

ANNIVERSARY

ISSUE *

June 1953

SPACE TIMES

Harry Turner '53

Vol 2 No 6





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COVER BY TURNER.

BACK COVER BY JEEVES.

SPACE TIMES is published monthly by Eric Jones for the Nor'west Science-Fantasy Club. Editors, Eric Bentcliffe and Eric Jones. Editorial Address 47, Alldis St, Gt Moor, Stockport, Cheshire. Art Ed. Terry Jeeves, 58, Sharrard Grove, Intake Sheffield 12. (To whom all artwork should be submitted. Ass Eds. H.P. Sanderson & G.R. Lewis. Printed at the SpaceTimes Press, 44, Barbridge Road, Arle, Cheltenham, Glos. Printer Eric Jones. All material for publication, send to Editorial Address. Sub's to the N.S.F.C. of 7/6 per year will bring you SPACE TIMES regularly, write E.B. THIS PERIODICAL IS REGISTERED WITH THE G.P.O. AS SCRAP PAPER.....

THE EDITORIAL...

FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS

Slightly over a year ago, Space Times was conceived. The first issue was a single page newsletter, the second two and a half pages. From the fourth issue the old method of reproduction was dispensed with - except for the covers - and since then Space-Times has gained pages with every issue, the average now containing fourteen pages. The subscription list has grown beyond any speculations we may have had in those days, and to cope with it we are purchasing better reproductive equipment.

And what of the material therein? The first two issues were written mainly by EB and EJ. Dale R. Smith soon joined the staff and his monthly reports from America have since become a popular feature of ST. Vince Clarke, Dave Cohen, H.P. Sanderson, Terry Jeeves are a few of the British fans who have written for ST in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

Abroad, we now have reporters and correspondents in most corners of the globe. Pearle Appleford, 'South Africa', Dag Siggerud, 'Norway', Marc Thirouin, 'France', Frank Dodd, 'New Zealand' - just to name a few. We hope eventually to make Space-Times the most truly international of all fanzines, and the Nor'west Science Fantasy Club, the most international of all clubs.

Of this issue we are quite proud. It is the largest and best (We believe) that we have yet achieved. It contains inside illustrations of a type which we would like to feature in every issue, material of a high standard, a story (original) by John Russell Fearn, who, as far as we know, has never appeared in a fan-magazine before. A story by Peter Baillie who we think you will be seeing in the pro-mags before very long. Some humour by the inimitable Jeeves, plus two short stories by the respective Ed's - just so that that you've got something to moan about.

We hope for your support and interest during the next twelve months to make Space-Times the best fan-mag in the field. And you can do as much towards advancing ST as we can, by writing in and telling us your likes and dislikes, by writing for ST...What did you say? "But I can't write?".....have you tried???

There are other ways too in which you can help. By persuading your friends to join N.S.F.C. or subscribe to Space-Times. By taking a more active interest in the club itself...If you cannot think of anything to do for the club, and would like to help, write to any member of the Committee, we are full of ideas..If you are one of the types who just like to read SF, well, we are glad to have you as a member but, brother, you are missing most of the fun. Come into the pool, the water's fine...and the fish don't bite..

Which, we think, is enough from us for this issue, read on, and enjoy yourselves.....

Yours in Fantasy,

Eric Bentcliffe and Eric Jones.

DALE'S DIARY

By

Dale R. Smith.

This month I seem to have accumulated a fairly large number of facts and figures for the column, but haven't been able to discover much in the way of a central theme. So please join me and we will do a bit of bounding around and about.

In a recent bit of brilliant reporting I informed you that Minneapolis originated no fan publication. This was most certainly an error. SKY HOOK, combined with Chronoscope is edited and published quarterly by Redd Boggs for the Fantasy Amateur Press Assoc, 2215, Benjamin St. N.E., Mpls, 18 Minn. And it is in its sixth year of publication. Price 15¢ per copy. SKY HOOK is most excellent - physically and contentially. (I think I just invented that word.) My sincere apologies to Minneapolis and Mr Boggs.

Donald E. Keyhoe, Major, USMC, Retired, is about to astound the world again with a sequel to THE FLYING SAUCERS ARE REAL. This time it will be FLYING SAUCERS FROM OUTER SPACE., and will be released by Henry Holt & Co. on Nov 9th at \$ 2.95. I can hardly wait.

The july issue of OTHER WORLDS will be the last according to a late bulletin in SCIENCE FICTION NEWSLETTER No.29. OW put out a total of 31 issues which I hope will develop into rare collector's items since I have a complete set in near mint condition. In spite of the adverse criticism concerning the story material they sure had some dandy covers. -And SFN also reports that it will discontinue publication at the end of the year, also with issue No 31. Sorry to see it go. -Then came a letter from Ray Palmer with the official data. OTHER WORLDS as such, is all through. Beginning with the October issue it will be known as SCIENCE STORIES and will be bi-monthly. Palmer promises a new type of paper, new make-up and higher rates to authors. And the new UNIVERSE has been acquired by Palmer to fill the gaps between SCIENCE STORIES.

Do you have any ideas concerning the ages (average) of SF fans? My guess would be something less than 30 years. The AP reports the Los Alamos Library presented a programme on "The Planets & Space Travel" but, feeling that this might be too deep for the "small-fry", invited only those who had finished the second grade. - Ray guns and cut-out books with a deep-space flavor are standard items of equipment for the pre-school age child. Crown Publishers announced September availability of CAPTAIN QUICK'S SPACE PATROL containing a 30 inch rifle that actually works, life-size helmet, pursuit rocket that flies, moon man mask, space jet that flies, 3 guided missiles, special launcher etc. Then there is also CAPTAIN QUICK'S FLYING SAUCERS AND ROCKET SHIPS offering a flying saucer that really flies, giant 30 inch rocket ship, ray gun that really works, space helmet, jet plane that can fly, etc. Both of these "almost unbelievable" values can be had for \$ 1.00 each. Now where did I hide my piggy bank?

For any adult that may have read this far I might mention briefly a couple of books for reading instead of cutting. CONQUEST OF THE MOON, edited by Cornelius Ryan will be released by Viking in October at \$ 4.50.

This is "a magnificently illustrated forecast of man's first trip to the moon." It is written and illustrated by the same team that produced "Across The Space Frontier". - MAN IN SPACE by Heinz Haber, Bobbs-Merrill Co., \$3.75 is available and will prove to be a most valuable basic tool for anyone interested in space flight. The illustrations are quite weak but the text presents an excellent and detailed picture of the fundamental problems.

The N3F has issued a 1953 Fanzine Checklist. This should prove a valuable reference tool as it lists almost 100 titles showing price and source. SPACE TIMES is listed.

Time out for beer - only slightly chilled..

Message for Bill Hague. -Write, Damn it!

YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY

SCIENCE FICTION and 'ILLUSTRATED'

Reported by

Eric Bentcliffe.

On the twenty-second of July there foregathered at the home of the Medway Science and Fantasy Club, a frenzy of fans. Early visitors were John Gutteridge of Brighton, and your reporter. The reason for this gathering was an expected visit by a reporter and photographer from the weekly pictorial magazine "ILLUSTRATED". The reporter, who turned out to be Corocon speaker Maurice Goldsmith, arrived with photographer and NEW WORLDS Editor Ted Carnell.

Maurice began by taking down details of the Medway Group and the NSFC. Details of the respective magazines were taken, also information of the activities of the two clubs.

At first the photographer wanted to take a shot of the fans grouped around a "Rocket Pinball Game"...he was gently dissuaded from doing this. .. He then proceeded to take several shots of the meeting (Which was held in Tony Thorne's living room) culminating in one through the window from a pair of step ladders. At this stage of the proceedings Illustrated almost collapsed.

Business completed, Maurice Goldsmith joined in the general conversation and gave some interesting information on Russian Science Fiction, mentioning the fact that he had recently recieved a science fiction magazine from this country. One of the stories therein concerning the discovery by photography from space of a new 'Planet' ; this was later found to be actually a photo of Terra. The amazing growth of the Russian Corn Belt (Collective Farms) and the levelling of the land under the new irrigation schemes, was given as the reason for this error.

We shall look forward to seeing the meeting appear in the magazine ILLUSTRATED, and meanwhile send up our prayers to Ghu and Hic! that the meeting is not treated too facetiously.....

GhuHicGhuHicGhu

MISSING THE COROCON WAS NOTHING.....MISSING THE SUPERMANCON WOULD
BE MISSING THE GREATEST SF CONVENTION
OF ALL TIME!!!

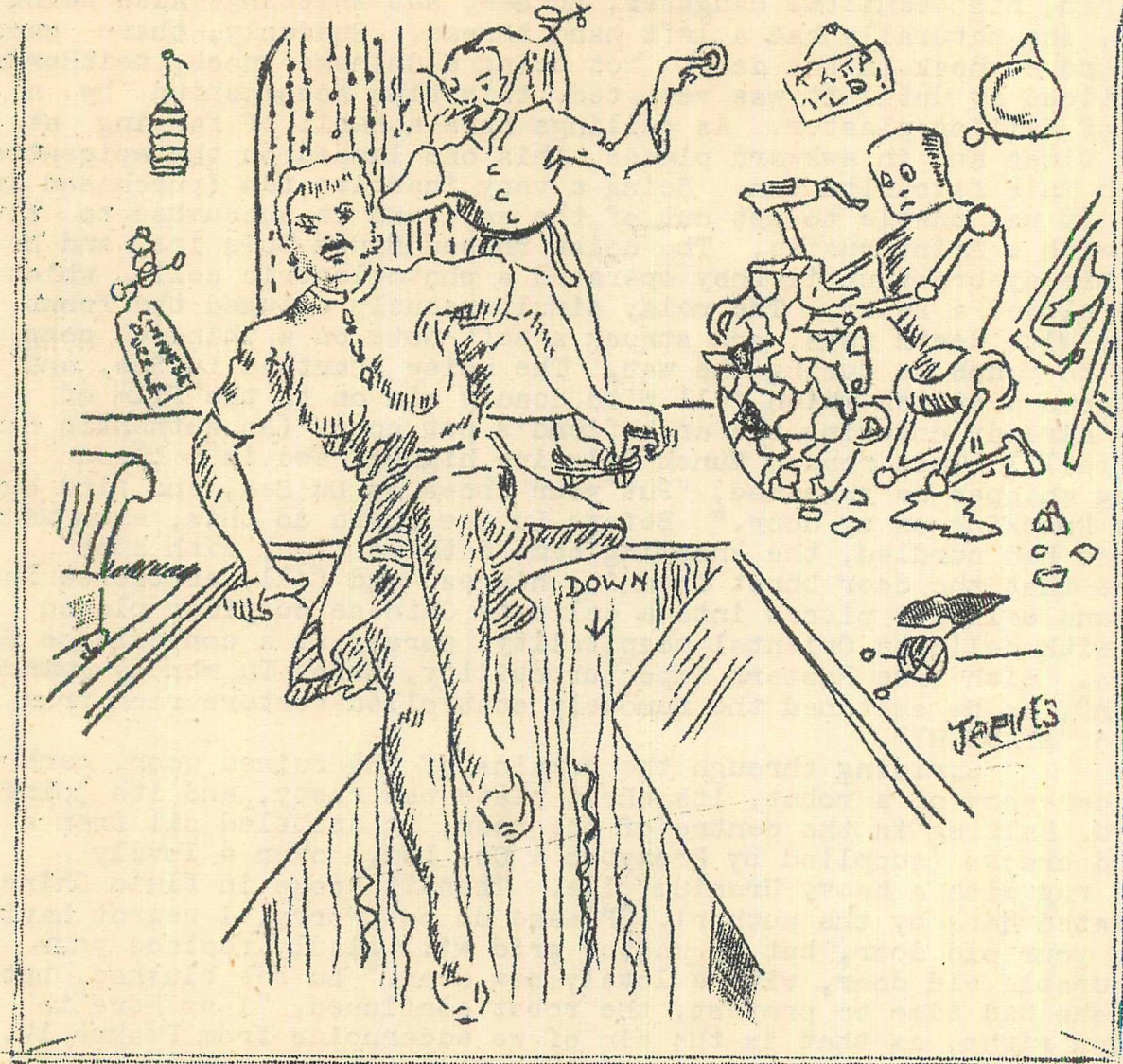
The Coated Tong

By Terry Jeeves.

Dr. Yu Munch Tu, the sinister master mind of the Orient munched placidly on a fragrant morsel of stewed detective's brains. Facing him, his beautiful daughter, Lu See, sat knitting. Also being Chinese, she naturally had a left hand thread. Suddenly, there came a thunderous knock on the door. Not being a Chinese knock, neither of them noticed it until it was repeated, this time accompanied by a shower of falling plaster. As ceilings have a habit of falling at awkward times and in awkward places, this one landed on the epicentre of Munch Tu's favourite fan. Being a very inactive fan (purchased in London) it was unable to get out of the way, and it succumbed to the deluge with a faint rustle. The noise roused Munch Tu's ire, and he raised his eyebrows until they operated a photoelectric cell, which in turn closed a relay. The relay simultaneously deluged the front doorstep with death rays, and struck a soft note on a Chinese gong awarded to Munch Tu during the war. The noise startled Lu See, and she dropped a stitch which fell with deadly aim on to the film of plaster already covering the arch fiend's pet corn, (An Authentic corn incidentally) This roused Munch Tu's ire higher, and in a blood curdling whisper he screamed, "Put your shoes on Lu See, and find out who was knocking on my door." Before Lu See could do this, even before her blood had curdled, the knocking came a third time, with such violence that the door burst from its hinges, and fell, shattered into a thousand delicate pieces into a delicate Chinese cuspidor placed nearby with delicate Oriental hospitality, purely as a convenience for visitors. With true Eastern imperturbability, Munch Tu merely murmured, "Come In", as he switched the remotely controlled torture room from 'OFF' to "STAND BY".

Striding through the remains of the ruined door, came a gaunt scarecrow of a robot, its chest plate was rusty, and its joints squeaked. Halting in the centre of the room, it dribbled oil from a thousand cracks (supplied by Proxyboo & Co. Ltd.) over a lovely Chinese rug with a heavy Uranium pile. Then it spoke in fluid Chinese, (translated here by the author). "Please do not worry, I regret having damaged your old door, but my master grid will gladly replace your dishonourable old door, with a lovely new door." Lu see blushed, but before she had time to protest, the robot continued, "I am here to serve you right, as that is the aim of we addernoids from Prayre IV. We aim to do for men, and my name is Robert." At the conclusion of this little speech, Robert simpered, and attempted a curtsy. Sad to say, his left knee gave way, and while Robert was busy glueing together pieces of a priceless Ming Vase, Munch Tu was able to switch the torture room from 'STAND BY' to 'FULL POWER'. Robert finished the vase, carefully wiped away exéess glue with a strip torn from a painted scroll, and turned to face Lu See. "I will also do your work at the laundry, so that you may devote your life to pleasure." Lu See glared, "Not Buddha likely, I get a good screw at the laundry, and I'm not giving that up." The outburst staggered Robert, and he stepped back into an Anglo cabinet full of cups, saucers, and other Englishware, he tried to save himself, and thus added another Ming Vase to the jig saw puzzle upon the floor. Out came the tube of glue, and Munch

Tu made a note to add another position to his torture room switch, one marked 'FULL BOOST'. Biting six inches off his carefully manicured nails, he crept past the busily working Robert, to a secret button, carefully disguised as a bell-push. Then, with a dastardly laugh (and one finger) he jabbed the button and turned in time to see Lu See vanish through a trapdoor in the floor



Realising his slight error, the marble faced arch criminal was about to try again, when he was interrupted by Robert's voice. "You really ought to keep your trap shut Dr Munch Tu, your daughter has left us with unseemly haste, not to mention most of her kimono". Stooping, Robert retrieved a turquoise blue kimono, tastefully slashed with green bars, and a whisp of Manarkan 'Glamorette', which looked very much like a pair of the latest 'Trade Secret' air cushions. Seizing his big chance and his little courage in both hands, Munch Tu rushed at Robert's back, pausing only to fill his pistol, and telephone the members of his Tong. Too late he realised his error,

Too well he succeeded in his aim. Over into the pit went Robert, but over went Munch Tu as well, firmly stuck to the glue which Robert had spread around with gay abandon and a small brush. Down into the pit they fell, down, while Robert squeaked. Down, while Munch Tu saw his past life flash before his eyes, he wished he'd never had his autobiography painted on the walls. Down they fell, it was the only way. Bearing out previous experimental evidence on the tower of Pisa, they dead-heated at the bottom, with a noise like ten thousand boiler makers going on strike. Automatic grapnels lashed out and caught them, hoisted them on to a conveyor belt and began to lead them into the torture room. Knowing what was coming, Munch Tu closed his eyes, but Robert was caught unawares by the floodlit copies of 'Fantaswillboreyer', 'Flaming Godhs' and 'Orthantics'. His catatonic brain boiled in its bucket, perilously poised positrons were polluted, and with a loud despairing grinding of gears, the robot went mad. Seizing huge chunks of conveyor belt, and suspender belt from nearby Lu See, the robot tore its way through the torture room wrecking all before it. Then turning slowly, its fiendish hate-glazed eyes beheld Munch Tu and his daughter. Slowly the insane machine began to advance. A fighter to the end, Munch Tu fought as never before, in an effort to keep his daughter before him. Fighting equally well, she strove to reverse their positions. Lu See had been in some precarious positions during her short life, but this one looked like having a less pleasant ending. Still the robot advanced, until he towered above them. Then, with a rending, crashing, splintering noise, the door burst open, and Munch Tu's Tong burst into the room. None wore the official Tong uniform of black and white squares, in vain had Munch Tu tried to keep his Tongue in check, they preferred stripes. For once, Munch Tu was prepared to overlook their idiosyncracies. One man sized up the situation at a glance, and hastily grabbed Robert's tube of glue, in an attempt to repair the door before the robot could attack. The rest of the Tong joined him, and within seconds, the place was covered with glue. Munch Tu was stuck to Robert, Robert was stuck on Lu See, and Lu See was stuck to her father's Tong. 'What a predicament' thought Munch Tu. At that moment, the ceiling received its orders from ceiling centre. Like famous ceilings before, and no doubt, since, it fell in. Munch Tu and his men were plastered, Lu See was plastered (a not too unusual happening), Robert had turned very white and lay deathly still. Munch Tu gazed around through one half-closed eye. Many times before, he had put his Tong out on jobs, now, this looked like their last. Fondly he gazed at the coated Tong. Fondly they gazed back. James, the smallest member, was shaw it was the end, he too, looked very pale, even Bob, the cheeriest member at a torture party, was white. Z Something had to happen. It did, a wayward lump of ceiling detached itself and fell on to the pile. CRITICAL MASS ! The pile exploded. For Munch Tu, Lu See, Robert, James, Bob, Tich, members of S-T staff, fans, humans, non provincials, the stencil, and even you too dear reader, it was

(almost,

Don't forget the Supermancon in 54 ! (

THE END

VEGETABLE

ANIMAL

By
Eric Bentcliffe.

ALIEN?

IT LOOKS as though Senator McCarthy is determined to make Ray Bradbury's "The Fireman" come true, already the "Burning of the books" has commenced. VORTEX Science-Fiction, one of the newer U.S.A. mags, contains twenty complete stories. Although this means they are all "shorts," the size of the print used in this mag (micro-print?) means that you get pretty good value for money....Tony Thorne informs me that the Medway Group recently commenced correspondence by tape with U.S.A. fans. Mechanix Illustrated have shown interest in this international use of tape-recorders by fans and has asked for full details and photos..... Photo's taken at the Corocon by Fred Robinson can now be had from Tony at, 21, Granville Road, Gillingham, Kent.....ASTRONEER (the N.S.F.C.'s second magazine) and ZENITH, BOTH EDITED AND PRODUCED BY HARRY TURNER, are recent appearances in the Fan-world. Harry is to be congratulated on the make-up and appearance of these two magazines which are as far ahead of any other fanzine we have yet seen, as Galaxy is of Planet... you can get either mag from Harry at, 9, Willow Bank, Church Lane, Moston, Manchester 9. Get your subscription to him right away!! (See pages 16 30)....How soon, we wonder, will the publishers in the U.S.A. run out of titles...already there are some dozen mags whose titles begin with the word Fantas(y)tlic....Latest new mag to be scheduled bears the name of DIMENSION.....The third volume in Robert Heinlein's "Future History" series is due out toward the end of this year, titled, "If This Goes On"....If this book does come out at the end of the year it will only be a year and a half overdue, and, 'if this goes on', by the time the last volume in the series is published it will no longer be "Future History"...."Space Stories", the excellent space opera mag of Standard Publications, has folded with its fifth issue. If this leaves a gap in your monthly reading, we advise you to get Del Rey's "ROCKET STORIES" which also purveys good yarns of this type.....Donald A. Wollheim, ex-editor (praise be) of Avon Publications, is to edit a series of double novels for Ace Publications. First in the series will be Vogt's "Shadow Men" and "World of Null A", these novels will be printed back to back and each will have a separate cover, the price will be 35¢....However soon the magazine publishers run out of titles, we feel that Hollywood will have no trouble of this kind..Latest imaginative and descriptive film title is "ROBOT MONSTER".....Cher ami, Radio Monte Carlo depuis le 6 Juillet passe chaque jour a 14h 45. AS TU VU LES SOUCOUPES??? Une rubrique de Jimmy Guieu et Fernand Pelatan?...In other words folks, Radio Monte Carlo has taken an interest in Flying Saucers and presents a programme investigation featuring two of the leading French SF Authors, who are also contributors to OURANOS, the bi-lingual FS mag...An excellent book disproving the Flying Saucers as "man or alien made vessels" is "Flying Saucers", by the eminent American astronomer Dr Menzel. He maintains that the FS's are only natural phenomena and goes a long way to proving his theory...Are you suffering from Saucers in the belfry?? Read this book and they will soon go away....Fantasy Times, the twice

monthly American news mag is usually first with the news. Their first issue, however, slips up somewhat this month by reporting a play at the Corocoon as excellent when the play was not put on....."It Came From Outer Space", the first tri-di space epic, is from a story by Ray Bradbury. "It's 80% my story," he says. "It's a good picture. Not an outstanding one."....Seems that he got better treatment than H.C. Wells.....

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GUESS

By
Geoff Lewis.

WHO!

This member is your greatest friend,
The onto whom all comers wend,
To whom your inhibitions bend.
He may not borrow, yet must lend.

He is a good and cheery soul,
Your leisure filled, his patient goal,-
(We wish he had one tiny mole
So we could make it rhyme with hole).

He's rather fair, you have it now
Do we mean hair? Or is it how
He treats with others? Both we throw.
We gladly to his dictates bow.

He is not thin, nor is he fat,
We think he never wears a hat.
No group including him goes flat.
He has each member fancy pat.

He is well-known to all of you,
Whate'er your domicile or hue,
And tho' of N.S.F.C.'s crew,
Not quite Mancunian, kompreneu?

6/6/6/6/6/6/6/6

N E W M E M B E R S

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Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

No. 8.

IMPORTANT....

This is the last of the first set of "Guess Who" and your solutions of the first eight characterizations in verse should be sent to the editorial address not more than one month after you receive this issue. Don't forget that the winners will get a prize.



GALVAN the Glorious, capital planet of the vast Galvanic Empire, governing world of more than 80,000 planetary systems, lay naked below the shadow of the combined navies of Imperial Earth.

In the reddish sky above the planet, fear-filled eyes could easily discern the forty-eight thousand imperial warships poised quietly upon thin wisps of supporter beams; forty-eight thousand slivers of metal holding the power within them to decimate the entire world within the space of a few seconds.

To these ships this was the end of the road - the end of eight years of savage fighting in which nearly a hundred thousand Earth vessels had perished, together with a like number of alien ships. Earth had overflowed into a new galaxy and had won the right to rule it.

To Admiral D. Argar, commander of the sixth fleet of the periphery, sitting in the solitude of his office on his flagship, this should have been the day of triumph - particularly as it had been the powerful 6th fleet that had borne the main burden of the fighting. But on the contrary, Argar looked on the day as in no way a day of triumph.

His fleet was now numerically inferior to the other Earth fleets as well as being damaged to a far greater extent - and that is a serious matter when an admiral was planning a coup d'etat with the intention of taking over the government of the whole Empire of Earth....in fact, it was sufficient to render at naught the whole of his plans.

Make no mistake, Argar had every reason to wish to dethrone the present rulers of Earth. The Priesthood had grown into a governing

force less than a hundred years ago and had slowly spread from the centre worlds of Sol outwards through the Galaxy, bringing with it worship of the Galactic Spirit to the exclusion of all material progress - and attaining its ends by intrigue, assassination and corruption. The centre worlds had imperceptibly begun to grow decadent and the long advance of science had suffered a growing eclipse. It was for this very reason that the 6th fleet, stationed and based on the Periphery, had been used as the spearhead of the Earth's attacking forces, as the Priesthood was well aware of the potential threat of the 6th fleet, which was by far the strongest of all Earth's forces, and the least affected by the Priesthood's poison.

If the war had broken out a few years later, it would most likely have ended in a far different way than it had done. As it was, the timing had been very fortunate for the Priesthood; in using the powerful 6th fleet as the centre of Earth's attack, they had not only smashed the threat of rebellion but had once again established the supremacy of Earth life over the alien rabble inhabiting the outer galaxies. Once again proved the truth of their dogma that Earthmen were chosen by the Galactic Spirit to rule all life in the universe.

... ..

Argar was suddenly brought back to the present by the soft chime of his door alarm. He pressed the "Enter" button and the door slid open, allowing the fleet historian to come in. Argar had never seen the old man so heated before and he remained silent as the man advanced to his desk, waving him a chair, pretended a hasty salute, and said.

"Admiral Argar, to come straight to the point, I think we've stumbled on the most important historical discovery of all time; a discovery of such moment that....."

Argar felt a weary anger grow in his breast at the enthusiasm of this man over some unimportant trifle, when he himself could see so clearly the last hope for the billions of Earth and its Empire extinguished. He interrupted brusquely.

"Leave the file with me then, Captain, and I shall give it my attention at the earliest possible moment."

The historian hesitated, and made as if to speak again, but the Admiral waved him out.

Argar rose from his desk and paced to the wall screen whose symbols showed the major units of his fleet scattered about his flagship, and shook his head.....Twelve thousand ships simply would not do, and that was all he had, even counting in the semi-casualties.

Only one way remained, and that seemed impossible. The power of the Priesthood would have to be shaken by internal revolt, before his small fleet could effectively be used.

And he thought of the hold of the Priesthood, reinforced by the recent victory, and his heart gave way to bleakness. The billions of the centre planets, doped with the stupid doctrine of their being the Supreme Creation, would never rise against the Priesthood as long as their belief was so comfortable - and so damned provable.

Argar secretly confessed to himself that he had, many times, wished that the war had gone the other way - for victory in the field (how the archaic idioms lingered on) was also a moral victory for the Priesthood, reinforcing their dogma of man's God-given Supremacy he amended that to Terrestrial Man's God-given Supremacy, because the aliens were so humanoid as to be practically indistinguishable from Man. He smiled a little at the way the priests had explained away the aliens' likeness by showing that the additional complexities of their physical structure were a sure sign of inferiority.

He turned from the screen, strode to the desk, and his eyes fell upon the file the historian had left there. Casually he leafed through the papers, scanning the conclusions of the reports; whereupon..... his heart almost stood still.

His chair creaked as it absorbed the unusual speed with which he slumped into it. He quickly read the six foolscap pages that comprised the conclusions of the report, and as he put the file down, his heart was singing for the first time in many years.

He jabbed at the intercom switch and, overcoming his excitement, quietly requested that the fleet's High Priest be sent to him at once.

... ..

It took the High Priest nearly three hours to arrive before the Admiral, during which time Argar read and re-read the conclusions of the report, cross-checking them with the body of the document.

When the dignitary finally arrived the Admiral, all smiles, ushered him into a comfortable chair by the screen.

Without further ado, Argar commenced to speak.

"Holiness, I have asked you to come here to straighten out two or three misconceptions I may have had about the Church; and, incidentally, I have some information which might be of importance to you."

The Priest nodded, thinking to himself that he was about to hear the personal recantations of a man who realised he was down for early liquidation.

"Tell me," continued Argar, "What, in your opinion, is the basis of your power, and that of the Church, over the central planets?"

The High Priest sat up, startled by this request, and then relaxed with an icy.....

"The Priesthood is the temporal instrument of the Galactic Spirit, or God, appointed to govern the spiritual and material life of his creations. Our power comes not from guns and fleets, as does your power, but from the Being that created the people of Earth to rule Supremely in the Universe. Thus, Admiral, I might add, no temporal power can prevail against us."

Argar realised that they had, very quickly, got near to the bone, and was thoroughly enjoying himself.

"What makes your Holiness think that the direction in which you are leading the Empire - that of worship and the relinquishing of scientific advance - is the right way?"

"Surely, Admiral, even a layman should realise that a body appointed and guided by the Creator of all things could not choose the wrong direction!"

Argar rose from his seat as he said in the quiet voice he reserved for very special occasions.

"So you do maintain that the whole basis of your power founts from the Galactic Spirit - the being who made our people as his supreme creation to rule the whole universe?"

The High Priest leaned back in his chair and observed.

"You have summed the position up admirably."

A slow smile spread over Argar's face.

"Then I think you should be the first to see this report, seeing that you are the direct representative of the Galactic Spirit and the Church in this region of Space."

He flicked the report at his side.

"Do you remember the first Galvanic world we stopped off at to arrange for the cessation of hostilities before we advanced to the capital planet? Well, whilst we were there - a matter of three weeks - a lot of information on the Galvanic Empire was transferred to our ships as a preliminary to an exhaustive study of their Empire by the specialist branches of our government. Quite by accident, the complete history of this people's interstellar flight came in among more pertinent information such as complete orbits for flight to each and every system, storm sectors, types of drive etc." --

Argar dismissed this with a wave of the hand --

"And peculiarly enough, it is this history of alien interstellar flight that has proved to be so interesting."

He opened the report.

"These records show that the first known flight into interstellar space was made by these people almost 28,000 years ago, our time." Argar looked up. "I don't think I need remind you that that period is longer than that reached even by our recorded history. I just want to emphasise that these people had interstellar travel - purely within their own Galaxy - when we were still swinging about in the trees."

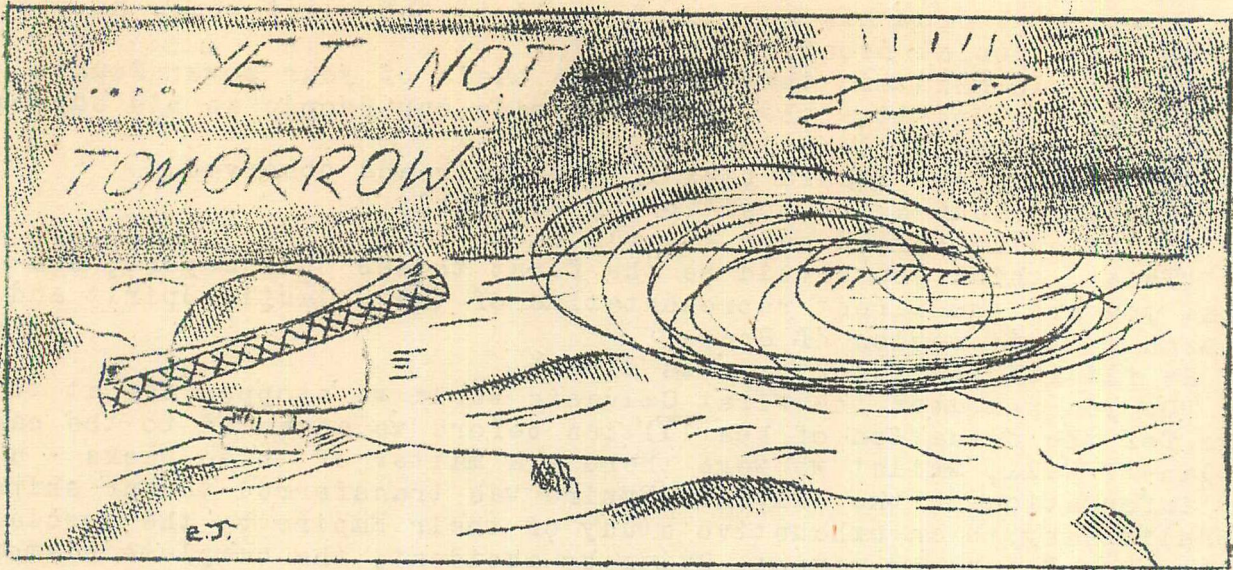
The High Priest made a movement suggesting boredom, which pretty well summed up his reaction to this chunk of alien history; but Argar's voice continued and the politeness forced him to pay some attention.

"Now the next bit of history is the one which should be of some interest to you. The first interstellar ship was experimental and these Galvans made it completely automatic in every way, setting its orbital course for one hell of a long round trip and stuffing in, for good measure, a couple of guinea pigs - two positronic robots, designed to react as they themselves would to the stresses of interstellar conditions. The machine was intended to go a long way - and it did! Something went wrong with the directional hyper drive and the ship headed straight out into the inter-galactic deep."

The High Priest was fast becoming tired and broke in with..

"And just how interested should I be in the fate of the first interstellar ship of these inferior aliens?"

Argar purred. "Well, just leaving that point by for a minute, your Highness, I rather fear you're going to have some trouble with the usual "civilising" of these people. I suppose you'll employ the usual methods to convince them of the truths of our religion - about



By

Eric Jones.

The thin wind howled over the desert, whisking the sand into dunes; the sharp particles formed clouds and blotted out for an instant the light from the smallest satellite as it hurtled onward around the planet. Far across the desert the shifting sands uncovered a dome-like structure that had lain buried for aeons. Surrounding the dome, and inclined at an angle, was a heavy antennae, and, as the winds and sand-clouds dropped, light from the stars struck it. Somewhere inside the dome a relay closed, a generator began to turn, power flowed through ancient wires and circuits, long forgotten, came into operation. A section of the dome began to open...

Lathga, the robot, his joints clogged with the abrasive desert sand, awoke and tried to move toward the open section of the dome; he fell, but in so doing freed the sand that encrusted his lower appendages. His servo motors whined and he rose again and finally reached the door of the dome. As he looked across the desert his memory-tapes recalled him to the task for which he had been built those long years ago. His eye-lenses swept skyward, searching, ever searching as he had done until the sands had come from the North and covered the dome. His instructions were still clear.....

II

Sanderson decreased the thrust of the forward jets and swung into a two-hour orbit around Mars. He was almost at his journey's end now but the exertions and nervous tension of the deceleration and the orbit juggling had made him tired, descent was out of the question until he had rested. Cutting off all jets he left his cramped position in the control seat and moved over to the radio transmitter and switched on. After a few moments the 'transmit' light flashed, he picked up the

mike. "Endevour to base two, Endeavour to base two; am circling in a two hour orbit, descending at 05.00 G.M.T. tomorrow 15th August." He repeated this message eight times and switched off the set. There was no need to wait for a reply, he could contact them tomorrow as soon as he had landed. He slid onto the bunk and strapped himself down. Thoughts and queries flew through his mind as he lay resting. "What would he find down there tomorrow? Would it be as they said, - just desert, no life except for the odd lichen clinging to the rocks? Or would he be greeted by a curvaceous Martian maid as was always the case in his favourite mag "Space-Tales?". The tension broke at this thought and he slept....

III

Lathga re-entered the dome and threw the switch that closed the door. He moved stiffly towards the control board that was located on a dias in the centre of the dome. Switches closed under the touch of his tentacle and the hum of power permeated the dome. He checked readings of several meters and adjusted control knobs until they were correct. All was well. He threw another switch and waited.....

IV

At 04.55 G.M.T. Sanderson cut in the nose jets and began the descent, watching the radio altimeter constantly for it was his only means of height determination. "Why in hell can't they put ports in these ships," he muttered. "Just like a blind man jumping off a wall landing these things." In long elliptical swoops around the planet the ship's speed decreased to 4000 and Sanderson swung the ship around, opening up the rear jets and cutting the nose for the vertical descent. 400 miles, 300, 200, 50, sweat stood out on his brow as he increased the thrust. Ten miles now, and he cut in 'auto' and leaned backward in the control seat. The ship would take itself down the rest of the way.

He watched the altimeter steadily return to zero and felt the impact of the shock absorbers, the auto-pilot cut off the jets and silence reigned. He had made it! His fatigue forgotten, he almost leaped from the seat and made his way to the suit locker and removed his oxygen helmet from its stowage and glanced at the space-suit. "Won't need that, the air pressure is low but it's darn cold outside...better take the parka." Hastily fitting the helmet into place and struggling into the parka, Sanderson made for the airlock. The inner door clanged shut behind him; he opened the valve to let the outside atmosphere into the lock...Quickly now he opened the outer door ----- stepped out--and SCREAMED!!!

V

A warning gong sounded in the dome, Lathga went to the controls and switched on the visio, the screen lit up slowly, flickered, and the picture of Sanderson's ship appeared, suspended, apparently, in the thin air of the planet. All was well....Lathga threw the main switch off and the force screen dissolved. Sanderson's ship hurtled down 10 miles and disintegrated on the face of the planet.....

The winds blew and moved the desert sands again; soon there would be

no trace of the broken ship that had come so far to meet, disaster.

Inside the dome the power was failing as the sand dunes covered the antennae again....the antennae that drew its power from the dark stars.

With the last spurt of current Lathga recorded on his memory-tapes.

"80649, sector 10, Uraxian ship of new design destroyed. 9237".

.....E N D.....

GENESIS..... continued from Page 13 .

our being created by the Galactic Spirit for the specific purpose of having dominion over all his creatures - and so on ? "

The High Priest nodded. "You are as aware as I am of our technique of persuading alien peoples of our obvious superiority ."

Argar almost choked at the smugness of this remark.

Controlling himself with difficulty, he continued. "Then, to return to the lost alien space-ship. I think this report solves the riddle of where it went to, and unfortunately at the same time I rather fancy that we have set the Church two or three somewhat knotty problems as regards our creation."

"You see, this ship landed in our own Galaxy, and from all appearances these positronic robots seem to have survived the landing, or crash if there was one . And this is the interesting point ; the names these aliens have for robots - they're protoplasmic and reproductive of course, - when translated into English via our own ancient Hebrew, are.....Adam....and....Eve! "

...///...///...

The Dictionary defines it as:

"A point in the heavens directly above the observer"

The fans define it as :

"A point which every fanzine editor should strive to attain."

They both describe ; **"ZENITH"**

The Super Litho'ed Fanzine that Out-slants Slant. It gives the Space-Divers the "bends". Beside it O.F. is OFF. This is the mag no fan should miss, if he terms himself a 'fan'. Send a shilling off today -or three shillings for three issues....It's worth 2/- a copy..you'll see!

Break that piggy-bank!! Bust that gas-meter..and send the cash to:-

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TODAY.....

Arthur C. Clarke is Married. Only 36 hrs after meeting his future bride, Marion Torgeson, a widow with a small son, Arthur got himself hitched. Congrats and all the best Arthur.

NOT ONLY HOWARD BROWNE NOW..

The Sunday Express reporting on the Astronautical Congress in Zurich this year says that Scientists attending the Congress told them "Man will never reach Mars or any other planet, the gravitational forces involved in crossing space would literally tear the astronauts apart."

CURRENTLY SHOWING

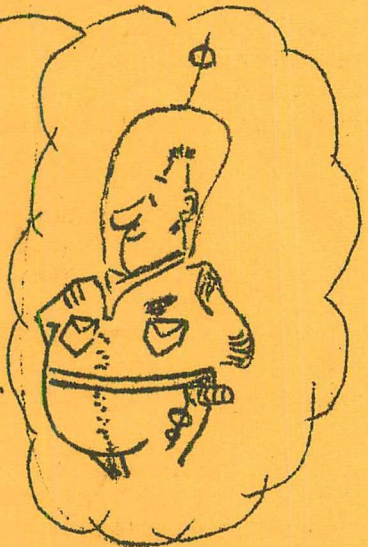
On TeeVee every Saturday at 8.45 is the "Quatermass Experiment" TV's first real attempt at a serialised Stf play. The action is rather slow...The Play was written by Nigel Kneale.....

WANTED.....

Suggestions for a house name of Stf significance for the Space Times Press. Please send your suggestions to Eric Jones. What should I call it? Spaceways? Galaxy View? Or?

Also wanted at the above address are old copies of Lilliput (pre- 1949) preferably containig cartoons by Ronald Searle A reasonable price given. Wanted for trading purposes...

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here ship would
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sphere there would be a
atic on the Base radio & com-

Nobody ever returned from Sirius Five. A
ship would spiral down into the planet's atmosphere,
there would be a burst of static on the Base radio,

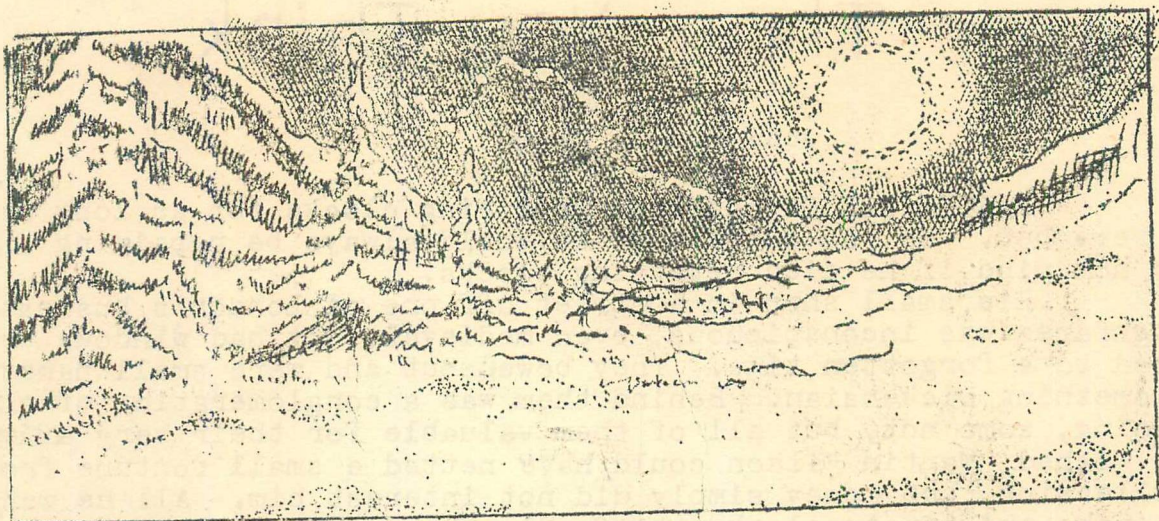
IF YOU WERE A BUSY SCIENCE-FICTION EDITOR, WHICH MSS.
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Numerous fans are trying to break into the science-fiction field with stories which have to compete against submissions from old-time professional authors. Obviously, merit counts, but editors just cannot spare the time to read manuscripts which are not up to professional standards in clearness, neatness, spelling, and all the other details. You may be a second Heinlein, but the appearance of your manuscript will still be a big selling point! And can you spare the time to re-type your story from the rough draft? Wouldn't it be easier to type or write it with, perhaps, 'strike-overs', deletions, etc., and send it away to us?

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A T T H E R I S E O F T H E M O O N

By

Eric Bentcliffe.

The forest was wrapped in a shroud of white, the fall of snow had been heavy and long. When the moon arose it would turn into a wonderland of gleaming whiteness. But now it was grey and ghostly beneath the branches, all was silent and only the soft thud of Carl's own footsteps broke the stillness. He had been fleeing from the hunters of his tribe for what seemed to be aeons and now his legs felt weary, his mind numbed with the fierce cold. For some time now the sounds of pursuit had been getting fainter, and now, stopping to listen, he could no longer distinguish the sounds that had haunted him for endless hours...

He started off again at a weary trot but stumbled before he had covered a bare ten yards, he got up but weakness overcame him and he sank back into the soft carpet of white. Blackness sought to envelop his mind but his fear of the change, stronger by far than the fear of his tribe's hunters, managed to drive the darkness away from his senses. He lay still and prayed for fresh energy, he must reach safety before the Moon cast its silvery sheen upon him and caused once more the change, into the form at which his tribesmen had cried out in horror..

He must reach a sanctuary, a cave, wherein he would be safe, safe from the Moon's rays, safe from its weird power to change him into a monster. A weak pink-skinned thing with its senses far inferior to his own.....

Carl the wolf lurched to his feet, shook his shaggy mane and began to race against time.....

..... E N D

Later Than You Think

By
John Russell Fearn.

MARTIN WILSON had been repairing clocks for as long as he could remember. He was quite sure he would always be repairing clocks. He did not mind if he died repairing clocks.

His small shop in a street off one of London's busiest thoroughfares was inconspicuous, even medieval. It had windows which belonged to a forgotten time. They bowed out and were small paned, like something Dickensian. Behind them was a conglomeration of clocks, some going, some not, but all of them valuable for their very antiquity. Had he wished, Martin Wilson could have netted a small fortune from his collection, but money simply did not interest him. All he wanted was to make and repair clocks, to fondle them, to take them apart and put them together again. From the busy little ticking of a watch to the stately beating of a lordly grandfather he knew every pulse and throb. The sound of the clocks comprised his world, his everything. People brought their clocks to him for two reasons: some because they were -- quite mistakenly-- sorry for the grey haired old man who was apparently too frail to make a living any other way; and others because of his superb workmanship.

This September night he was, as usual, busy, and also -- as usual -- he had forgotten to draw the blinds over the window or lock the door. Outside, it was drizzling gently and the air was stifling warm with a hangover from summer. The few lamps which lighted the narrow street were casting back from the glaze of wet flagstones.. At the far end of his shop Martin Wilson worked under an electric bulb hanging low from a length of flex, putting the finishing touches to a recalcitrant marble timepiece. He smiled as he wound it and then listened attentively to its steady ticking.



He glanced up at the master-clock on the opposite wall. The master-clock's big pendulum was swinging deliberately. It was exactly ten. Martin Wilson adjusted the hands of the marble clock and then stood it amongst the half dozen other timepieces he had repaired during the day.

For a moment there was something unexpected. Martin Wilson felt as though he were not looking at clocks but at something dark. It was like a shadow interceding between the clocks and the electric bulb. Their bright, burnished glitter faded and became opaque and meaningless. The ticking and clicking and tocking faded into a jumble of sounds which became discord----- Then everything was back as it had been.

Martin Wilson was puzzled. He leaned forward in curiosity, pressing hard against the edge of his work bench. He felt something grind in his pocket but he was too confused for the moment to pay heed.

"Good evening."

Martin Wilson straightened in surprise. He had not heard the shop door open or shut. Indeed he had never anticipated a customer at such a late hour. The man was standing at the other side of the bench, a black raincoat turned up about his ears and a dark soft hat pulled well down so that it was difficult to see his face. Raindrops gleamed like sprinkled diamonds as he moved into the diagonal radiance of the low-hanging lamp. "Good evening, sir," the old clockmaker wiped his oily hands on a rag and came forward. "Something I can do for you?" The stranger seemed to reflect and Martin Wilson fancied he saw a ghostly smile.

"It may sound rather silly," the stranger said, "but I'd like to know the time. I have no watch, nor have I seen a clock in quite a little while. I'm wondering how late it is."

"It's just on ten o'clock ---"

The old clockmaker stopped, staring at the pendulum clock on the far wall. The pendulum had ceased swinging, for the first time since the clock had been constructed.

"It is later than you think," the stranger murmured. He had a low, pleasing voice with a curious alien rhythm in it.

"I don't understand it!" Martin Wilson stared hard at the silent master-clock with its motionless, vertical pendulum.

"That clock has never stopped before. . ."

"Perhaps," the stranger suggested, "you might have some other clock by which I may learn the time?"

"Surely!" The old man smiled at the absurdity of the idea. "Outside of my master-clock, though, there is only one other time piece I trust -- my watch." He pulled it out of his waistcoat pocket and gazed at it. His frown deepened. The glass had been crushed to powder, blocking the second and minute hands. The watch too had stopped at exactly ten o'clock.

"You are unfortunate," the stranger murmured, leaning forward so that the light made the raindrops scintillate.

"I remember doing this," Martin Wilson replied, musing. "I leaned on the bench here. I must have crushed my watch. It was just before you came in. . . I must repair it when I have the chance." He returned the watch to his pocket and surveyed the busily-ticking clocks on the workbench. "It's seven minutes past ten," he said finally.

"Thank you," the stranger said, but he made no effort to go. The old man looked at the master-clock again and sighed.

"You shouldn't have done that William," he said seriously. "William?" the stranger repeated, and Martin Wilson smiled. "My master-clock, sir. I have names for all my clocks. They are my children. You see, I never married. I have never known the love of a woman, or of children of my own. Always it has been clocks.

The stranger said nothing. The deep silence of the drizzling night was outside and the quiet of the shop was only broken by the pedantic rhythm of a grandfather's pendulum and the busy little ticking of an alarm. In varying degrees of enthusiasm the other clocks were keeping in step. The stranger seemed to listen to them for a while and then stirred slightly. For a moment the light caught his face and was gone. Martin Wilson did not quite know what to think. He was trying to fathom what it was like to expect to see a face and yet not see one. There did not seem to be a face at all, only some kind of indeterminate shadow which, as he unconsciously moved towards it to look more closely, became all the darker.

"You are curious as to my identity, my friend?" the stranger asked in his mellow, cultured voice. Martin Wilson shrugged. "I admit I've never seen you before." He mused. "I have come a long way, and I am somewhat tired. Would you consider it a liberty if I were to sit down and rest for awhile?"

"Please do."

The stranger turned and pulled forth a chair from his own side of the bench. He settled on it, his back to the light so that his face was thrown into an even deeper shadow than before. A chiming clock struck the quarter hour. It aroused Martin Wilson from a spell of thought. His eyes moved from the glistening drops on the stranger's hat and shoulders to the still silent master-clock.

"Since you wish to rest, sir, and I am in no hurry, would you mind if I worked?" he asked.

"My dear friend, please do," the stranger urged. "Not for a moment do I wish to delay your industry. Men with your touch are so rare."

"Are they? I'm--I'm sort of glad to hear you say that. I take myself so much for granted-- Excuse me, but I must see what is wrong with William." Martin Wilson shambled out from behind the bench and searched amongst the lumber of the shop until he had unearthed a pair of steps. He straddled them, climbed up to the penultimate step, then shoved a nd heaved until he had the wall clock free of its massive nail. As though the clock were a sleeping child he cradled it in his arm and descended slowly to the floor again, laying the clock face upwards on the bench.

"I never knew I had that much strength," he remarked, surprised. "This clock is heavy--solid mahogany frame."

"Sometimes," the stranger said broodingly, "we do not realise how strong we really are."

THERE was again that glimpse of something where a face should have been and was not. Martin Wilson wondered if he ought to be frightened by his extraordinary visitor. For some reason he was not. He felt he accepted the occurrence as the most natural thing in

the world. The complexity, the mystery of it, did not trouble him in the least.

Reaching to the tool-rack over the bench he took down a screw driver and began to detach the clock from its frame. It looked as though the stranger were watching his activities. At last Martin Wilson had the clock free and, detaching the pendulum, he laid the clock face down and gazed at the polished brass works.

"Beautifully intricate," the stranger commented. "Obviously constructed by an expert."

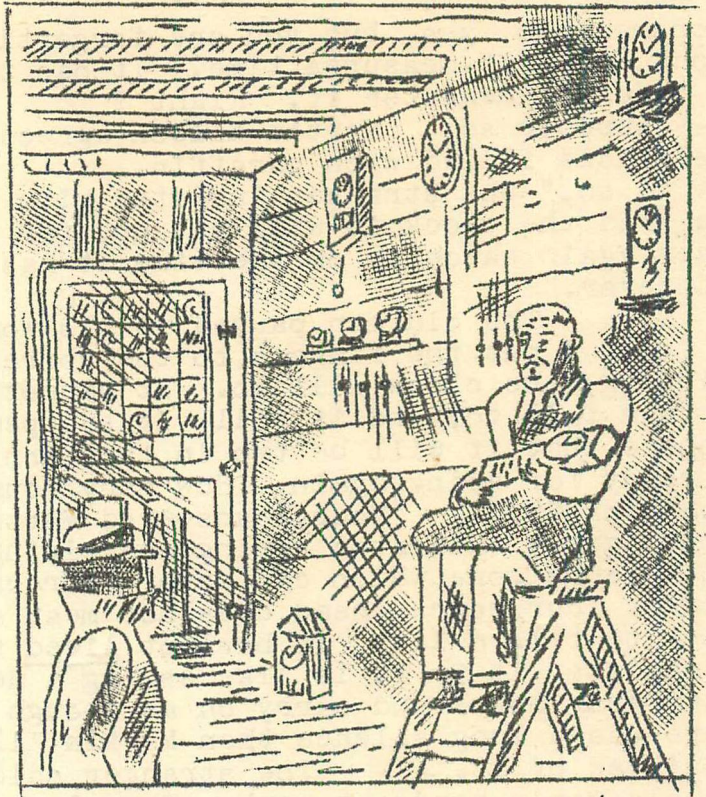
"I made it," the old clock maker responded. "Thirty years ago. It was an old Swiss model. I took it to pieces, rebuilt it, and since that time it has never varied more than a few seconds either way. I just can't understand why it should have stopped like this. There

doesn't appear to be anything wrong with it." He contemplated it, his slender fingers testing the cogs and escapement. Finally he shrugged. With a pair of forceps he unfastened the clamps holding the back in position and lifted it gently. Cogs and pinion-wheels, their supports gone, fell askew. One little spindle rolled forth, a glittering line under the light, and teetered to a standstill.

"You are going to try and repair it?" the stranger enquired.

"If it takes me all night!"

The stranger moved again, ever so slightly, and seemed to be preparing to watch. Martin Wilson glanced towards the door, entirely from force of habit. It seemed still to be drizzling. Nobody was passing--which was odd. It was as though he and the stranger were the only two people in the universe. So quiet, except for the endless chorus from the clocks. Shadowy, too, save just in this one spot where the naked glare smote on the clock which would not go. One by one Martin Wilson took the parts and placed them on the bench, until at last he had the bare frame of the clock and a heap of wheels and spindles. He had forgotten what time it was. For some reason he did not even care. The stranger was still watching absorbedly, and presently he made a comment. "You know my friend, I have the strangest conviction. I do not think that clock will ever go again."



"With my workmanship," Martin Wilson told him, with reasonable pride, it cannot fail to.

"Workmanship, yes, but you are forgetting a deeper issue. What does a clock do? It measures time. It has to work in that advancing time in order to register it. Right?"

"I---suppose so," Martin Wilson agreed, putting a spring into a small receptacle filled with paraffin.

"It is so," the stranger insisted with quiet firmness. "When you have repaired the clock it will not go, for the simple reason that it can never again catch up on the time it has lost. That time has gone--
--forever."

The old man paused in his work and looked troubled. "How so? If I put the fingers to the correct time and start the pendulum swinging, the clock will go. It cannot fail to."

"It can fail to, and it will. It stopped at ten. Very well, let us suppose that it will be two in the morning before you have assembled it ready for going again. How many hours will have passed during the repairing?" "Four," answered Martin Wilson mechanically, removing the saturated spring and wiping it.

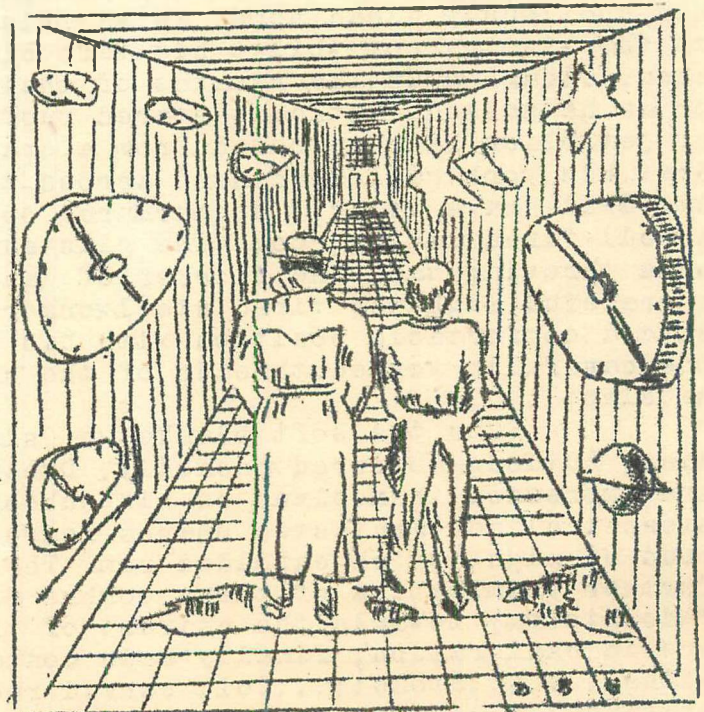
"Four hours gone which can never be recalled. To simply adjust the fingers four hours ahead does not mean a thing. You are asking the clock to tell a lie. It has not lived through that time, so how can it register it? It is like asking a dead man to come back to life after four hours and carry on as though nothing had happened."

There was a long silence then Martin Wilson said: "It will go, I'm convinced of it." The stranger said nothing further. He watched the old man's hands at work. The clocks chimed. The hours sped. It surprised Martin Wilson to find that it was striking two when he had the clock reassembled once again. Cradling it in his arm, the pendulum in his free hand, he mounted the steps up to the nail in the wall. Gently he slid the clock back into position and hung the pendulum carefully. With a delicate finger he touched it. It swung to and fro. "There!" he exclaimed, smiling. The stranger had risen from his chair and was in the deep shadow cast by the grandfather. It was hardly possible to see him as he gazed upwards. "It is not going," he stated quietly. "It's not---?" Martin Wilson looked at it and then started. The stranger had spoken the truth. The initial swinging of the pendulum was slowing down. There was no steady clicking from the escape mechanism. The old clockmaker opened the front of the clock and peered up into the works. He could see the escapement working perfectly, and yet the clock was not going. Its fingers were still at ten o'clock and the pendulum was slowing-slowing--Stopped. "This is impossible!" the old man declared. "Am I not a master clockmaker? Why should this one defy me?" "It does not defy you my friend. It is as I told you: You are trying to make it operate in a time which does not exist." "But surely, if I advance it to seven minutes past two, which is the time now, it will then go?"

"No, to get the fingers there you will have to make a record of the intervening hours on the dial, hours which the clock has never truly registered. It cannot do it, anymore than you could reach Tuesday

morning by being dead on Saturday, Sunday and Monday." "But clocks are things of metal," Martin Wilson protested. "They do not think! They cannot reason the passage of the hours!" "My friend, the intervening time has not existed, either for the clock . . . or you." The old man blinked and stared down at the shadowy figure. "Or for me?" he asked. "I am trying to tell you that Time is not yours to do with as you wish, my friend. Like anybody else you merely borrow it as an intangible medium in which to perform certain acts. To you, to everybody, there comes a moment when the supply of time must run out. It has run out for you--and the clock." Martin Wilson descended slowly to the floor. "These other clocks are going," he remarked. "Exactly--because they did not stop. There is no reason why they should not continue to go since they are recording time faithfully. They are living through normal time: you are not." The old man scratched the back of his neck. "Y'know sir, I haven't the vaguest idea what you are talking about. Do you mean to tell me that my master-clock will never go again?" "Not whilst you and I are here."

The silence seemed to deepen even more, muting even the ticking of the clocks. Martin Wilson spoke in so low a voice he was hardly audible. "Who are you?" he breathed. The stranger moved and came slowly into the light. For the first time Martin Wilson looked on the face which was not a face but a--- He took a sharp step backwards appalled. "Don't be alarmed my friend. Now you know the truth. You have not feared me so far: There is no reason why you should do so now." The stranger paused and then asked quietly, "Well, shall we go?" "Yes," Martin Wilson muttered. "Yes, we'll go. Now I know what you mean by the clock never going as long as we remain." The stranger moved and the old man fell into step beside him. They went across the shop to the front door and it had never seemed so far away. The nearer they went to it the more it appeared to recede, until it was lost in a vast corridor, almost a tunnel in space, becoming darker and darker in which every sound of the living world was swallowed up... At the inquest on Martin Wilson the following day, the Coroner returned a verdict of "Death from Natural Causes"



CLOTHO'S THREAD

by
Peter Baillie.

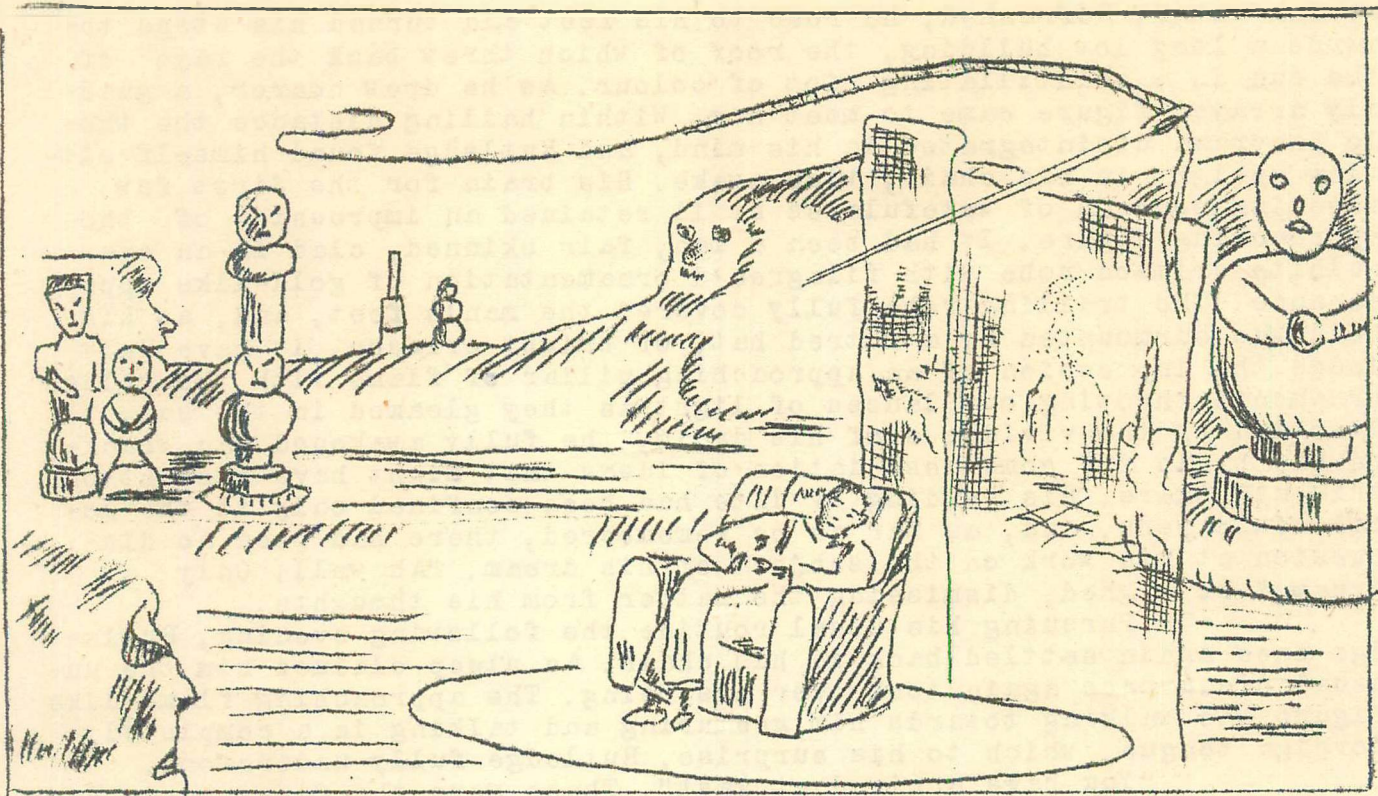
"Chair backs; No, not again, the damned things won't stay put!" John Rutledge gazed with mild repugnance at the beautiful embroidered chair backs which his wife displayed with unconcealed pride. The artistic workmanship held back any further tirade which the amusedly ruffled husband was about to pour on the inoffensive articles. Graceful stitches wove a simple but pleasing pattern of a crinoline lady walking in a garden with a colourful display of flowers in full bloom. Tall, fiery pointed lupins mingled gaily with the soft blue of the Michaelmas daisies. Small autumn crocuses made a carpet of colour bordering the flagged path on which the dainty feet of the lady trod.

"They're nice dear, but I'll rumple them so when I have my evening nap."

With this masterpiece of masculine understatement, Rutledge eased his lanky figure from the armchair in which he was reclining. Dainty fingers - proud of their workmanship - deftly laid the chair-backs on the high backs of twin chairs drawn up before the glowing coals in a brightly tiled fire-place. After the ceremony of placing the chair-backs the same deft fingers quickly prepared a hot cup of cocoa before they retired after another day's labours.

Early morning saw Rutledge clad in rough blue overalls on his way to work. After eight hours of heavy manual labour, wrestling with great suspended ladles of molten steel, he returned gratefully to his spotlessly clean home. As was his custom after dinner, he retired to the living room whilst his wife clattered happily in the small kitchen, clearing up the remains of their meal. Glancing in the hall mirror as he passed, Rutledge stared ruefully at his reflection. Bristles of jet black hair sprouted from a craggy chin causing the tired man to draw his work calloused hand across the lower part of his face. "Darn it! I'll shave later," he murmured opening the door to the warmth of a well-fired living room. The glistening threads of the new chair-backs were throwing back the flicker of dancing flames in the fireplace. With a grateful sigh the tired steelworker relaxed, wriggling his tired body into a comfortable position with his slightly balding head resting on the carefully worked threads of the chair-back. It was not long before he slept.....

As the soft blanket of sleep drew shades over his closing eyes, Rutledge stirred uneasily. Dreams of a vivid and terrifying nature impressed themselves on his subconscious mind. He stood alone on a steep incline. Fantastic shapes reared their mighty forms from the shroud of night which enfolded him. The obscure darkness prevented any further examination of these sombre figures. With faltering steps he made his way towards the nearest of the strange beings. Hesitant fingers in exploration, finally made contact with one of the looming monoliths.....Stone!!...Cold carved rock. The figures were but mighty statues. If only there was light;



As if in answer to the wish, a cold grey light pierced by the golden rays of the sun began to suffuse the scene. The sight which a moment before had been hidden from the dreamer's eyes began to take form. He was standing beneath the carved prominence of a rocky chin. The great stone edifices were colossal human heads carved from solid rock.

Easter Island! That's where he was.

Island! But where was the water? The surrounding scene was now fully discernable in the triumphant advance of daylight. It showed Rutledge that he was standing on the summit of a large hill, and stretched out below him was a gigantic plain. A collection of artificial edifices showed far on the horizon thus proclaiming life on land which should be far below the waters of the Pacific Ocean. He turned his attention to the area immediately below him and saw well defined roads, passing through a cultivated countryside all leading to a central point; the high hill where he now stood. He looked more carefully at his surroundings and saw gigantic carved heads scattered around rearing their mighty forms as if in welcome to the now fully risen sun. They were all standing, and unmarred by wind or weather. Remembering photographs he had seen of Easter Island, Rutledge knew that many of the monoliths should be lying on the ground as if they were toys thrown aside by some cosmic god-child.

Slightly troubled by the overbearing presence of these weird carvings he started the long descent to the plain below. Some time later he at last reached his goal and on the banks of a sluggish stream he flung himself to the ground and drank greedily from the slightly br-

ackish water. Refreshed, he rose to his feet and turned his steps towards a long low building, the roof of which threw back the rays of the sun in a scintillating riot of colour. As he drew nearer, a gradually arrayed figure came to meet him. Within hailing distance the whole panorama disintegrated in his mind, and Rutledge found himself sitting upright in his chair, wide awake. His brain for the first few fleeting seconds of wakefulness still retained an impression of the approaching figure. It had been a man, fair skinned, clad in an exquisite crimson robe with filagree'd ornamentation of gold-like appearance. The trailing robe fully covered the man's feet, and, as his head was surmounted by a mitred hat, of bright crimson, it gave Rutledge the impression of an approaching pillar of flame with the golden ornaments throwing out lances of light as they gleamed in the sun.. Startled by the vividness of his dream, the fully awakened man wracked his brain for some association of ideas that might have brought on this nightmare. His reading of late had been confined only to the local newspapers, and, as far as he remembered, there had been no discussion at his work on the subject of his dream. "Ah well! Only a dream," he sighed, dismissing the matter from his thoughts.

Pursuing his usual routine the following evening, Rutledge once again settled back in his chair. As sleep claimed him the unusual dream once again took over his being. The approaching flame-like figure was walking towards him gesturing and talking in a completely foreign tongue, which to his surprise, Rutledge fully understood.

"You have arrived at last". These were the first words discernable to the now halted dreamer. The scarlet clad figure came closer, bowing in obeisance to the sombrely clad Rutledge.

"Man from the future, our prayers are answered. Our threads spun into time have at last called you back."

"Called me back! What do you mean?" asked the amazed steel worker in the same unknown language.

"Follow me please." With this request, the bowing figure turned and with reverent tread, started towards a low roofed building. The man from the future followed in complete bewilderment. The dazzling display of the building, now in full view, showed a surface of gold studded with a myriad of glistening stones. The roof was supported by massive circular columns of the same metal with artistic and beautiful designs worked on their surface with the same glittering array of gems. There was no time for a more careful survey before he was ushered into the shaded interior. Glass! That was the secret! On his approach Rutledge had thought that the columns were supporting the roof alone. Now from the inside he saw that between each massive pillar stretched a perfect sheet of glass. Like a building enclosed in a building, he saw that inside was another wall of opaque glass through which he passed by means of a gold hinged glass door. Everything was made of gold. Used as he was to metals, the steel man saw this at once. Carved golden chairs stood about on a floor of thick laminated glass inlaid with strips of the same metal giving a tasteful tiled effect. "Seems odd," he thought, nothing was made of wood. "Not surprising though" as on his survey from the hilltop where he had first found himself, he had seen many signs of cultivation, but not a tree. His host bade him be seated. "Now" he said. "You will require explanations. This is the land of MU of which I am a priest to the gods on the mountain. For hun-

dreds of years our land has been eaten away by constant erosion of the sea. Now, however, our scientists have discovered that in ten years, approximately, our whole world will be engulfed by the seas and be no more."

"But how does this affect me?" interrupted Rutledge.

"Patience please, let me proceed." exclaimed the priest. "Our race has decided to emigrate to one of the planets, as for many years this whole world will be under water. Land will eventually rise again and the whole sorry struggle of life will start all over again. Our base metal is gold, and in building of ships to reach the stars, it cannot be used as it distorts under the terrific heat generated by friction with the atmosphere."

"But what type of drive have you? What metal do you use to build your engines?" enquired the visitor, his interest aroused.

"Engine? We have no engine or drives. Our scientists have overcome gravity. It is a mere arrangement of allowing certain parts of our proposed ships to be exposed to earth." The priest paused to take a sip of water from a carved glass which stood on a small table by his side.

"To continue," he went on. "Our scientists have failed in the main object, that of deriving a metal to withstand the terrific stresses and strains of space travel. That is why we have sent into the future for you. We hope that in the civilisation which will have once again arisen there will be a new type of base metal."

"How was I brought back here anyhow?" queried the bewildered Rutledge.

"That is a rather complicated business," replied the host. "We know that you have not yet discovered the method of controlled time travel as we have."

"If you can travel in time, why didn't you come to us instead of sending for me?" inquired the listener.

"That is easily explained. One can only travel backwards in time, never forward. The process of controlled time travel is too complicated to explain to a layman such as you are, however I will endeavour to give to you the bare essentials. The whole secret is that of atomic structure. Everything in the universe is constructed of atoms coalesced in one form or another. No two atoms are ever in actual contact with one other, therefore in every structure there are minute spaces. We have discovered in the human body - a rather loose construction of atoms - that these spaces are filled with another matter, or take the form of an inner man. Call it the soul if you wish. This being, of alien substance, is released by sleep or death, therefore you have dreams. Your everyday self takes as impressed images on the subconscious. They are not! Your inner man actually lives these dreams and adapts itself to wherever it may go, hence your understanding of our language."

On the delivery of this last amazing statement, Rutledge found himself once again awake and back in his own home. If that priest of ancient times was right then his astral being was back home, the 'home' being his body. He could not dismiss the experience with a shrug this time, it was still too vivid and real on his mind. They wanted metal. He allowed himself a small chuckle at the thought. For years on end he had worked with the one metal that these far-off people were looking for and if they failed; a race destroyed. He would go back again taking the process of steel-making with him. But what a task! Ten years to do it in. Iron ore to mine. Clay to find for build-

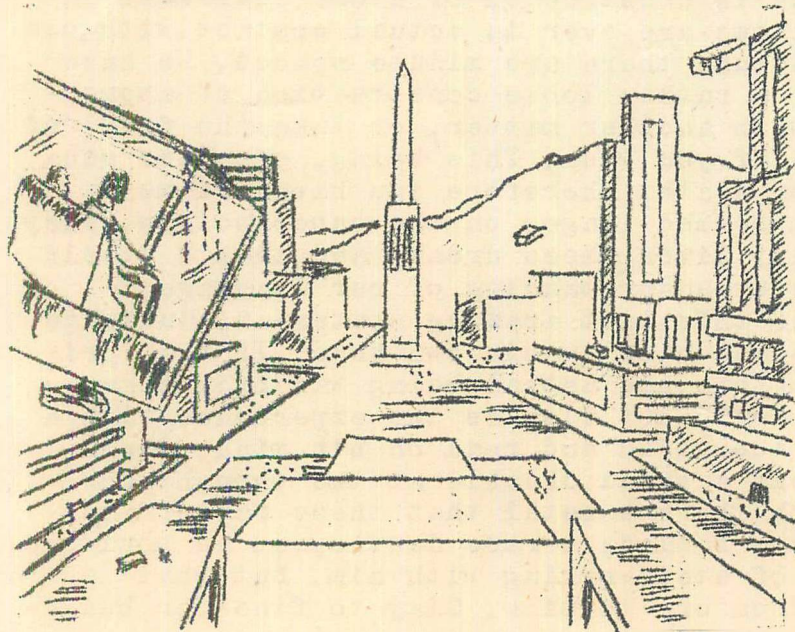
ing the vast furnaces which would be needed. Innumerable jigs and precision tools to be made from the first furnace of metal to enable work to proceed on the steel which was to follow. "Ah well," he thought, "The ancients have the greatest prize of all to work for...life."

He followed the same pattern the next evening and soon found himself seated opposite the same guady figure who continued as if he had never moved. "Time? That I see is your next question. In our belief - now a known fact since you are here - time moves in a vast cycle, so vast it is impossible for the human mind to comprehend. Though we never know it, every act on this world is merely a repeat performance of what has happened before. No doubt, trillions of years ago, you and I sat here saying these very same words. As I stated before, one's inner dweller can only travel backwards in time, but this was the problem, only so far and no further. Years ago when we first realised the danger, our men of knowledge began spinning a thread back into time. Any being who contacted that thread while its subconscious mind was in ascendancy would be automatically brought here. You are not the first. There must be a great variety of life in the future. Some fearful specimens have arrived on the mountain. However, you are the first intelligent human so we hope you can help?" The priest paused waiting a reply.

"Yes, I can help, but do you realise the work which must be done in ten years?" The mitred hat nodded. "We know that it will be no easy task, but survival of our whole culture rests in your hands." Rutledge then plunged into the technicalities the priest required so much. The properties of iron, carbon and clay were discussed at length, and the most likely spots to find them. "We will go forth and make the necessary arrangements for finding these substances you mention," his host finally replied.

They emerged from the gold and glass edifice and entered a queer contraption of the same materials. As soon as they were seated the priest moved a small golden lever, the only visible method of control. The rectangular object rose swiftly from the ground and in answer to the lever's movements gained momentum and moved onwards. "Our gravity drive," explained the pilot to his passengers' unspoken question.

They were soon over a large city and on surveying the scene Rutledge saw that it was a civilisation built on the square. Everything had the same box-like appearance. There was not one graceful curve to detract from the severity of its outline. On landing, there followed innumerable conferences in numerous buildings, which all looked the same to the visitor. He soon noted that these crimson-robed clergy were the scientists and leaders of the community.. "Strange mixture," he thought. "So far advanced and



still worshipping stone gods."

The ordinary people of the town seemed to constitute a happy and prosperous community. They were clad in a variety of multi-coloured gowns with no distinction of dress between the sexes. The ceaseless eddying of the crowd gave colour to the otherwise sombre severity of the city outline. Rutledge was amazed at the lack of wheeled vehicles on the wide straight glassite streets. With the constant flitting to and fro of the box-like antigravity machines, he saw that surface traffic was unnecessary.

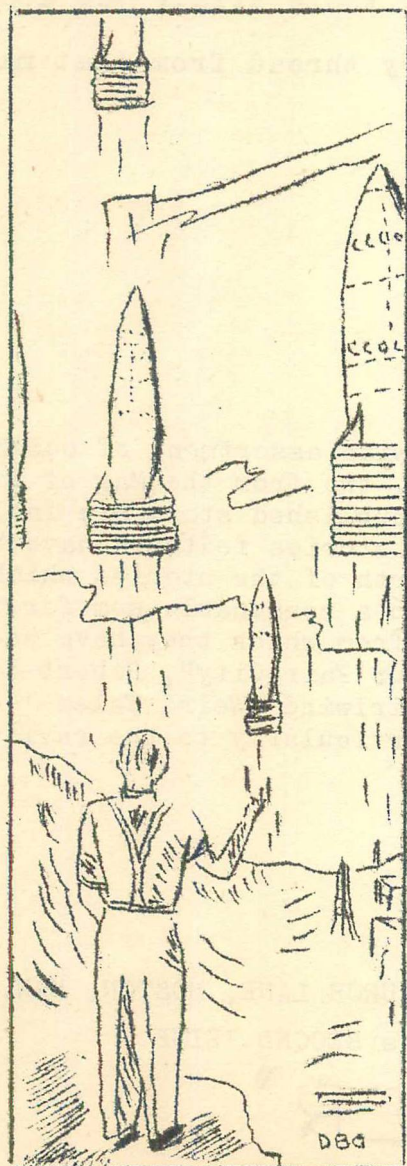
His bustling host gave him no time to contemplate the strange sights. He was ushered into the street where their flying machine stood. Airborne again, they returned to the gem studded temple. At a leisurely pace they entered the building.

"We are sorry," started the priest. "But we cannot in any way reward you. There is no substance you can take back with you." "There is no reward necessary, the experience has intrigued me and I would like to see it through," answered Rutledge. "There is one thing however I don't quite grasp. If one cannot travel forward in time, how is it that I come and go so easily?" "My earlier explanation was, I'm afraid, rather scanty but I will try to explain the matter to you," his host replied. "The astral being, when it leaves your body, can only be projected back into time. But, when the normal brain begins to take over control, the inner man returns no matter where he is or what he may be doing, so in that way you actually do travel forward you merely follow our thread back to your own era."

"Threads!" exclaimed Rutledge. "I know! The chair backs. My head resting on the stitches which have enabled me to come back here. They must be your threads. The threads of time."

Nine years later, after continual visits, Rutledge stood on the mountain of statues. The plain, spread out before him, presented a spectacle of human triumph & ingenuity. Rank upon rank, mile after mile was filled with the towering bulks of thousands of spaceships. The armada to the skies was ready to leave, their slim steel noses pointed to the stars. On a given signal the whole fleet rose from the plain and in an instant was gone.

The man stood alone with the frowning stone heads as a weird backdrop. The only human left in this whole world. The last man on Earth! Not one member of the land of MU had been left. Old and



young, aged and infirm, parents and children, all had gone and were now hurtling towards some far-off planet where they would ensure survival of the human race on some alier soil. The weary time traveller returned to his own era and for a few weeks stayed away from the now worn stitches of the frayed chair backs. He decided to pay a last visit before consigning the worn articles to the flames. He lay back, his head resting on its accustomed spot. There were no dreams - the world of the past was at last submerged.

The thread was broken -----.

Mrs Rutledge sighed with relief as she watched the flames devouring the precious chair backs. She had been proud of them at first, but since that night years ago when John had explained their oddity, she had always felt a bit fearful of them and though she had agreed finally to help her husband in his strange task she had never quite understood it and was inexpressibly glad to know that the whole affair was done with.

She would never again buy embroidery thread from that market stall.....

.THE END.

B O O K R E V I E W

BEYOND HUMAN KEN.....Edited By Judith Merril.

Published By Grayson & Grayson at 9/6

Here we have an excelllent anthology containing a wide assortment of science fiction and Fantasy. Six stories from 'Astounding', two from the Mag of Fantasy and SF, one from Galaxy and one previously unpublished story are included in the fifteen stories herein. That several of the stories featured have been previously anthologised is unfortunate, but the worth of the stories which have not before been published in hard covers, makes 9/6 a reasonable sum for this book. The stories, as indicated by the magazines from which they have been chosen, are of a fairly high to classic rating; "Our Fair City", Robert Heinlein's amusing story of Kitten, the intelligent whirlwind (Weird Tales '48), and Eric Frank Russell's "The Glass Eye", were particularly to the reviewer's taste.....

+++++

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ABBOT AND COSTELLO GO TO MARS.....
A reluctant Film Review
By Eric Jones.

This film doesn't even rate a large heading - or a space in the contents page. If it comes your way then save your money, you won't be missing anything.

I might say that I went to see this film and expecting a laugh - I didn't get one. Bud and Lou are loading supplies onto the 'ship' - which is a reasonable mock-up apart from the fact that it is standing on needle-point fins - and Lou starts playing with switches, result, take-off. With very bad faking they whistle around New York's skyscrapers, under the Lincoln Tunnel and finally, after Lou throws another switch, land. They are still on Earth but think that they have landed on Mars, do some exploring and get mixed up in the Mardi Gras.

A couple of convicts newly escaped from the state jail find the ship and get toggled out in space-suits, the helmets of which are fish-bowls minus fronts. They rob a bank in this rig and paralyse the staff with 'ray-guns' - these are glorified gas-lighters complete with sparks. They then return to the ship and await Bud and Lou's return.

The convicts force the boys to take off for Mars where the cops won't get 'em. This of course causes some confusion and a lot of double-talk; eventually they take off and the scene switches back to the Experimental Field where they are being 'tracked' on a screen. This screen is so good that you can see the ship clearly in space and almost see it land! Back to the ship again and the only effect that 'G' has on the occupants is to make them assume deep voices. In free fall we get only two effects; a hat floats upward to the porthole; when a revolver is fired the bullet just dribbles out of the muzzle.

The most authentic scene of the lot is the cave on Venus (No. They never reach Mars!) where the flying saucers are landing. Incidentally, you see some of these saucers in space, complete with sound and smoke! The gang arrive on Venus to find that it is populated by a race of Amazons who have discovered the secret of immortality. The gals come straight from the pages of AMAZING & PLANET. The boys are eventually banished from the planet and Lou tries to take some samples back of the native life. On the return journey we are treated to a repeat performance of the flight around the skyscrapers, under the tunnel - same as before - and wind up nose first in an airfield.

Summary. The corn in this film is so old it must have come from Tutankhamen's tomb. See it if you must but take my advice Only pay the lowest price for a seat.....I paid 4/-.....

