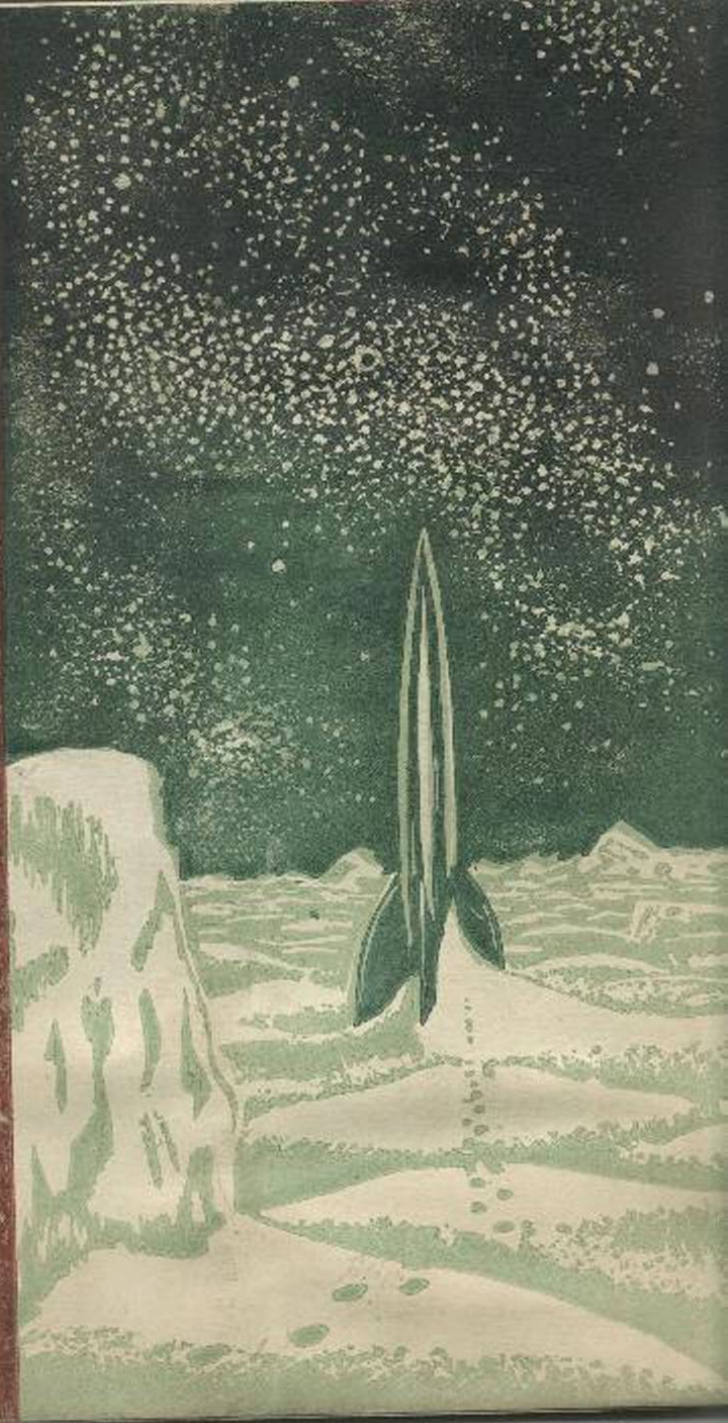


# SLANT

NO. 7

WINTER, 1952-3



No.  
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Winter  
1952/3

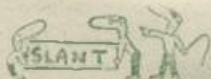
## CONTENTS

|                                       |                         |    |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|----|
| EDITORIAL                             |                         | 3  |
| PATH OF GLORY                         | A. Bertram Chandler     | 5  |
| LEFT AT THE POST                      | Robert Bloch            | 16 |
| AN AMATEUR EX-EDITOR SPEAKS           | Manly Banister          | 20 |
| A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE                   | Marjorie Houston        | 27 |
| FANSMANSHIP ILLUSTRATED               | Wren Ballard            | 30 |
| INTRODUCTION                          | Arthur C. Clarke        | 31 |
| TEMPLE MEMOIRS                        | William F. Temple       | 32 |
| THE FANSMANSHIP LECTURES              | Bob Shaw                | 47 |
| FANTASY AWARD                         | Chuck Harris            | 50 |
| THE JUDGMENT OF HARRIS                | Walter Willis           | 52 |
| STROLL                                | Eoh Shaw                | 54 |
| THE NEW S-F                           | A. Vincent Clarke       | 56 |
| AN INEXPENSIVE FANZINE PRINTING PRESS | Bob Shaw & Vince Clarke | 61 |
| NEW YORK LETTER                       | Ermengarde Fiske        | 59 |
| THE PRYING FAN                        | Walter Willis           | 66 |
| POEM                                  | Bill Venable            | 67 |

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*Interior illustrations by White and Shaw*



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# EDITORIAL

Some time ago we got wind of this stern comment from the White Horse. "SLANT," said some anonymous critic, "is too promaggy." We were aghast. Could this vile accusation possibly be true? Whitelipped



and trembling, we stole a guilty look at the last issue...and reeled away, sick with self-disgust. It was true! No use to conceal the fact from ourselves any longer; the mag was tainted with pseudo-professionalism. It

wasn't just the vile prose we were printing---the very physical form of the mag was contaminated. Its condition was critical. Not only had it contracted symptoms of chronic legibility, but neatness was breaking out all over it.

Obviously there was only one thing to do. We must retrace our steps, in search of the True Path from which we had strayed. We began by tearfully saying goodbye to the long happy months of setting type, lifting it out of the stick, picking it up off the floor again, correcting typos, distributing it again, and finding the rest of the typos. But these sacrifices were only the beginning. Relentlessly I went on to invent a new method of reproducing stencils which produced a nice black impression (pages 6 to 45), and then cunningly bought 9000 sheets of paper just too thin to take it. Now we were back to the joyful days when our readers used playfully to ask us to make it clear just which side of the page was which. Other experiments, like slipping when we should have sheeted, were equally successful; and with this issue I think we can safely say that we

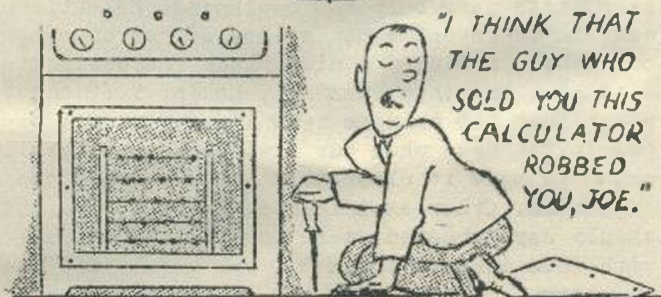


have regained our amateur status quo.

But please, no applause. It was nothing, really. In fact we'd be just as happy if you wouldn't make any comments at all on the appearance of this issue, just accepting the whole wonderful thing with silent gratitude. Not just on account of our innate modesty, but because I have an uneasy foreboding that we are about to backslide again. The dread symptoms are re-appearing and I'm afraid I must warn you that the next issue may be almost as lamentably legible as the last.

Among the more readable items will be the second instalment of the Temple Memoirs, dealing this time with the affair of Ego and the duplicator, which is probably the funniest thing of its kind ever done, and an unusual Thing by Vince Clarke. There'll be some other stuff too, but you know more about that than I do. Would all you brilliant minds in my glistening audience please note that under the new type set-up (or non-set-up) SLANT will be going frequent, needs material again, and that the deadline for the next issue is the end of April. Yes, 1953.

For this issue, thanks to Marjorie Houston, for cutting the stencils for pages 6 to 29, and to Hal Shepiro for the cartoon idea on p.46. The poem on p.67 is veriously ascribed to Bill Venable and Nan Gerding because I'm not sure which of them wrote it. It appeared unsigned in their FAPA magazine.



# PATH OF GLORY



A. BERTRAM CHANDLER

*Illustrated by James White*

# PATH OF GLORY

A. BERTRAM CHANDLER

When he got off the train at the Pierhead Station Lanning checked his watch with the platform clock. It seemed to be a good half hour fast. It was very strange---but it explained the early morning feeling he had known since bolting his breakfast and making a dash for the Seaforth bus. He would have to get the radio fixed, he reflected. When every watch and clock in the place suddenly went haywire something would have to be done about it.

He thought of dropping in somewhere for a cup of coffee before going to the office, and then decided against it. His stomach, after his hasty meal, was far from happy. Besides, there was a pile of work waiting for him, and Captain Beardmore had been loudly wondering for the last two days when WAITE-MATA's papers would be ready.

Turning up his raincoat collar against the thin, chill drizzle he waited his chance. There was a lull in the traffic and he ran across Water Street, almost slipping on the greasy cobblestones. Once inside Atlantic Building he made straight for the automatic lifts. One had a large placard, OUT OF ORDER, hung on its door; the other was unengaged. He entered and pressed the starting button for the Sixth Floor. His stomach protested at the acceleration and for a few moments he thought he was going to be sick. The lift stopped. He stepped out, turned sharp right along the corridor that would bring him to the office. Suddenly, he stopped. There was something unfamiliar about that all too familiar short walk.

For weeks the office between the lift shafts and the Company's premises had been vacant. It seemed suddenly to have found a tenant. There was lettering on the frosted glass of the door, lettering that had not been there on Saturday. Had it merely been the name and title of some firm of brokers or merchants or ship chandlers Lanning would have passed on, have given it no further thought. But the words, for all their black, businesslike neatness, were so outrageous in this temple of the drab gods of commerce that he could but stop and stare.

J. SMITH, read the sign, CONSULTING FORTUNETELLER. And then, in staring characters, WHAT COULD YOU HAVE BEEN.....IF?

Mr. Smith, thought Lanning, should have his fortune told if he thinks that he's going to make his fortune by setting up shop here. The other tenants will take a very dim view of this. Especially Beardmore. He does all the fortune telling in this neck of the woods. Then—I shouldn't like to be in Captain Keene's shoes when he reports in today.

He made to pass on, then hesitated. There was a light behind the frosted glass, and he saw a shadow briefly flicker across it. He looked at his watch. At least twenty minutes before the Big White Chief was due. He would see what this bird Smith was like. It would be a tale with which to amuse the others after eleven o'clock tea.

Lanning tried the door. It opened easily. He poked his head around the edge, saw a little man seated behind a big desk. "Excuse me," he said, "are you --er--open? I was just passing and--"

"I am always ready to receive suckers after the truth," replied the other. For one so small his voice had a surprising volume. "Will you come in, my friend?"

And now Lanning felt a peculiar sensation com-





pounded of reluctance and an eager desire to learn more of this J. Smith. He wanted, badly, to retreat to the drably familiar world of the company's

office—but he opened the door still further, and stepped inside. With a gentleness that surprised him he shut it after him.

"Won't you sit down?" asked the little man, indicating a chair facing the desk. Lanning felt suddenly weak, sank into it gratefully. His eyes roamed with frank curiosity about the room. It was sparsely furnished, seemed to contain only the big desk and the two chairs. Save for one thing, the desk boasted only the normal office accessories. The abnormality was a large crystal on a squat ebony pedestal. It was vaguely disappointing. Lanning had expected something less cheaply obvious.

And yet he never gained a clear impression of J. Smith. The little man seemed always slightly out of focus, his outlines shifting and uncertain. Only his voice seemed real. And apart from its deep richness it was almost too commonplace.

"And now, tell me about yourself..." It was more of an order than a request.

Lanning felt a rush of disappointment. Why, the fellow was no more than a cheap charlatan--and not even as subtle in his methods as most.

"Me tell you?" he demanded scornfully. "But..."

Then he stopped. He sensed rather than saw the little smile that flickered over the obscurity of the other's face. And he felt—although he would have died rather than admit it—a very real power inhibiting his speech. He tried to continue, but could only stammer wordlessly.

"I am not a fortune teller," said J. Smith. "At



least not as you understand the word. I make no pretence of either foretelling the future, or of delving into the past. But I can show you what you might have been had you taken the alternative path at any of the crucial points of your life. Now..?"

Lanning's memory flashed back to two years before the war. The RAF had invited applications for short service commissions and, among others, many ship's officers had welcomed the opportunity for leading a fuller, more adventurous life. He had been among them. While his ship was in London he had attended Adastral House for an interview, had met with the approval of the high officers before whom he had appeared, had been given the date, time and place for his medical. And then Audrey had kicked. He was in a good job, in the service of a first class liner company. His prospects were good, even though promotion was painfully slow. He was married. Why throw up everything and risk his neck in aeroplanes? Lanning had been able to produce several answers to that question---but none was right in the eyes of



his wife. And so he had cancelled everything and continued in the service of the Company. Under the artificial conditions of wartime he had gone ahead fast. And when he was Second Officer of one of the big ships he had been put ashore with gastric ulcers and for weeks his life was despaired of. On recovery he was told that he must never go to sea again. And so the Company, out of the kindness of their collective heart, had found him a berth in their Liverpool office where, to all intents and purposes, he was no more than an office boy for Captain Beardmore, the unpopular Marine Superintendent. And as both he and Audrey were incurable Londoners they loathed Liverpool with a deep and dreadful loathing. He would never admit it, Audrey would never admit it, but they both wished with all their souls that he was back at sea again.

All this and more he told J. Smith. The little man listened intently, his hands clasped before him and that half-seen smile---mockery or compassion?---flickering now and again across his vague, indeterminate features. He waited till Lanning finished then...

"Look," he said simply.

The crystal on his desk had come alive, was shining with an uncanny life of its own. Within its cloudy depths vague forms, dim colours swirled and shifted. It compelled attention. J. Smith was no longer there, his office and its simple furnishings were gone. And Lanning was no longer there. He was inside the crystal, living the life of the image of himself that he had glimpsed, as though through the wrong end of a telescope, within its doubtful mystery.

He lived the life of this other Lanning through all its moments of doubt and triumph, and yet there was that which stood outside and told him that this was but a dream, that the long hours and days and

fractions of seconds. But in the world of the crystal they were as real---more real--- than anything he had ever known.

As Flying Officer Lanning he started the war, as Air Commodore Lanning he finished it. And in the interim he knew the feel of a plane under him, saw the fantastic snowy caves and pinnacles as he sped into the overcast, felt the almost detached fear, of the intellect rather than the emotions, as he watched the pretty, harmless-seeming streams of tracer climb with deceptive slowness towards his cockpit. Telling himself that the last fights of mankind were the best, he participated in the great aerial battles over Germany, when the sky was alive with tracer and bursting shells, whilst the war rockets wove their fiery patterns through the flying fleets and burning ships plummeted earthwards like fallen archangels.

As Air Commodore Lanning he finished the war, and as Air Commodore he went to the Palace, where the man whose crown he wore on badge and buttons tapped his shoulder and dubbed him Knight.

"Sir Richard Lanning..." said Audrey. "I can't get used to it, Sir Richard..."

"...and Lady Lanning," he finished. "You wouldn't have got this, my dear, if I'd stayed with the Company. I've kept in touch, and the furthest that any of the blokes with the same seniority have got is Second Mate---with the doubtful prospect of their K.B. when they're full of years and honour and have stayed the course long enough to become Commodore Captain. I wonder... Suppose I had listened to you, dear... What then? Where should I be?"

"Who knows?" Her voice was very far away, and her eyes seemed to be looking past him into another space, another time. "Who knows? Oh, Dick, I'm



frightened. This is all too good to last...You've had a charmed life during the war. And you've gone ahead fast, too fast. You've had luck, you must admit, the kind of luck that makes one wonder what kind of dirty trick Fate has up her sleeve. And if you'd stayed at sea..."

"I should be either a Second Mate or shrimp fodder. But I see what you mean. Better to be a live dog than a dead lion. But I'm not dead..."

"What was that other?" asked Audrey. "You know. The one we used to say together whenever we thought that our luck was too good to last...Man goeth like something..."

"Man goeth up like a royal tops'l..." prompted Lanning. "Man goeth up like a royal tops'l," they said together, like two solemn children, "and cometh down like a flying jib!"

Then came the dull, bleak morning when the first plane fitted with the Lanning Drive was to be tested. In the world of the crystal he understood it perfectly, as indeed he should have done, for it was his own invention. In that other drably unreal world he remembered it imperfectly and briefly. It was not jet propulsion---quite. It was not rocket drive---quite. It adjusted itself---somehow---to the density of the stratum of the atmosphere in which the ship was flying. Its fuel...he could not remember.

The Air Commodore stood with a group of high officers in a small hut towards the edge of the wind-swept field. He was in flying kit. The others shivered in their greatcoats. Somebody had produced, by some wizardry, hot fragrant coffee. Lanning sipped his, grateful for its warmth. He waved aside the proffered brandy flask. "No thank you, sir. I'd better not have mine straight. She's a bit tricky yet..."

"Damn it all, Lanning," exploded the other, "every young cub in the Service would sell his soul for the chance to take her up..." He waved his hand towards the window. "You're too important."

"I'm not." He followed the other's gesture, looked long and lovingly at the craft outside, a mere projectile with stubby wings. "And after all, she's not their child...."

"Lanning's luck" he heard somebody murmur. "He



could take up anything and get away with it."

The words touched a chord in his memory. "Man goeth up like a royal tops'l, and cometh down like a flying jib..."

"What was that, Lanning?"

"Nothing sir."

He finished his coffee, and as he turned to place his cup on the rough table his eyes were caught and held by a calendar on the bare wall. Above the date

was the picture of a naked girl, scarce worthy of being dignified with the name of art. Yet the unknown artist had given his meretricious work something of the essence of all womankind, something that stood out in startling contradistinction to the little artificial world of uniformed men, bare bleak fields, and ugly vicious machines that stood waiting and purring like monsters from some other planet.

To hide his interest in the nude Lanning made a pretense of noting the date. "Thirteenth of October 1947," he said softly. "But then thirteen always has been my lucky number..."

He walked to the door, out over the damp grass. And then he was in the pressure cabin of the plane. One of the mechanics shut the door. Abruptly, all sound from outside was cut off: he was conscious only of the muffled purring of his idling motor.

Through the thick port he saw the others withdraw to a safe distance from the ship. Not far enough. He waved impatiently. There was a moment's hesitation, then the little group split up to coalesce again a hundred yards or so further from danger.

When Lanning pressed the starting button he felt as though the whole world had risen and dealt him a violent blow at the back of the head. Then his vision cleared, and he was able to look at his instrument panel. He whistled softly. He was high. Already he was high. He looked down—and the kindly earth was covered by a blanket of cloud through which he must have briefly flashed with the speed of a meteorite. Above—the sky was already black instead of blue.

But I'm not bound for the moon...yet, he thought as he levelled off. Now to put the old girl through her tricks...He became aware that the RT was making querulous sounds, barely audible above the brute



roar of unleashed power.

"Yes, this is Lanning," he barked impatiently into his microphone. "Levelled off at thirty thousand, but she could do more...Yes, she's a sweet job..."

And then the world of Air Commodore Sir Richard Lanning became a mercifully brief hell as the flames from his screaming motor swept into the cabin. And that other Richard Lanning stood somewhere outside and watched.

"But he fell like an archangel," he was saying over and over again. "He fell like an archangel..."

And the crystal on the desk was just a transparent colourless ball, and behind the desk sat Mr. J. Smith, that enigmatic half smile still flickering briefly and faintly across his shadowed face. But it was none of these that Lanning saw first, it was the calendar. Just an ordinary office calendar showing the date of October the Thirteenth, 1947.

It was J. Smith who first broke the silence.

"You have seen," he said abruptly. In the words was, perhaps, compassion---but there was also dismissal. "You have seen."

"Yes," replied Lanning dully. "I have seen..." He fumbled in his breast pocket. "Is there...?"

The other waved his hand in a gesture that was both refusal and farewell.

"There is no charge," he said, "but there will be payment. Goodbye, Air Commodore and Knight that could have been..."

Somehow Lanning found himself at the door. "Better to be a live dog than a dead lion," he was mumbling to himself. Then..."But he...I fell like an archangel...I fell like an archangel..."

Outside the empty office he turned sharp left, and left again for the Company's familiar doorway.

It was never established who it was who had left

open the door of the shaft of the lift that was out of order. The employees of the firm responsible for repairs and maintenance swore innocence.

And when they found Lanning he had been dead a long time.

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## LEFT AT THE POST

ROBERT BLOCH

People are always asking me, "Bloch, what kind of mail does a professional writer get? What kind of mail does a professional writer get? What kind of mail does a professional writer get? What kind of—" And so forth. It's enough to drive me crazy.

So finally I decided to do something about it.

I went crazy.

Just to show you why, I'll give you a sample of my incoming correspondence for November 22nd, 1951. (If there are any smarties who protest that November 22nd is Thanksgiving Day and for this reason no mail is delivered, all I can say is that they belong over here in the States: I'd gladly trade places with them sight unseen, if only to get away from the postman's ring. It's a rather large ring with a fake diamond in it, and it hurts my eyes.)

So without further ado, I take you to the morning of November 22nd, and drop you there with a dull thud.

I sit down at my desk with the correspondence on one side of my typewriter and the wastebasket on the other. I contemplate the stack of letters and packages, then pick up a letter-opener and run my finger along the edge. Sighing deeply as I realise

it isn't quite sharp enough to cut my throat, I attack the mail.

Ah, a letter from Ireland-----and not in Gaelic, either!

This I must read.....I open it with breathless anticipation (also the letter-opener, which makes it easier) and what do I find?

A wretched scrawl from somebody named Willis, trying to cadge material for a fanmag. This goes in the wastebasket, just to line the bottom properly.

Then the inevitable dunning letters. One, two, three, four, five---I like to get bills, because I don't have to bother opening them. Into the basket. Makes a pretty pile, too.

And then, a thunderbolt. As I take up the next piece, the horrid realisation hits me.

GALAXY has folded!

Yes, folded. The postman must have sat on it. He must have been getting behind in his deliveries.

I unfold it and put it aside, then pick up a fan magazine. It's from abroad. Something called SIANT: one of those dry, pedantic publications---but then, these chaps have no sense of humour, you know. I riffle the pages and check some of the more glaring errors and inaccuracies---for example, a pen sketch of Lee Hoffman which shows her as a White girl.

Clunk! It hits the basket as I pick up a letter from a prominent editor, begging me to do another novel under one of my pseudonyms---Robert Heinlein or A.E. Van Vogt. I laugh heartily until the tears come to my eyes: then wipe them with a thousand dollar bill from my fine collection of Japanese war currency. A brief pencilled notation, advising the editor that from now on I will use only one pseudonym, Ray Bradbury, and the letter is filed away



until the afternoon, at which time I shall write the novel.

Now, a 'fan letter' from still another amateur editor. This requires special treatment. He had written asking for material in the past, and I begged off, telling him I was under doctor's orders not to do any more work. Whereupon he wrote back, "I don't believe you. What's supposed to be the matter?"

My answer was brief and to the point.

"Kidney trouble."

Again, his reply. "I don't believe you."

So I wrote, "Am sending you a specimen under separate cover."

Back came his letter. "Examined your specimen and you don't have kidney trouble at all."

To which I answered, "Are you positive?"

Answer, as of today: "No, but your specimen is!"

This bothers me, because all the time I thought I was sending him a negative answer...

Now a note from Forrest J Ackerman, who is starting a movement to introduce a branch of naval dianetics, in an effort to make it easier to clear the decks. This is filed, with other dianetics gags, in the standard memory bank, or wastebasket.

And now, a flattering invitation from a learned scientist who has just read a lunar flight story of mine and is so impressed that he urges me to take a flying jump at the moon...

What's this? Another note from the Willis person, quote: "Hurry up with that article, I haven't got all day!"

Such persistence---always harping on something. Clunk...into the basket.

An invitation to read one of my stories aloud at the annual banquet of the School for the Deaf...A solicitation for an international fund now being

raised to scrape the guano off the white cliffs of Dover...and a whole series of requests for my autograph from various tradesmen who would like to see it on cheques. (We spell it 'checks' over here, but those foreigners can't learn to speak English. Can you imagine such stuff? "Neques" and "wreques" and "deques" too, I suppose.)

The wastebasket is almost full.

I reach down and scrabble around in it to test the depth, and then breathe a sigh of relief. My correspondence is at an end, and there is room. With a stern cry of "Rockets Aaaaaaay!" I slit myself down the middle with the letter-opener, pull out my contents, read the entrails for signs, and hurl myself into the basket.

That's where I am now, along with this article. And here I intend to stay, unless that damned Willie finds me...



"Pierce with pin to release vacuum."

# AN AMATEUR EX-EDITOR SPEAKS

MANLY BANISTER

Notice, please, that I call myself an amateur ex-editor--NOT an ex-amateur-editor. The distinction is considerable. An amateur is one who does something for the pure love of it. When I was an amateur editor, I was such for the love of it. Now that I am an amateur ex-editor, the condition still obtains. I love being an ex-editor.

Almost anyone with two or three holes in his head can be an editor. Ex-editing, on the other hand, is a sublime art. Any editor can become an ex-editor simply by stopping up the holes in his head with ground-up contributors. To avoid a lumpy effect, graft over the bumps the hides of those readers every editor flays in his sleep.

Since it is so much fun being an ex-editor, why did I ever become an editor in the first place? Well might you ask. The one is contingent upon the other. None can know the pure joy of loafing without having worked.

But all that aside. My principal aim in writing this is to be of service to my fellow men--to that proportion, at least, which senses a restless hankering to edit. Let me make plain that I refer to amateur editing in all instances--pro-editing is a world apart; I know nothing about it (but it must be a pretty good go, to judge from the way the old die-hards keep hanging on year after year).



You to whom I speak are those who have heard the call, or are about to hear it. You feel an incompleteness of living. You seem to think that there is a place for you in the world, if you could but find it. You startle at the rustle of paper, the bang of a typewriter is music to your ears, the smell of printers' ink is a heavenly essence compounded of spikenard and myrrh. The skids are greased under you; you wait only for somebody to cut the rope.

For the day will surely come when you will square your shoulders, lift up your head, fuse a sparkle into your eyes, and cry out: "I will publish a magazine!"

From the inner depths of your own consciousness, a Voice speaks. "You wonderful fellow you!" it says.

From East and West, from North and South, comes the answering voice of the multitude to whom you have made known your intention: "Whuffor?"

Well, hell, am-eds are a dime a dozen—did you expect to be received with breathless excitement?

When I made my first world-shaking announcement in this fashion, I sat back and waited to receive the applause.

I got three dirty cracks from three disinterested individuals. Nothing more.

I broadcast an appeal for manuscripts from a population supposedly frothing at the mouth to appear in print. What happened? I took a leaf from the book of the better pro-eds and jammed the first issue with my own crud under a variety of pseudonyms, plus a little extra stuff I was able to cadge from some very close acquaintances.

Perhaps some of you saw that first issue of The Nekromantikon. It was quite fancily illustrated with linoleum cuts. Those linoes I spent hours carving out the stuff to make the result look as much

like authentic drawings as possible. I selected the best cover stock I could find on short notice. And the mimeographing was lousy.

After publication, results flowed in. "Anybody knows," said one correspondent, "that you should never try to print line-work with lino blocks. That medium is supposed to be used only for a block effect." By James White! I swore. (James White had not yet begun his own to-become-famous lino artwork, but I swore in the future tense).

Another bellyache concerned the lousy covers--they fell off in the hands. This from a young am-ed whose whole mag disintegrated in my hands.

Somebody else wrote in ecstasy, mentioning one of my pseudonyms. More from this fellow, he says, but that so-and-so (mentioning another of my pseudonyms), he should drop dead.

But everybody thought the mimeographing was wonderful. I thought, and still think, that it smelled. It was bad. A composite of half a dozen different brands of stencils. But everybody agreed on the one point that the mimeographing was excellent, so I took hope. At least, here was an amateur zine you could tell what was in it, besides ink.

The cost of that first issue was 27¢ per copy, and there were 250 of them. I gave half of them away, and peddled the other half at two-bits a throw.

I was launched. Briefly, the clanking press was stilled, the mimeograph crouched sullenly like a silent A.B. Dick in the corner. Through the long nights, the stapler slowly cooled from the heat of its labor.

But the more I nursed the blisters on my fingers and thought of those egregious lino blocks, the more I thought to hell with it. There must be an easier way, I thought, and I considered the possibilities of zinc engravings for future illustrations. I had

once made a tour through an engraving plant, and there was nothing to the process, it seemed to me, which could not be learned with determination and ten years of experience.

It was about this time I got a letter from some foreigner telling me about the troubles he was having with his zine. It was a terrible book, he said, but he was sending me a copy anyway, but not to judge too harshly, etc. etc. The foreigner, of course, was Walter Willis, and the lousy zine he mentioned was SIANT. When the magazine arrived a few days later, Walter became definitely established in my mind as the world's most modest man. The mag was little in size, all right, and the printing could have been improved -- but the glinting thread of pure genius ran through the entire work. Beg pardon -- two geniuses. I was captivated by the marvelous concepts embodied in those razor-bladed "wood-cuts" of James White. I pride myself that I recognized in the beginning what certain pro-eds and fans did not wake up to until later issues of SIANT had been published.

(NOTE TO WALTER: The above constitutes fee in kind as payment for the publication of the herewith article. Please tear off coupon at bottom of page, endorse it back to me, and file with Lloyd's of London. MB)

Now, let's get back to this other interesting fellow--me. But why should I go into detail about the process of photo-engraving? There are simply too many details, as I found out, to bore anyone with the recital of them. I should, however, like to mention an initial difficulty which I solved with great neatness, and it may be of help to anyone desiring to take up engraving. In some musty tome or other, I read that the next step after fixing the image on the zinc plate is to "immerse in 20%

nitric acid solution and swab gently with a pad of cotton." I swabbed and swabbed and nothing happened, except that all my body hair fell out. It occurred to me, then, that perhaps it was the zinc I was to immerse, and not myself. As later experiment proved, this was the case.

Enough of technical matters. Let us get to the fun of the business. One day the mailman staggered up to my door and deposited a basketful of manuscripts. Heavens to Betsy! I thought (cleaning up the expression), fandom is certainly WILD about Nekro!

I read through script after script happily accepting this one, joyfully rejecting that one with the terse comment: "We can't print everything, you know." This kept up for days. The manuscripts poured in. But one funny thing -- I couldn't find the names of the writers in any of the numerous lists of fans. Who were these people?

Then, one day, the horrid secret came to light. I received a printed card from A Certain Writer's Magazine That Shall Not Be Named. It said, to this effect: "Here is a sample of your listing as we have been running it. Please check, make any necessary corrections, and return." That listing looked to me as if it were set in 72-point type, though actually it was something less than six. There was poor little Nekro, listed with all the hot-shot paying professional markets...and the blurb concluded: "Payment by arrangement". How this came about is too long a story to tell, and I don't know most of it myself anyway.

I fell upon my knees. I wept tears of chagrin. I tore my hair and beat my breast. My God! My files bulged with accepted Scriptures. I could only write letters of apology and permit the authors to withdraw their creations. Before I could get started on



this project, the postman brought another dismal burden. But this one contained three acrid and injurious epistles wanting to know when in hell that "payment by arrangement" was forthcoming. Just because those authors were nasty, I sent back their pieces (which weren't very good anyway) without notes of apology. To the others, I crawled as the lizard crawls upon its belly, limbs akimbo. One expressed his own apology in reply and requested the return of his manuscript. The others generously consented to permit their work to continue toward publication. I am still not completely recovered from the shock of this experience.

One of the oddest manuscripts that I ever received was really a lulu. The author was congenitally incapable of spelling, and his punctuation was fragmentary, to say the least. The script was single spaced, and the lines ran from the top edge of the paper to the bottom edge, and from the left edge to the right, so that every inch of the paper was filled with typewriting. When a word arrived at the right margin, what was left was carried to the next line at the left margin, even if it were only one letter. In some cases, when the last word of a problematical sentence ended at the right, the period began the next line to the left. It would not have been funny if the script had been prepared by some Smurly-Pants. Actually, it was high humor because it was written in honest ignorance, and would have been well worth publishing just for laughs had not my Christian nature come to the fore and bade me refrain.

One character I cannot about to forget is one who wrote me several letters in quick succession, recommending himself highly as a literary artist. The fact that his letters sounded like drivel could have nothing to do with it, for most literary men, when

writing personal letters, sound like fugitives from a chain-letter-gang. This gizmo told me all about his agents and his contacts with various editors, and gave me to believe he had a few rejects which were "too good" for pro pubs and would like to see them published.

All agog, I told him to forward his stuff for a look-see. He had, he said, written a story that was word for word in a great many places identical with a certain story written by a well-known name author. He wrote another story so closely like another name author yarn later published, that he accused the editor who had rejected his story of copying it and putting a "house name" on it. His letters were full of stuff like this.

And the wonderful story came. It was terrible, and I told him so. So he wrote me an 8-page letter telling me what was wrong with me. "You are frustrated," he said. And this was the very truth, for I sweated with frustration of a desire to clobber the cuss.

Now, gentle reader, you know in some part the reason for my enjoyment of ex-editing. Another of its joys, besides affording freedom from the freaks and vicissitudes of inclement chance, is the opportunity to cultivate quietly the finer things, the nicer people, and so on, it was my fortune to meet with while editing....only then I didn't have time for them.

I hope I have discouraged no one from editing a magazine. This has not been my intention. It is great fun...while it lasts. And by the way...if any of you would-be editors think photo-engravings would dress up your mag nicely, please contact me. I have a complete outfit of very fine photo-engraving equipment....For Sale Cheap!

## A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE TO THE GREAT AMERICAN SCIENCE FICTION DESERT

MARJORIE HOUSTON

There? That is a neatly-baited title, for it seems to imply that the following dissertation will be in some way concerned with science-fiction. And since *SIANT* is concerned with science-fiction in its sprightly Gaelic manner, you may be forgiven for leaping to the conclusion that the writers in it are also. But, alas, dear leapers, we are not all born in the lush lands where the River S-F flows. We are, some of us, nomads, dwellers in the arid deserts beyond the pale, children of the darkness.

Indeed in the very heart of America...the region known in times past as the "Fertile Excrescence"—cradle of such cultural phenomena as the Jesse James and Buffalo Bill legends...Mark Twain...and the Free Silver Heresy—is one of these now benighted realms, barren of science-fiction as the Sahara is barren of mosques. Indeed, MORE barren, for all Arabs have heard of the prophet and praise him, but few indeed are the inhabitants of this desert who have heard of Campbell or Gold.

So you—if you be a missionary at heart, or even an adventurer—are invited to leave the luxuries of the cities of milk and honey—your Space Suits and your Space Ships—your Scantily-Carbed Heroines and your Mighty-Minded Heroes—your Floating Ways and your flaming jets—for a brief visit to the world-left-behind—the world of all our yesterdays, where

S-F is only a program that very small children frighten themselves with on T-V.

The success of an expedition such as you are going to take depends on advance planning. No matter how wise you may be in the World of Tomorrow and its customs--no matter how cleverly you can cope with the Man-Eating Plants of Venus and the Crafty Ancients of Mars... 'ware the S-F desert, where the natives will keep confronting you with the nightmare PROBLEMS OF TODAY! Select a guide you can trust. Consult your friends (if any has returned alive from similar safaris.) Handpick your bearers. Know your weapons. (Here an additional word of warning might be added: DO NOT IN ANY CASE DEPEND UPON YOUR RAY GUNS FOR DEFENSE!!!! The children of the desert have developed a natural resistance to ray-dissolution, and in their simple, superstitious way they have come to attach religious significance to that natural resistance. They call it DOUBT HEALING.)

Of course, there are cases in the desert where the S-F springs flow crystal clear and pure--newsstands, corner drug stores, and other fonts of truth and wisdom. But the traveller from gentler climes had best bring a copy of the "Druggists' Directory" with him lest he perish of thirst only a few city blocks from a copy of GALAXY.

Nor are the backward inhabitants of the desert eager to welcome new ideas. A short while ago a denizen of the country, attempting to create a demand which might result in an S-F pipeline for the territory, went from one drugstore newsstand to another, requesting a copy of SIANT. The only result was a blank and hostile stare from each proprietor. And eventually he found himself being shadowed by a number of the above proprietors who had always nurtured a secret yearning to be in the FBI or the DESERT SONG. "Whassa tryin' to do?" they hissed at



one another in pharmaceutical symbols—"interduce somp'n new—and ruin business for the Sat'dy Ev'nin Post?"

Under the influence of their persuasion, the enlightened one abandoned his attempt at modernization and returned to his tent where he reverted to native customs, adding validity to the argument that it's no use trying to educate the natives. They'd rather have their nomadic freedom than a steady job reading ASTOUNDING.

Now, concerning supplies for your trip!

Most of your luggage, of course, will have to consist of the living waters of S-F...for it is this which the desert so sorely lacks. At least three—preferably more—years' back issues of any mag you like, plus a trunkful of pocket books, will constitute a bare minimum, and these will have to be replenished soon from the aforementioned oases. Due to rapid dehydration in the arid climes, you will find it necessary to imbibe approximately twice your usual quota of S-F to maintain your mental equilibrium. Bear this in mind, and prepare to supply not less than five or six books daily for each member of your party, which should prevent complete dessication—though it will certainly not be all that you might wish.

One more important suggestion in dealing with the dangers of the desert is the technique for buying S-F literature. Always peer near-sightedly at the rack, grumble something about not being able to see with your darned eyeglasses (or without them as the case may be). Mutter, well, you have to get the kid somp'n to read, and take your mag blindly from the rack. Any other method is fraught with menace.

And so, with these few practical suggestions, we close this guidebook to the S-F desert. Welcome, all travellers. Visit us—but COME AT YOUR OWN RISK!

# FANSMANSHIP ILLUSTRATED

(From Wrai Ballard)

Dear Friend,

Got your name from Wentworth Braxely in answer to my enquiry for fans who might like to write. Would you? If so a postcard or letter will be answered by a postcard or letter as you desire. I am new in fandom and want to meet via the mail all fans that I can write to. So far I only have two fan friends. We like letters best but a card will do to answer this if you will, please.

Thanks sincerely,  
Pommsworth

Dear Pommsworth,

Surely youth would not besounouth as to suggest that I bare my private life to half this country by writing to you by means of a postcard? Such a course is not only inconceivable, but also hard to imagine. However, I will be glad to write to you. Always willing to give struggling youth a chance, says I. As you will note, I am a cultured gent of that high and fine order who owns a typewriter. However I am rather broadminded and often mingle with the hoi-polloi, so have no fear and write whatever you feel like writing and I will discount it as the babblings of an idiot.

My views on fantasy and science fiction are that they are both rather boring but not as boring as some other mediocre stuff.

What do people do for entertainment there; I haven't been slumming for ages. It's so dull here.

Condescendingly,  
Waldemar Wiggins

## INTRODUCTION TO THE TEMPLE MEMOIRS

by

ARTHUR C. CLARKE

BSc. FRAS

Chairman of the *BRITISH INTERPLANETARY SOCIETY*

Perhaps it is as well to explain, for the benefit of newcomers, that the events caricatured in this piece of Templeism date to a somewhat remote period. The activities of the thinly disguised "British Rocket Society" in the years 1936--1939 were very much like this; indeed, the episode herewith is based quite closely on a specific event. Many readers may be surprised to know that the 'coelostat' was eventually designed and demonstrated successfully at a BIS meeting in the Science Museum. Unfortunately its main commercial possibility has been destroyed by the advent of LP records. You can read the labels *nowadays* without using any gadgets.....

Future historians compiling the "Encyclopaedia Galactica" may succeed in establishing the identities of 'Mrs Robinson', 'Mr Williams', and Mr Arnold'. To save them unnecessary trouble, however, they ought to know that the character described as "Ego" is purely a figment of Mr Temple's imagination, possibly a synthesis of the author's better qualities.

*Arthur C. Clarke.*



A LA RECHERCHE DU TEMPLE PERDU (I)

## BENEFIT PERFORMANCE

or THE WAY TO THE STARS

*William F. Temple*

One morning Ego got a notice in the post to the effect that a Technical Meeting of the British Rocket Society would be held that evening in Watford.

Ego was on the Technical Committee and a leading light in this organisation, and he'd persuaded me to become a member. Now, I don't know. It must have been in the days when Ego's personality impressed me, and I thought he was what he thought he was.

The rocket was the answer to everything. It seemed that the B.R.S. had made it a law of nature that a rocket should be able to travel in a vacuum and as there was a lot of vacuum between here and the Moon they wanted to fire a rocket through it to show off their new law.

Not only that, they wanted to ride in it. They'd designed a compartment in the thing to carry three men--- I suggested four, for bridge, but they replied coldly that they hadn't yet tampered

with the mathematics of Fuel Ratio to Load, though they also indicated that it wasn't past them if they chose.

So I said, "Yes.....I quite see your point," and didn't, and they knew I didn't, and I knew that they knew I didn't---we left it diplomatically at that. I'm just not technically minded. For years I have thrown fountain pens away when they ran out of the ink the shopman put in.





Now here was Ego pushing me into a Technical Meeting, to mix with people who shot expressions like "adiabatic expansion" and "stoichiometric amount" at each other and, moreover, appeared to know what they meant. I shrank inwardly.

"Is it really necessary for me to come tonight?" I said. "After all my duty lies here by the hearth ...I ought to lay some lino in the kitchen."

"Your duty to Man always comes first," said Ego, ponderously. "You have the honour to be numbered among the pioneers of Space Travel, who are planning a journey of ~~even~~ greater significance than the voyage of Columbus-----Man's first faltering steps from his mother planet. The exploration of the Universe lies at hand---and you talk of laying lino-leum in a back kitchen."

Ego goes off in that vein at any mention of the keywords "Moon" or "rocket." Now he went off about the outer planets and lost himself in interstellar space.

"Shall we be back in time for supper?" I asked.

Ego paused, dizzily suspended somewhere between Alpha Centauri and the Horse's Head (Neck?) Nebula, made a mental grasp for support, missed, and came back to the "mother planet" with a bump.

"No," he said flatly. "The custom is to take some food with us---sandwiches, cakes or the like---and have them at Mrs. Robinson's house.

But when the time came, I'd completely forgotten to buy anything to bring to the Rocket Society Harvest Festival. Then I remembered some ham sandwiches Mother had packed for me on Moving Day and which I had forgotten. I dug them out from behind the coal scuttle, still in their original newspaper.... To maintain the lawful standards of hygiene I brushed the coal dust off the wrapping before I took them.

During the day I had looked over a few of Ego's

books so that perhaps I shouldn't seem too crassly ignorant at the meeting. I gathered that the Moon revolved round the earth, hence Old Moore's Almanac, and that a twenty-inch telescope meant the diameter of it, and not its length, as I'd always imagined. There was one book in particular which was a mine of such information and impressively entitled "The Nebular Hypothesis."

Thus primed, I arrived at the Robinson's house. Mrs. Robinson welcomed us at the door. Her St. Bernard also welcomed us, particularly me, and saved me a trip to the bathroom by washing my face with an enormous wet tongue.



"He likes you," said Mrs. Robinson.

"That's nice," I said, with two eyefuls of tongue. "Will you tell him I think he's got the worst off now?"

"Oh, no, your face is still there," said Ego.

We went in, and handed over the cakes, rolls and sandwiches. There was company already in the sitting room. Besides the host, Mr. Robinson, a thick-set fellow with determined features, who was the Secretary and had to be determined because these meetings were liable to get out of hand, there were Mr Williams and Mr. Arnold.

Mr. Williams had painted a picture of the Earth as it should look from space. He stood holding it up at one end of the room while Mr. Robinson peered at it through a small telescope.

"You should have a look at this," said Mr. Robinson to me. "The telescope is slightly out of focus, so that you get a sort of hazy effect, just as the Earth would look from a rocketship three days out."

"Thank you," I said, as he gave me the telescope.

"Nice instrument this."

"You are interested in telescopes?"

"Oh yes," I said, and embroidered further to cover a certain nervousness. "I've a friend who has a 20 inch telescope."

"Reflector or Refractor?"

"Methodist," I said. "Oh you mean the telescope? No, it's neither--it's one he made himself."

He exchanged a puzzled frown with Mr. Williams.

The last strand of my nerve snapped, and I took refuge in peeping through the telescope. At first I had difficulty in seeing anything at all. And then all of a sudden it came right, and I saw a lovely, pale pastel-shaded globe, somewhat blurred and indefinite, but in its way thrilling if you allowed yourself to imagine that you were in a rocketship thousands of miles out in space, travelling Moonwards and looking back through a porthole at the "mother planet."

"It's fine," I said, enthusiastically. Then I thought perhaps I had better temper my enthusiasm with just a wee bit of criticism to show that if I were no expert on telescopes, at least I knew something about astronomical paintings..... So I added, "But I think there is just a bit too much red in the centre."

Then I removed my eye from the eyepiece and found I had trained the telescope full on the round face of Mr. Arnold who was standing there, looking thoughtful after a visit to the cocktail cabinet in the corner. My remark seemed to change his line of thought, and he stared at me without benefit of telescope.





I crept away into a corner--the corner where the cocktail cabinet was. I had two double whiskies before I dared look anyone in the face again. The St. Bernard sought me out and, seeing with canine intuition that I was unhappy, licked my face again consolingly. He'd got down to the sixth skin layer when I burst free.

More technical members now came pouring in. I kept out of their way, trying to look as if I were the man who'd come about the gasmeter and had nothing to do with any rocket society.

Things really began to get going when the Technical Director arrived. He had quick, lively eyes, and talked as much with his hands as with his tongue, and he was no mute.

As I mentioned, the Society had designed their own rocketship to go to the Moon. Most of it was still on paper because the thing itself would cost a million or two. They thought it was only a question of time before a billionaire came rushing forward begging to back their venture with hard cash---for what billionaire could resist such a chance to buy everlasting fame? Meanwhile, while they were waiting for the first billionaire to rush, they were amusing themselves by making some of the smaller and cheaper navigational instruments.

The Director had just finished constructing the altimeter. He explained how he'd done it. This was quite a performance, needing both hands and plenty of room. He had his own system of semaphore in





shorthand. A swift circular sweep in the air meant 'a wheel'. A sort of corkscrew wiggle (borrowed, I suspected, from the Hawaiian Love Dance) meant 'A spiral spring.' A Roman salute meant 'about so high.' Once he tried to describe a camshaft and a crankshaft simultaneously, and drew music from the air. 'A long lever' carried a vase of chrysanthemums off the mantel-shelf. For the benefit of the short-sighted he also ran a machinegun vocal commentary. He was somewhat handicapped in clarity, though not in speed, by a heavy cold. (".....two sprigge attadged to thad chaid...")

Apparently the Director's altimeter wouldn't behave itself. The thing had a big dial, on which a pointer moved to indicate the exact height to which the contraption had been raised above ground level. But every time he lifted the thing up, the pointer whizzed back past zero and pretended that the altimeter was decently buried six feet in the earth.

"H'm.....that could prove very embarrassing at a public demonstration," commented Mr. Robinson.

"We could always tell them that it proves space is curved," rapped out Ego smartly, and there were murmurs of approval.

Everybody now began to discuss this subversive behaviour of the altimeter and in the Rocket Society tradition no one kept to the subject. First someone suggested substituting an egg timer for the spaceship altimeter, on the grounds that it worked on the same principle. From egg timers, the talk slid away to ecology, the rising birthrate, tomato growing, and Halley's comet. Here someone carried it over to the Great Nebula in Andromeda and I recalled a certain book title and seized this chance to mention to my neighbour: "I have always thought the Nebular Hypothesis purely hypothetical."

"Some do, some don't," he answered, gravely.

The Director and Mr Robinson now started an argument, across the room, on such a highly technical plane that I just sat between them agape while the stream of polysyllabic words passed over my head like a beautiful rainbow. Ego kept making bright interjections, which may or may not have been to the point, but which at any rate showed us that he understood what was going on. Which was all that Ego wanted to show us anyway. It ended with the Director promising to consult the National Physical Laboratory on this point. (I missed the point, and as far as I'm concerned it's still missing.)

The company was analyzing methods of running a bag-wash when the determined Mr. Robinson dragged the focus of attention round grimly to the next item on the agenda. It was another navigating instrument, called

a "Coelostat." Its use still persistently defies my understanding, but for the curious I got Ego to write down in his own words his explanation of the thing, with no comment from me save that it's obviously all done by mirrors.



"The BRS rocketship is designed to revolve around its own longitudinal axis when in flight (a) to maintain stability during its initial flight through the atmosphere, in the manner of an artillery shell, and (b), to provide the crew with artificial gravity

by pressing them, through centrifugal force, against the walls of the ship. Hence, the Navigator will find it difficult to take bearings since the visible heavens will appear to be revolving. The Coelostat is designed to counteract this and contains mirrors revolving in a contra direction to the rotation of the ship, so that the Navigator looking through it sees the heavens apparently stationary and is thus enabled to fasten upon fixed stars for bearings. I, personally, think that I.."

(Irrelevant matter follows this.)

Even some members of the Technical Committee were a little confused over the optical principle of the thing, so the Director undertook to dispel their confusion by giving object lessons.

"I'll make a cardboard model of the Coelostat, from which the principle can be clearly seen."

He stood there and we looked at him expectantly.

"Er---has anyone got any cardboard?" he said.

Mr Arnold fumbled in his pocket, produced a piece of bent cardboard, and handed it over silently.

"Good," said the Director, and stood there absently fiddling with the piece of card. Everyone waited.

"Uh---has anyone got any scissors?"

Mr Arnold, without a word, produced a pair of folding nail-scissors.

"Thank you. Now we're getting somewhere."

The Director stood there, with the cardboard in one hand and the scissors in the other, looking as though he had either too many things or not enough. The tension grew.

"I wonder---ha---if anyone's got a needle?"

The amazing Mr Arnold rose to the occasion again. It seemed no emergency could find him at a loss.

"Fine, fine---ouch!" said the Director, taking the

noodle by the wrong end.

He sucked his thumb for quite a while.

Presently he said, "All we want now is a mirror."

Everyone had become tired of looking expectantly at the Director. The miracles, it seemed, were not coming from him but from Mr. Arnold. Everyone looked eagerly at Mr. Arnold. But he blushed, shook his head, and giggled feebly.

"Will this one do?" asked Mrs. Robinson, passing over her powder compact.

The Director thought it would. Now he began cutting the cardboard into strips.

"From these I shall form a model framework of the Coselostat," he announced. "You will see that it is quite simple and straightforward."



He borrowed a pen and labelled the strips "Front" and "Back." He picked up the powder compact and brushed half-heartedly at the powder which had streamed down the front of his suit. Then he became persuaded that he should have started with the needle and built the framework around it. He looked

for the needle. He had lost the needle. We were all conscripted for the search and soon the room looked as if it had been the scene of a stand-up fight between two poltergoists. The needle was never located, but if I remember rightly somebody found a haystack. (The St. Bernard was blamed for this.)

The Director returned to his cardboard strips. He counted them rapidly. Then once more, slowly.

"I've got one 'Back' too many, and not enough 'Fronts'!" he said. "Has anyone got a pen?"



"What happened to the one I lent you?" somebody asked complainingly.

The Director stated that he hadn't borrowed the pen, that he remembered giving it back, and that it wasn't a very good pen anyway, and then discovered it behind his ear.

He used it to amend the strips. He counted them, again. Then he accused the company of interfering: he now had all 'Fronts' and no 'Backs'. Someone suggested that he build the thing that way, and they'd all just look at the front and try to imagine it had a back.

But the Director petulantly threw the strips away, and said he wasn't going to play if they made fun of him. Everyone except myself then protested their undying loyalty, admiration, support, eagerness to learn and willingness to co-operate.

"Very well," said the Director, relenting a little. "I'll use all of you for the framework. What I mean is, if we can get hold of enough mirrors, you can hold them up at the proper angles, representing the framework of the Coelostat."

The hunt for mirrors began. The house was combed from attic to cellar. I produced my steel pocket mirror, Mr Robinson his shaving mirror, and Ego his portable triptych mirror, with which from time to time he was wont to sit and admire his profile. People kept wandering in with wall mirrors and hand mirrors and great slabs of mirror lifted from dressing tables. One enthusiast staggered in with the door of a wardrobe with the broken hinges dangling.

By now the room was flashing and scintillating. It looked like the finale of a pantomime. Finally, the flashing subsided, became astoundingly glitter. All movement was stilled. The house had been sucked dry.

The Director surveyed the huge spreading pile.

"Where's the powder compact?" he asked suddenly.

It wasn't visible. It had been walled in by its multitudinous greater relatives. The Director smote his head. We rushed to point out other little mirrors that could be used as a substitute.

"No, none of them is the right size," he said, with a wailing note. "I must have the compact."

"Very well," said Mr Robinson. "I know this territory better than most. I'll go in and get it."

We cheered, gave him sandwiches for rations, and watched him disappear into the interior. He was not actually seen again for some time, though occasionally we were vouchsafed reflections, usually of his rear view, as he crawled about in the mirror maze. At first there were intermittent clinkings, and as long as we could hear him thus we felt that all was well with him.

But then there came a long period of silence, and we began to feel uneasy. We voiced our uneasiness and then just as Ego was taking down the names of volunteers for a search

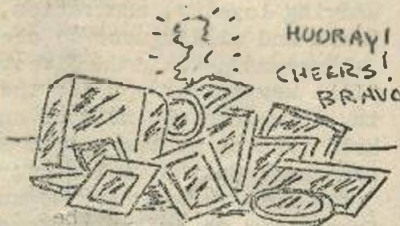
party Mr Arnold said "Look!" and pointed. From the north-eastern area of the maze, we saw thin curls of tobacco smoke rising. Life still existed in the catacombs!

Soon Mr Robinson emerged, clutching his pipe and the powder compact.

Ego said, with a little catch in his voice. "So long as we have members as dauntless as this, there is no fear that we shall fail to reach the Moon."

Even I was moved.

The Director took the powder compact, and placed it carefully on the top of the grand piano. This, as explained, was to represent the 'viewing Mirror'



of the Coelostat.

He directed us each to pick up a mirror and hold it above his head. Then he placed us in various postures, adjusting the angles of our mirrors. The idea was to get a line of reflection passing from mirror to mirror through all the angles, just as it did in the Coelostat. To show us how it did, he attempted to trace the line with a pencil, passing it slowly through the air from mirror to mirror. He kept losing track of the line, and once, in a flurried effort to regain it, found himself rapidly going round in circles. He had difficulty in getting out of the whirlpool. Afterwards, he was dizzy and lunched about, and went right off the line again, nearly jabbing Mr Williams' eye out with the pencil.

He rested, and then persistently went through it again, this time without being derailed. He ended up by pointing with his pencil out of the doorway.

This bewildered him. He should have ended up in the coal scuttle, he said.

He looked around at us as we posed. Ego was contorted like the Discobolus. I felt sure that he had the wrong knees bent and was throwing us all out of focus. But it was we that the Director frowned on. He shook his head, said "tut-tut!" and twisted my mirror to an excruciating angle, to hold which my biceps needed to be on the undersides of my arms. It was a heavy section of dressing-table mirror and it had already begun to make my arms ache. Now my back and legs ached too, and my arms felt like twisted elastic.

"There!" he said. "That's better. That was where we were wrong." He addressed the company at large. "Now when I look in the viewing mirror I should see the coal scuttle, passed through all your mirrors."

He went to the piano, bent and peered carefully into the compact mirror. He complained that he could



see nothing but the ceiling. He twisted the compact around and still saw the ceiling. He lowered himself practically on to an eye-level with the piano-top, squinted into the compact from that angle, and saw ---the ceiling.

The roomful of living statuary began to lose some of its artistry and cohesion. Fatigue was overtaking it. It showed itself first in a little trembling here, a little swaying there. Then, definitely, wobble set in.

Some held grimly on. Others sank, more or less gracefully, to the floor. But two or three of them just went out like candles, thudded to the carpet, and lay twitching amid the splinters of their mirrors.

I could feel myself going...going...

But the Director saved me by giving in first.

"Confound it, I can't do a thing until somebody takes away the ceiling!" he yelped, and flung away from the piano, and was inconsolable.



Mrs. Robinson came across the battlefield like Florence Nightingale with a tray of tea and sandwiches, and the fallen began to sit up and take nourishment, although still somewhat white and shaking. They ap-

ologised to the Director, and said that despite their being broken reeds they had, even in the act of collapse, glimpsed the beautiful principle of the Coelostat, and they were grateful to him for this revelation.

Presently he thawed out and forgave them, but he kept explaining to Mrs Robinson over and over again: "I couldn't see anything but the ceiling."



"Yes, of course," she soothed, giving him another fishpaste sandwich. "Lots of people have told us we have too much ceiling. I've been trying to get my husband to do something about it."

I took a large bite at my own sandwich, and realized too late I'd been hoisted with my own petard. Mother's ham had come back to her loving son, even though the weather had been against it.

I can't imagine how the layer of coal dust had got into it, but I was glad it was there: it acted as a sort of buffer and probably saved me from skinning the roof of my mouth. Even so, I was beyond speech for some time. Not that it mattered: the conversation was not flagging. It touched upon the species of bed-bugs, the symptoms of rabies, the formula for ice-pudding, the air-speed of flying-fish, and skated round life in Tibetan monasteries. It sped off in the direction of Van Gogh, by way of Mr. Williams; St. Bernards, by way of Mrs. Robinson; and Ego, by way of Ego.

My power of speech returned but not the power to use it. For one thing, the flow was unbroken and I couldn't get in. For another, I didn't seem to have anything to get in with. Nobody even mentioned science, and I was left with my poor little string of facts dangling uselessly.

"Surely," I told myself, "at the rate they are going they must, sooner or later, get round to the Nebular Hypothesis--or else there's nothing in the Laws of Chance."

I perceived I'd been studying the wrong sources of information. I should have concentrated on the fillers in the popular weeklies: "It is not generally known that all winkles are ambidextrous." That sort of thing.

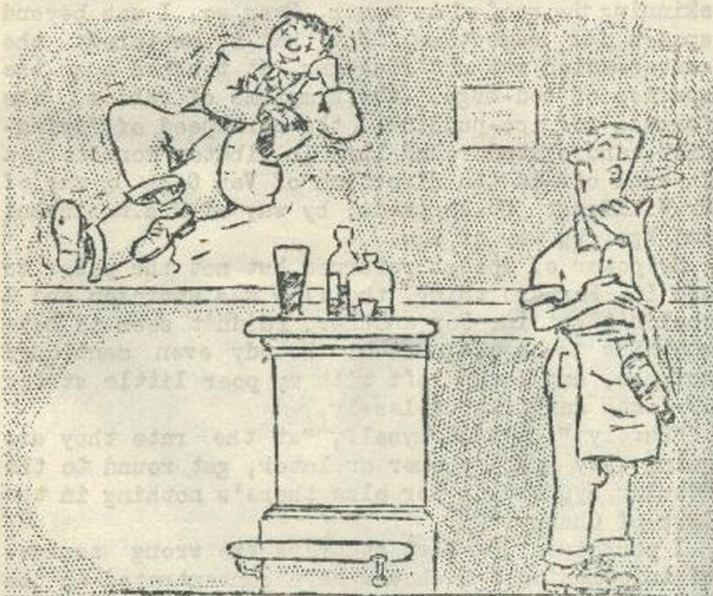
After settling the question of herring pickling for this generation, the meeting broke up in the

usual way (ie, in disorder) and we two drifted off in the general direction of London.

As we walked along Oxford High Street, I tried Ego---for want of a better audience.

I said, with careful casualness: "Regarding the well known Nebular Hy---"

"The higher the fewer," he said abruptly, and sent me on ahead to see if a train was coming.



-CHAPLIN  
35

"And when we get outside the pull of gravity we start floating like thish."

# The FANSMANSHIP LECTURES

BCB SHAT

In my third lecture, now that I have covered the basic groundwork of Fansmanship, I am going to present a detailed account of the famous clash between Fansmen N.Hall and P.Jordan. In order to help the student follow the more subtle ploys and counter-plays I will insert notes of explanation where necessary--although, if you have been practicing your ploys diligently, this should not--ahem!--be very often.

This bottle, which most Fansmen regard as being one of the most brilliant ever, opened with a letter from Jordan to Hall as follows:

Dear Norman,

I am sending you a copy of my fine STAR SHIP. I don't expect a fan of your stature to subscribe, of course, but if you would consider sending me an article sometime I would consider myself more than repaid.....

N.Hall, who was at this time working hard for his Grey Fansmen Badge, decided to employ a gambit. Since he had never heard of Jordan having entered the Legion of Fansmen, he thought it was safe enough and actually subscribed to STAR SHIP. (I hope it has been obvious to even Fansmen novices that Jordan was hoping to bring off a ploy in Zinesmanship by putting Hall under an obligation by presenting him with free copies. This meant that Hall was almost bound to contribute material.)

Jordan, receiving the subscription, was so taken



aback by the ruthless parrying of his ploy that he foolishly sent Hall a plain, unguarded request for material.

Dear Norman,

Thank you so much for the PC. STAR SHIP is very hard up for good material at the moment---I wonder if you would care to send me something.....?

At first Hall was tempted to cut Jordan to ribbons, but then he suspected that if he did so Jordan might publish both the letters and work the Poor-Struggling-Famed-And-Big-Bed-BNF Ploy on him. (It later turned out that this suspicion was unfounded.) He decided to employ a camouflage of humour! This was the letter that rocked the already shaken Jordan to his foundations:--

Dear Peter,

I agree---you are hard up for good material at the moment. In response to your request I am enclosing a sample of the pattern for my new sports coat. This is very good material.....

Shattered and bewildered by these crushing blows, Jordan realised that his only hope lay in Fanmanship. He availed himself of a copy of W. Willis's masterly treatise "Everyman A Faneman" and began to study furiously. He was at first appalled to see the stupidity of his mistakes so clearly shown up, but with astonishing perception he soon decided that the only reply open to him was that known as 'The Prolificsman Ploy.' (I myself prefer to call this The Profuseman Ploy.) Accordingly, inside the next week Hall received three letters and two postcards full of friendliness and fanish good cheer. It must go on record that Hall later admitted quite freely that he was shaken. As he pointed out, Jordan was



at a great advantage on this tack on account of the fact that he had freshly entered the Legion of Fensmen while Hall, who was an old member, was naturally quite incapable of such philanthropic behaviour.

As the days went by and the flood of effusive good nature from Jordan poured through his letter-box Hall racked his brain desperately. He knew full well that such a weapon as this terrible amiability in the hands of an experienced Fensman would have demolished him entirely, but he relied on Jordan's naivete: he sent the following...

Dear Peter,

Thank you for all the letters etc--it must give you great pleasure to get writing to a fan of my stature. I have all your stuff stored in the attic and some day soon I am going to try and get reading some of it.....

Another year in the Legion of Fensmen and Jordan would have known that he had Hall worried, but (as Hall had hoped) he lost his head and sent Hall the following letter in an unstamped envelope.

"Dear Norman,

I hope....."

With a sigh of relief Hall seized on the deliberate misspelling of his name, pointing out that anyone who had ever studied history (ie gone to school) would know how to spell 'Norman' properly. He capped his victory by answering the no-stamp ploy with "...and to help you in your poor financial state I am enclosing several postage stamps and a stock of envelopes for use in your correspondence."

Needless to say, no more was heard from Jordan, and Hall sat back secure in the knowledge that yet another name had been added to the list of fans in whom the name N.Hall inspired feelings of fear and dislike.

# FANTASY AWARD

C. HARRIS

The last "New Worlds" carried an interesting post mortem on the International Fantasy Award. The cognoscenti of fandom and the vile pros and hacksters who deliberated over the '51 hard-cover output had all their individual selections published for the fannish hordes to gaze on with awe and reverence.

They should be ashamed. True, that FANCIES AND COONIGHTS deserved the award, and that DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS was a competent runner-up, but these results seem to have been achieved almost by accident. Of the 14 part-time savants on the panel only five could agree that FANCIES was the best book of '51. The others plunged for mindshaking thought variants like SANDS OF MARS, FOUNDATION, and TOMORROW. SOMETIMES COMES. Between them they chose no less than 28 books in their selection of the best five.

Frankly, I doubt whether some of the judges read 28 books in '51. How else can one explain Ted Carnell's omission of FANCIES and his inclusion of the corny CITY IN THE SEA? Or Judy Merrill's placing of THE DREAMING JEWELS as her second choice? Surely somebody told her that only books published in '51 were eligible? JEWELS was of course published in 1950 and had been considered for that year.

Willie voted for SANDS OF MARS because "...nobody but Clarke is writing true science fiction these days as opposed to futurist fantasies, and very few people except him and Russell are producing anywork at all that isn't tainted with Bradburyish defeatism or Hubbardish paranoia."

Rubbish.

Ted Dikty's front-man, Everett Bleiler, does his best to sabotage the whole layout. Everett just CANNOT decide whether THE ILLUSTRATED MAN was better than DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS or vice versa. After weighing every comma, he has to give up. He brackets them both as first choice, gets them allocated five points each, and then lists another four selections — thus having a larger vote proportionately than any other judge. If this establishes a precedent next year's awards will really be fun. Imagine what will happen if Merrill discovers ERB and can't decide which of the Tarzan books she prefers.

I am not trying to ridicule the judges. This is a serious constructive article. Besides if I disagree with almost all the judges' choices it's possible that I'm wrong. Most of these people are in the Trade and should be reasonably proficient at reviewing. Me, I'm just a fan. If Gallet thinks TOMORROW SOMETIMES COMES was The Book Of The Year, that's his business. He may even be right about TYPEWRITER IN THE SKY being the second best. If Ostlund chooses FOUNDATION because "there's no space opera there" all I can do is shake my head in silent admiration.

However I would like to make a few suggestions for the IFA panel to ignore. To my mind this award is one of the best ideas yet and, as Les Flood says, it may take its place alongside the Tait Memorial Prize and similar literary Oscars.

The first thing I'd suggest is that the non-fiction award be dropped. The field is too large and too nebulous, the judges are fantasy bookmen and they have quite sufficient to read in the fiction department. The non-fiction that they do read is usually hinged to their fantasy collections. To illustrate this, I could point out that both of the non-fiction



awards have been to science fiction authors.

And I think the panel could be enlarged. If the field is so big, another half a dozen judges would tend to make the vote 'popular'. This year DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS came within an ace of winning the award without obtaining a single first place vote. A larger panel, with perhaps a revised voting system, would give the better book a better chance. At present, two third-place votes outweigh a vote for first. If the first selection were awarded seven points this trouble would be obviated.

After the IFA committee make all these changes, I'll come up with a few more suggestions, but one really simple solution does occur to me now.

The whole panel could be scrapped. In its place we could have one single judge whose decisions would be final. This fannish Solomon would have to be a stalwart honest bibliophile with razor keen sense of judgment, and preferably some experience in the Mene Mene Tekel Uphersin racket of reviewing. He would have to be intelligent diligent and well read, but retaining that common touch that would make him loved and respected by fans and pros alike. He must have keen perception, mature outlook, and a sense of understanding.

Somebody like me for instance.

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## The JUDGMENT OF HARRIS

Walter Willis

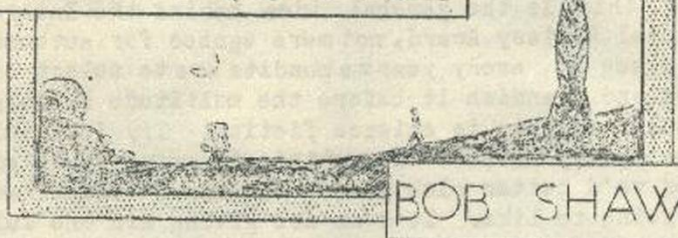
In the February 1953 STARTLING Ken Crossen bemoans the fact that the much-heralded boom in SF has turned out to be nothing more than a dull pop, and suggests as a remedy for this sad state of affairs that we "throw the science out of science fiction." Well, of course this is one solution, just as one way to make



your girl happy is to marry her off to another man. But assuming for the moment that we all want to become popular with the masses, a better way is to make the public like it as we like it. I take it that this is the general idea behind the International Fantasy Award, not mere egoboo for authors. As I see it, every year we pundits are to select one book and brandish it before the multitude shouting "Look, now this is science fiction! Try just this one, pretty please?" Now if this is going to do any good we'd better pick a book the man-in-the-street is going to like. It's no use giving him one full of taken-for-granted time paradoxes, semantics, space verps, parapsychology, psychohistory, ftl spaceships and similar third-order flights of fancy. This is the sort of thing I meant by 'futurist fantasies'. I love them myself, but let's face it, they aren't extrapolations of current science--which indeed declares most of them to be impossible--but extrapolations of the science fiction we've been reading for the last 25 years. Just us, mind you. The man in the street still thinks a flight to the moon is pretty fantastic. We've got to start him on the ground floor....and that isn't necessarily the top story.

Not that SANDS OF MARS needs any apology. It was a good story with the warmth, humanity and optimism that is the very spirit of science fiction. It may not have been as great a literary masterpiece as FANCIES AND GOODNIGHTS, but then..pardon me if I'm wrong..isn't this primarily a science fiction award? If not, just exactly what is a 'nonfiction' fantasy? And since when has fantasy needed our encouragement? Are we going to exhibit our silver space-ship in London shop-windows on top of a new edition of The Odyssey or a collection of ghost stories?

# STROLL



The tiny ship floated down out of the night sky and, for the first time in eight years, its tripod nuzzled into the soil of Earth. The engines gave a brief sigh, like a man settling into his favourite chair after a long walk, then were still.

Presently the airlock opened.

Frank Houseman sat for a long moment on the rim of the lock. The air of Earth was pleasant to him—in eight years he had forgotten just how sweet it was. After a while he took out a cigarette and sat drawing on it in the darkness. The tobacco smoke tasted better somehow, when it was mixed with the scents of the familiar meadow.

From all over the ship came clicks and whirs as each machine busied itself with the task of becoming deactivated. Houseman grinned to himself, savouring the feeling of being home.

He finished the cigarette and jumped down into the lush grass. They would be waiting for him at the house.

With a leisurely stride he covered the half mile to the south gate and turned into the lane leading to his home.

Eight years, he thought, eight years since he had seen his mother and father. Back in the old days he would have had to run. Eight years had been a tenth of a lifetime before The Shots.

The strangeness of the idea had often intrigued Houseman....were they very much different in those days? Did they run everywhere, knowing that their time was short? Did death not frighten them?

Using three hundred years of training, he put the subject out of his mind.

When Houseman reached the last bend before the house came in view, he paused and leaned on the gate to the orchard. The night air was heavy with the scent of apple-blossoms, and Orion had just lifted above the horizon. He lit another cigarette, and stood watching until the misty Pleiades reached their zenith. Perhaps three hours passed. Never having carried a watch, Houseman wasn't sure.

Strangely, he felt a slight surge of impatience. He continued on his way, walking rather faster than usual.

In eight years the house hadn't changed.

There were lights on. The detectors would have let the family know he had arrived. Probably his mother had prepared a meal for him—again Houseman grinned.

The front door opened for him, and he went in, feeling glad to be back. His mother in another part of the house heard the clatter of his booted feet. He heard her voice before he saw her...

"I didn't expect you back so soon, Frank," she called cheerily, "Did you have a nice trip?"

"Quite nice, Mother," he answered, "What have we for breakfast?"

THE END



(JOHN HAYWARD FAN, etd, from p.66.)

any hasty conclusions about the place after a mere 8000 miles of travelling about in it, but towards the end I was really coming to suspect that it's a lot bigger than it looks in the atlas. You drive for two whole days at 60mph, and on the third find yourself still in the same state---that of bewilderment. The place has got ~~out~~ of hand and something should be done about it. If the United Nations won't take action America should contract out of it.

The only other really damning thing I noticed about the country is that they have a chain of grocery stores called the 'Piggly Wiggly'. There are a few other faults---you can't smoke anywhere....the Statue of Liberty offers you a light as you go in, because it may be your last chance...and they look under the bed every night for the Politburo---but nothing else with the stark horror of that 'Piggly Wiggly'. The people are just like people everywhere else, except that they're not terrified of American foreign policy, which is to say they're pretty nice. What really did impress me was the American small town, which seemed to me the nearest thing to the ideal place to live in that has appeared so far on this planet. Pleasant houses, tree-lined streets, young people in summer clothes, and warm evenings filled with the crepitation of crickets and of neon signs---symbolically indistinguishable in sound.

#### WHICH PALMER EDITORIAL D'YA READ?

"We are going to steal every good author in the field by hook or crook." (OTHER WORLDS Feb.53, p.4)

"This editor isn't the type of pirate, or the type of imitator, or the type of competitor who keeps eyeing the writer who has already developed his talent." (OTHER WORLDS Feb.53, p.156)

AN ARTISTIC TRAIT? "Bah! Issue liquor! I'll have Kerby bring you something easier on the pallett."

---ASF, Feb. '50, p.23.



MIGHTY LIKE A ROSICRUCIAN Elron will never be just  
the same without an attack  
on L. Ron Hubbard. but it looks as if the last one  
was only too well founded; far be it from me to kick  
a man when he's not only down but out of his mind.

But maybe English readers haven't heard about EX-  
CALIBUR? Well, it seems that during the war Elron  
died. Awakening in the Hereafter, he found himself  
surrounded by all the knowledge of the Universe. He  
had been browsing in this stuff for a mere ten min-  
utes when he felt the cell of the Flesh and was  
drawn back to the operating theatre, where he had  
just given the doctor quite a turn. He left again  
as soon as he decently could and typed out carefully  
all he could remember of the Eternal Wisdom he had  
acquired. This was EXCALIBUR. He hauled it round  
vericus publishing houses, but none of them could  
take it. In fact their Readers kept committing su-  
icide, their minds giving way under the impact of  
these transcendental ideas. On the last occasion,  
according to Elron, he was present in the publishing  
office when the Reader entered, laid the MS on the  
desk, and left the room again by way of the window.  
Since the window was on the 40th Floor neither the  
Reader nor Elron ever recovered from this experience.  
Kindly Cl' Hubbard decided that the World was Not  
Ready for EXCALIBUR and confined himself to pub-  
lishing a teensy-weensy little bit of it, which he  
called Dianetics. Lately, however, Elron has become  
disenchanted with humanity on account of the vile  
attacks on him by unsympathetic people like sheriffs,  
reporters, judges, and the Bureau of Internal Re-  
venue. He has given us up, and he's just jolly well  
going to let us have EXCALIBUR. So, NOW, if you'll  
just send him a measly \$1000 and sign a waiver for  
damages when you jump out of the window, you can  
have a specially typed copy of EXCALIBUR---now re-  
posing in a sealed vault---for your vewy very own.  
The NEW YORKER called this the Biggest Little Book  
Bargain of the Month.

# THE NEW S-F

A. VINCENT CLARKE

.....Minnie Lemouchier thrust a vagrant black curl beneath her close-fitting cap and bent again to her work, but somewhere deep inside of her she knew it was of no avail. All the other girls were deftly assembling, checking, examining, and robots were stepping from the end of the production belt with monotonous regularity, but before Minnie's eyes floated the image, not of an artificial polychromatic receptor, but of a lean, bronzed, square-jawed figure in whose eyes danced small golden lights that matched the crinkly hair.

Minnie parted her soft red lips in a sigh.

This was Love.....

Uh-uh. Don't zap. Sf is moving into the big time, and in '53, or maybe '54, something similar to the above will be commonplace. Not, perhaps, in SF, but in one of those magazines that cater for everybody. Our dearest dreams are being realised, sf is now popular with the moron-in-the-street, and inevitably other forms of...well, literature, are impinging on the fantasy field. The body of sf is being invaded by strange organisms, and already Micky Spillane has erupted on its face.

According to the Relativity formulae with whose first equation we are all so familiar, authors such as Heinlein, Bradbury and James White will be compelled to meet the masses half way. No longer will the knowledge of why a rocket works in a vacuum and how to spell 'psychosomatic' suffice for the sf author. He must learn to attract the un-other-worldly outsiders, to face the experts from other fields, and cultivate their corn.

When for instance the gardener turns from 'Birds, Bees and the Nursery Garden' to 'Superdooper Stories' he'll expect to find the flower-decorated spaceship carrying an especially large-lunged crewmen whose carbon dioxide exhalations keep the herbaceous border alive. A tractor-ray will be a ray emanating from a tractor (as used on space-fields), and neutron beams will give place to zap-guns full of poison ivy juice.

On a higher plane than Spillane and the manure heap will be sf for the musician and dancer. Now, in the search for higher circulation, can you persuade the student of the rhythmic arts to lay down the 'Clavichord and Hot Trumpet Makers' Gazette', unless you can offer him something like....well.....:-

.....Nadia Naziburov, premier ballerina at the Martian Gondoliers Ball listened enthralled as the thunder of the rockets ascended in mighty fortissimo chords to a cadence in which the motif of riven atmosphere faded and died.

"Oh Michael!" She turned, the pale oval of her face alight with excitement. "Listen to the overtones! A perfect morendo!"

Mike breathed heavily. "I dig you, baby. How about skiddin down to no-grav an' leying it in the groove with some solid stompin?"

One can see emotional conflict here at least.

Perhaps the solid biographical type of fiction would provide sf with the sort of symbolic hero that enriched detective literature with Sherlock Holmes. I am not referring to such creations as 'Captain Future', but to someone who is at least semi-human, in accomplishment and environment. This may sound ludicrous, but in the New Sf practically anything could happen.

But we're discussing popular fiction and sf. The sample from the romantic that started it....what of the other types read by the masses. Well, the West-



ern we have always had with us. The shadowy figure of Rats Durston has hovered over pulp sf from Richard Sarton of 'The Skylark' to.....(fill in from this month's mags.) The detective type is a different matter, and in spite of Anthony Boucher's gloomy predictions that the detective sf novel would never succeed because the author could be so unfair to the reader....murder through time or the fourth dimension, etc.—I think there is still a vast untouched field here to bring in that 35c from the mystery addicts.

The door was high-polished Venusian swampwood reflecting highlights from the office electrotubes. The panel in its centre was supposed to be transparent, a polarised Luna Crystal, but after some blasterhappy goon turned a vibrator on it in the Case of the Curious Callietian it was shot through with streaky patches. I could hardly read the flecking gold letters on the other side, but I didn't need to. I knew them by heart.—

BIBAND TUCKER, INTERPLANETARY INVESTIGATOR  
LUNA CITY 1212

Something was standing outside the door. It'd knocked four times. I figured it wanted to come in.....

The rest of this epic you'll be able to read in the new era, when a fast buck is being made at interplanetary speeds by all and sundry, and the mass of the population is getting the sort of science fiction it wants.....TRUE ROMANTIC SCIENCE FICTION, SCIENCE DETECTIVE STORIES, SPACE WESTERN and EXPLORATION OF SPACE.

Science fiction for the technologist, the 'whither-mankind', the scientist?

Hell, they've had their innings. It's circulation we want nowadays. Bring on the emotion and human appeal and the general guff.

And order another safe, willye?



## NEW YORK LETTER

Since, as a result of your editor's sojourn in America, he and I were able to insult each other personally, there have been very few letters from which he can cull my New York one. Therefore, since it is a topic of primary interest to readers of this magazine and also since I can't think of anything else to write about, I shall describe Walter's entrance into these United States. He, of course, may also cover this topic, since he too was present, but I feel I can be more objective.

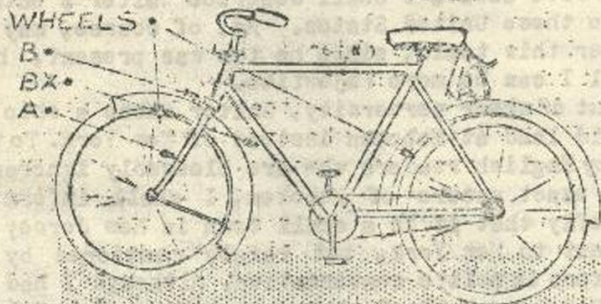
Out of sheer perversity, Walter chose a ship that would land at Hoboken instead of New York. To those of my English readers who are blessedly ignorant of the exact nature of Hoboken, I shall inform them briefly that it is a small town in New Jersey, adjacent to New York, but rarely mentioned by New Yorkers in polite conversation. Although I had been to Hoboken, Holland, I had never been to Hoboken, New Jersey, but for the sake of Slant I dared this perilous journey and managed to find the correct pier. Hundreds of people milled about. Had Walter already gone, I wondered, or was he still in the Customs' clutches? Naturally I would not dream of speaking to a stranger, so I could not get any information as to whether a tall Irishman with an other-worldly expression had been seen wandering off in the wrong direction. So I waited patiently for several hours, finally achieving a coveted position on the very palings of the Customs barrier.

Attaching myself to the lapels of the guardian of the barrier, I whimpered that I had been waiting hours to see my poor old mother from Ireland, and felt I couldn't hold out much longer. Touched by my tale of woe, he admitted me. I sped to the W's.

No Walter.

(vid. or. p. 15)

# AN INEXPENSIVE FANZINE PRINTING PRESS



AN ALMOST INESTIMABLE SERVICE TO MECHANICALLY  
MINDED FANS, BY TWO SERIOUS AND CONSTRUCTIVE  
TYPES: --BOB SHAW & VINCE CLARKE

There is no reason today why fans should put up with old-fashioned ugly duplicating machines, when anyone with ordinary skill and any sort of shop equipment can build an inexpensive printing press using materials that can be found in the home.

For the particular model that we have in mind, and which we have found to give very satisfactory results, all that is needed is an old bicycle, 23ft. of 12 SWG wire, scot, and the ability to devote a few evenings to the interesting construction work.

## CONSTRUCTION OF THE BASE

Take the bicycle (Fig. 1.) and saw off the front forks (a) just below the crown (b), remove the front wheel, and weld the forks to the rim as at Fig. 2.

Drill a 9/16ths. hole in strut (bx) at position shown in Fig. 2, and mount the bicycle in the frame

by means of the front spindle. The front brakes should be attached by wire or strong string to the front of the base, so that a slight pressure on the brake lever will draw the front of the machine down.

NOTE: The paper will travel over this base, so make sure it is free from oil and dirt and the supports (the former front forks) are wide enough to allow the paper to pass through between them.

## PRINTING

Remove the back tyre, leaving the inner tube in position, and with a sharp knife carve your letters, figures, etc. out of the rubber. These are then attached to the inner tube in the various orders desired by means of rubber solution.

The circumference of the inner tube will be roughly 78 inches, all of which except for about 6 can be used for typesetting. As a fenzine with pages 6ft. in width would be awkward to handle, the printer should mark out sections about 9" long (4" in width plus 2 half-inch margins), repeat the type layout in each section, and then will be able to print 6 pages in one revolution of the wheel.....a real timesaver.

To commence printing, the operator seats himself in the saddle and, pulling on the front brake, lifts

## STRING TO FRONT BRAKE

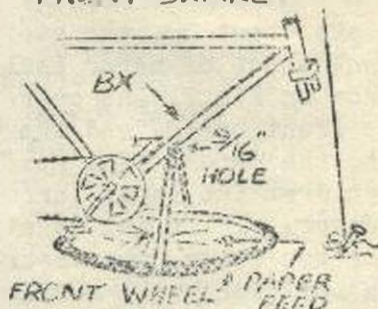


FIG. 2 (NOT TO SCALE)



the back (printing) wheel clear of the platen. He then begins to pedal slowly, inking the type, while an assistant at the head of the machine feeds a blank sheet of paper in the direction shown by the arrow in Fig. 2. The operator then gently releases the front brake, and the printing wheel is lowered onto the paper. The revolution of the wheel will then draw the paper through, and if the pressure is correct, will print it at the same time. The operator can alter the pressure when needed by shifting his position in the saddle. When the paper has passed through, the printing wheel is raised and the process is repeated.

### INK AND INKING PAD

A fine inking pad can be made from a cycling cape. Cut three 8" by 3" strips from the middle, glue them together into a triple-thickness strip with tyre-



### UNDER INKING

that the pad can be inked from the top. The pad should be about 0.095" from the type surface, and the back brake is so adjusted that it will cause the pad to



### PEDAL BLOCK

contact the type before the brake blocks reach the rim of the wheel. The ink can easily be made from bicycle oil and soot. If no easy source



### OVER INKING

resolution, and stick on the underside of the back mudguard. A useful hint here is to drill holes through the mudguard so

### PUNCTURE

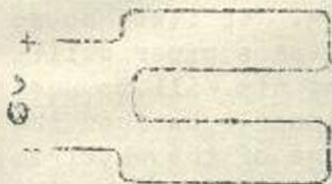
of the latter is available, burn the pedal blocks, if they are made of rubber, and hold your head in



the smoke. You will soon find a deposit of soot on your palm. The right dilution must be found by experiment, but it must be thin enough to flow through your oilcan.

Coloured inks are rather harder to obtain, but if your bicycle has vari-coloured enamel, scrapings from this dissolved in one of the stronger acids...sulphuric or fluoric...will suffice if used with care. Do not overink....a little goes a long way.

#### DRYING THE COPY



THEORETICAL  
CIRCUIT OF  
HEATER

If the bicycle has a dynamo attachment, disconnect the lamp and sell them. With the money buy something gauge wire ..about 25ft. of 12SWG should do..and arrange it in a spiral over the tray receiving the finished copy..the latter can be made from a dozen spokes soldered into a framework.

Connect the wire to the dynamo points, and you will have a first-class heating element which will dry your prints immediately they fall into the tray, thus avoiding offset.

#### STAPLING

With a little ingenuity an efficient stapling machine for your completed magazine can be made from the bicycle bell. The various types and methods of construction are too numerous to be described here, but with the aid of a small arc welding outfit, a lathe, and a power-grinder, the mechanically minded fan can easily convert any make of bell. Don't forget that the standard upon which the staples slide should be within the limits  $X \pm .002$ ", where  $X$  is the distance between the staple chisel points.



PATCH

## PAPER AND PAPER CUTTING

Paper in the 6ft. long lengths required can be easily obtained from your local paper-mill, and in this connection it might be cheaper to obtain it in ~~best~~ <sup>ROLL OF PAPER</sup> rolls and mount it in front of the Cycloprinter. The printing operation can then be practically continuous.



### SECTION OF STRUT

Whatever method is used, it will be necessary to cut the printed paper into separate pages. For fans who do not happen to possess a paper guillotine the following tip will be useful. Remove the inner tube from the printing wheel, and grind one edge of the wheel rim to a sharp knife edge. Take about 0.25" from the other edge, and you will then have a rotary guillotine, powered by pedaling, which will cut through .25" of paper in one operation. Exercise great care when replacing the inner tube on the wheel, and keep a small bottle of iodine and a bandage in the type-case (saddle-bag) as it is useful to know where these articles are in case of emergency. In the event of urgency, a serviceable bandage can be improvised by sewing together the fragments of cloth to be found adhering to the patches in the puncture repair outfit.



THE PLATEN is made from the floorboards of the room. Just cut a square out of the carpet and the floorboards will be found underneath. Smooth down with sandpaper and dust with French chalk, both of which may be found in the puncture repair outfit.

NOTE: The Cycloprinter will now find that he has a spare duplicator on his hands, but no means of easy transport. The authors are working to remedy this and hope in the near future to publish an article on "How To Turn Your Duplicator Into A Bicycle."

New York Letter, dtd. from 4.50

He had gone. Somewhere in the night he was wandering alone, bewildered, desperate. I had failed him.

I found him in a Customs line. He looked blank. "Well, the voyage is over," he said tentatively.

"Walter!" I cried. "It's me, Ermengarde!"

"Oh yes," he said, recognition slowly dawning. "So it is. Why don't you go wait by my luggage? It's under W. Joe Gibson and Will Sykora are guarding it."

I trotted back to W. There was nobody there but a young gentleman who might have been as little as eight or as much as ten. This did not preclude him from being a fan but he looked--as so many fans do--as if he might bite.

I looked about for some place to sit down. Walter's suitcase did not seem adequate for the support of a well-fed American female. On the other side of the shed, two evil-looking egotists were sitting wrapped in the Oriental comfort of a commodious plank suspended on bollards. I wished they would go and drown themselves, so I could bag the plank.

I stood on one leg by Walter's luggage, trying to read a pocket edition of an sf novel which proved to be one I'd read before. After I nearly lost a shoe in the water, I returned to Walter's line. He had moved up a foot.

"Hello," he greeted me. "Did you enjoy the trip?"

"Walter," I bleated, "It's me again."

"Nice of you to come meet me," he replied. "Why don't you join the fans waiting by my luggage?"

Time passed. I shuttled back and forth, between the baggage and the line. Finally he was released. We went back to his luggage. As we did, the two ruffianly-looking scoundrels arose from the plank.

"She was trying to steal your luggage, Walt, but we protected it," one said.

They were the fans. And, had I but known, I could have sat on the plank too.



# THE PRYING FAN

Walt Willis

I came home from my US trip to find that half of you good people didn't know I'd been away, and the rest had written anyway. I'm sorry I haven't replied to your letter or acknowledged your subscription or appeared in answer to your writ, or whatever it was, but for the last six months I've either been getting ready to go over to America, been over in America, or been getting over America. And believe me it's a hard place to get over. People keep asking me what I thought of it. Well, that's a good question: I wish someone would hurry up and tell me a good answer. There were some things I liked a lot. Salted milk, the Ckfenokee Swamp, orange juice, the Gulf of Mexico, hamburgers, the Rocky Mountains, pastrami, the Grand Canyon, fried chicken, the New York skyline----subtle nuances like that in the American scene which the less perceptive tourist might pass unnoticed. And of course Americans. The place is full of them. Why, do you realise there are more Americans in America than there are in Britain? (Nicer ones, too.) One especially nice thing about Americans is that they understand English, a feat which the English themselves have never been able to master yet in my experience of them.

And to the other question that people ask, yes I would like to live there, just as soon as I can find a small university town in the Rocky Mountains just outside New York with the climate of Florida. I am now inclined to believe, however, that there may be some difficulty about this. I don't want to jump to (Ctd. on the pages which have developed between 55 & 56.)

## **SOUND THE ROAR OF THE ROCKETS**

*Sound the roar of the thunder-shootin', high-falutin'  
bass note rockets*

*Let me hear those great big decibels  
I want to hear them*

*I want a slim silver cylinder  
Going up*

*I want a pearly pointed pencil  
Perched on a fiery pillar of hot gases  
Singing  
That great big decibel bass note  
And inaudible-treble high*

*I want a big noise  
Going up*

*. . . . S  
I  
N jetwash dan was a deep-space man  
G with thunder in his tail  
I he steered his course with good white horse  
N and fueled his ship with ale  
G . . . . Give me  
The clean white heat of a rocket backwash  
A column of flame, to ride on*

*Give me  
A sphere of star-strewn space  
A pot-bellied planet fore, aft  
A metal bright moon, and  
An asteroid  
Or  
Two*

*I want to sing a thunder song, a big bright thunder-song  
Roaring  
A hallelujah from a big metal mouth  
An orchestra of slim silver cylinders that knows the  
music; give me the music*

*I'll write the lyrics.*

*—Nan Gerding*



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**THIS is issue No.7**