stag-King. He awakes to find himself fitted with antlers by surgery; and they are pumping into his blood-stream hormones that will dictate him into the behaviour of a sex-driven animal. As he charges round the route laid down for the Stag-King, he shudders each morning at his activities of the night before. The background to all this is plausibly thought out, and the plot moves briskly. However, I am not so sure about the freedom bit - there are no explicit sex scenes; nor is sex shown as being enjoyable. More dominant to me was the thread of cruelty; there are countless instances of this; even the original Earth Mother would be hard put to beat this lot. Yet, oddly enough I felt no authentic grue. Instead I recalled Mary Renault's THE KING MUST DIE and the chill induced by her description of the return of the women after the King had been sacrificed. Renault gave a lot less detail of the cruelty of those days than does Farmer of his and, perhaps just because of this, I was less affected. Still: an interesting experiment.

The Goblin Reservation: by Clifford D. Simak. Rapp & Whiting. 25s. Publication date: Oct. 9th. This one is whacky and I enjoyed it. In this future earth time a Professor Peter Maxwell, specialist in Supernatural Phenomena, returns to find he has been duplicated - and that his duplicate has been killed! Earth has now time-travel to such an extent that creatures from different ages are now in the present. Maxwell counts among his friends a Neanderthal called Alley Cop and Ghost (who cannot remember of whom he is the ghost) and Mr O'Toole the goblin. Added to this circle is Carol and her sabre-tooth pet. All these characters are caught up in Maxwell's struggle to secure for Earth the storehouse of advanced information that he has discovered. Again a rich background is imaginatively presented with a good deal of urbane humour. Just the thing to cheer you up after reading too much of the gloom and doom school of SF writing; and highly recommended for this reason.

natterings



Just as I was hoping that someone would nobly step forth and arrange some way for fans to travel to Heidelberg cheaply -Tony Walsh did so. He is organising the trip by bus; and will be sending out the information on this. I have some advance news. The cost will be £20 per person. This covers coach fare boat fare, and two nights accommodation en route. The only reduction for children will be about £2 on the boat fare. It will be a 13 day round trip. Coach leaves Bristol early am Sunday August 16th, picking up en route for Dover. There will be an overnight stay in Belgium. Arrive Heidelberg Monday evening 17th Aug. Whilst there the coach will be available to take people around with no extra charge. Leave Heidelberg Friday Aug. 28th; and arrive Bristol Sat. Aug. 29th. All reservations must be made before Nov. 30th, a £5 deposit. Deposit is non-returnable after Jan. 31st. Balance must be paid altogether or in instalments by July 31st. For accompanied children under 14 no deposit is necessary but fare must be paid eventually, of course. Accommodation in Heidelberg is not the responsibility of the coach organisers. Further information from Tony Walsh, 61 Halsbury Rd. Westbury Park, Bristol. BS6 7ST. I think this is a marvellous scheme! Let's hope that Heidelberg will now soon put forth some information about accommodation. I always like to know early just how much I have to save up for continue.

Another piece of news is from Walter Gillings who announces that COSMOS will appear next in mimeo; at least 2000 with price reduced to 1/6d. He is also starting a Tape Magazine and Library. For more information write -Walter Gillings, 115 Wanstead Park Rd. Cranbrook, Ilford, Essex.

I am sorry to report that Jean Muggoch and Daphne Sewell will be leaving the London area for Wales. No doubt Jean will continue with her International Newszine; but she can hardly be expected to carry on the London Newsletter. Fans are invited to send any news items to me; and I will publish them in my other zine HAVERINGS which comes out every two months..due next Oct. It would be even better were someone to start a newszine; but failing that HAVER might fill the breach. Last letter I had from Ron Bennett said that he had undertaken to stay another year in Singapore; so lessening the likelihood of SKIRACK re-appearing.

Mary Reed it was who recently suggested to me that I should write something about my work in hospital. Well, I did this fairly thoroughly in the early days of SCOT; and have no notion to do it again. However, I did wonder if my readers would like to know about the upheaval now going on in the nursing profession. It does illustrate some of the things that can happen in an Organisation and an Establishment--two favourite themes in SF stories.

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Florence Nightingale set the tone of British hospitals; and to a large extent her ideas were perpetuated right up to the inception of the National Health Service. A Nightingale hospital was easy to recognise; it contained about 500 beds in wards 30-40 beds, all branching off from large, gloomy corridors. The nurses who staffed them had a rigid hierarchy; authoritarianism was rampant, and communication only went down, never up. There was a great deal of emphasis upon service to the job, devotion to duty, and an especially heavy emphasis on the need for economy. It was considered to be an honour to be allowed to nurse in these hospitals; and there was a snobbish attitude to hospitals which were run by the County Council or had at one time been Poor Law hospitals. These Nightingale-style hospitals were called the Voluntary ones and they were counted as the cream. Staff from them gravitated to be Matrons and senior staff of all the hospitals. A situation not unlike the public school system which saw a large amount of its pupils become leaders of the country.

As long as this held steady, all went well; but in fact it concealed that there was a great timidity in the profession. This meant it was always a step behind the medical profession and never alongside as equals. Matrons did appear to be great and awesome and Sister not much less so. When I started in one of these hospitals it was not unusual to hear a Sister say, "You are not paid to think, Nurse!" Why not? This was what had been said to her when she was a junior. It sounded authoritarian and it was authoritarian but it concealed the fact that no layer of nurses questioned the layer above; and that the very top layer was highly vulnerable having come up themselves through this type of conditioning.

When the NHS was mooted, doctors organised together and fought it tooth and nail. So noisy was their demands and their opposition that it passed unnoticed that the nursing profession had gone meekly into the NHS without even a pot shot. Undoubtedly there was some feeling that the medical profession would look out for us but they were too busy looking out for themselves. Also, there must have been a great disbelief among top nursing staff that anything could shake their place in the hospital scheme or belittle their authority.

Suddenly there sprang into prominence a person called the Secretary who was to act as a co-ordinator. His role in relation to the doctors was clearly defined; no lay person could tell a doctor how he should treat his patient. The role of these secretaries in relation to the nurses was much less clear. As the nurses had taken a backseat in the planning of the NHS; it was no wonder that they suddenly found some power lost. Matrons in particular were divested of much of their power; they did not receive too much sympathy for the feeling was that in the past they had held too much.

The Secretary and his staff, known as the lay administration, took over many of the responsibilities that had traditionally been that of the Matron. This included the catering departments, staff residences, control of non-nursing staff, and also control of supplies. Whilst the medical men and the secretaries were busy jockeying for position, the Matron was often left clear out of it. In some hospitals on the Appointed Day (as the beginning of the NHS was so titled, not annointed, mind) the Matron was told brusquely to hand over all her keys to the Secretary.

Looking back, one can feel sorry for those poor old things; they had never had their authority questioned or questioned authority; and many of them were quite helpless to deal with this change. There were some strong Matrons who

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held on grimly and fought back for their 'place'; but this was very much an individual effort. There was not even a Matron's Association then to which they could turn for advice. The one national organisation was the Royal College of Nursing; even today it is not noted for its militancy on behalf of its members.

It took the nursing profession quite a long time to figure out what had happened; and then even longer to figure out what to do about it. One of the things that helped to spur things on was the increasing shortness of staff. This was due of course to the change in ratio of men and women, to the increase of professional outlets for women, and to the turning away from domestic-type work by women. More organisation and militance at the top plus increasing shortness of staff at the bottom saw 1963 produce a committee, headed by Lord Salmon, to look into THE SENIOR NURSING ORGANISATION IN HOSPITALS. In 1966 the report came out, "Salmon" was among us and the upheaval began.

The Salmon Report is a large, thick, document full of civil service language that is devastating, in a quiet way, in its criticism of the way the nursing profession has been run in the past. It greatly deplored the authoritarian approach; the ill-defined lines of responsibility (if you do it, you are taking too much on yourself, if you don't do it you show no initiative); the lack of communication at all levels. It particularly emphasised the fact that nurses were not adequately prepared for the responsibility of higher posts.

The time was ripe for this report. The profession had taken a long hard look at itself and decided that the way back to a clear position was to concentrate upon the nursing; and let the rest go hang. Under Salmon the non-nursing duties would no longer be done by nurses; the grading would be clear, there would be job descriptions for every level, and everything in the garden would be lovely. Now there would be a Chief Nursing Officer up there beside the Group Secretary and the Chairman of the Medical committee and, at last, a hand in the planning.

It was not enough, of course, to say we would do all these things, more was needed. The whole nursing profession had to be yanked out of their apathy and shown that they were managers. Can you conceive of a ward sister responsible for 30-36 ill people; approx. 12 nursing staff of varying grades; the training of student nurses in practical work; the liaison between every department in the hospital from the medical profession through X Ray, Catering, Pharmacy, to the supervision of the ward domestics; who did not realise that she was a manager? There were thousands of Sisters who did not realise this simple fact. Or that they were paid less than the manageress of one of Lord Salmon's teashops.

To help them realise a few things about themselves and to give them some of the tools the NHS started Management Courses for all trained staff. They are busy right now pushing them through, as many as they can as quickly as they can. Next time, if you like, I'll tell you what happened when I attended one.

For years I have been buying my duplicating supplies from Gestetner, but with the last price rise I had to quit. I meant to try Chapman's for paper but put it off too long; so had to dash out to Straker-Bedser in a hurry. From there I got 12 reams of paper - cost £8.15s; and that was with discount! Can anyone give me a comparison? Looks like I must seek elsewhere or go out of business. It sure would help if a few of the non-faned, non-letterhack readers would part with a subscription!

Ethel Lindsay