

VECTOR NO. 11.  
SPRING 1961

Official Organ of the  
British Science  
Fiction  
Association.

Edited by:  
Jim Groves,  
29 Iathon Road,  
East Ham,  
London, E.6.

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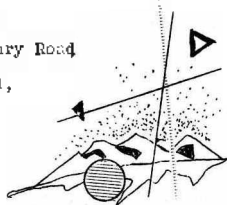
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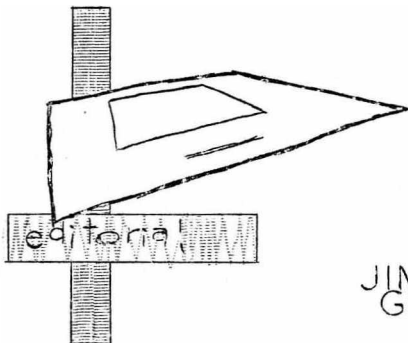
There is no "General Chunterings" this time due to pressure of work.

#### BSFA Committee.

Chairman.. Mrs. Ina Sherroock, 2 Arnot Way,  
Higher Hoxington, Wirral, Cheshire.  
Secretary.. Miss Ella Parker, 151 Canterbury Road  
West Kilburn, London, N.W.6.  
Treasurer.. A.H. Mercer, 434/4 Newark Road,  
North Hykeham, Lincoln.  
Librarian.. Peter Mabey, (Basement) 130  
London Road, Cheltenham, Glos.

The deadline for material for VECTOR 12  
is the 25th of May 1961.  
Duplicated by GAF Press.





JIM  
GROVES

Your reactions to the story in the last issue were mixed, about 50/50 for and against. I'm passing them all onto Pat in the hope that they may be of help to him. I intend to continue running occasional items of this sort, amateur efforts in the field of writing or art, by members. As before criticism and comment will be appreciated and will be passed onto their authors.

I've got a letter to hand from Peter Mabey, our Librarian, about some of the recent acquisitions including Kingsley Amis' "New Maps of Hell"; A.C. Clarke's "The Challenge of the Spaceship"; three of R.E. Howard's "Conan" series; E.E. Smith's "Triplanetary" and "First Lensman"; T. Sturgeon's "Venus plus X"; and Weinbaum's "A Martian Odyssey", and "The Black Flame". The Amis book in particular is drawn to your attention. We have a review of it in this issue and I recommend that you read it. I reckon it'll cause quite a stir in sf circles for some time to come. His elevation of Pohl, Kornbluth and Shackley over the heads of what many will feel to be more deserving and talented authors will certainly cause comment. Kingsley Amis will also be at the Easter Convention so we can expect some lively debates there as well.

As you can see from the letter column quite a number of members are in favour of some sort of permanent printed cover with the name VECTOR and some sort of simple design. I admit that this would save the frantic search for a cover that has gone on of late. It would also give the OO a more official look. Can I have definite views on this subject please? If the majority say that they would prefer it that way then I'll make enquires as to how much it would cost etc., and find out if it's feasible. Suggestions as to the extent of the design if any will be appreciated as well.

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# SECRETARY'S REPORT



ELLA PARKER.

As this is my final column for you in my capacity as Secretary, it seems like a good idea to do some rehashing; not only of those plans that have come to fruition, but those too, which for some reason, seem never to have got off the ground.

**FRIDAY NIGHT IS BSEA NIGHT:** This has been one of the more successful plans. So popular have these meetings become it seems incredible that they've only been going since August of last year. Apart from the hard core of regulars who always turn up, such as: Ted Forsyth, Jimmy Groves, and Joe Patrizio, we have collected some newish members who, in their turn, have attended just as faithfully once they were made aware of the meetings or came to live in London. Among those we can count: Roy Sheppard, Patrick Kearney and Harry Atherton. Then too, we occasionally see Mike Raynor, Don Geldart, Arthur (ATom) Thomson, Ethel Lindsay, Paul Andrews, and Ron Bennett (when he's in town). Harry Atherton especially deserves mention. Harry travels all the way from Cambridge every week just for the sake of a few hours in our company.

Someone, Chris Miller, I think, asked that we should appoint a 'note-taker' at these gatherings to let you all know what goes

on. Apart from the fact that none of us can do shorthand it would mean that whoever volunteered for the job would be too busy taking notes to join in the talk, and so we TALK! Mostly about SF, but I have heard politics and religion come under discussion as well as films seen and liked or disliked; we swap magazines or buy and sell them if new. Quite often if any of your publications are ready for the duplicator they are run off with the willing assistance of those present. More recently plans have been discussed for attending the Convention at Easter and, of course, we drink lots of tea and coffee. Usually we break up around 11.15 pm. We never know who will turn up unexpectedly nor yet where the conversation will turn, but of one thing we can be sure, it's always interesting.

BSFA NEWSLETTER: This is another new idea which has caught on well. So far none of you has told us you don't like it or think it superfluous. Neither have you told us whether you agree with the items used in it. As it was intended to cover news of members as well as news in the SF field we would appreciate any items you care to send to us. Like for instance: Brian Jordan is forming an SF club among fellow students at Sheffield University. I hope that as it progresses he will keep us posted on how things go and if he manages to persuade anyone into giving them a talk, or if they come up with any ideas for a club project he will write and tell us about it. Have you found a book out of the ordinary in which you think members would be interested? Have you seen a particularly good SF film lately? Tell us about it. Are you getting married, or have you changed your job for one of more interest to you? We are interested in what you are doing and I believe our members are too.

VICE-CHAIRMAN: It would seem that you were all in favour of this new post being created, and for the first time this year's elections sees two nominees for the office. I hope your vote is in? Votes will be counted and the result announced during the AGM at the Convention.

So much for our successes. Any failures? Well, I did suggest that some of you living in other parts of the country might like to copy the idea of my Friday night meetings for members. I requested that if you did get them started you should let us know and we would publicise them for you in either of the publications. To date not one such has come through. I appreciate you don't have the same concentration of members in your part of the world as do we in London, but I also know that in Edinburgh, for example, we do have quite a number. Couldn't you lads do something along these lines up there? There are others who could do likewise.

I don't know if this can be rightly called a failure, but I haven't heard anything of it for months; I refer to the "Young Fans Group" that Jim Linwood was all alive to get going. From various letters I have received I know that Jim has been going the rounds meeting members in their own homes, but about the YFG, not a word. How are things coming along Jim, or have you dropped the scheme?

CORRESPONDENCE: I also asked those of you who would be willing to write to new members, to send me your names. With two exceptions, nothing. Oh well.

On reflection it would seem that results over the past year have been favourable. Keep it up all of you.

Again the eternal argument has come up about faan V BSFA non-fan members. It was revived by Daphne Buckmaster in a letter she wrote to VECTOR 10. I at first intended to answer her in detail, point by point, to show how ridiculous her arguments are, but I don't think the non-fannish element among you would be in the least interested in such arguments so I shall save what I have to say for a private letter, or even better, tell her if she turns up at the Convention.

Your editor has made some of the points I would have done, but I would also like to remind Daphne that it was the faan who got the BSFA going in the first place and who has worked hardest for it's continuation. I fear the kind of Association envisaged by Daphne and some others would be wealthy in numbers if not in cash, with little if any interest in the Association and it's affairs being felt by said members. Speaking now as a member like yourselves and not as one of it's officers, I don't care how small we remain just as long as those who have joined are as interested in the well-being and continuance of it as I am. Rather a small band of willing and enthusiastic members than a large unwieldy and completely disinterested membership list of faceless names.

Taking full advantage of my position to see your letters before they are printed; I would ask you to read the letter sent in by John Phillifent before going on with this. John "agrees wholeheartedly with every word she(Daphne) wrote". Here I go again! John and I, at one time, had a fierce correspondence going on this very subject. John seems to imagine that our - or is it my? - sole aim is to make faans of all of you. Nothing could be more wrong. I neither deny or apologise for making it known to you that such a thing as faandom exists and the wide field of amateur publishing, but that is as far as I go. Having been made aware, the next step is yours. The fact that many of you have joined us in the wider scope provided by fandom is a feather in our caps of which we are rightly proud. but we don't feel for you, the non-fan, the pitying contempt that John feels for us who are faans. I just cannot understand his intolerance. We don't ram faandom down his throat, we don't try to wean him to our way of thinking, why then should he take every opportunity to blast us as he does, not only in VECTOR I would remind you, but in the fanzines which are faanish publications. Be happy without fandom, John, but please, allow us the same right to be happy in fandom. The loss is not ours.

For the rest of John's allegations about the BSFA "being run by, and heavily slanted toward 'fandom'" I can only invite him and some of the 200,000 who pay for SF to come in and take office. I can imagine how deadly dull the Association would become then. I wonder would it have lasted the three years that it has run so far had they been at the helm? It's no use, I just can't work up any enthusiasm for this argument with him when it is only a rehash of what passed between us last year.

It is a sad fact, as I said earlier, that this is my last 'official' column for you in my capacity as Secretary. At Easter I hand the position over to Joe Patrizio. Joe is a Scot who has come to live and work in London, and who has, right from the start, shown an interest in the Association and it's affairs that is most

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### TREASURER'S REPORT.

Herewith are presented the Accounts for the December Quarter 1960 and for the year 1960 as a whole, together with the relevant expense analyses.

As far as the Accounts themselves are concerned, I don't think that they need any particular remarks apart from such as have been made hitherto, except perhaps that I might take the opportunity to point out that the year ended with a satisfactory cash balance in hand and provided that the subscription income can continue to be augmented from other sources from time to time, this position should be fairly easy to maintain.

One other point I might mention perhaps - those of you who have been following the periodical Accounts with bated breath will doubtless be relieved to learn that the outstanding debt of 3/6d for sale of the "New World's" index has subsequently been paid, approximately one year after it was first incurred.

In addition to the Accounts, there are four extra "annual" tables being presented with this.

Table "A" shows the breakdown of expenditure amongst the various projects of the Association after "General administration" and "Advertising" expenditure have been proportionately sub-allocated amongst everything else.

Table "B" shows the cost of VECTOR and the Newsletters (together) per issue of VECTOR only. Now that the advent of the Newsletters has complicated the scene there isn't perhaps as much point to this table as there was to its equivalent last year, but it is included mainly for comparison purposes. To further elaborate on this table, the cost of an average Newsletter (say one ream of paper, five stencils and 150 2d stamps) comes to around £1.15.0, which is about 2½d each (not all Newsletters bear their own postage for various reasons). Thus on an average, the cost of each copy of VECTOR should come out at just under two shillings on the lower figure, or just over two shillings on the higher.

Table "C" shows the average subscription for the year.

Table "D" shows the cost of what I consider to represent the Association's basic expenditure for the year. It will be noted that this is not covered by the average subscription. This, as was mentioned above, does not matter so long as periodical surpluses from other sources continue to be forthcoming. As I understand that several new publications are almost ready to be offered for sale, there should be no cause for alarm on this score.

*A.H. Mercer*

A.H. Mercer.  
Hon. Treasurer.

February 1961.

British Science Fiction Association.

December Quarter 1960.

RECEIPTS

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Brought forward.						
Cash in hand	59	7	2			
Reserves	12	9	9	71	16	11
Subscriptions	20	2	9			
Less refunds		12	6	19	10	3
Library charges etc.				7	2	0
Outstanding debtor				3	6	

£98 12 8

PAYMENTS

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Expenses						
Treasurer	22	5	11			
Library	4	13	0	26	18	11
Reserves						
North Am. Exp.	5	9				
Gen. Purps. '62	10	6				
Held on A/C (1961 subs)	12	6		1	8	9
Debtor (per contra)				3	6	
Cash in hand						
Library	6	5	0			
Con Committee	11	0	6			
Treasurer (unreserved)	52	16	0	70	1	6
				£98 12 8		

	GEN.	V.	LIB.	CON.	ADV.	N W CL.	GAL. CL.	
P T	16.3							
O S E	6.4	5.16. 1	2.14.3	3.6	9	5		9.17. 9
T S								
T A T.	5. 2.7	6.10.11					3.0.0	14.13. 6
S U N D.	7.8		2. 0.0					2. 7. 8
	6.12.10	12. 7. 0	4.14.3	3.6	9	5	3.0.0	26.18.11



Accounts for year 1960.

RECEIPTS

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Brought fwd.						
Cash in hand	52	3	5			
Reserves	13	7	4	65	10	9
Subscriptions	77	5	0			
less refunds	1	13	6	75	11	6
Library charges etc.				20	0	3
Sale of "New Worlds" checklist o/s debtor plus sales		3	6			
	1	17	6	2	1	0
Sale of VECTOR				10	6	
Sale of surplus Library stock				3	0	
Convention receipts	54	19	11			
less refunds	15	0		54	4	11
Anon. receipt						6
				2218	2	7

PAYMENTS

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Expenses						
Treasurer	132	10	7			
Librarian	13	8	3	145	18	10
Library advance loan fee repaid						10 0
Reserves:						
North Am. Exp.	5	9				
Gen. Purps 1962	10	6				
Held on A/C (1961 subs)	12	6		1	8	9
Debtor (per contra)						3 6
Cash in hand:						
Library	6	5	0			
Convention Committee	11	0	6			
Treasurer (unreserved)	52	16	0	70	1	6
				2218	2	7

	GEN.	VECTOR	LIB.	CON.	ADV.	N.W. checkl.	GAL. checkl.	
P	I 2. 9. 8							
O	E 1.10.10	10. 1. 8	7.17.4	1. 7. 6	-1.0	7.8	3	23.16.11
S								
T	8.10. 8	40. 6. 8		1.16. 8			3.0.0	53.14. 0
A								
T	1. 0.10	12. 9.0	10.18.0	40.17. 9	3.3.4.			68. 8.11
S								
U	13.12. 0	62.17.4	18.15.4	44. 1.11	3.4.4.	7.8	3.0.3	145.18.10
N								
D								
P	9.32	43.08	12.86	30.21	2.20	2.33		100.00
E								
R								
C.								

TABLE A

BPA Expenses with "General" and "Advertising" sub-allocated amongst the other categories (year 1960).

VECTOR & LIBRARY CONVENTION CHECKLISTS TOTAL

<u>\$71.1.2</u>	<u>\$21.4.2</u>	<u>\$49.16.9</u>	<u>\$3.16.9</u>	<u>\$145.18.10</u>
percent 48.69	14.53	34.15	2.83	100.00

TABLE B

COST OF VECTOR AND NEWSLETTERS (YEAR 1960).

Copies of VECTOR printed during 1960:

No. 7 200

No. 8 c175

No. 9 c175

c550

Cost of VECTOR and Newsletters together \$62.17.4

including proportion of Gen. Admin. and

Advertising \$71.1.2

Therefore cost of VECTOR and Newsletters per issue of VECTOR  
2/4d on the lower figure, 2/7d on the higher.

TABLE C

AVERAGE SUBSCRIPTION (YEAR 1960).

Number of memberships effective during whole of year 1960-128

Total subscriptions for year \$84.13.8

Therefore average subscription 11/10d

TABLE D

COST OF BASIC EXPENDITURE PER MEMBER (YEAR 1960).

VECTOR AND NEWSLETTERS	<u>\$62.17.4</u> 128	9/10d	per member
ADVERTISING	<u>\$3.4.4</u> 128	-/6d	" "
GENERAL ADMIN.	<u>\$13.12.0</u> 128	2/2d	" "
LIBRARY RENTAL	<u>\$5.0.0</u> 128	-/9d	" "
TOTAL OF ABOVE	<u>\$84.13.8</u> 128	13/3d	" "

# AUDITED ACCOUNT

Income and Expenditure Account for the six months ended 31/12/59

	£	s	d	£	s	d		£	s	d	
Vector				23	6	0	Subscriptions received	36	0	0	
Library											
Expenditure	13	0	1				Sale of "History and				
Less: Fees	8	15	4	4	4	9	Index of New Worlds				
Postage				3	3	6	Science Fiction"	4	12	6	
Misc. Expenditure					6	0					
Balance, being											
excess of income											
over Expenditure					9	12	3				
					<u>£40</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>		<u>£40</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>

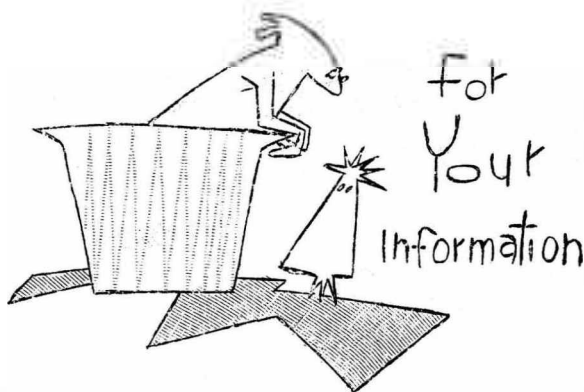
Balance sheet as at 31/12/59

	£	s	d	£	s	d		£	s	d	£	s	d
<u>Accumulated</u>							<u>Library as</u>						
<u>Fund</u>							valued by						
Balance as at							Librarian						
1/7/59	132	6	3				Bal. as at						
Excess of							1/7/59	102	10	3			
Library Valuation							Increase						
over cost							per contra	25	0	0			
to Assoc.	25	0	0								127	10	3
Excess of							<u>Stocks</u>						
Income over							Stationary	5	0	0			
Expenditure for							New Worlds Index	1	7	0			
year	9	12	3				Vector	5	0				
				166	18	6					6	12	0
<u>Subs. paid in</u>							<u>Debtors</u>						
<u>advance</u>				37	14	0	Vector	3	7				
							New Worlds Index	5	4	0			
											5	7	7
							<u>Cash Balances</u>						
							At Bank	63	9	8			
							Publications						
							Dept	1	13	0			
											65	2	8
											<u>£204</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>

The above Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account have been prepared from the books and vouchers of the Association and are in accordance therewith.

4 Lloyds Avenue,  
London E.C.3.

William A. Croft F.C.A.  
Chartered Accountant.



A HANDBOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY compiled by Donald H. Tuck; second edition April 1959. Two vols. foolscap size 396pp.  
50/-

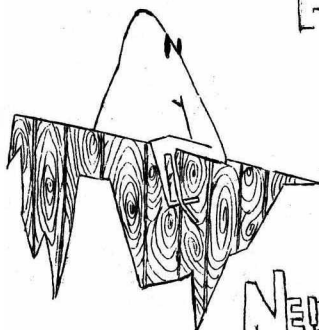
This is a must for the serious collector of sf and fantasy. The story references are not complete but they are fairly comprehensive. Under each author's name is given a list of books by him, any series of stories, with appropriate magazine references, and also any notable stories. This used in conjunction with the "Author's Works Listing" reviewed below will give nigh on complete coverage of the sf field, particularly with reference to magazine sf. There are also anthology listings, with full contents, pseudonym data and many items of general interest concerning the history of sf and fandom.

AUTHOR'S WORK LISTINGS compiled by Donald H. Tuck. 3/6d per set. Sets one and two now available.

Each of these sets contains some half dozen prominent authors and covers their entire output in the sf field up to the date of issue of the set. Set one includes Asimov, Heinlein, Bond, Knight, Brown, Stubbs, Cummings and Weinbaum. Set two contains Anderson, Clarke, Leinster, Kell, Kline, Schachner and Whitehead. Others in this series are planned and, together with the Handbook, should give a nearly complete coverage to work in the sf field.

All of these items may be obtained from:-

Donald H. Tuck, 139 East Rindon Rd., Lindisfarne, Tasmania.  
Fantast (Midway) Ltd., 75 Norfolk St., Wisbech, Cambs, England.  
Mr. H. DeVore, 4705 Weddel St., Dearborn, Michigan, U.S.A.



# ALIENS

for

# NEIGHBOURS

BRIAN ALDISS.

Although we are supposed to ride along on revolutionary ideas, science fiction writers have to make do with pretty common phobias. Rather surprisingly, many sf writers share a genuine dread of the effects of science and a fear of alien life. There is one very honourable, very notable exception to this, and he is an exception to several other rules besides, Clifford D. Simak.

The universe is a more comfortable place for Mr. Simak than for any other sf writer.

Consequently, very little killing takes place in Mr. Simak's world. People, aliens, things, come to an agreement instead, often an unspoken agreement. Aliens - who ninety percent of the time have to yield to force - respond in Mr. Simak's universe to Courtesy (the actual title of one of his earlier stories).

Even in a tale like "Honourable Opponent"\* the galactic battles result in no deaths; after the war, the enemy returns Earth's ships intact, for it is all a game. In "Kindergarten" (reprinted in Strangers in the Universe), where the aliens are all-powerful, their intentions, though at first in doubt, are entirely benign. Even an isolated alien with plenty of tricks up his sleeve can be just a hombody, as in "Neighbour"\*. For the horrible machines in "Skirmish" an excuse is found; they are liberating their fellow-beings.

---

\*In The Worlds of Clifford Simak. Simon & Schuster, N.Y., 3.75

Machinos in fact are generally as benevolent, and as benevolently treated, as aliens. The computer called Lulu in the tale "Lulu"\* is a nuisance but no more; she is capable of, and responds to, love. The last words of Mr. Simak's one major flop, "Time and Again", concern 'an android woman crying her heart out'. This is a distinct change after our usual diet of metal monsters. The apotheosis of these pleasant robots is Jenkins in the City sagas, a creature at once worldly-wise and world-weary in true Simak fashion.

Animals enjoy similar treatment. No other sf writer has produced such a brood of them. You can't turn a page without stumbling over some shaggy pooch or other. The Worlds of Clifford Simak is infested with them, and not only dogs but zebras, bulls, fish, skunks, and similar livestock.

Nor is plant life exempt from Mr. Simak's consideration. A rose bush and a five-foot weed play important roles in "Green Thumb"\*. Furniture and inanimate objects too have plenty to say. A spinning top featured prominently in his best book Ring Around The Sun. Cabinets talk in "Immigrant", an old jellyop flies in "Operation Stinky"\*.

All these aliens, machines, animals, plants and things could not comfortably exist were Hiram a trouble-maker. Mr. Simak's men are not that way inclined. Any day of the century, they'd sooner settle right down on their hunkers and whistle a stick, or go and fish, or just plain squat on the patio and smoke.

"We lit out of there like a turpentine dog," remarks one of his characters, characteristically. They are rarely in such a hurry, even when confronted by alien mystery. Heck, if you sit around long enough, maybe you can kinda dicker with these here aliens and figger out what they want, and do a deal with 'em.

And often enough a deal is done. In The Worlds several deals are done. Maybe you start with a problem, but you end on a cash or barter basis - as in "Dusty Zebra"\*, "Carbon Copy"\*, and "The Big Front Yard"\*.

I confess to finding the last-named story a disappointment, although it was voted the Best Novelette of 1958. To have a beginning where splendid ratty creatures get to work under Hiram's floor and mend TV sets for him before a plurality of worlds opens up beyond his front door is magnificent; but to finish with Hiram sitting dickering over a paint deal seems to me a Grade A anti-climax.

This, however, represents the fault of Mr. Simak's virtues. In reducing mystery to sanity, he sometimes reduces it to littleness as well. Generally his simplicity is a source of strength. Occasionally it smacks of small-town mentality.

A small-town mentality, whatever it's defects, is one with roots. Sf is a rootless literature; by and large it's mentality is that of the city corner - not powerful but aggressive, not social but gregarious, not wise but sharp - and this we accept, for we are as much a product of the age as it is. Simak is different. He so obviously does not live in a city flat.

His over-riding symbol is the house. Houses appear again and again in his fiction. Sometimes his participants are house agents, as in "Carbon Copy"\*. The majority of these houses are the same house: a rambling affair with a patio and shutters, full of sunshine

and creaking boards, a sleepy place - a place that perhaps needs a little attention, a door oiling or a window mending, but nevertheless a home that will stand a few more summers yet (Mr. Simak does not seem to like the winter, for he only writes about warm days). In short his homes are places of security, and with security one can afford to take a pedestrian attitude to wonder. Generally this pedestrian attitude sounds just the right note. He unfolds his tale looking you so straight in the eye that you swallow all the impossibilities. No sf writer ever got by with less explanation. Stinky, the skunk-alier, makes machinery grow; we don't know how. Lulu hops about; we aren't told why. "This is just an idea", says one of her crew, and we must take his word for it.

"This may sound a bit kinda odd at first, but here's the way it happened", Mr. Simak is saying, and you have to take it or leave it. Personally I can take any amount of it. For my money, the lack of explanation compares favourably with some stories by other writers which seem all explanation.

I like the fairy tale touch - though not when it degenerates into whimsy, as it does in "Lulu". I like his small towns, and I like his rambling and repetitive style (which is more flexible than it was some years back, as can be seen from the over-writing in "Courtesy").

Above all I like the good nature of his stories. They are simple, almost corny at times, in a strong American rural tradition - all of which makes them a rarity in sf. They are plain, without the phobias from which the rest of us suffer, and often seem to be about happiness more than anything else - which makes them a rarity in any form of contemporary fiction.

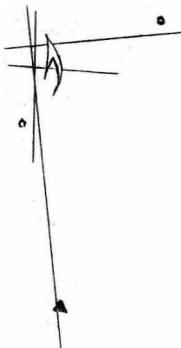
The Worlds of Clifford Simak is a delectable collection, even with the strictures made above. In particular "Carbon Copy", "Idiot's Crusade", "Operation Stinky", "Jackpot", "Green Thumb", and "Neighbour" are first class of their kind. In sf, their kind is unique.

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We regret to announce that Dr. Arthur R. Weir died suddenly in Standish Hospital, Gloucester, at 3 am, Saturday, 4th March.

"Doc" was one of the early members of the Association and was very active from the start. He attended the 1959 Easter Convention in Birmingham and was there elected to the post of BSFA Secretary. Unfortunately he was forced to relinquish this post about halfway through the year due to increasing ill-health. Despite this he was one of the most regular and prolific contributors to these pages, not only with book and magazine reviews but also with articles. During the past few months he finished compiling a checklist of "Science Fantasy" for the Association.

Doc was one of the outstanding personalities of the Association, contributing much to the success of Vector, and we will miss him very much.



## Book Reviews

NEW MAPS OF HELL by Kingsley Amis  
161 pp. Gollancz, 16/-

It was the Duke of Wellington who regarded the reinforcements sent him and uttered the now classic remark, "I don't know what effect they will have on the enemy, but by God they terrify me!" A contemplation of "New Maps", this venture into the cartography of sf, inspires a similar feeling in my breast: I don't know what it does to the general public, but by God it impresses me.

One of the difficulties of writing this book must have been that of knowing one was addressing two entirely different (many would say opposed) publics, the general and the sf reader. You have to assume ignorance on the one hand and knowledge on the other, without equating these with stupidity and virtue. Kingsley Amis has managed this with amazing success. As far as I know he is the only author to succeed; the very few other books at all comparable to his - such as the Protner symposium "Modern Science Fiction" or Patrick Moore's "Science And Fiction" - fail as dismally in this respect as in many others.

Another important virtue of the book is its readability. Though often jocular in tone, it is never trilling; Kingsley has put the cartography before the horsplay. And it will be read not simply by the converted. Kingsley Amis is one of our best known younger novelists, as well as a critic of standing.



Of course it is possible to differ considerably from many of the views he expresses. The book is naturally coloured with his own preferences, although for all his free and easy style he adheres carefully to objective standards of criticism. But it will never be possible again for a new critic to come along and lay waste the field; the spot heights are marked, the bench marks out - the Ordnance Survey has called. Future work (and of course there is room for many more books on sf) will have to take Kingsley's pioneer work into account, and very good work it is.

His elevation of Frederick Pohl and Robert Sheckley to the peerage may surprise some people who would not have placed these two authors in their Top Ten. All the same, it is a consistent choice; Kingsley's inclination is towards satire and away from pure fantasy, which automatically displaces Pohl upwards and someone like, say, Simak downwards.

Well, his favourites would not exactly coincide with mine. But it is a relief to see a few hitherto crowned heads rolling, among them John W. Campbell's and Van Vogt's, and Heinlein's to a lesser extent. An orthodoxy of authors needs the occasional reshuffle as frequently as a government. Myself I feel that the flat 'realistic' writing of the old "Astounding" type story has had a long enough day. The more true way to freshness of story is via freshness of writing rather than freshness of plot - and here Pohl and Sheckley have an edge on many of the others. To this list, Kingsley might have added William Tenn and - if he had included the British scene in his survey as well - Jim Ballard.

Damon Knight has said that Kingsley gives no reason for his reshuffle of the hierarchy. It seems to me his reasons are evident enough; he believes that the science or the theory side of the story should never rise and engulf the living (characters, activities, human values) side of the story. This should be an innocuous enough statement, hardly challengeable, one would have thought - until one recalls the Patrick Moore school crying for more science to be loaded in. Science must act as a springboard rather than handcuffs; that is all that Kingsley is saying, and he says it succinctly enough. At the same time, he seems perhaps to give too little credit to writers who achieve the science and fiction balance particularly well: writers like Asimov and Hal Clement.

Other small quibbles with this book present themselves. To describe Jack Finney as a writer 'yet to make his name' is perhaps unfortunate. And Kingsley's figures for the circulations of various sf magazines are somewhat out; Astounding's US sales number 74,000, not the 100,000 he gives - though his figures were probably accurate when he delivered the series of lectures at Princeton upon which "New Maps" is based.

Any cartographer is bound to make a slip or two. Few could have provided as accurate a map as this. I must finish with a few of the things about it that particularly make me wish to cheer.

First and foremost is the effect the book will have on the GBP. No longer should it be possible to say "science fiction" as if it were a term of abuse rather than a category. No longer should it be possible to think of sf as "spaceships", or as a sort of gilded pill for those wishing to brush up on quantum theory, or as a fiction companion to Popular Mechanics, or as a prediction machine,

a kind of Old Moore (not Patrick) in a space suit.

On the positive side of the same coin, Kingsley - as nobody else has ever done to my knowledge - has defined exactly the variety of enjoyment good sf can yield, and how this differs from the enjoyments of ordinary fiction.

Second is the effect that the book will have on the sf reading public. We are exceptionally fortunate that Kingsley Amis wrote this; he knows the field intimately, but he does not know only the field ("what know ye of sf who only sf know?"). Because of this he has the main reference points to his Hades in true alignment. Without ever mentioning it by title, he sweeps much of the pretentious nonsense in "Modern Science Fiction" down the sink. Sf, as Kingsley says, is not "a massive body of serious art destined any moment to engulf the whole of Anglo-Saxon writing".

Dearlly as we love it, sf is only a small part of contemporary fiction. There is no progress in the arts, as Wyndham Lewis has pungently demonstrated; nor is contemporary fiction stagnating - both tenets frequently aired in fanzines. True there can be progress in the pre-art stage; this is what we have been witnessing in sf over twenty or twenty-five years, the climb from crudity to literacy. Kingsley Amis's book is a symptom of the climb rather than a medal of honour for shinning up the literary Everest of Parnassus. This is what makes it a lovely and an exciting volume.

Put it this way: the importance of Kingsley Amis's book is twofold. He has opened a window for the general reader on to our lively branch of fiction. And he has provided a mirror in which the sf writer and reader can see the perspectives of our curious and colourful nether world. Whether you are a visitor to or a resident in the hells he charts, he's one item to cherish among the flames.

Brian W. Aldiss.

THE PAPERS OF ANDREW HELMOUTH by Hugh Sykes Davies. Methuen 16/-

Science fiction books are usually largely about things, but here, for once, is one almost entirely about people: Andrew Kelmouth himself, the experimental biologist; his hard-boiled girl friend Margaret; the narrator of the story (which Sykes Davies tells under his own name); Mary, the other girl in the tale; her father the elderly retired scientist known as Sir Charles; 'X', the nuclear physicist, with an eye to the main chance at all times; and lastly, Dan Talgarry the professional rat-catcher.

Much of the action of the book takes place through its conversations, as the characters tell one another of what they have done or propose to do, and criticize one another's opinions, and the final result is an amazingly clearly drawn picture, with a peculiar nightmare atmosphere of a kind that I do not remember meeting for many years past. The climax of this comes when Andrew Kelmouth discovers that the literary technique that he has always used for the pedantically accurate description of scientific experiments can also be used for the telling of fiction, and, more particularly, in just the particular fictional episode that he chooses to relate...

This is something new in science fiction, horribly plausible and most disquieting, the more effective for being restrained throughout to a deliberate level of understatement. Was Andrew

Leinath really sane, and how far was his gruesome little fictional tale meant to be a parallel of his own mental state? And how far was he affected by the single terrifying incident of his own childhood, that he never mentioned at all, and that the narrator found out about only by chance?

This is first-rate sf, told using an uncommon and very interesting technique; and I shall look forward to more experiments of this kind.

Arthur R. Weir.

THE WAR AGAINST THE RULL by A.E. Van Vogt. Panther 2/6.

This book is the result of an amalgamation of five stories which appeared in ASF. RETRIBUTION in 1940; CO-OPERATE OR ELSE in 1942; THE SECOND SOLUTION also in 1942; THE RULL in 1948; and THE SOUND in 1950. As a result, there is a curiously uneven quality to the narrative as a whole. The basic theme is of Earth as the key planet in a Galaxy wide co-operative of nations...although we never meet any of these allies .. locked in a war with a fabulously difficult enemy, the Rull. Coming from another Galaxy, the Rull have the ability to manipulate light energy so skill fully that they can impersonate humans indetectably. They are harder to kill, fanatically bent on wiping out Man, devoid of any of our kind of emotions, and easily our equal in science.

Over the shoulder of the leading character, Trevor Jamieson, a scientist high-ranking in the Council, we meet an assortment of life-forms, all of them violently antagonistic. The ezwal, for example, weighs some six thousand pounds, has eyes three-in-a-line, slaty-blue skin like leather, six clawed feet, and so powerful that a baby ezwal, exhausted, on the run, cold and hungry, is able to dispose of a Lodiak bear with little trouble. The ezwal is also telepathic, and only Jamieson knows this. His task is to develop friendly relationships with this life-form; as a recruit against the Rull. Not only is the ezwal unwilling, but the human settlers on Carson's planet, where the ezwal lives, are rigidly opposed to this ferocious killer-animal. And he dare not leak the secret of the telepathy. Jamieson manages to survive the worst efforts of both sides, including a desperate attempt by the Carson's planet people to kill him by abandonment on it's moon. This is where we encounter the giant grass-eater, and the bloodsucker gryb, an animal which makes an ezwal sound kittenish.

Then there is a kidnapping adventure on Mira 23, and a meeting with the lethal young of the lymph beast. Oddy, the nine-year-old son of Jamieson, has his brush with the Rull, in an affair where the Rull are infiltrating in numbers into the heavily secret area surrounding the Ship. I mustn't forget the Floians, those non-material, electronic intelligences, who go crazy drunk on magnetic fields. Our Jamieson strikes up an acquaintance with one, trains it to communicate with him, and finds this association highly helpful in a subsequent hand to hand struggle with the Big Chief Rull, on an isolated mountain-top on Laertes III. And so-on and so-forth.

It is impossible to summarise Van Vogt, even in a straight-theme story. Like all the rest, this one is piled high with gadgets, gimmicks, concepts and twists of all kinds, the whole

saturated in a boiling, seething stew of just about every stress emotion you can name. And no breathing spaces, at all.

For me, it didn't come off. The whole ramshackle edifice seems to blur at the edges into something perilously close to slapstick. Possibly my fault, because, after the first half-dozen sweating pages, my emotional responses were stunned into numbness. If you're the empathetic type, this book could run you into a nervous breakdown. Odd points emerge. Van Vogt is curiously wooden with his humans, and his aliens come across much more real, to me. The big query, though, is this. What readership were Panther aiming at, with this book? I mean, possibly I'm not very bright, but I have been reading sf for around thirty years .. I know the jargon .. but whole slabs of this were quite meaningless to me. V.V. doesn't stop to fill in details, or explain odd references, and whole trains of side-issues are simply thrown away. The average reader is going to find this gibberish, for the most part. Or are there really that many 'hard' sf readers, enough to show a profit?

John T. Phillifant.

BEST SF 4 edited by Edmund Crispin; Faber & Faber 15/-

This is the fourth and latest in the Best sf series. The contents include a 52 page novelette by Francis Donovan called "The Short Life" and nine short stories. The one that impressed me most was "It's a Good Life" by Jerome Bixby. The story tells of an all-powerful three year old who has the most terrific psi powers. All through this story there is a feeling that something dreadful either has happened or is about to happen. You find out what at the end.

"A Subway Named Nobius" by A.J. Deutsch, has an interesting fourth-dimensional-sort-of-paradox in it. "The Yellow Pill" by Rog Phillips concerns the problem "which one is having hallucinations, the headshrinker or his patient?" A good story this, with a very gory ending. Brian Aldiss has a nice tale in "Psychlops". At first, after reading the first page or so, I thought that I'd finally found an Aldiss story that I didn't like, but it clarifies itself nicely farther on.

Eric Frank Russell's contribution concerns a space pilot stranded on an unexplored planet, alone save for his talkative pet macaw, and of the interesting discovery he makes. "Baxbr" by Evelyn E. Smith, is a dramatic piece about the end of the world. Or rather it's invasion, and the extermination of man, by aliens. The central character has a hobby in which he crisscrosses words in some fashion. Hanged if I can figure it out!

Also included are "Balaam" by Anthony Boucher and "The Bliss of Solitude" by J.T. McIntosh.

This is a good buy.

Fat Kearney.

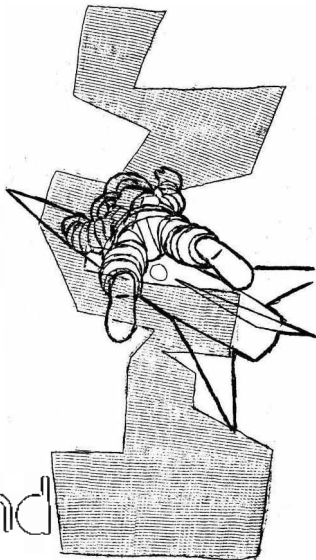
SLAVE SHIP by Frederick Pohl: Dobson, 11/6

This story tells of a very 'hot' Cold War in which almost everyone is conscripted, including children. Even this however is not enough. For years, in the story, computers have been set to work on the languages of animals, and had succeeded in getting

once

round

BY HARRY GILBERT.



They relaxed, their backs resting on thin air. Their faces were similar and each evoked the same feeling of hopelessness. Their minds were something more than primeval, yet they were less civilized than jackals. They both knew that they were going to murder a man; and no civilized man, out here where jungle law was the only law, could hope to survive. They had sent this man out into the endless fall to do routine work on the rocket's skin. One of the men muttered something into a tiny microphone near his chin. He had told the man who was to be murdered to go out swiftly. He knew it would confuse him. After a short time the other man reached out and pressed a button. A flickering red light acknowledged the action. He had opened the air escape holes. These were spread evenly over the rocket's skin to let out the waste gases. They would throw anything outside the rocket off into space. It was suicide to go out with the air escape holes activated. Or murder...

He was moving out of the airlock into space when he felt the vibration of the gun-shots on the metal, and saw the bullets tear

out into vacuum near him. Then in his suit-radio a voice said, "Get out there quickly, we're closing the lock."

He had been overtaken by the swiftness of events, and obeyed automatically. He came to his senses three seconds later, and hammered on the closed airlock. It remained closed, and there was no voice on his radio. After a while he turned away, and crawled along the outer skin of the giant rocket like a fly on a bottle.

Gradually, he became aware that there was a slight pressure coming from the rocket's surface. Investigating, he found it was due to a large number of small holes evenly spread over the metal, which continually squirted thin streams of gas into space. They must have been activated by the gunmen. If he let go for very long he would find himself drifting outwards to float among the stars, like a dead fish lying motionless in the sea.

Letting his outstretched hands slide carefully on the metal, pressing them down, he could feel, through the texture of his suit, the little knobs which were there just as last resources if one lost one's "life-line". Holding one of those with index finger and thumb, he clumsily pulled himself along. Lying flat as he was he could see the curve of the rocket, as it seemed to fall away from him, very near.

With finger and thumb holding one knob, he reached the other hand forward to find another. He pushed himself forward with his feet a few seconds before he expected to reach the next knob. His hand groped in vain, and the first hand was pulled off the knob by the impetus of the kick. He was now gliding slowly along the metal, rising very gradually. His hands frantically explored the surface, found knobs, and caught hold of them, but were dragged off because his fingers were shivering and uncontrolled. In a few seconds it would be too late. With both the curvature of the rocket itself and the pressure of the air-jets, he could expect to take-off, rather like an aircraft, and sail forever in the sky. He clenched his teeth, gulped and quickly clenched and unclenched his fist steadying each individual shiver of every vital finger. He was about one foot off the metal, flying smoothly along. He could not, of course, see much. Star-light had a habit of being not very strong. Therefore he could find knobs only by feeling for them. There were in actual fact a surprising number of knobs covering the surface: all he had to do was grasp one firmly and he would be brought to a stop.

His breath hissed out through clenched teeth and his arms, stiff and straight out, swung slowly across and back. He suddenly felt a knob and took a deep breath, closed his eyes, and snapped his fingers together. On he sailed, the knob slipping out of his nerveless hand, and he seemed to be gaining height more rapidly. Just then his eyes went a little glazed and he could almost laugh at himself - easily able to save himself, yet too scared. He felt a little calmer and perhaps slightly cooler with less desperation. The next time he felt a knob his fingers tried harder to hold it and he slowed slightly and started going on a downward incline. His arms relaxed and he shook his head wonderingly. He judged that in a few seconds he would hit deck again at this slant. Yet after that time there was no collision. Alarmed, he brought his arms back into play and felt for metal. There it was, but he was flying

parallel to it. The air-jets had pushed him up: yet they surely had not that power before. The gunmen must have increased air-pressure. He almost panicked. He would soon be on the upward climb and now a lot quicker. He felt again: yes, he was going up. With teeth pressed so hard together that he could hardly concentrate on his job he pushed his exploring hands down. Almost immediately he found a knob: he was so surprised that he lost it. Suddenly, he realised that this was it; he had to hold the next knob, or out he would float into coldness. He could now only just spread a hand flat against metal, and even then his arm was uncomfortably stiff, and his body had to bend in that direction a little. He let his finger-tips slide along the surface, so that his arms could be moderately comfortable. His left hand felt the upward curve of a knob. Without thinking, without, it seemed, a single conscious light in his brain, his left thumb and finger closed at first lightly and then tighter and tighter: it seemed as if he had been doing this since he was a child. He now had a strong hold on the knob, but his legs and the lower half of his body were twisting up, trying to throw themselves towards the distant glint of stars. Nothing could control this movement and resignedly he let himself swing up until his feet pointed directly upwards. Then he realised the danger. Yet it seemed nothing could be done about it. Just as he had thought, as his feet swung further over, his fingers on the knob were twisted; the result was inevitable. His head was now facing in the opposite direction and he was lying on his back. His back, though, was rubbing gently on metal and in places he could feel knobs; but not for long he realised. He had held on with his fingers longer than had seemed safe, and this was the only reason that he was touching metal at all. His hand groped underneath him and he grasped a knob. Slowly, almost painfully, he pulled himself round til his chest lay against the metal. Then he remembered the little compartment in the tail of the rocket where there was both food and oxygen. After a while he came to a decision, he would go there.

Suddenly, in the middle of these thoughts, the air-jets cut off. He felt unreasonably happy; he wasn't safe, of course, yet, but still it was a great help to him. Boldly, he drew himself along - but with the caution that his experience had dictated fused with it. First, he moved around, trying to fix his position relative to the tail end of the rocket. The accident had diverted his attention from this. When he had clarified the situation in his own brain, he realised that in his accident, indeed throughout it, he had been travelling across, rather than along the rocket, and since the airlock had been in view at first, he must have travelled once round. For a moment he was taken aback; it had seemed so fast and the time so short while it was happening. Then he smiled, his happiness coming back; it was as if you had woken up on Christmas day, thinking you had to go to work, then remembering what day it was. With that lasting smile resting on his lips, he moved away from the airlock, having now regained his sense of direction, relative to the rocket. Now he glided adventurously along, only touching knobs to bring him nearer metal or to decrease his speed. Presently, he pulled himself to a stop. He had realised at last that his arms were aching. In the middle of

his accident he had no time for anything like that. And afterwards he had been so much the victim of conflicting emotions that he had not noticed it. Now that he had he decided to rest. So with his right hand clutching a knob and his left hand drifting near a second one, he relaxed his muscles. He could not relax his mind, for he was desperately tired and had to fight strongly against sleep. As strength came back to his body he felt a little more awake, perhaps capable of reaching the tail this time. He flexed his shoulders and closed his eyes for a second. Then he snapped them open quickly, shocked at the complete relaxation that had come in that moment. He had felt his right hand almost slide from the knob. Alarmed he started moving forward again. Time passed swiftly for him and he was surprised when he saw the rim of the rocket before him, a right angle over which he could look down into infinity. Again he almost let himself fall asleep; he was so tired that he could hardly move. He had to force himself to slide over the edge, bend his body, and hold very tightly to the knobs. Soon he was over. Lying flat on the end of the rocket he pushed his body forward to the hole and saw the straps there by which he could hold himself down outside the actual compartment and lie half inside and half outside the hole. While he was watching these straps he almost fell asleep. He only just kept control of his mind; it seemed like a greased, slippery fish. By now he realised that he would have to use those straps for he was so tired that his mind would permit nothing else. He would sleep outside till he was conscious enough to go in. Almost too tired to tie the straps, he fumbled for the thongs and pulled himself in. There he lay while he clumsily buckled himself in. Then he really relaxed; his mind seemed to swim once round in his head then it collapsed into unconsciousness.

He was awakened by a mighty roaring sound. He was wide awake very quickly. It only needed a second for him to become completely clear about what was happening. The jets had started and he was in an unguarded position. You were not meant to lie in these straps during acceleration. If you did then you took the consequences.

His face crinkled up, his skin peeled off, and he knew no more.

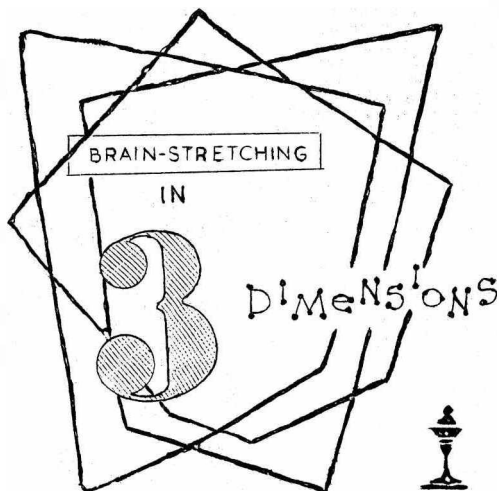
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EDITORIAL Jim Groves continued from page 3

#### THE GALAXY CHECKLIST

The GALAXY checklist is at last ready. Compiled by member Karl Dollner, it covers the period from the first issue in October 1950 to December 1958, some 98 issues. Like the New Worlds index it is divided into three parts, issue, author and story listings. Also the same as the New Worlds checklist will be the price, a member's first copy will cost 2/6d, after which extra copies will cost the same as for non-members; that is 3/6d. It will be on sale at the Convention this year, and after the Con it may be obtained from next year's Treasurer, Ted Forsyth, at 11 Ferndale Road, London. S.W.4.





ARTHUR R. WEIR.

In the course of the last few years, several types of three-dimensional chess have been evolved, and thanks to the courtesy and help of Fred Galvin of the Mathematics Dept. of the University of Minnesota and of Ruth Berman, also of Minnesota, I am able to give the following outline of the most elaborate and complete of them.

Space Chess is played in a cube, consisting of 8 square sheets of transparent plastic, divided up as chessboards of 64 squares each; the cube thus contains 512 cubical cells, called CASES.

Each player has 64 men: 40 pawns, 4 Rooks, 4 Bishops, 4 Fools, 4 Nippogriffs, 2 Favourite, 2 Knights, 2 Archbishops, 1 Queen and 1 King.

ROOKS move in straight lines parallel to the edges of the cube, i.e. along a line of cases having faces in common; a rook in an inner case can move in 6 directions.

BISHOPS move in straight lines parallel to the diagonals of any of the faces of the cube, i.e. along a line of cases having edges in common; a bishop in an inner case can move in 12 directions.

FOOLS move in straight lines parallel to the solid diagonals

of the cube, i.e. along a line of cases having corners in common; a fool in an inner case can move in 8 directions.

A FAVOURITE can move at choice either as a bishop or as a rook.

An ARCHBISHOP can move at choice either as a bishop or a fool.

The QUEEN can move at choice either as rook, bishop or fool.

The KING can, like the queen, move in any direction, but only one case at a time, i.e. the King moves from the case in which it stands to any one of the 26 cases that touch it at face, edge or corner.

PAWNS move one case forward or up or down (but NOT sideways or backward) like a Rook, but may only capture by moving one case diagonally, like a bishop or a fool; thus a pawn on an inner case threatens 8 adjacent cases. An unmoved pawn may be moved forward one or two cases, and it can be captured en passant. A pawn which reaches the other side of the cube is promoted.

Perhaps the best way of describing the KNIGHT's move is as follows: an inner case is touched by 26 cases, and there are 98 cases that touch them, which may be considered as being two cases away from the knight. Now if the knight were a queen (and the intervening cases were empty) it would be able to move to 26 of those cases; the knight can move to any of the remaining 72 cases.

The HIPPOGRIFF may be considered as moving three cases like a rook, and then making a plane knight's move in the plane perpendicular to the rook's move; thus, a hippogriff in an inner case has 48 possible moves.

The algebraic formula used to record moves is as follows: floors are numbered in Roman figures I (bottom) to VIII (top); files are lettered A to H (A is on White's left) and ranks are in Arabic numerals 1 to 8, from White's side to Black's.

At the commencement of a game, White's 64 pieces fill the first 2 ranks of floors III, IV, V & VI; the second row of each of these floors is filled with pawns, the first rows being filled as follows:

Floor VI	p	p	f	B	B	f	p	p	p equals pawn
Floor V	R	B	A/B	Q	F	Kn	H	R	f equals fool
Floor IV	R	B	Kn	F	K	A/B	H	R	B equals Bishop
Floor III	p	p	f	B	B	f	p	p	R equals Rook

H equals Hippogriff, Kn equals Knight, F equals Favourite, A/B equals Archbishop, Q equals queen, and K equals King.

Black's men are set up as the mirror image of White's; thus White's queen is initially on V-2-1, whereas Black's queen is initially on V-8-8.

The detailed rules of this (and of several other unorthodox chess variants) may be obtained (in French) in the book Nouveaux Jeux d'Echecs Non-Orthodoxes by Joseph Boyer, 3 rue Leconte de Lisle, Paris 16e, France, published 1954, price in England 8/6d post free.

BRITISH

MAGAZINE  
REVIEWS

NEW WORLDS

No. 102.

**VENUS PLUS X** by Theodore Sturgeon. This will be reviewed when complete.

**THE EDGE OF OBLIVION** by Peter Hawkins brings together two old favourites: the possible properties that matter might assume under the temperature and pressure conditions of a nova core, and the neurotic scientist knocked off his mental balance by the failure of his pet line of research. Intertwined with these is an "explanation" of the atmosphere of Venus. The idea is ingenious but leaves too much unexplained, and the human side of the story is told with stock types.

C plus.

**HIATUS** by Frank Brandon. A short tale of the first crew member to awake from artificial hibernation at the end of an interstellar voyage, and his half-sane struggles to remember where he is and what it is that he has to do. But why didn't the automatic tape recordings, instead of warning him off the mechanisms he was not supposed to touch, also direct him to the places he was supposed to go? Sorry, but it's nonsense.

D.

**THE SPIRIT IS WILLING** by Richard Graham. An alien and lower culture, unable to stand up to Earth's overlordship by means of open force, tries a more insidious approach. The idea is good, and the author has made a praiseworthy attempt to put across an alien atmosphere, but he leaves just a little too much to the

reader's powers of imagination and reconstruction. C plus.  
STOPOVER EARTH, by Dan Morgan. The plot of this is "Stranger from Space" told in reverse, so to speak, and well told - was the girl's death suicide or accident? B.

STARTING COURSE, by Arthur Sellings. How can you start a colonial empire when the home population is too contented to move? Several stories have been written on this theme, but I think that this is a brand new answer, and an interesting one, since only the fundamentally decent people, desirable as colonists, could be expected to react in this way. B plus.

Article : RADIO SPACE by Kenneth Johns. A very good and up-to-date account of radar (as opposed to radio) astronomy. B plus.

Editorial - John Carnell compares several of personalities' reactions to the Wernher von Braun film I AM AT THE STARS. Most of the criticisms are pointed and interesting, but not the one that complained that nothing was said in the film about the V-1. Von Braun was a rocket expert, and never pretended to be anything else; V-1 was not a rocket at all, but a pilotless jet aircraft of only slightly unconventional type, in which field von Braun had no special knowledge.

Book Reviews - this time all by Carnell; an interesting and fairly long survey of new pb's on both sides of the Atlantic.

COVER, by a newcomer Sydney Jordan, is an adequate, but not striking, illustration to VENUS PLUS X; it's a pity the countryside does not show the colour and detail described in the text.

No. 103.

VENUS PLUS X part II to be reviewed when complete.

THE MOON VERSUS NIMROD by Theodore L. Thomas. A powerful industrial corporation takes advantage of an accident to the plant of a chlorella-farmer on the Moon to try to "squeeze him out," only to have their attempt recoil upon their own heads. Thanks to Centerton, Westgate & Hogan, the enterprising firm of ex-engineer lawyers, whose hilarious beginnings were the subject of the tale THE LAW SCHOOL (ASFBRE September 1958). Plenty of incident and amusing skulduggery; we could do with more tales in the same vein. B.  
SPRING FAIR MODULI by Francis C. Rayer. This is "I never get a square deal because I'm an alien" brought to a happy ending through an (undescribed) transdimensional gimmick. None of the characters seemed worth the trouble to me. D.

A WORLD FOR ME by Robert Hoskins. If you set out to educate a humanoid robot, can you object if it develops a personality of its own, which you may happen to dislike? There have been many yarns on this framework; this one gives the impression of a potboiler written in a hurry: e.g. on p.47 it speaks of experiments on this robot's "successors", while on p.53 it says that this whole series of experimental projects was closed down; also I cannot see why the project director gave the order he did for the robot's destruction. D plus.

THE MAN WHO CAME BACK by Robert Silverberg. After eighteen years a man performs the supposedly impossible task of buying out his indentures, on one of the less agreeable colony worlds, and returns to Earth with the stated intention of marrying his old love, now

a much-married-and-divorced television star. And he does too - how being the story gimmick. I'd say it wasn't worth it, but then I've a warm corner for an author who'll give a colony world a classic Czech name! So we'll call it B minus.

ROUTINE EXERCISE by Phillip E. High. There have been many time-travel tales in which we "meet our own ancestors", but this one has a new twist. A good, fast moving adventure tale; pity it's so short. B plus.

EDITORIAL. Carnell surveys changing patterns of sf in Britain and U.S.; and tells a good tale against himself.

POSTSCRIPT. One letter gives more and very interesting matter on Reinlein's much-disputed new novel.

COVER - by Lewis; I can't believe that the lady-killer hero of Sturgeon's novel was as downright ugly as this!

Arthur R. Weir.

## SCIENCE FANTASY

No. 45.

THE MAP COUNTRY by Kenneth Bulmer. Kenneth Bulmer is now acquiring one of the most valuable gifts an sf author can have - the trick of bringing off something quite unexpected. If I had read this story without knowing the author's name, I would have unhesitatingly put it down to John Brunner, since it is more than a little reminiscent of that author's DIPRINT OF CHAOS in No. 42. The basic plot gimmick - that of the parties who, going off the torn edge of their map, find themselves in another "earth" very different from that of everyday - is not original, but the characters, and the working out of the theme are altogether original. Like THE BOMBS OF SMOKE and BEYOND THE SILVER SKY it shows the author at his best, though like the latter, it leaves too many unsatisfied questions at its finish. A minus.

STUDIO 5 THE STARS by J.G. Ballard. The author has returned, here, to the artist colony, "Vermilion Sands" which was the centre of his FREAK BELLA DONNA of four years ago. This story, like that, centres round a mysterious woman with odd artistic gifts, but this time a poetess instead of a singer, who erupts into the local group of poets, who are accustomed to producing their masterpieces with the aid of electronic computer-transcribers, that will write perfect verse in any given metre or rhyme-pattern or theme to which they have been programmed. The myth of Melander and Corydon is re-enacted in real life, with results slightly shattering - in more senses than one. It is a brilliant new idea, but the writing does not come to life as it should, and the characterization is poor. Article - STUDIES IN SCIENCE FICTION, 10: FIVE-JAMES O'BRIEN by Sam Moskowitz. Here we have Moskowitz at his best again, though the article is rather long for the selected author's relatively small output. However Moskowitz has kept firmly to his point, and given us a lively and interesting account of a talented and versatile fantasist. Two points are worth raising: apparently Moskowitz has not troubled to look up any of the files of British magazines, in which he could have found more recent reprints of several of O'Brien's stories; also his claim that only Frank Owen ever got close to O'Brien in "capturing the complete essence and mood of Chinese storytelling", simply will not stand up for a moment before

any reader acquainted with the works of the late Ernest Brahmah!  
B plus.

COVER - by Brian Lewis illustrating THE MAP COUNTRY. A good striking cover, but, as so often, spoiled by incorrect detail. We are told that the "tank-things" had unprotected caterpillar tracks, and this point is important, since it was only thanks to this that some of the protagonists escaped with their lives. Yet Lewis has shown them with either no tracks at all, or else completely enclosed tracks - I wonder why?

Arthur R. Weir.

#### NEW WORLDS 104.

MOON OF DELIGHT by Brian W. Aldiss. The blurb suggests that this is some sort of parallel to Fredric Brown's PLACET IS A CRAZY PLACE, but in fact Tandy two is a very different kind of place, and this is a very different kind of story.

Incidentally, if the "strip" can stop a massive WTL ship, moving at large multiples of the velocity of light, in about 200 milliseconds, why isn't everything in the ship smashed superflat by the deceleration?

But, as always, Brian Aldiss has produced an unusual story.

B minus.

THE SINGING GRASSES by Mike Davies. In this would-be tear-jerker short, a star-ship captain finds the legitimate way out of an intolerable situation.

D minus.

GOGOLO by E.C. Tubb. How to protect a poor and defenceless colony world against influence from "home". This is again one of Ted Tubb's "atmospheric" tales - an atmosphere of deception. A minus. FIVE by D.S. Stewart. A brand-new and complicated idea, rather poorly developed by a new and inexperienced hand. C.

STAR LIGHT, STAr BRIGHT by Ian Wright. Seeing is believing even when you don't want to believe. But I cannot believe that the coincidence of dates would have gone unobserved by the coroner's court.

B minus.

Cover by Brian Lewis. Tillo to VENUS PLUS X; good but not a masterpiece.

Arthur R. Weir.

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#### BOOK REVIEWS continued

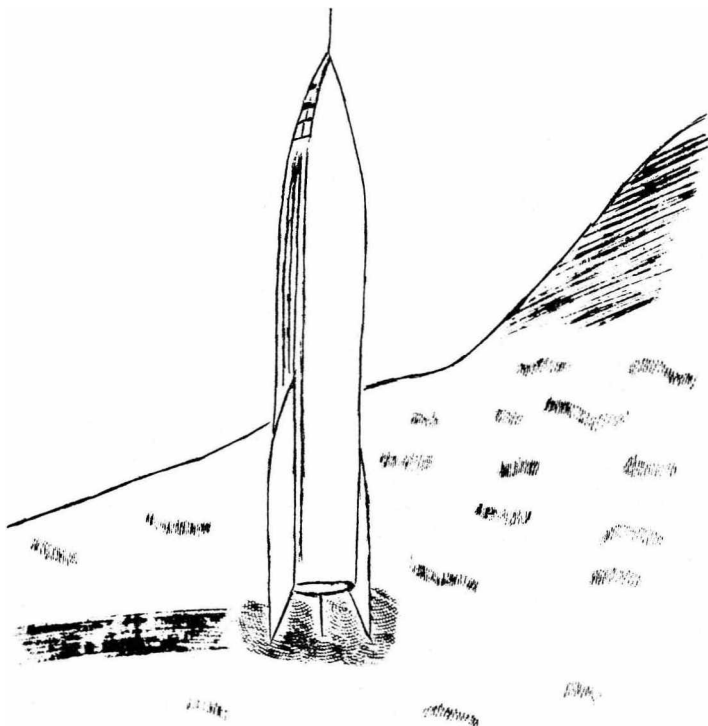
through to sheep. "Eat the weeds in the potato patch, but leave the potatoes alone," sort of thing. Gradually the languages are mastered and finally the animals are enrolled in the armed forces. This is the story of the first mission on which they are used.

If you missed this story in the serial form in Galaxy then read it here, if you've read it before then read it again. It's good - very good.

Pat Kearney.

Illustration by Chris Miller (transferred to stencil by Jim Groves).

This is the only response so far to our recent appeal for art-work from members.

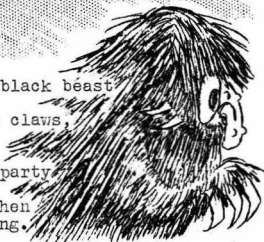


# THE BALLAD

ATOM

They say in the East that there dwells a black beast  
Whose motto is "Cherchez la femme":  
It howls and it roars and it snickers its claws,  
and the villagers whisper "The BEM!"

I was drinking Bacardi that night at the party  
When Stefan turned up with the Thing,  
So alone of the fen I was not surprised when  
It was marched through the hall on a string.



It seemed like an age till they climbed on  
the stage  
And the chairman collected his wits:  
"Three cheers for old Stee, and his tame  
chimpanzee--  
'though the creature fair gives me the  
creeps!"



"What a horrible sight we have with us  
tonight,  
This tentacled figure of hatred!  
---By the way, am I right? Are those  
manacles quite  
As unbreakable as they are rated?

"This eater of men he has tracked to its  
den--  
No thoughts for his safty had he---  
With fannish persistence he broke its  
resistance  
And brought it for Fandom to see!"

Here Stefan broke in, with an unhappy grin  
At the Bem, who was twirling a key;  
"There's a slight alteration to your explanation--  
As it happens, the Bem has brought me."

Not a sound, not at all, was heard in the hall  
As these words of disaster sank in;  
Every fan, drunk or not, stood aghast on the spot.  
As his future turned pretty damn thin.





# OF THE BEM

BY

SID BIRCHBY



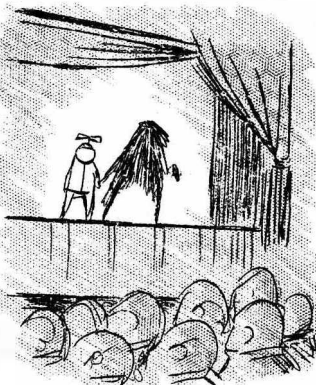
"I presume you're aware," snarled the  
Thing with a glare,  
"That a Bem has one outstanding feature--  
It is one which I doubt I could manage  
without,  
Since I am a Conventional creature."

I refer, in a phrase, to the 94 ways  
In which I've appeared on a cover.  
In at least 93 I've been chasing a She,  
And we'd best draw a veil on the other."

But a fan from the South dared to  
open his mouth  
(From the back of the hall, out  
of range)  
"We've no women to spare, but  
you'll find, if you care,  
That a neofan makes a nice change."

Said the Bem: "Your suggestion is  
out of the question.  
It makes my tentacles curl;  
I'll give you two winks to finish  
your drinks  
And then I start chasing a girl!"

Yet wait! There's a crash, as it  
twirled its moustache,  
And someone cried "I volunteer!"  
If you want a free tee, you can try  
chasing me..."  
---and a neofan gave a faint cheer.



From a room without name stepped a  
beautiful dame:

A blonde with some scissors and  
glue!

"I could use a new bonnet with your  
hide upon it!

As sure as my name's Fob-Mailed  
Sue!"



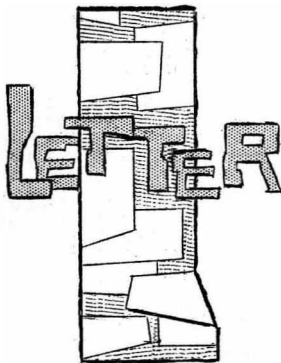
At these friendly remarks -- in a sheet  
of blue sparks --  
The Ben jumped a yard from the floor;  
And as Sue with a leer snipped a piece  
from its rear  
They vanished hot-foot through the door.

From the depths of the night came expressions  
of fright  
Such as "Don't let her touch me!" and  
"Eek!"  
As Sue later boasted, when oft she was  
toasted,  
It didn't stop running that week.

And there in the East you may find the  
sad beast,  
A-limping along rather wobbly;  
And if you ask why, it will quote with  
a sigh!  
It's motto: 'La donna e mobile'.

Sid  
Birchby





## section

Ethel Lindsay, Courage House, 6 Langley Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey.

I haven't read an Amazing for years, so George's article made me curious, maybe I will have another bash at it. Ken Slater only whetted my curiosity with that little bit of gossip he mentioned. I would like to know which village it was, and what they voted for.

Now, to Daphne's letter .. the first thing that strikes me is that part where she says "what if a meeting with publishers or editors were arranged". This is a very remote possibility indeed as she must well know, but even if the type of thing that she envisages did get arranged, I am sure none of the officials would fail to attend on the grounds she mentions. But what editors for goodness sake? There is only one, Ted Cornell, in this country. Who are these editors and publishers that worry Daphne so? Why should we keep VECTOR impersonal to impress them? We have had John W. Campbell at a convention here, and he was not noticeably unimpressed by the 'fannish goings on'.

As to the serious fans who also worry Daphne I wonder why some of them do not step forward to help more with VECTOR? Or the BSFA itself for that matter. Who has done all the work since the inception of the BSFA but fans, and all active fans at that, with little need to take on extra responsibility.

Daphne wants, if I read her correctly, people who take unpaid jobs in non-professional organisation to act as if they were professionals. Frankly I think that is an unfair thing to ask or expect, no matter what the organisation.

\*(( I'm curious about that village too! ))\*

Peter Mabey, 10 Wellington Square, Cheltenham, Glos.

The cover is disappointing after the previous one - unless you can continue to get outstanding ones, I think you'll have to adopt Daphne's suggestion of a permanent design: this would pay off in another way, in that it would then be economic to have it printed, with a blank space somewhere to have the issue number put in. The interior illustrations, on the other hand, are generally pretty good - the heading for the editorial, in particular, is in Atom's best non-comic style.

Taking your editorial and the letter from Daphne Buckmaster together, the only comment that I can add is that if all the officers of the BSFA had to be folk who could put that job before their own private circumstances, then it would cease to exist. Although the Association is going along well, it's not big enough yet to expect to be able to find enough people able to give it that kind of service among the membership - and there is also the danger of getting the type of person who wants to shape the organisation they're running to their own ideas regardless of the wishes of the members. (They aren't necessarily after any sort of gain - they just have strong views about what the organisation should be, and not enough consideration for what it is.) I agree with you that at present we can't expect to exert much influence on editors - again it's a question of size relative to the total readership. However, consideration of the objects of the BSFA as described in section 2 of the constitution in relation to what is being done and what can be done - not only by the committee, but by the members generally - does warrant further attention, and I hope that Daphne's letter will start members thinking about it.

George Locke has practically provided two articles in one, though I'd have rather preferred it if he'd done two separate ones. The history of the early days of magazine science fiction was very interesting, but it didn't really leave him enough space to develop his argument for livening up the current magazines by a change of editors. I agree that Campbell's latest ideas have become altogether too dominant, but it seems a bit too drastic to throw him right out: though I'd like to see what sort of fiction he might produce now. (I suppose it's possible that he might still be writing under a pseudonym, but I don't think so.)

I don't think I've got much to say about the reviews - I've not seen the Von Braun film yet so can't comment, except to say that if it bears any significant similarity to his actual life-story it'll be totally different from practically every other Hollywood biography I've seen!

Doc Weir, Primrose Cottage, Westonbirt Village, Nr. Tetbury, Glos.

Cover - lovely. A propos of Daphne Buckmaster's criticisms how about doing as the old Amazing Stories used to - i.e. having the top panel of the cover, with the rubric of the name and number always the same in some standard style, and then the lower panel may be just anything?

Editorial - if you accept any official post in any organisation then that becomes your number one hobby for the time being, and all your own concerns, short of actually making your living, take second place - right?

General Chuntering - very good as always. I loved his account of the vote stuffing over the Rugos'. Also his comment on PATF-FINDERS TO PARS.

Letter column - the ideograph of a typewriter makes a very good heading.

KEN SLATER - I agree that "psience" when it reaches the cult stage belongs with spiritualism, etc. But it certainly hasn't with me; I built my printed circuit Hieronymous machine simply to demonstrate to my own satisfaction that the whole thing was a fake. Working strictly from the results I've got, I've managed to demonstrate (to my own annoyance!) that the thing isn't a fake - merely a distractingly interesting phenomenon, so unreliable and un-understandable as to be no damn use anyway!

As regards Lovecraft, I've inadvertently answered his challenge since I've mentioned the title of the story from which he was quoting (DREAM QUEST OF UNKNOWN KADATH) in reviewing the Moskowitz article on Lovecraft.

Jim Linwood, 10 Meadow Cottages, Wetherfield, Herts.

Liked the I.M. AT THE STARS reviews. Somehow I got hold of a free ticket for the Nottm showing with a distributors-handout. The handout, an open letter from producer Lee Thomson, claimed the film took no sides, and presented both sides' opinions. So I tottered along to the local expecting 1 1/2 hours of thought provoking material...I wish I hadn't! The GMD side was represented by a hysterical American who belonged in a nut-house, whose opinions weren't valid anyway because his family were killed by a buzz-bomb, leaving him emotionally disturbed. VB was presented alien to my impression of him; I see him as brilliant, yet politically immature (like most Germans at that period), pottering around with his inventions, thinking of Hitler as a remote benefactor, and actually believing the Third Reich would last for ever. He hasn't changed much has he?...just substitute Pentagon for Nazi-Party. Personal opinions aside, it was a downright lousy film, full of irritating repartee like when the SS man picks up a VB model rocket and asks, "Vot ist dis?" "A moon rocket", "To go to der moon?"...ecccchhhh.

Enjoyed your verbal battle with Mike Moorcock. Re the individual versus society; you have probably read Herman Wouk's fine novel THE CAINE MUTINY, and are familiar with it's pro-society message. The minesweeper "Caine" is captained by the cowardly, neurotic, queeg, whose frustrated officers take over when he gives an order which would mean the destruction of the ship. The officers are courtmartialled, but a brilliant defending lawyer, Greenwald, reduces queeg to a nervous wreck, and shows that he is incapable of captaining a ship. The officers are acquitted and queeg's career is finished. The twist is delivered by Greenwald who says that queeg was an instrument of society, and was therefore right even tho' he would have killed every man on the "Caine". The true villain was the mutiny leader, Hofer, who triggered the dissent against queeg; what's more Kofer was dangerous because he thought for himself, and actually read books! What Wouk was in effect doing was the fictionalization of the Organisation-man philosophy...defunding the neurotic, tranquilizer-taking, executive, who keeps the wheels turning. Now any intelligent person could defend

queeg on the grounds that he represents society is beyond me; only yesmen take orders without question...look what happened to Hitler's Germany!

\*(THE CAINE MUTINY - I haven't read it but I get the general drift of it from what you write and what I've heard. I don't think that you're right in surmising that Wouk was eulogising the Organisation Man. If so he'd have had queeg vindicated, and shown in a more favourable light, a sort of loyal but pig-headed man. What Wouk was probably saying was that when someone is given authority he must be obeyed, and that disobedience must be punished. You can't run a ship, or an army, or even a country, by consulting everybody everytime a decision must be made. Split second decisions are made by individuals not by groups. Even in a democracy like ours the bulk of the people are only consulted every five years about the running of the country. In between times absolute control is exercised by three or four hundred men. For every queeg there are a thousand good captains. And for every Keefer who is right there are hundreds of men who would stir up trouble for personal petty motives if they thought they could get away with it. You can't change the general rules to allow for minor exceptions; that must be done in each particular case without altering the general rule. Greenwald's final statement is in defence of a position, that of captain of a ship, not of an individual, queeg.

Yes, just look at what happened to Hitler's Germany. They were beaten by the finest body of yes-men in the world, the British Army. Men who were ordered to their deaths for the common good, and who went without complaint. Under a competent leader yes-men are necessary for success, and the group is responsible for making sure that it selects good competent leaders.))\*

Archie Mercer, 434/4 Newark Road, North Hykeham, Lincoln.

English community with a population of under 7,000 - I've checked most of the obvious ones in a friend's A1 book, unfortunately I can pin it neither on Hoddesdon nor Wisbech.

Daphne has a point about christian names and nicknames. I can't think of any Committee nicknames that have been dragged through the pages of VECTOR, I suppose that she means diminutives such as Jim, Archie, etc. But as far as her general principle goes I've always tried to describe myself officially as "A.M. Mercer" rather than "Archie Mercer", I even revived my otherwise moribund middle initial to do it. But then again - if Committee members and the like in the OC, why not professional authors in the prozines? The John Thises and Kenneth Thats and Brian W. Thootherers are too numerous for words, and diminutives such as Sam (Morwin Jr.) and Fred (Hoyic) are by no means unheard of. It looks like your practice is at least capable of putting up a spirited defence.

As for her wider angles (if you'll pardon the expression), it strikes me that you're doing a pretty good job of trying to please BOTH types of sf reader. And her conditions for acceptance of office, though ideal, are not in tune with the facts of life. Officers with limitations on their time are after all better than no officers at all. Within limits anyway.

Sobbie Gray, 14 Bennington Street, Cheltenham, Glos.

You seem to be of the same opinion as I am regarding marchers, though you have made a suggestion that I never have i.e. why don't they stop wasting their time marching and finance the social scientists. But I can't help thinking that, human nature being what it is, what would happen if two human beings were in a situation - a dangerous one - and only one could escape, would either of them think of the other? There may be a dedicated few, but would not even the best of us get out fast? So what are these marchers doing? Are they really concerned with saving everyone's skin or are they only thinking of their own and have got scared enough to do this protest marching. No one is going to tell me that every one of those marchers was another Canon Collins. Anyway, I saw the end of last year's Easter march and quite a number of the marchers were recognisable as the type of exhibitionists who would jump on any bandwagon for the sake of being in the limelight. It must have been quite sickening for the small nucleus of really sincere people.

Daphne's letter - Daphne can be very logical, but she over-looks one important thing. Most people aren't logical (thank God!) and any publication which wants to interest people must make an appeal to their interests or emotions. In other words there must be a certain amount of personality to a magazine.

I would also like to point out that it was the friendly atmosphere (Christian names and such) in the editorials and letter columns of the pre-war sf professional magazines that was largely responsible for the formation of fan clubs, and from that to societies and associations.

By the way there is a so-called horror film going the rounds that I'm not sure whether it is supposed to be taken seriously or whether it is intended to guy all horror films. It's an X film called "The House of Frankenstein". It starts off with a mad scientist, a hunchback (Notre Dame up to date) who naturally falls in love with the heroine (who can't act), Frankenstein's Monster, sorry, Dracula came first, then the werewolf and the monster. Talk about piling Ossa on Pelion! Characters all destroyed at the end, until they want to make the next film.

\*(Marchers - I think you underestimate people, providing they don't panic I reckon the majority would act well in the situation you postulate. As for the exhibitionists, it's a case of working with the material to hand, we can't all be Canon Collins'. The few lead and the many follow, albeit reluctantly.))\*

John Phillifent, 103 Clam Attlee Court, London, S.W.6.

I have just finished reading VECTOR 10, and this is as good a time as any to take stock. Doc Weir has come out in favour of the 'personal' reaction, so here's mine, for what it's worth. Staying with Doc, and his many predecessors, the book and magazine reviews are a legitimate part of the BSFA, and 'belong' in VECTOR, but they have been, consistently, it's weakest part. As I have been responsible for some of the material, I feel entitled to comment.

Before taking on the task of reviewing, I had to decide, objectively, just what a review should be, and my conclusions are directly opposite to Doc's. As I see it, what the reader wants from a review is, quite simply, the title of the story, where

published, who wrote it, what it's about, whether or not it's worth reading, exciting, interesting, well written or not, and maybe whether the concepts and conclusions in it are valid .. and nothing else. To intrude with my personal reactions, whether or not I've seen this or that twist, theme or gimmick before, whether it was better or worse than some previous story, I consider an impertinence. I cannot imagine more than a small handful of people who would give two damns as to my personal reaction to a story. To try to rate a story in any sort of 'competition' standard would be sheer conceit.

Carnell, over here, and Campbell, over 'there' are far more experienced in this field than myself, or any other amateur reviewer, yet they both run a special department for 'rating' stories, by the only valid method, which is readership appreciation. If those two experts refrain from trying to 'rate' a story, the lesson is obvious. I was pleased to see this point raised by Ken Slater and Mike Moorcock. I'm pretty sure there are many others of like mind.

The only other point of importance was raised by Daphne Buckmaster, and I agree, wholeheartedly, with every word she wrote. The trouble, here, is that 'fandom' is a state of mind, a 'conviction' which makes those afflicted with it almost immune to ordinary common sense. Fandom is one thing, SF readership is another. The may, and quite often do, overlap in the same person, like the gambler who goes to church on Sundays, but, as activities, they are poles apart.

Perhaps a few rough figures will help. Nova sells two magazines a month. There are, also, Analog, Galaxy, If, and F&SF. All selling, for money, and presumably, making a profit, in this country. Even allowing for overlapping and duplicating, this argues a readership, a buying readership, of the order of 200,000 and up, which is something like a hundred times as many as there are fans all put together. And that minority, that one in two hundred, is pretty well catered for, already, what with clubs, groups, associations and fanzines.

I joined .. was persuaded to join, the BSFA, in the impression that it was; per it's title, a science-fiction association. I am not a 'fan', never have been, don't want to be, and am not the least bit interested in 'fandom'. For some odd reason, this seems to be Greek, to fans. For some weird reason, the fact that out of every hundred people who read and enjoy SF, only one is 'fan' inclined, seems to be incomprehensible to fans. Yet it is a fact.

Now, so far, the BSFA has been run by, and heavily slanted towards, 'fandom'. It is, in fact, a thinly disguised fan-club, and VECTOR a watered-down fanzine. And, after all this time, the membership is around two hundred. To me, these facts speak for themselves. The officials of the BSFA, present and past, have been 'fans', have been obsessed by the 'fannish' approach and technique, and have had to attend to BSFA matters, and the production of VECTOR, in between bouts of other and hectic 'fanac'. Much credit to them for the sweat and blood, of course, but ..

The 'fan' approach is obviously failing to reach any appreciable fraction of that positive 200,000 who are interested enough in SF to pay money for it every month. That is fact. In my opinion, only, the 'fan' approach is doing more, is actively alien-



ating many who would otherwise be interested in an organisation to promote a follow-on interest in SF. I don't consider myself in any way unique, and I like reading SF, reading about it, discussing it, arguing about it, and, at times, trying to write some. On the face of it there are some 200,000 more like me. If only one percent of that number could be induced to join an association for the purpose of promoting and satisfying interest in their favourite fiction, our membership would be 2,000 and more. As against 200, or less.

I would be happy to see a positive, reasoned statement, or some concrete evidence, that I am overstating my case, or that my conclusions are wrong. Until such time, however, my personal conclusion is this. I shall renew my sub. this year. I'll play you one more game, your way. Then, unless there is a decided and significant change .. goodbye!

\*({ You can see Ella's reaction to John's letter in her column, but I'd like to add a few words of my own. To start at the beginning - the sf readership is a specialized selection of people from the general public, and fandom is a further selection from the ranks of the sf readers. The thing then, in both cases, is not to thrust sf or fandom down their throats but just to ensure that they know it exists. For instance I know quite a few members of the G.P. They know that I read sf (usually they find the fact hilarious). They know that sf and the BSFA exist, I don't thrust sf down their throats or insist that they join the BSFA, but if they want and ask for information then I'll give it. Ditto for sf readers. As long as they know that fandom exists and who to ask for further information that's ok by me. Any further effort is up to them. The same goes inside the BSFA. The Committee posts go, almost without argument, to those who want to take them. Once in the post you are at liberty to nudge the Association in whatever direction you choose. If the members disapprove then they can exercise their right to refuse to re-elect you the following year.

As for those 200,000 sf readers whom we are failing to attract, well it's one thing to be willing to lay out two, four, six or more shillings per month for sf mags but quite another to lay out a pound for the dubious privilege of belonging to an organisation of one's fellow addicts. I should say that most of those sf readers don't give a damn about the others. Even of those who have joined the BSFA few seem interested enough to meet one another or write.

Our ads are in the magazines, and they're not fannish in nature, and that's as far as we can go. If the sf reader does not want to respond then there's very little that we can do to make him.

I've been trying to think what John means by this "fannish slant" that VECTOR has, and so far I've got the following:

- 1) The editor is, and always has been, a fan.
- 2) It is duplicated like a fanzine. (The only economic process).
- 3) Illustrated by fanartists. (None other available.)
- 4) Written for by fans, albeit sf type material. (Ditto.)
- 5) Publishes a fanzine reprint each issue.
- 6) Extremely informal in tone. (I can only shrug.)

What else is there I wonder?

Meredith Chatterton, 63 Pentire Road, London, E.17.

Best item in the issue was George Locke's 'THE INGROWN'. It says much that I have thought for years, but says it clearly and effectively. Good for him, saying in effect, "Campbell must go" (go with honour, of course, for his great contributions to sf, but still go). I hope a third era may succeed the Gernsback and Campbell eras.

As a CNDer I must remark on your reply to Jim Linwood's letter. You justify lumping CND with anti-vice and anti-gambling on the grounds that each "seek to abolish what amount to universal human activities". This simply is not true. Warfare is not universal. You yourself mention the Eskimos and try to explain them away. Even one exception invalidates a general law. In fact of course there are other cultures that do not have warfare. The Arapesh of New Guinea for example, and one of the American Indian tribes - I think the Zuni but I may have got the wrong one off-hand. The truth is of course that among tribal cultures some are very warlike and some very pacific. Even among the "civilised" nations, Switzerland has not been at war for 400 years - 12 or 15 generations have lived and died without suffering from your universal human activity. In short, warfare is a cultural pattern, not some inborn instinct.

\*(( First the cultures you mention are minor ones, none of the major cultures come into that category. Second Switzerland is part of Western civilization, a very fortunate part so far. The instinct is the instinct to survive, to fight for the right to go on living.

To take another tack, for a ban to be effective there must be ways to enforce it ; woudld by who? And if such a ban could be enforced why stop at nuclear weapons?))\*

Brian Jordan, 86 Piccadilly Road, Burnley, Lancs.

THE INGROWN - This is lovely, yes. George sums it up very well, I think....things are bad, bad, when Astounding runs an article on crystal-growing for beginners ....but then it isn't Astounding any more is it? Thank God that didn't happen - I guess the name change was a good idea after all, if that's the sort of crud that Campbell is going to publish.

later letter.

Here, slightly late, is my account of the Inauguration of the Sheffield University Union Science Fiction and Fantasy Association, SUUSFFA for short.

The Inaugural Meeting went according to plan - though turnout was rather less than promised. Only regret was that we had to skip the letter from the BSFA due to shortage of time - though only one person present hadn't heard it before.

We now have a constitution and bye-laws, stating that our purpose is the furtherance of critical and constructive appreciation of sf and f in the Union and University.

The membership is about half from the science and technology faculties, and half from the arts faculties. This even distribution is generally regarded as a Good Thing. Also, as we have the promised membership of the Chairman of the Arts Society, a joint

debate or discussion of some kind may well be arranged.

That's about it 'cept for the list of committee members:

Chairman Brian Jordan (chemist)  
Secretary Peter Martin (chemist)  
Treasurer Frank Salter (fuel technologist)  
Librarian Peter Wright (psychologist)  
Editor Brian Jordan.  
Asst. Ed. Wolf Percival (arts)  
Programme and Social Sec. Norma Shiel (arts)  
General members Dave Bailey (chemist)  
Clive Walden (arts)

Total membership difficult to say. At present only 11, however, undismayed, we expect to reach 20 easily.

WEALSOHEARDFROM:

Ken Cheslin, Stourbridge, Peter Mansfield, Slough, and  
George Willick, Indiana.

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SECRETARY'S REPORT. ELLA PARKER continued  
heartening.

Friday night meetings will continue at my place, and as Joe is a regular attendee you will be able to meet him there, those of you who manage to get along; he'll be at the Convention too. Now I should be able to get round to writing all those letters I.O.U. You listening, Fred Hunter, Bill Morris, and Jim Norrie, just to mention a few?

I have enjoyed my year's work with you, and I have made many new friends as a direct result of it. Now I retire into the shadows and become once more 'just a member', but I'll be watching you!

'Bye now and a Happy Convention.  
It's all yours Joe.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ella', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.