

OPERATION FANTAST

Vol. 2, No. 3

SUMMER - 1953

Whole No. 15



CONTENTS

CARNELL, Creator of
NEW WORLDS 3

Let it be Natural
by Bert Campbell 7

Players of the Lens
by IAIN MacLAIN 9

BOOK REVIEWS . . . 12

WHERE and HOW ?
by Oscar Janser 14

ENIGMA by G. Whiting . . 16

GETTING THOSE BOOKS
PUBLISHED by J. J. Curle 21

BOOK REVIEWS . . . 22

THE LOADED MAGAZINE 25

GENERAL CHUNTERING . 28

(Cover pic by Staff Wright)

BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY



Editor: Capt. K. F. Slater, 13 Gp. R.P.C., B.A.O.R., 29, c/o G.P.O., England.

Assoc. Editor: Joyce Slater. *Art Editor:* Alan Hunter.

Correspondents: Ed. Wood, Chicago ; Bob Silverberg, New York.

(Australia - vacant !)

Official Representatives: U.S.A. - J. Ben Stark, 290 Kenyon Avenue, BERKELEY, 8, Calif., U.S.A.

Australia - David Cohen, Box 4940, G.P.O., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

South Africa - Pearle Appleford, 75 Kensington Drive, Durban North,
DURBAN, South Africa.

Subscription Rates: U.K. 7/6 - U.S.A. \$1.00 - Australia 7/6 - South Africa 7/6.

(Subscriptions cover 4 issues, and include membership of O.F., entitling members to receive all Newsletters, etc., issued in the subscription period).

CANSFIELD BROS.

(MAPS) LTD.



Specialist Photo Litho Printers .
for
Science Fiction

CARNELL—

Creator of NEW WORLDS



Born in Plumstead, London, in 1912, E.J. Carnell (Ted to his friends — John to the publishing world), is one of Britain's outstanding science fiction personalities of today. In fact, one might say he is THE personality, for there cannot be a fan in Britain — or for that matter in the English-speaking world — who has not at least heard of him.

Like most of his contemporaries, Mr. Carnell started on the path of science-fiction back in the days when the "BOY'S MAGAZINE" was publishing sensational serials about Venus and Mars for a juvenile public in the early '20's. Plus any books of that period. In 1930 he found his first American magazine — the Fall 1929 Wonder Stories Quarterly — and then haunted the London bookstalls for five years picking up the cheap (3d) ballast pulp mags, preferring ASF of the three then published. In 1936 he took out a direct subscription with S&S, which continued unbroken for 15 years until "foreign" subscription rates went haywire. During the war years while he was travelling the world with Combined Operations his subscriptions were kept paid (as gifts), by two of his close friends — Robert A. Heinlein and Forrest J. Ackerman. (Bob, by the way, is god-father to Ted's son Michael, and his daughter Leslyn was named after Bob's first wife).

Unlike most readers of those days in Britain, Carnell was an enthusiastic — in the active fashion. In 1936 he chose at random a number of readers' names, from the letter section of Amazing Stories, and commenced corresponding with Americans also interested in the s-f field. Amongst these was George Gordon Clark of Brooklyn, who was Member No. 1 of Gernsback's Science-Fiction League. In short order, Ted was involved in writing articles for Clark's Brooklyn Reporter, a fanzine which appeared to have everything. From this beginning his columns were requested by numerous other amateur publishers ranging from Philadelphia to Los Angeles.

George Gordon Clark was instrumental in putting Carnell in touch with the HQ of the British Interplanetary Society, in Liverpool, and a close friendship grew up between him and Les Johnson, the then Treasurer. He recalls his first fan meeting as being held in the smoke-filled environs of Liverpool Street Station between himself, Les Johnson and Eric Frank Russell, with a subsequent journey to Ilford for the three of them to meet Walter Gillings. From this small beginning a major portion of British fandom and publishing has sprung.

In 1937 a small group of readers in Leeds formed a branch of the SFL, and Carnell, Gillings, and Arthur C. Clarke, a fragile-looking youngster fresh out of college, journeyed North to attend Britain's first memorable Convention, from which evolved the Science Fiction Association, with its HQ in Leeds. Shortly after this the Liverpool HQ of the BIS thought it would be more advantageous to have the focal point of interest in London, and Carnell was one of the members who were instrumental in effecting this move, taking over editorship of the Society's Journal and Bulletin.

In 1938 the SFA had also expanded, and decided upon a Metropolitan HQ, and Carnell then became involved in the Treasury-ship of the science fiction group. This same year he and Les Johnson launched the Science Fiction Service, a magazine trading business devoted to s-f with an office in Liverpool (subsequent to

the war he sold his interest to Mr. Johnson and directed his attention at the expanding book field).

Then, in 1939, shortly before he became married, occurred an obscure but momentous event. Britain's foremost fan magazine of those days was called NOVAE TERRAE, and was produced by several fans in Leicester under the guidance of Maurice K. Hanson. Owing to encroaching business ties Hanson decided to drop the magazine, but the SFA decided to take it over as their official organ. Carnell became the editor and changed the title to NEW WORLDS, an important point in his fan life — but at the same time an event of even greater importance to present day readers of science fiction magazines. Devoted to short stories and controversial articles, the neatly duplicated first three issues of NEW WORLDS appeared some seven years before most fans realise! Only the advent of the war was to blame for the curtailment of both the magazine and the SFA in general.

Almost, but not quite still-born, the idea of his own magazine lay dormant in Carnell's mind throughout his trips to Algeria, South Africa, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Sicily, and Italy — but not quite.... Although the war drove a wedge between many British fans and their beloved fiction, Carnell maintained contact with all his old friends on both sides of the Atlantic and when the early pioneers of hard-covered s-f started publishing in USA he was ready to take over British representation for them, handling Fantasy Press, Prime Press, Shasta, FPCI, and Hadley.

At the same time NEW WORLDS had not been forgotten. In January of 1946 Carnell was introduced to the directors of Pendulum Publications by Frank Edward Arnold. There had been a time back in 1940 when Ted was dickerings with another publisher to put out a professional s-f magazine — but the scheme had fallen through after material for three issues had been framed. However, this experience was useful, and so at the meeting with Pendulum's directors Carnell was well-armed, and the project was revived.

There were rumours of more than one s-f magazine to appear on the British market, and Carnell and Pendulum decided that their first issue should appear with as little delay as possible. No advance publicity was given at home, although a knowledge of the project could not be avoided in American s-f circles. Carnell had expected some difficulty in obtaining material, but within a fortnight had received more than half a million words of MSS. From this quantity he had the not-too-easy task of selecting some 100,000 words for the first issue. The greater part of the material submitted, naturally, bore little resemblance to the type that Ted wanted. He had (and still has) a strong editorial policy, but in the case of the first issue of NEW WORLDS so little material conformed to his requirement that this policy he scrapped — for that issue — and selected as best he could stories that conformed to a very strained edition of his policy.

The main problem with which he was confronted was finding a suitable artist. No known British artist (in the medium) was available, and those artists approached had at best a vague — very vague — idea of the specialised approach required. Carnell considers that the cover of the first issue of the professional NEW WORLDS was the biggest handicap ever presented to a public; but quite fairly Ted says that this was not so much the fault of the artist but the medium in which he had to work, and production difficulties outside his control.

This first issue appeared on the British bookstalls in July, of 1946, and reader reaction was negligible. Comment from diehards of pre-war fandom, and a scattering of letters from newcomers was the sole result of Ted's hard work. However, things improved immensely, the second issue appearing in October being almost a sell-out. This was in part due to an intense sales drive launched against the wholesale and distributing trade; a section of the publishing world that does not take kindly to new periodicals. Reader reaction also picked up, and the number of letters, commenting favourably, left no doubt in the mind of John Carnell that his magazine had received a warm welcome.

But then the storm clouds started to gather. A series of setbacks, involving two printers, paper shortages, power-cuts, and block making difficulties (to quote the major troubles) delayed the third issue until October of 1947. Consequently a large proportion of 'reader following' had been lost. Annoyed subscribers had written irate letters to Ted, who answered all of them, in terms varying from the humorous to the apologetic (and in a few cases verging on the apoleptic !). Such an interchange of correspondence, covering from to appeared in "OPERATION FANTASY" (first series) No. , and reflects the difficult time experienced by Carnell during that period.

The worst had not yet come, however. Although the third issue oversold by 3,000 copies, NEW WORLDS seemed doomed. Pendulum Publications suspended all business when the fourth issue was finally ready for the press. Word crept round fandom, and enthusiast -ic readers shuddered. Just who thought of the idea it is difficult to say, but from several sources came suggestions for its continuation - including the one that fandom should be invited to subsidise publication. Ted already had some such idea in mind, and in view of the obvious support the suggestion would receive he gave it serious consideration, consulted with others, notable among them being Walter Gillings (editor of the equally ill-fated FANTASY, and of the far more successful FANTASY REVIEW), John Beynon Harris, G. Ken Chapman, and Frank Cooper.

A provisional scheme was worked out, and Carnell made the announcement that fandom would be invited to share in the new publishing project. This announcement was made at the WHITCOM, held in London in 1948, the first of the revived British conventions, and was received with acclamation. Originally it was proposed to float a limited company in which 5/- shares could be taken. This action, permitting almost any fan to participate in the venture, was discovered to be impossible, and the company finally floated on a limited capital of larger shares, still with the proviso that a shareholder must be a science-fiction enthusiast. Most of the paper-work attached to the incorporation of the company was done by Mr. Cooper, the title NOVA PUBLICATIONS being the result of an inspired thought on the part of one of the six working directors' wives. It was immediately realised that such a project could be no altruistic work; it must be built on sound business lines, and must be able to show a profit, at least sufficient to maintain itself. The Board was formed, Beynon Harris becoming Chairman by popular consent, and the others falling almost automatically into posts. Cooper as Secretary, G. Ken Chapman Treasurer, Carnell and Gillings in editorial and advertising positions, and Eric Williams taking over subscriptions. The Board generously agreed that subscriptions to the old NEW WORLDS should be honoured - perhaps immediately denying their own rule against "no altruism", but at least preserving considerable good-will for the new company, although few subscribers seemed to realise that this gesture was an immediate liability that the company could ill-afford.

In the early days of committee meetings in the private bars of the WHITE HORSE TAVERN tempers frequently ran high. Whilst it had been agreed that editorial policy should be left to the discretion of Carnell, strong views were held - and freely expressed - on certain major issues. The question of art work - should this appeal to the "intelligent" reader, or to the lewd eye of the general purchaser of pulp magazines? Should NEW WORLDS adhere to the common American policy of undraped females, or should some more sedate form of cover illustration be accepted?

The committee were lucky - there was a "sounding-board" against which their ideas could be flung, and the "echoes" analysed. The next bar in the WHITE HORSE contained the more gregarious of London's fan population, and this gathering was put to good use. The cover used for the fourth issue of NEW WORLDS was finalised from a which had been accepted by this cross-section of fandom.

The accent was on dignity, and John (editor) Carnell sighed a sigh of relief. His project at last seemed to be on the road to success. Limited capital, but great - and channeled - enthusiasm.

Spare-time devoted to administrative work, proportionate payment for authors, subscription drives using the existing fandom; all these and many more ideas to save pennies, to get a buying public, were used. But mainly the success of the enterprise resulted from the generosity of the Board, the members of which put in considerable hard work, without thought of payment; and to the initiative and imagination of Carnell himself - working in the evenings on editing copy, proof-reading, consulting with artists and authors; and in his lunch hours, harrasing type-setters, printers, and the hundred and one other people concerned with the production of a magazine.

Now on a bi-monthly schedule, although the date has been removed from the cover in accordance with the wishes of distributors, it appears that NEW WORLDS is here to stay. We hope so.

Of Carnell himself, having placed his 'baby' on a firm footing he is far from idle. Apart from the work - still considerable - of editing NEW WORLDS, and SCIENCE FANTASY (Nova's second string), he has for some time now acted as an author's agent, working in collaboration with Ackerman in Los Angeles for American sales, and on his own in the British field. Most of the British publishers, now interested in hard-cover sf publication, know him by repute and he is often called in as an expert to advise. His first anthology - NO PLACE LIKE EARTH - has been published by Boardman this year.* At present, he is compiling another collection, which will probably see publication early in 1953.

No known stories under his own name have ever been unearthed, except in the August 1942 ASF where he beat de Camp out of first place with an Improbability Zero story about Time Travel, but he has been accused of being a number of authors, most of whom he emphatically denies.

Although he wasn't the first s-f personality to cross the Atlantic and make contact with the American field (Eric Frank Russell made the trip in 1938), Carnell can be accused of starting the post-war "Transatlantic Trot" when he went at Guest of Honour to the 7th World SF Convention in Ohio in 1949. Since that date there has been a steady two-way traffic in personalities - the Ackerman's, and de Camp's to Britain in 1951; Clarke and Harry Kay (one of the original pre-war SFA members, now a medical doctor), to the USA in this year; Walter A. Willis from Northern Ireland to the Convention in Chicago; and many other trips planned or projected in future - both in '52 and after. Carnell has certainly created quite a lot!

* NO PLACE LIKE EARTH was reviewed in O.F. 13/14.

PROJECT FAN CLUB will provide free advice to "O.F." members on forming and operating a fanclub as well as advice on problems connected with the maintenance of their fanclubs. Please mention your membership in OPERATION FANTASY, state the problem on which you want advice, or the information you require, as fully as you can and tell me what you have already done in connection with your problem, etc., and give an example if this is possible.

Return postage is not necessary, but it will be appreciated. Also, I'd appreciate your giving me the name of your club.

PROJECT FAN CLUB, Orville W. Mosher, 1728, Mayfair, EMPORIA, Kansas, USA.

AMERICAN MAGAZINES FROM 1/6 EACH, plus postage, from: T. MOULTON, 15 FORDWAY AVE, BLACKPOOL, LANCs.

WANTED - Books by Talbot Mundy, particularly "TROS OF SAMOTHRACE," and "THE PURPLE PIRATES" - Leo Lobel, 7 Hester Street, NYC, 2, New York, USA.

OPERATOR 5 - wanted 1940 Jan-Feb thru 1943 Sep-Oct.

Will pay up to 6/- for good clean copies with covers, or will swap FIVE British mags for each issue.

Walter J. Norcott, 41 St. Johns, WORCESTER, Worcs., England.

LET IT BE NATURAL

by BERT CAMPBELL

(Writing Science Fiction V)

Since I became an editor a while back I've been reading a large number of s-f manuscripts from young hopefuls — and some of them not so young at that. The thing that impressed me most about these stories was their striking lack of naturalness. Only a very few of the submissions rang true; the others were like plastic flowers — inglorious travesties of something bright and beautiful. (If you are anything of an artist you'll abhor such frozen lies).

Day after day they came in. Penned, I suppose, in hope and high endeavour. I could tell that a lot of thought had been put into them. A little too much thought, perhaps. Certainly they were not penned in sincerity. The authors had been traitors to themselves. They had lied and deceived, fawned and grovelled, at some unseen shrine they called The Editor's Desire.

Now, I am all for supplying what the buyer wants. How else can a writer live? But only in the matter of subject, theme or slant. Not in the matter of style. My style is my own. Yours should be yours. It is a priceless (to you and to me) pearl of accomplishment. Not a thing to be bandied about, chivvied and chipped, moulded and mangled by editors.

The suprising thing, in my experience, is that editors don't want to rape your style. They don't want every article and story to be cast in the same uneasy pattern. Ask yourself; what is the age-long cry, the song the editors sing?

FRESHNESS AND ORIGINALITY. Time and again you'll hear it. If you go along to see them, they'll tell you the same thing. Give me something fresh, something original!

You can't do that with subjects, themes and slants. There is nothing new under the sun — except styles. That's how to be fresh. That's how to be original. Not by cheating — copying somebody else's. Not even by consciously striving for some kind of effect.

That is the way to be unnatural. It was the fault of those manuscripts I mentioned. You could see it in every line of narrative, every word of dialogue. The authors had sat down at their desks and written with three quarters of their minds on some arbitrary rules they'd picked up somewhere or other.

Stick to the rules, by all means, when it comes to plot construction, characterisation and such things. But interpret them. Don't just stick to them. Be like a conductor on his rostrum. He doesn't simply wave a stick according to the time set down on the score sheet. He interprets — and gets something of himself into it.

My poor authors didn't get anything of themselves into their stories. They were too busy cramming them with other people. Unreal, shadowy people. You could see right through them, physically and psychically. You knew just what they were going to do, to say. No suspense, no solidity. The settings might have come straight from guide books. Maybe they did, I wouldn't be suprised. They were stuffy enough for it.

Here and there they would have a flash of brilliant wordage, these authors of mine, like the sudden bursting into foliage of a tree that's been straggling along bleak and black through a long winter. I think they were tired at those places.

You think it's odd, I know. But it isn't. You see, they plodded on, typing, scribbling, grinding out the stuff they thought was WRITING. Then a weariness swept over them. The constant jumping about of black marks on white paper got them down. They let the rules go where all rules should go and started writing the way they thought, the way they felt. Their writing became real.

Page Seven

Not good, mind you. Not necessarily, anyway. Sometimes it was crude technically, unsaleable. But only because they hadn't been at the game long enough quite. Only because they hadn't yet read enough and thought enough and written enough according to the dictates of their own inner feelings. But it was real and one can forgive a lot for that.

I rejected their manuscripts. Just as I've had mine rejected, all of two hundred times. I don't know whether I ought to have told them. Told them to write the way they want to write. To observe the rules of plot and character and dialogue and suspense and atmosphere, but to ignore completely the ready-made, reach-me-down styles of contemporary writing. To let their pens be fluent transmitters of their own way of looking at things, feeling about things, saying things.

Would they have understood me if I'd told them that a writer is a thinker who puts his thoughts on paper? That writing is just a vehicle for personal, individual approach to the problems, joys, places, talks and talismans that make up this great Scheme of Things?

Would they have understood, would you understand, if I told them that the inky shrine of The Editor's Desire is blasphemed, not revered, by sacrifice of individuality? That a prostituted style must walk the dark streets of oblivion until caught in the irrevocable mesh of an Editor's Profanity?

I hope you would. I hope they did. For, to my mind, it's the only road to honourable print.

WANTED by T.G.L.Cockcroft, 3, Stilling-street, Melling, Lower Hutt, NEW ZEALAND

H.P. Lovecraft: The Dunwich Horror and Other
Weird Tales (Armed Services Edition).

H.P. Lovecraft: A History and Chronology of
the Necronomicon (leaflet).

Herbert Wise and Phyllis Fraser, editors: Great
Tales of Terror and the Supernatural (1st Edition).

Dashiell Hammett, editor: Creeps by Night (1st Edition).

Herbert Asbury, editor: Not at Night.

T. Everett Harre, editor: Beware After Dark.

Phil Stong, editor: The Other Worlds

Phil Stong, editor: Twenty-Five Modern Stories of Mystery and Imag-
-ination.

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Wright's Shakespeare
Library Edition, illustrated by Virgil Finlay.

Strange Tales 1931 November. 1932 January and March.

Weird Tales 1928 February. 1929 January. 1932 January.

1934 January and August. 1935 December.

1939 September and October.

Argosy All-Story Weekly 1920 August 14 and September 4.

Science and Invention 1927 December. 1928 April, May and July.

Famous Fantastic Mysteries October 1940. Fantastic Novels April 1941.

Amazing Stories Annual. Oriental Stories 1932 Spring and Summer.

Will pay good prices. No offers from outside British Empire, please.

Please use airletter to expedite transactions.

SUPPORT THE FAN-VETS !

SUPPORT THE FAN-VETS !

Details from: James V. Taurasi, 137-03 32nd Avenue, Flushing 54, N.Y.

Back issues of OPERATION FANTAST available from the Editor, 1/- ea.

PLAYERS OF THE

LENS

by

IAIN MacIAIN

(artwork by
Brian Lewis)

At the turn of the millenium the Heels challenged the Heroes to a friendly (sic.) match as part of the New Kiloyear celebrations.

They suggested the surface of Jupiter as a playing-field (to eliminate the weaklings), one of the denser asteroids for ball, and offered the Heroes choice of ends. Captain of the Heroes, the redoubtable K. Kinnison, chose the south pole and the two sides began to group forces a mere six months in advance. The Heroes put their really rugged types on the surface, the others in inertialess Bergenhalm-driven vessels overhead.

As our reporter was with the Heroes' side, it is not possible to describe, nor would it have been possible to describe, then or ever, in any terms intelligible to the readers' limited perceptions, the devices and deployments adopted by the Highest of the Heels, Rich of Floor, ably seconded by Ggolshggth and Ixtl. Suffice it to record that only the last-minute invention by Channing (of Venus Equilateral) of a square-wave circularly polarised personal identity resolver with instantaneous atomics saved the Heroes from the utter chaos caused by the innumerable entities and images masquerading amongst them in human form. Even so, an unsuspected complication lost the Heroes the valuable services of at least two Gilbert Gosseyns. An appeal to the Umpires was unanswered.

Precisely on the microsecond, the ball materialised on the equator of Jupiter. Exactly one microsecond later it vanished completely. The Heroes would have been baffled at the outset but for Worsel of Velantia, who, with a mighty bellow of "It went that-a-way", thundered lightly off into the methane-blizzard with the Heroes' forward pack at his heels.

By this time Kinnison's long-range detectors had located the ball under several thousand kilometres of iron-hard ice IV just a short way south of the Red Spot. Launcelot Bigg's Excavation Group went for the ball with his disintegrators, with the Patrol holding off the attacking forces. Worsel and company, on the ground, were halted short by Couerl's force, who made short work of Peter van Bus-kirk and his boys. Already slowing down under the punishment of 16 gravities, at minus 160 degrees C their space-axes were as brittle as glass. Their names are to be found engraved in pure uranium in the Heroes' Hall of Remembrance. Only the fact that Worsel's metabolism contained no phosphorus saved him. Meanwhile the patrol was barely holding its own as a horde of Hukles materialised in every vessel in the fleet and completely ruined the gunners' aim.

One Cade earned the Galactic Medal in that he was the only man in the entire fleet whose marksmanship never wavered. He continued to shoot with inhuman accuracy while sweat poured from every mm. of his skin under the intolerable itch that drove several hundreds of his comrades insane. Just in time the Karres Junior Decontamination Squad, led by Goth, teleported the Hukles en masse into the centre of Ggolshggth himself. His comment is not recorded.

By this time, L. Biggs was only a few hundred kilometres into

the ice when he discovered that he had been booby-trapped. The under layers of ice were pure deuterium oxide and his disintegrator touched off the H to He reaction: his name is to be found engraved in pure uranium in the Heroes Hall of Remembrance.

Fortunately, the Heroes' Long-Distance Removals team, G.Gosseyn, Lucky, and the Leewit had managed to get a PK. hold on the ball. Unfortunately, Ixtl had it from the other side and they could get it no further than the surface. At this point Capt. Jocelyn, tossing off a drink, powder and all, smiled a weary and twisted smile, and snarled bitterly "What have I got to lose any-how? Come on, you space-scum!" and led in a raiding party. By sheer speed and audacity he got a tractor on the ball and whipped it from the deadlock straight into the grasp of Worsel and his re-formed forward pack! Owing to some slight hitch in communications the LD Removals group were not informed of this impending manoeuvre. The Leewit and Lucky were immediately sent back to base for psychic repairs. G. Gosseyn suffered only a severe headache, but was overheard to remark that his own side seemed to have it in for him more than the Heels did! Quick as a flash came the retort from the great Kinnison himself "Whadd'ya expect, you v.v. type?"



By this time the Worsel party were smashing their way relentlessly over the surface towards the enemy - er, sorry, opposing, goal. Screen after screen of super-duper-dreadnoughts blasted their irresistible way across the ghastly surface of Jupiter; mountain ranges of flinty ice were only temporary obstacles. The ground forces dragged themselves through formaldehyde bogs, and ammonia storms slashed down upon them. With fiendish ingenuity the Eich of Floor engaged them at this point, and the heat of battle catalysed the ammonia formaldehyde mixture into a resin and stopped them dead. A young fellow named Britthouse earned himself immortality - he forced his tracked vehicle to keep moving long after all the others had seized solid. He was eventually halted by the blowing up of his atomic motor. His name is to be found engraved in pure uranium in the Heroes Hall of Remembrance.

At this moment the Bulls descended en masse. Fortunately Kinnison was prepared; at a given signal every man in the forward line was teleported into the battle-wagons overhead, and the entire fleet descended on the battlefield and wiped the area clean in a blaze of literally stellar intensity. He saved his forward line, but lost the ball. Dxtly had it half-way to the defenders' goal when the two Gosseyns, operating simultaneously, grabbed it. Backed by Worsel and the Karres Junior Squad they hauled it back and flung it towards the Heels' citadel. Kinnison had learned his lesson, and kept his operators off the ground. Almost on their objective, the Heroes found the goal completely ringed by offspring of the Leech. An appeal to the Umpires was unanswered.

Then began the most bitter and deadly struggle in the history of Galactic Sport. The Heroes held the ball, but could not reach the Heels' goal. The Heels held their goal, but could not get the ball. The hotter the battle, the faster grew the Leeches. Mail - ers, blasters, disintegrators, A-bombs, H-bombs, and HA-bombs; the Leeches devoured them all in voracious glee, and grew, and grew, and grew - AND GREW! "By the great black brass-bound claws of Klono!" roared Kinnison "We have only to keep this up to make them as big as Jupiter!" "Analysing the situation as a simple event in the space-time continuum the appropriate cerebral - as opposed to thal - mic - response," suggested G.Gosseyn, "is to stop fighting." Fortunately, a pink-cheeked, youngish medic by the odd name of O.D. Methuselah was able to stave off the apoplexy which threatened to deprive the Heroes of their leader at this moment. Staggering under the load of bromide, the redoubtable old warrior saw that the suggestion was



BOOK REVIEWS (I)

ADVENTURES IN TOMORROW edited by Kendell Foster Crossen (BODLEY HEAD, 24Opp, 10/6)
THE GALAXY READER OF SCIENCE FICTION edited by H.L. Gold (GRAYSON & GRAYSON, 254pp, 9/6)
THE YEAR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS edited by E. F. Bleiler & T.E. Dikty (G&G, 264pp, 9/6)

Now that other major publishers are taking a serious interest in science fiction the lead which Messrs Grayson & Grayson obtained by being "fustest with the mostest", in Britain, becomes a matter to be challenged. The anthology contributed by The Bodley Head to the rapidly growing number of science-fiction works available in Britain represents such a challenge, containing a selection of thirteen (there were 15 in the original edition) which give the reader a little of everything.

The first four are short items, all rather pessimistic in tone - Ward Moore's FLYING DUTCHMAN picturisation of man's robot-weapons battling on after man has left the scene; Ray Bradbury, in THERE WILL COME SOFT RAINS, developing a similar-but-civilian theme; Forrest Ackerman's bitter THE MUTE QUESTION, relieved but so slightly by the sardonic humour of the last line; the faintly hopeful note of Walter Van Tilburg Clark's starkly sentimental THE FOR-TABLE PHONOGRAPH.

A brighter note follows in the unusually uncomplex story - AUTOMATON - which represents A.E. van Vogt, and continues in Crossen's own contribution, RESTRICTED CLIENTELE, closer to "true" science fiction than the most of his work, but still displaying that element of humour which is his saving grace. Then comes MEMORY, by Ted Sturgeon. This deals with a shortage of storage space on interplanetary transport, and is solved by "memory" - and no-one can deny that memory does a pretty good job of storage.

Unrecognised martyrdom, and blind bureaucracy, are the themes of Sam Merwin's EXILED FROM EARTH, a choice bit of dramatic space-opera. Miss Leigh Brackett casts aside swords-and-slaughter, to give us a tale of high endeavour, and a revolt which tears man from the confines of the Solar System, in RETREAT TO THE STARS.

In the lighter vein, Henry Kuttner's THE VOICE OF THE LOBSTER, with its delightful mixture of human, humanoid, and non-human characters. Perhaps a story that will be a little hard on the newcomer, who has not yet realised that there is science-fiction, & science-fiction, but one which is not quite too far-fetched to be a total loss. (After all, we all like to let our hair down sometime, don't we?) The final section starts with Robert Arthur's THE END, a trite tale well written, but when you discover that the two main characters are named Aydem and Ayveh..... The last story in the book pulls it back to a high level, however; Bruce Elliott's THE DEVIL WAS SICK - one of the few stories on a science fiction base which have broken the "religion" tabu - successfully. Between the last two mentioned comes TRANSFER POINT, a paradoxical tale of the last man, some of Anthony Boucher's best writing.

But although the story content of the book is good, it has two big faults. The preservation of Crossen's interminable preamble is one. Some half of the references will be lost on the newer British reader, and I feel sure that 18 pages of fiction would be appreciated far more than this ponderous dissertation on the "historical origins" of science fiction. And then the breakdown of the stories into sections labelled "Atomic", "Galactic", etc., "Ages". This was not too happy an idea in the original edition, and when one considers that in this version the "Galactic" section contains, in two stories, only one in which the reader is taken as far as the planet Mars, one realises how inappropriate such captions are.

THE GALAXY READER contains thirteen yarns selected from the mammoth American publication. I'll not stick my neck out and say these are the best - but they are "of the best". Richard Matheson's, simple but deceptive, *THIRD FROM THE SUN*; Miss Jacob's excellent *man-meets-superior-culture PILOT AND THE HUSHMAN*, which is one of the finest tales of its type that I can recall reading; the similar but apposite *BETEIGEUSE BRIDGE*, by William Tenn. These are three of the first four, over which I have no quibble. I am a little uncertain, regarding William Campbell Gault's *MADE TO MEASURE*, but at least it adds variety.

Clifford D. Simak's *GOODNIGHT MR. JAMES* has been retained, & lends a neat twist of its own to the collection. *FIELD STUDY*, Peter Phillips, overcomes the triteness of the "superman" theme, due only to Mr. Phillips' good writing. Dual-authored *DARK INTERLUDE* (Mack Ray-nolds & Fredric Brown) is short, but effectively points "the fact that in our dreams of the future we are apt to overlook the facts of our not-too-pleasant present. Poul Anderson's *INSIDE EARTH* is one of the longer stories, concerned with a conquered world, and uses an unfamiliar idea of "Crush and Unite" as a change to "Divide and Rule" - although the basic idea of a threat to humanity causing the unification of mankind is not new, I feel that Mr. Anderson has uncovered a new side-line. John D. MacDonald is honoured by the inclusion of two stories, his *SUSCEPTIBILITY*, demonstrating the impossibility of successful Galatic administration of colonies, and *COMMON DENOMINATOR*, in which he suggests a method of making a race psychologically stable - one which I feel humans will not accept, as Mr. MacDonald in the yarn agrees.

THE BIOGRAPHY PROJECT, by Dudley Dell, is short, but the new idea is good; John Christopher's *MAN OF DESTINY* could have been a god to the natives, but.... How to dispose of misfits in the worldculture of tomorrow is the theme of Ted Sturgeon's *THE STARS ARE THE STIX*.

THE YEAR'S BEST contains considerably fewer yarns than these other two books. Only four items, in fact. But assuredly four of the best! *IZZARD AND THE MEMBRANE*, by Walter J. Miller, Jr. . . . *AND THEN THERE WERE NONE*, by Eric Frank Russell. *FLIGHT TO FOREVER*, by Poul Anderson; and Frank M. Robinson's *THE HUNTING SEASON*. Three, I note, from Astounding, and one from Super Science.

Miller's tale concerns an American cyberneticist who is enforced, after suitable conditioning, to construct an electronic brain for the enemy. But the story is not the "usual" e.b. style, it very definitely is something special on those lines, on a par with that shorter item, *JOHN THE REVELATOR*. Over Eric Frank Russell's suggested culture, derived from the passive resistance and civil disobedience campaigns of Ghandi, there has already been considerable discussion; all I can say is that irrespective of one's opinion regarding the feasibility of the culture, no-one can deny that it makes a tip-top bit of imaginative writing. To anyone who wants to argue about it I now send postcards marked "MYOB"!

FLIGHT TO FOREVER had the dubious honour of appearing, more or less, in the guise of a British pocket-book. Now, I'll admit that sometimes authors do have similar ideas, but if the pb was "original", and you have read it, I'd suggest you read Anderson's version in this book, and see how the story should have been written! Oh, it is not anything "new" - it is quite possible that both Anderson and the author of the pb derived their ideas from some old and forgotten epic of past days, but, my friends, the difference! Frank M. Robinson can, I think, claim a new idea in his "hunt"; perhaps not with the "hunting", but in the setting and system of the hunt. The "hero" is outcast, sent back in time, and may be hunted and killed (legally and very definitely) by the huntsmen who also come back to the same era. Needless to say, the "past" in which this occurs is our "present", and some neat commentary on our civilisation is a by-product.

Three books, for a total of 29/6, containing some of the best of recent work, in a lasting format. You can't go wrong.

ENIGMA

by



G. Whiting

(illos by J. Bowman)

Early in the century one of mankind's oldest dreams had been brought to fulfillment. With the first successful landings on the Moon's dry and airless plains the conquest of space had begun. Later to Mars the rockets had sped in silent flight, circling and flaming in the thin clear atmosphere of the red planet. No trace or record of intelligent life had been found on its dry and dusty surface, but for a few hardy lichens a dead world - ruddy and forbidding. Hopefully men turned their eyes to Venus the Queen of planets, still an enigma with its all enveloping clouds.

Venus Satellite Station swung steadily on its appointed orbit. Separated from it by twenty thousand miles of space billowed the dazzling white upper clouds of Venus, brilliant in the glaring sunshine. Drifting with the station on its orbit appeared the black cylindrical bulk of the Automatic Survey Rocket. Flame flared from the rocket's rear propulsion tubes as it commenced to move away from the station, accelerating rapidly and silently in the cold crystalline clearness of space. Within the satellite's metal shell men sat; moving switches, watching meters and adjusting dials. The hum of equipment and extraction fans blending to form a steady background to their conversation.

"It will contact cloud in ten minutes," said the Astro-gator. "Dead on course."

"Cameras on as soon as it clears the cloud," the Chief said. "This preliminary run ought to give us...." He broke off as the radio came abruptly to life with a steady hiss.

"Tanker four to station, contact established, will maintain radar watch, over."

The minutes ticked smoothly by, a deep silence reigned as each man concentrated on his instruments.

"Contact with upper cloud formations," the Astro-gator's voice broke across the silence.

"Vision on."

"Roger."

All eyes focussed on the great grey projection screen at the end of the control room - it began to come to life - a picture formed-- tendrils of thin white mist whipped towards them and across the screen as the rocket plunged into the top of the Venusian clouds. Gradually with the passage of time the screen darkened as the rocket plunged deeper into the cloud layers. A fleecy grey wall of cloud rushed towards them continuously, flicking sideways at the edges of the screen. Watching the screen the Chief felt a nightmarish feeling of unsupported fall that comes sometimes in sleep and a sensation that something would suddenly emerge from the rushing mist, crashing into him before he could move or shout. Reluctantly the Chief turned his eyes from the screen to glance at the radar range unit. The cloud began to thin out, individual clouds appeared whose turbulent upper surfaces rushed towards them, enveloped them, and then cleared away as the rocket rushed through into the open

again. A swirling haze of dust between the clouds the whole pervaded by a sickly yellow twilight. The Radio Tech was busy giving a sotto voce commentary over the radio link for the benefit of the orbiting tanker crews, his voice murred in the background.

"The main cloud is beginning to thin out — the surface is just visible....."

The Chief's eyes went back to the screen, a few stray clouds streamed past, the surface of Venus lay revealed below. A vast flat plain lit by a murky, yellow and streaky twilight shimmering and hazy with a high, dense and turbulent cloud ceiling. In the distance a long mountain range dimly outlined against the yellow clouds; far below dust whirled and eddied.

"Level off, orbital course," the Chief said quietly in the hush. "Roger."

The dim distant mountain range commenced to slide down the screen, as the rocket levelled off.

"Just as predicted," said the Engineer in a disappointed tone.

"Another planet lost to science fiction," the Astrogator turned to grin at the Engineer.

"Not so fast," the Chief said quickly, "there appears to be a light over the horizon almost directly ahead of the Survey Rocket."

All eyes returned to the television; a glow of light was just visible on the planet's murky horizon reflecting yellowly from the underside of the clouds.

"It may be a volcanic disturbance of some kind," the Chief said. "Possibly an active volcano, are the cameras running?"

"Yes chief."

Slowly, almost imperceptably the glow increased in size.

"Buildings," said the Radio Tech in a loud voice.

"I believe you're right," the Astrogator said in an awed tone.

Now coming slowly into view over the horizon were a group of dome shaped buildings, like a cluster of plastic beehives, glowing with a bright white light, which reflected from the clouds to illuminate the rugged and barren landscape around them.

"They must be immense," the Chief began, and then stopped.

"What....."

A small black dot appeared in the centre of the screen, growing rapidly in size until it filled the screen — the screen changed to a blank grey.

"Radar contact broken."

"All circuits dead."

"Something ran into her."

The Chief's voice broke across the babble, "Check with Tanker Three, they should have been following her."

The Radio Tech reached for the microphone, a movement he was destined never to complete — at that instant the station and its occupants dissolved into a blinding flash of heat and light, a ball of expanding disintegrated matter.

Far away, hidden in the planet's shadow, floated Tanker Four, a deep space ship acting temporarily as a radio relay station. Through the open viewport in the control room, aligned on the distant satellite, her crew of three saw with startled eyes the expanding white flower of flame that marked the station's destruction. The Skipper opened his mouth to speak, before he could do so, another white ball of fire appeared against the blackness of space on the tanker's television screen aligned on Tanker Three on the far side of Venus.

"Tanker Three," said the Radio Tech through stiff lips, staring in fascination at the screen where a cloud of white smoke was outlined in the sunlight against the dark background of space with its blazing stars.

"Let's move," the Skipper broke the stunned silence. Abruptly he



slammed the firing switch primary with the palm of his hand. "Strap in and for God's sake wake up!" he shouted at his dazed crew above the hum and click of relays. "Give me rear vision Jack." This last remark to the Radio Tech who was adjusting his straps.

"Roger, Skipper."

A deep space ship is ugly looking in comparison with its atmospheric sister, but being fitted with Cardwell atomic drives is capable of high accelerations. The Tanker swung rapidly out of its orbit, flames streaming from the drivers, accelerating rapidly. The cloud surface of Venus slid smoothly across the television screen, watched anxiously by the Skipper.

"I'm increasing acceleration," the Skipper shouted. "Hang on!"

A huge and heavy hand pressed them into their chairs, the hum rose in pitch and volume. What seemed ages later he switched off the main propulsion units and a deep silence descended on the control room; Venus now barely filled the visio-screen.

"The natives of Venus appear to be hostile," remarked the Engineer drily, breaking the silence.

"What happened there I don't know; anyway the boys never knew what hit them," the Skipper said slowly.

"The same type of thing that hit the Survey Rocket I should say," the Radio Tech replied.

"Did you pick up anything on our radar, Jack?" the Skipper asked.

"I couldn't. It blew a fuse just before that business started, and that reminds me...." The Radio Tech opened the front panel of the set.

"That may have saved us," was the Skipper's cryptic comment. "Let's have some coffee, Jimmy," he added, addressing the Engineer, who was fumbling in the food locker.

"Right, Skipper. What are you planning to do?"

"First let's get a report drafted while the incident is still fresh in our minds, and as soon as we are within range of the communication satellite Jack can send it off. Our present course is set Earthside." The Skipper drew a message pad from the rack.

Several days later Tanker Four swung towards Earth from out of the Sun, past the Moon bright and glaring on its sunlit side, into an orbit around the planet. Through the cleared viewport Earth was visible with the curve of sunlight across the huge spherical bulk. A grey, blue, brown and green patchwork on the daylight side, garnished with white fleecy clouds piled high towards the Northern Pole. Occasionally a bright blue flash appeared as the Sun was reflected from the heaving oceans. On the dark side twinkled the firefly lights of the big cities. The blue-white shining halo on the daylight side, which marked the limits of the Earth's atmosphere, whaded off into the deep velvet blackness of outer space ablaze with many coloured points of light like a haze of glittering diamond dust. A large bright dot against the background of stars identified Earth Satellite Six, the outermost of the satellite stations, a huge and ugly man-made moon serving as the communications centre for planetary radio. Below, a small black dot outlined against the white clouds, the refueling station was just visible. The Skipper turned from the viewport, reflected sunlight throwing his features into relief. The electrotypewriter had commenced to click and purr, a message sheet pushed up jerkily from its slotted top. As the machine came to rest the Radio Tech tore the paper off and without a word handed it to the Skipper. Clearing his throat the Skipper read out its printed message:

"Satellite Six to Tanker Four. Ref your SL76. Report checked. One - close orbit this satellite, all attend for interview. Two - refuel and restock, collect atmo fuel tanks orbit 6B. Three - refit long range radio. Four - return safe orbit Venus, release atmo fuel tanks. Five - report all unusual phenomena. Await further orders. Ack. Signed Ransome, Chief of Station, SU934."

"So we are IT," said the Engineer.

"I expected it," the Skipper replied, "we are readily available and only been out a year." To Jack, "Acknowledge this," he said, waving the message flimsy. With one hand he closed the viewport shutter

and then pushed himself across the control room.
"Action stations !"

Tanker Four was on it's third polar orbit around Venus, the crew - having set adrift the load of atmo fuel tanks and their accompanying radar beacon - had both retired to their rooms, leaving the Skipper to take his turn on watch. The deep silence which embraced the ship was broken by a shout from the Skipper which brought them swinging from their bunks.

"Do you see what I see ?", the Skipper said in a hushed voice, as they crowded round him, clinging to the viewport handholds. Silhouetted against the glaring white cloud was a small egg-shaped object, apparently stationary.

"A space ship !" was the Radio Tech's startled exclamation.

"Get the camera ready," instructed the Skipper, operating the telescope controls. "I'll watch it, Jack, check for any radio emanation - are those fuel tanks cleared yet ?"

"Yes," said the Engineer, fumbling with the camera.

"Nothing on the radio," the Radio Tech turned to watch the Skipper who was bent over the telescope, "see anything, Skipper ?"

"No details," the Skipper mumbled. "How far behind are those fuel tanks ?"

"About a quarter orbit," the Engineer replied.

"Activate their radar beacon, Jack."

"Why, Skipper ?"

"Just an idea."

"Roger. Here she goes," the Radio Tech reached out and closed the Beacon switch, a single pulse left the ship's radar; on the fuel tank cluster drifting far behind a relay closed silently, the beacon commenced to emit it's steady call. Something attracted the attention of the Skipper near the strange space ship, a small black dot that appeared and vanished.

"Rear Vision, quick," he said urgently.

The television screen cleared as they all swung to watch it, gleaming stars. Tensely the three men watched it; so suddenly that they all jumped an expanding globe of fire appeared on the right of the screen; there was a short silence as it died away.

"There goes a load of atmo fuel," the Radio Tech's voice shook. "They must home those gadgets on radar transmissions."

"What's the next move, Skipper ?" The Engineer turned to face him. The Skipper did not reply for an instant but turned back to the viewport.

"For the moment, sit tight," the Skipper sounded puzzled. "They must be intelligent to build space ships, why the savage attacks ? How can we communicate with them ?"

"What about a report Earthside, Skipper ?" the Radio Tech said.

"Wait until we are over the top," the Skipper said grimly. "There may be enough spread from that paraboloid to give them a fix on us."

"I think a coffee is called for," the Engineer said, floating expertly across to the food locker. A brilliant flash stabbed through the viewport, outlining the Skipper's head and filling the cabin with momentary light.

"What the devil was that ?" the Engineer said, transfixed in the act of opening the locker door. The Skipper swung round, one hand over his eyes.

"My God," he said, trying to clear his vision. "Take a look !" Outside, against the white clouds of Venus, a huge cigar shaped ship hung, ablaze with lights from innumerable portholes.

"It appeared suddenly," the Skipper spoke in a husky voice, peering over their shoulders, "With a brilliant flash of light."

"It must be miles long," the Engineer said in a shaky voice.

"What..." The Radio Tech broke off as the static - which crackling from the speaker had formed an unnoticed background - died, to be



replaced by the steady hiss of a carrier; a dry metallic voice roared from the speaker in slow English...

"YOU WHO NAME YOURSELVES MEN AND ARE ON ORBIT, AROUND THIS PLANET, YOUR PRESENCE IS KNOWN. YOU HAVE NOT BEEN DESTROYED AS WERE YOUR FELLOWS, SO THAT YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR KIND AND TELL THEM THAT THEY NOW FORM PART OF THE GREAT GALACTIC CIVILISATION, WHOSE FRONTIERS ARE FOREVER EXPANDING. YOU UNFORTUNATELY STUMBLED ON OUR ADVANCED BASE BEFORE WE WERE READY. FROM THIS TIME ON YOU WILL BE CONFINED TO THE SURFACE OF YOUR PARENT PLANET. ALL YOUR SPACECRAFT WILL BE DESTROYED. IN DUE COURSE OUR REPRESENTATIVES WILL ARRIVE TO COMMAND YOU. YOU WILL RETURN TO YOUR PLANET NOW."

In the stunned silence that followed the Radio Tech reached for the microphone. "Go to the devil," he said. The Skipper, his face white and tense, turned from the viewport.

"Start transmitting, Jack," he said crisply. "Electrotype as much information as you can; this explains a lot of things."

"Roger." The Radio Tech's nimble fingers commenced to dance across the keyboard, the click and purr of the machine filled the cabin.

"That other ship is coming out," the Engineer said, peering into the telescope. His voice held a dazed note. "What are you going to do, Skipper?"

"The only thing we can do - ram the swine! Give the Earth a chance to prepare." The Skipper swung himself into the controlling seat. For an instant the steady click of the electrotype faltered. "That should surprise them," the Engineer laughed shakily.

"Forward vision," the Skipper's voice cracked.

From the rear of the Tanker a humming arose, relays clacked as the Skipper eased the firing switch primary over its arc. The television screen flickered and came to life, filled with the vast bulk of the alien starship. The Skipper felt the Engineer's breath on his neck. The warm-up lights glowed, throwing a ruddy glare onto their faces. Gently the Skipper depressed the firing secondary, the image of the starship commenced to slide slowly across the screen.

"Now!" With a savage downward motion the Skipper slammed all switches to maximum. A screaming, whining, roaring deafened them drowning the Skipper's next words, although his lips moved. Terrific acceleration hurled them back, pinning them motionless, as fascinated they watched the image of the alien ship grow on the screen. Larger and larger. The Tanker, tiny by comparison, flames pouring from its rear propulsion units, buried its blunt nose in - to the side of the vast bulk and silently disintegrated. A white puff of fire appeared on the side of the starship, it grew slowly at first, and then with increasing speed, until it engulfed, swallowed the great ship, exploding soundlessly outwards. A huge ball of fire, flaming and growing, filled the heavens, a miniature nova - rivalling for an instant the sun's glare against the suddenly turbulent clouds of Venus. It continued to expand, now more slowly, growing less bright and more tenuous - stars began to gleam through.... with a sharp click the recording ended. As the lecturer came forward to the rostrum the lighting slowly gained in intensity.

"Perhaps I should explain," the lecturer looked round the silent class. "The mental recording you have just received was built up partly from films taken by the expedition ship, whose crew witnessed the explosion, and partly from recordings of Tanker Four's transmissions. The originals, of course, you can see in the Space Service Museum." His voice took on a new note. "The heroic action of those three men gave Earth a respite. The base on Venus was captured and the equipment studied. When the next star-ship appeared Earth was ready, and the Empire suffered its first major defeat. As you will see in subsequent lessons the disintegration of the Galactic Empire followed swiftly, and the secret of the starships became available to all." The lecturer smiled. "That is all for today, children - class dismissed."

As the children streamed talking and laughing through the park an orange sun, low in the sky, threw long, dancing shadows

across the grass. A soft breeze played with the leaves at the base of a towering monument; electronic letters glowed across it's foot....

DEDICATED TO
Captain Jackson
Engineer Thoren
Radio Technician Smiley

EARTHMEN OF THE SOLAR SPACE SERVICE

"They opened the stars to all and gave the Galaxy
it's most treasured possession - FREEDOM"

.....

GETTING THOSE BOOKS PUBLISHED

by J. J. Curle
(Editor for Grayson
& Grayson, Ltd.)

Some of you heard me talk for a few minutes during the "CORON-CON" about the publishing end of Science Fiction and Ken Slater has asked me to amplify here a few sentences I used regarding the advantages of going to a literary agent.

Naturally. I can't speak for MAGAZINE editors. Prozines have to get the right stuff or go bust so they must methods of selection that work. With fanzines some appear to choose with great intelligence (fans are the most intelligent...!) while in others the selection appears to be made either with a pin or by a pinhead.

But when it comes to books a literary agent is your man. He takes 10% of what you earn so he's out to see that you earn a lot! He's in touch with the market, knowing what sort of work is wanted and where authors will get the best terms. He may know little about Science Fiction but he's going to judge you as the publishers (and 95% of readers) will - by your ability to tell a story that grips. Most budding authors know what they want to say and have something worth saying (if they haven't, no-one can help them), but very few know how to say it. A good agent can tell you where your story may need cutting and shaping, where an idea is not as new as you think, and where and how you fail to make your point clear (readers read for fun: they won't bother to continue if you make it hard work for them). Finally an agent takes the job off your hands; - no more wrapping and posting of tattered manuscripts, no more composing of letters to publishers, no more doubts as to who are the people to try (G. & G. are "jolly b").

I understand Ken can give you a line on some agents who handle this kind of work, so - go to it - and good luck.

.....



For your
comparison
The second
issue of
the first
GERNSBACK
magazine &
the second
issue of
the latest



BOOK REVIEWS (II)

SECOND STAGE LENSMAN: Edward E. Smith, Ph.D. (Fantasy Press, 1953. \$3.00, 307 pp.).

I realise my limitations. I am not capable of summarising the plot and action of this book into a few words. Nor shall I attempt so to do. Let it suffice for me to say that it picks up the tale of Civilisation's battle with Boskonian at the point where Kimball Kinnison is about to celebrate the defeat of Boskone (the Rich, and their planet Jarnevon) by wedding Clarissa McDougall. It is at this juncture that the Arisian, Mentor, sends a mental message indicating to Lensman Kinnison that mayhap the defeat of Boskone is incomplete !

The story then wends its violently active way through sundry worlds of our Galaxy, and culminates with the defeat (what, again?) of the Boskonian empire in the Second Galaxy, with Co-ordinator KK and Redlensman Mac finally married and ready for a tough administrative position on Klovla.

Should the neophyte not be familiar with the names and places mentioned, a fifteen page summary of the preceding four books of this InterGalactic Epic is given in **SECOND STAGE LENSMAN** - Doctor Smith has done a very fine job indeed on this condensed and dehydrated history of Arisia and Eddore, Civilisation and Boskonian, not forgetting the Lens. This, I should have said, was impossible. But Doc Smith, like his heroes, seems quite efficient at accomplishing the inconceivable !

Of course, any true fan will know that Boskonian is not defeated, even this time, and that we have a sixth book - **CHILDREN OF THE LENS** - to come. Of members will know that a seventh Lensman's epic is under way, not a continuation but a parallel from the **VOR-TEK BLASTER** series. The dust wrapper of this book mentions two more possibilities - **MADRECK OF PALAIM**, and **WORSEL OF VALANTIA** - which must be a misprint - "**VELENTIA**", surely ?

A number of folk don't like the Lensman yarns, for various of reasons. For one thing all the adjectives were used up in the first two books and so the increasing powers of the weapons and defences require superlatives to express them. Having reached the "ultimate" in weapons, Doc Smith promptly produces the "ultimate" defence. Then a weapon to penetrate that, and defence against the weapon.

True, it may seem a bit stupid in words but that after all is the very nature of warfare - the "irresistible" armour of 1940 did not prevent the unconditional surrender of May 7th, 1945.

Characterisation - or lack of it - is another complaint made about the Doc's writing. This may be true - K. Kinnison is almost, if not quite, too good to be human. And the villains are inconceivably vile ! But personally I do not think this "black" & "white" personification detracts from the yarn when the background is depicted in such vivid and colourful style. Edgar Rice Burroughs, in his stories, did the same thing on a smaller scale. Even allowing such faults the book is stupendous in scope. Doctor Smith does not write, I feel, to make any point. No moral is drawn, no object attained, no fallacy demonstrated - he writes to amuse the readers & presumably to make money. If you like plenty of action on a cosmic scale, you'll find it here. And help Doc Smith in his second & presumptive reason for writing.

.... K. F. S.

WINSTON

S F

MYSTERY OF THE THIRD MINE: Robert W. Lowndes (201 pp)

VANDALS OF THE VOID: Jack Vance (213 pp)

ROCKET TO LUNA: Richard Marsten (211 pp)

All the above three are from the John C. Winston company, and are available at 2.00 each. The other two titles in their new five are **BATTLE ON MERCURY** by Erik van Lbin, and **THE MYSTERIOUS PLANET** by Kenneth Wright. The oldster will recall the days of the

"big" magazines and their "INTERPLANETARY" numbers. This term can well be applied to Winston's latest five, their previous issues in each five titles had a leavening of non-interplanetary material.

MYSTERY OF THE THIRD MINE is a story of asteroid mining, and the frontiersmen of the future. In his introduction Doc Lowndes rather decries authors who have previously pictured "Mars in a state of civilisation like that of the Middle West of 1848", and "asteroids like California in the Gold Rush days. They describe people living in 'boom towns' and working out on the frontier." After this introduction I was rather interested to see how he tackled the problem himself.

The miners, when not working on their claims in the Belt, live in "Gerestown, the asteroid miner's domed city"... A pretty rugged existence, with a bit of softer living back in the city. The claims are "jumped". The Asteroid Miner's Association is an outwardly straightforward protective and co-operative group, with Mars' official backing, but has been infiltrated by crooks who are foregoing honest men to the wall. But just when all appears lost, the Texas Rangers come charging up on their broncos, and the day saved for the honest miners. Substitute Mars Patrol, etc., and you have it. Seriously, despite Doc Lowndes' introductory comments, he has not managed to alter the "boom-town" and "frontier" system much.

However, he has managed to add a lot of background detail which puts the entire story into a very believable and readable form, and his "horses" are not obvious. There is quite a lot of plot, human understanding, and "extrapolation" in the book, and I personally enjoyed every word of it. Recommended for all "juveniles" from nine to ninety.

I can't make the same recommendation for Jack Vance's it-ew, I am afraid. It is a good juvenile, but I fear the more shult reader will be a little annoyed by the stupidity of certain of the characters, the stupidity being essential to prolong the story to book length. Space piracy is the subject, a few murders are given to add action, and there is plenty of suspense. The villain being brought to book by the noisiness of the juvenile hero. From the so very complex and absurd way in which the villain runs his gang, he doesn't deserve to last as long as he did. And I'm still puzzled, a few items did not tie-up neatly. But for the younger reader it is excellent, plenty of action, some intense drama in the best Vance style, and quite a bit of misleading evidence to prevent guessing the villain too early in the game.

ROCKET TO LUNA concerns, naturally, the first trip to the moon. Made, equally naturally in this day and age, by a three stage rocket launched from a satellite station. Mr. Marsten acknowledges the assistance of "Across the Space Frontier", and the advice of Arthur C. Clarke, in respect of technical matters - the early pages contain quite a few technicalities, but introduced so neatly that they are not boring. By series of events not fully his own fault, hero Ted gets aboard in place of the fifth member of the official crew. The other members believe that he has replaced the right man by trickery, and he doesn't get a chance to tell his story, so suffers in silence. I suffered too! The situation in some respects was rather like that old cinema-serial one, when you want to scream at the insufferably stupid hero "Turn round!", because the villain has spent the last ten minutes creeping up on him with a knife. Nobody thinks to ask Ted for his story, or to get radio confirmation from the base, until it is too late, and the bad type has got his yarn in first.

The pilot gets injured, and Ted has to land the ship; he does this unsuccessfully in the wrong place, partially wrecking it in the process. Suffocation, starvation and desperation all gibber at the crew. Although the now partially-recovered pilot is understanding, and doesn't blame Ted; although two other members consider there may be something more to it than appears; the fourth chap hates his guts! Of course it is with this man that Ted sets out on a 1,000 mile Lunar hike to fetch back rations, air, and fuel...

But a near tragedy on the trip brings about an opening of hearts, and everything ends happily with the rocket where it is supposed to be, and the crew fixed for an indefinite stay. Ted is

proved innocent. Sighs of relief from the anxious audience. But seriously, it is a finely written yarn, full of interest and excitement, but perhaps a little too full of long-drawn suspense. Proof of the excellence, perhaps, is the fact that the delay in getting young Ted out of his fix made me want to scream. If I'd not been interested I couldn't have cared less what happened to Ted.

Certainly recommended for juveniles. For adults, with reservations. I mean, if you have blood-pressure, or a weak heart or something of that nature.....

.....Steve Gilroy

THE TITAN: P. Schuyler Miller. (Fantasy Press, '52, 252pp, 3.00)

A collection of eight of the author's best short stories, the longest of which gives its name to the book. This story (previously written for publication in one of Crawford's ill-fated mags, partly printed, and then "lost"), dealing with Mars, shows it as an old world with a social system having no earthly counterpart. The main theme is of a rebellion which stirs among the "blood-givers" against the tyranny and decadence of the "Masters". A new factor enters the tale in the shape of the "Star Beast", so called because of his screaming towards the stars during the early days of his captivity in a "zoo". He becomes "The Titan" when he finally makes himself known as a man from Earth, and aids the rebels. A note of heroism is struck when the Titan sacrifices himself for the future of Mars. An unusual tale in which Miller handles his theme with his customary skill. The remainder of the book contains a selection of the best of Miller's shorter science fiction, published in magazine form over the last fifteen years.

The book jacket is by Bok - excellent, but more suited to "fantasy" than to "science-fiction".

... Tom Mason

WORLD OUT OF MIND: J.T. M'Intosh. (Doubleday, '53. 222pp, 2.75)

It is just over three years ago that I received from a young gentleman in Scotland a letter which said, almost shyly: "I do sell a story or two to American magazines, now and then". That was three years ago - today author J.T.M'Intosh is as well known, to British & USA fans, as many an earlier "name" author. This book is his first published full-length novel, and is well up to the standard of his shorter magazine stories. It treats of a familiar theme - the invasion of earth by aliens. It maybe thought that to write something new on such a theme is impossible - well it ain't, see? J.T.M'Intosh has done it, and done it remarkably well. His idea of a tested and graded citizenship is not new; it was not new when Huxley wrote of his Alphas and Betas, but here it receives a new touch. The testing methods may have a semblance to the Games Machine of van Vogt's Null A civilisation - but it is only a semblance.

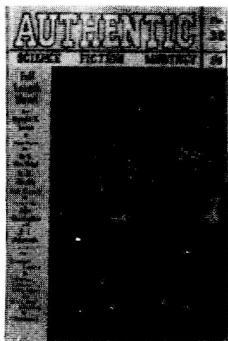
Eldin Raigmore is introduced as the obvious hero, but a puzzling person. He doesn't belong, somehow, to the scene. He is aware of this, and of his purpose - the reader is slowly let into his secret - he is an advance guard of the invasion, the leader, in fact, of the fifth-column. But a peculiar leader, with few if any contacts with his subordinates. But Eldin grows more and more to fit his place in humanity - and less and less in sympathy with the invasion. Of course, that rather gives the end of the yarn away - but there is a lot more to it than just that. The plot is complex, but not so much so that the reader gets lost in its intricacies (as one can do in van Vogt's novels). The characters, in the main, are living, human, creatures - except where the story's need prevents it - and the theme is treated with realism.

This book is not outstanding, but it is an excellent and very readable novel, well-balanced with action and thoughtful interludes. The reader may not care for Mr. M'Intosh's plan for a future world, but he'll not be able to complain about the entertainment and interest value of the ideas.

"THE LOADED MAGAZINE"

AUTHENTIC SCIENCE FICTION Monthly went into its new format in January of this year, No. 29, and is now the real handy pocket book size, 144 pp. The cover layout is an improvement, I think, and the backcover photo illos are quite good - screen shots (thru 4sj, most of them). Artwork inside as well, and although I was not impressed, it is improving. Bill Temple's IMMORTAL'S PLAYTHINGS was not of his best writing, I feel, and when I received ASFM29 I'd already read it in OW. Not that it was a reprint, in the true sense of the word, the mags must have appeared on the stands simultaneously, or very nearly so. A Bradbury yarn, WELCOME BROTHERS ! is a reprint, definitely, but there are plenty of folk in UK who haven't read all of Bradbury yet. February (30) issue saw another ex-OW yarn. LADY OF FLAME by Byrne - and I'd sooner have Jon J. Deegan than S.J. Byrne, Mr. Campbell !

That was a reprint - THE NAKED GODDESS from OW '52 Oct. DANGEROUS POWER by R. M. Rhodes, short item, was a nice yarn on P.K. however, and with No 31 came a yarn I'm quite willing to forgive any or all past "wrong 'uns" for. THE ROSE, by Charles L. Harness. Now, I expect there will be no littlecon-troversy over this one, but I think it was an excellent novel, introducing some newish ideas. Art versus Science is the theme; the question of necessity of a written language for a civilisation, & the next evolution of mankind from his present cry-salis to a winged being, are just thrown in for good measure. NEVER BEEN KISSED by E. Everett Evans is the title given another OW reprint - LITTLEMISS IGNORANCE, OW '50 Sep. There are two sequels - and for this one, Mr. Campbell, you have my full support - reprint the sequels as well. They are nice lightly treated and amusing yarns. The serial, by Syd Bounds, ends with this issue. FRONTIER LEGION, a fine yarn I'd have enjoyed if it had not spread over six months. That was a little too long ! No.32, just too hand at the time of writing, has a DWIGHT V. SWAIN yarn, another reprint and I refuse to comment ! I have already - but supporting stuff is better, at a brief scanning.



Beating H.L.Gold's BEYOND to the stands, Lester del Rey has given us the first true "fantasy" magazine since the lamented Campbell UNKNOWN. It is titled, appropriately enough, FANTASY Magazine - although I've already heard there is a change of title in the 2nd (June) issue. Spine date: and title page date differ - one says its March, t'other February. What do I care - a real fantasy mag ! The feature novel is THE BLACK STRANGER, by Robert E. Howard, and altho' L.Sprague de Camp has done his best to copy the master in his editing of the yarn, L.S.de C. shows thru rather more than R.E.H., I am afraid. Nevertheless, the story has the true Howard touch, and I'm all for more - find some mss ! But my own personal selection of the best story in the issue goes to FEEDING TIME by Finn O'Donovan. It is not possible to say anything about it without giving the pointed ending away - so, just "highly recommended". Robert Shekkin gives a tale in the old UNKNOWN tradition - man and demon - but just who is which ? And Steve Frazee tells a tale that is strictly out of a "shaggy dog" - DRAGON FIRES - dealing with a dragon civilisation.

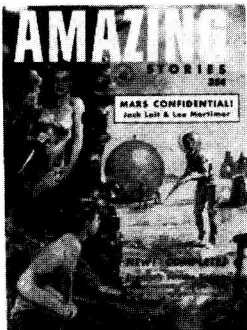
There are other yarns in the mag, all good, but on we must press - to ROCKET STORIES. Digest size, now familiar, and 35s, only too familiar. Again, some confusion over the date - March or April - take your choice. One novel, two novellates, and three shorts. In the lead yarn, QUEST OF QUAA by H.A.DeRosso, is drug-growing on Ven-us among the swamps. Apart from the peculiar properties of the Ven-usian drug, this could have been the simple story of a search for anyone's private hemp-patch in any old swamp - Pogo's, f'rinstance. JACKROGUE SECOND by Johnakes is better, but is rather familiar.

THIS WORLD IS CONDEMNED by Ward Botaford has the most unusual and novel idea in the mag, I think, and although it is only a short it ties in my estimation with Milt Lesser's THE IDOLS OF WULD, a longer tale which also develops a somewhat new idea on an old theme - Galactic conquest. Two other yarns in the mag, both are good - but there is nothing really "outstanding" about this first-issue, I fear. Not up to the standard of FANTASY Mag, SPACE S-F, or SFA.



Pressing the trigger again, I eject a dud cartridge. The new "slick" AMAZING STORY. Sorry, STORIES. The "new look" of the digest mags has not been followed in here - instead of the title on a colour band, it is superimposed on the picture. The illo, may, have something to do with the yarn MARS CONFIDENTIAL. I don't know. I didn't finish it. Not only did I find it boring, but pitiful. I quote - "we think we have X-rayed the dizziest - and this may amaze you - the dirtiest planet in the Solar System". I can but presume I have lost my sense of humour, for it

was neither funny, nor science fiction, to me. However, I'll raise my hat to Howard Browne for the rest of the mag. A vast improvement on the last ten years of AS, with PROJECT NIGHTMARE: Heinlein - PK approach to atomic war; NO CHARGE FOR ALTERATIONS: Gold; THE WAY HOME: Ted Sturgeon; TURNOVER POINT: Alfred Coppel (who is rapidly advancing into the "big name" section); THE INVADERS: Leinster; THE LAST DAY by Matheson, and finally the other "out of Place" item - IYAN Jor-genon's BELLY LAUGH (Ivan is a house name, and to blazes, says I, with Mr. Browne's statements otherwise). Colour work - one or other tone superimposed on black and white - for the interior art work. 162 pp, 35s, 4.00 or 5.00 for a 12 ish sub depending whether you live in or out of North America.



AVON SF & F READER has now had two issues, Jan & April, and my info is that this is all. Despite "All New Stories" stated on the cover they reprint ONE MAN GOD by Frank Owen, in APR 17 originally, in the Jan issue. In comparison with the other Avon's these two are top-flight mags, "surrealist" cover art, fine selection of material of all kinds, including Arthur Clarke, Milton Lesser, John Christopher, Charles L. Harness, and Jack Vance. I'd not go overboard for the mag, but it is ideal for folk wanting a variety of yarns.

I've already expressed, elsewhere, my disappointment in SCIENCE FICTION PLUS, Gernsback's new mag, but a slight improvement was indicated in the second and third issues. Although I'm very pleased with the format, art work, and general appearance, it reads to me as if I'd picked up an old 1930's (early) magazine in error. But I hear that the July issue is rather more "pulp" in appearance - let us hope the contents are rather more modern, too.

Biggest new thing - literally - is the 192 page digest size FANTASTIC UNIVERSE SCIENCE FICTION, edited by Sam Merwin, Jr. Fourteen yarns, and some book reviews. Clarke, Pratt, Bradbury, FB Long, Bertram Chandler, Bradbury - quite an author line up, and all pretty good yarns, too. 50s a copy, six for 2.50 in USA. No art work other than the cover by Schomburg. Bi-monthly, this ish dated June/July '53. Well worth buying, this one, even at 50s.

With a very similar title we find UNIVERSE SCIENCE FICTION. Digest, 35¢, only 128 pages with ten yarns, but quite readable yarns. Coloured interiors, one colour superimposed on b & w. Edited by George Bell, who has done good work by getting names, including Bloch, Sturgeon, Leinster, and Fran M. Robinson, into his first issue. I also note Nelson Bond back in there with a good although not unusual yarn. Best liked by me was BOW DOWN TO THEM - an anti-military-red-tape story, by Mark Clifton.

Then the next new one - VORTEX SCIENCE FICTION. Digest & 16Opp, 35¢, not dated, No. 1 contains twenty stories, and has an unusual cover format - smallish central illo with a white backing, title and other data at top and bottom. The twenty yarns are by names new and old - Alfred Coppel with two yarns (one is by Derfla Leppoe, it says here!), L. Major Reynolds, Lester del Rey, Vance, E. Everett Evans, and Bryce Walton are among the "old". Mostly the yarns are good, a few are trite - but with twenty yarns there's a good chance of finding a good half will appeal to you. Naturally, they are all on the short side, 22 pages being the longest.

Last shot in the magazine - BEYOND FANTASY FICTION, Hal Gold's latest. Almost a misfire, Hal, I fear. FANTASY MAG scooped you - but you've done pretty well, just the same - but if you were aiming for the UNKNOWN target you didn't quite make it. Still, you probably have a target of your own, I'll reserve my judgement. Novella is by Ted Sturgeon (more caviare) ... And My Fear Is Great. It is 56 pages long, and is a story of "unknown" powers - mental powers, magic, call it what you will. Good, but rather slow, I thot. James McConnell - All Of You - is good, but a pity that the idea - the "spider woman" - is getting overworked again. Still, James has given an unusual angle of sight on this - it is from the woman's viewpoint this time. Roger Dee's SPRING BIRD I did enjoy. A somewhat sentimental little piece, but no complaints. Others by Damon Knight, T. L. Sherred, Frank Robinson, Richard Matheson, and a joint work of Jerry Bixby & Joe E. Deam. All very good, but none which are "outstanding". The "surrealist" mix-up of a cover I frankly - I'm no art-appreciator, tho - did NOT like. Maybe it means some or other thing to some or other body, but not to me. Let us have, oh please, art work that illustrates things-as-they-are, and not this "abstract" stuff.

A glance at the older mags - Famous Fantastic Mysteries, I regret to say, is defunct. Last issue June '53. Startling goes back to bi-monthly, and FSM to quarterly. SFA and Space S-F also have changed back to bi-monthly after a very short career as monthlies. FANTASTIC SCIENCE FICTION folded, we hear, after its second issue. Not lamented by me. NEBULA SCIENCE FICTION, the British edition - we are told an American NEBULA will appear, no connection between them - showed a vast improvement in its third issue, which features shorter yarns and more of 'em. There are three or four - perhaps more - worthwhile yarns in current serials, I'll list the ones I recommend below. Startling has produced another of the much debated stories of Farmer, noted below as recommended. Not quite as good as the first, THE LOVERS, in my opinion, but still very good. And that is all the space I've got.... sorry!

.....KFS

RECOMMENDED: Mission of Gravity - Hal Clement - 4 part from

TANGLE HOLD: F. L. Wallace - GSF Jun 1953

FIRST LADY: J. T. M'Intosh - ditto.

LIBERATION OF EARTH: William Tenn - Future '53 May.

THE WALL OF SERPENTS: de Camp & Pratt Fantasy Fiction '53 Jun..

THE DUPLICATED MAN: James Blish & Michael Sherman, Dynamic S-f '53 Aug.

POLICE YOUR PLANET: Erik van Lbin, Science Fiction Adventures '53 Mar (4pts)

"GENERAL CHUNTERING"

The two "illustrative" items printed lower on this page are typical of our modern division between the ridiculous & the tragic...."space money"....and how to deal with the atomic bomb...no other comment to make....in this issue appears a review of J.T.M'Intosh's first novel...his second, **BORN LEADER**, will be out from Doubleday in November....Regal Books Ltd., 52 Victoria St., Manchester, 3, are supposed to be issuing two of S. Fowler Wright's novels in cheap editions about now...titles **THE SCREAMING LAKE** and **CAP TAIN SPARROW**...I wrote 'em for details, but had no reply.....Wright



sent a manuscript to an American publisher who has someone called Bradbury as a reader....said Bradbury turned the book down on some ground that it was "communistic"....have read the mss myself since and can only consider that Bradbury must also believe that British traffic lights are one third Communist....and what he must consider goes on behind a "red light district" is worth finding out.....Nic Oosterbaan, Dutch editor of **PLANEET**, mentioned the mistranslation & general nonsense attached to the edition of Clarke's **SANDS OF MARS**, published in Holland....from a letter of his I gather these included such things as "rocket" coming out as "jet aircraft", and novel ideas like "interplanetary air traffic", "exploding rockets", and "hyperbolic gliding movement"....**EXPLORATION OF SPACE**, translated by an engineer, is a far better item....other Dutch reprints include **PEBBLE IN THE SKY**, **THE BIG EYE**, **THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS**, and the **MAN WILL CONQUER SPACE SOON** Collier's symposium....the John Wyndham book did not sell well, possibly because it had already been serial-

PASSIVE DEFENSE POCKET CARD



TAKE COVER GENERAL I

1. This pocket card provides defense against atomic biological
2. Your gas mask protects gases. In addition the gas mask of radioactive dust and biological
3. Incorporated clothing (quietly against war gases and agents. Ordinary clothing protects against beta radiation.
4. Follow instructions of radiological personnel especially you in all matters pertaining to logical and chemical defense.



...top of the page is as good a place as any to draw your attention to the announcement at the foot....and this means YOU.....by reason of sundry factors I shan't go into here I can no longer... (I haven't been able to for some time, let alone "longer")...give O.F. support by digging into my pocket....hence the hoisting sub rates up to 7/6, or 1.00, for four issues plus the HANDBOOK plus all the usual bits of paper that I send out....there is no compulsion to this, but I'd like to know how many of you are willing & able to afford those rates, and to make it easy for you I'm send-printed reply cards with this issue so that you can mail 'em back to me....then I'll be able to see whether it is worthwhile to continue a printed O.F....or to drop back to a mimeo-ed or duplicated effort !....sad news, that, pals....but it all depends on how many cards I get back whether O.F. continues as now, or not....so if you want to see it continue....mail me the card filled up !....on to other things....Allen Newton informs me that juvenile sf is now being printed in Hebrew, in Israel....and that there is an sf club there....also that the first all-negro club, THE AFRICAN CLUB, has been formed in Lagos....mainly students drawn from the Trade Centre School there, and the club is sponsored by the International S-F Correspondence Club....next Tucker novel to come... THE TIME CHEATERS....due now from Rinehart....from Bill Hubble, of the NORTH SHORE FUTURIAN SOCIETY, (Box 2725, 24 Spencer Road, KILLARA, NSW, Australia) comes word that the N&S is open to fans in other parts of the world although mainly for down-under folk...if you want to keep in touch with Aussie developments three USA promags, or one hard-covered book, will get you a years membership... they issue a monthly news-sheet, and a fanmag TERRIFIC is on the way...half-foolscap, 24-32 pages...swaps for similiar fanzines, or for USA promags, one for one....President of the club is M. A. Bas, 24 Spencer Road, KILLARA....he probably has more room in No. 24 than Bill has in his box, so maybe you'd better send the mags, etc., to him....you can also get membership for 5/- sterling.... the death of James A. Williams, book dealer, rare-book appraiser, and senior partner in PRIME PRESS, came as a shock to the fans in general, and to the 11th World S-F Con Committee in particular... Mr. Williams had been in poor health for some time, but had never let this interfere with either his professional or his fan activity....he died on March 22nd, after a short serious attack of an intestinal illness....and he will be missed....his place as Convention Chairman has been taken by Milton A. Rothman, well known to fans and pros both under that name and as "Lee Gregor"....just sent to the publisher is L.Sprague de Camp's mag for a "SCIENCE-FICTION HANDBOOK" - The Writing Of Imaginative Fiction.....some 95,000 words....due out maybe in August....recently released was

Important:

HENCEFORTH, YOUR OPERATION
FANTAST SUBSCRIPTION WILL
COST YOU

7/6

OR

\$1⁰⁰

Much as we regret this, it cannot be avoided.
Your subscription, we remind you, is NOT for
one year, but for FOUR issues of OPERATION
FANTAST and the annual copy of the HANDBOOK,
PLUS any other material we publish in the
period covered by your subscription.

Subscriptions may be paid in cash to the Editorial
address, or to one of our "official representatives",
or may be paid from credits in the Trading Bureau.

This change may result in discontinuation of O.F. as a printed
publication if insufficient renewals are received - to enable
us to estimate our future, please complete the postcard which
is enclosed, and return it as soon as possible. Our thanks..

THE CONTINENT MAKERS, and this will be followed by THE TRITONIAN RING...both from Twayne, whom de Camp hopes will publish all of his "Viagens" stories....also out is TALES FROM GAVAGAN'S BAR, in which he and Fletcher Pratt combine in that delightful style made so familiar in the "Incomplete Enchanter" tales....which are being continued in FANTASY MAGAZINE... Ichecking back, I find that the "serious" de Camp book may have the title "ROCKETS, ROBOTS, & ROMANCE" - there seems to be some uncertainty in my sources of information....or else de Camp is being unusually prolific....STAR SCIENCE FICTION from Ballantine Books (pb at 35¢, hardcovers 1.50 - both issued same time) is first of series...Ballantine are reported to be paying 9¢ a word for material for the STAR series, and up to \$5,000 for books....money, money, money....GSP Novels 15 is THREE GO BACK...Mitchell...124pp...and Bob Silverberg estimates - "its been out even deeper than the severely abridged 1943 FFM version"...Sam Mines mags will probably drop back 128 pages with the October issues....SF+ did not appear in July...the issue following June is dated August...Dell pbs have just issued 25¢ editions of SLAN, van Vogt, and FIRST HE DIED (Time And Again, from GSF), by Simak....and BALLANTINE are out with Gravy Planet from GSF, under the title "THE SPACE MERCHANTS"....they'll follow up with an expanded magazine yarn from Fletcher Pratt, and on the stocks there are Arthur C. Clarke and Ray Bradbury collections....WEIRD TALES follows the trend and goes 35¢ and digest with September.....Don Wollheim, late of Avon and now with Ace, is editing a series of s-f books to come out back-to-back, a la COSMAG/SF+...first pair are reported to be WORLD OF NULL A and THE SHADOW MEN, both by v.v.second issue of FORERUNNER, 5/- Australian fanzine edited by Douglas Nicholson, has now reached me....46 pages approximately 8 and a half by 6 and a half inches....yarns by F.B. Eyring, Royce Williams and Doug Nicholson, continuation of Vol Molesworth's serial yarn, and an article by Norma Williams....semi-stiff binding, small photolith print....a fine job....forthcoming in NEBULA S-F

.....
WANTED by T. G. L. Cockcroft

3, Stilling-street, Melling
 Lower Hutt, New Zealand

Strange Tales 1931 November.
 1932 January and March.

Weird Tales 1928 February.
 1929 January. 1932 January.
 1934 January and August.
 1935 December. 1937 June.
 1939 September and October.

Strange Stories

1939 October and December.
 1940 February, April, June,
 and October. 1941 February.

Science and Invention

1927 December.
 1928 April, May and July.

AMAZING STORY ANNUAL

.....

South End, PORT ELIZABETH, South Africa, comes a request for Amazing Stories, '47 Feb. Jun. Jul.Alfred Gregory, on who's behalf we printed a plea for material for THE H.G. WELLS' CLUB some time back, tells me he is still receiving items from people, the latest from New Zealand, and would like me to express his great appreciation for everyone's kindness - he has done his best to acknowledge everything, but in case he missed YOU...you know that your sending was appreciated....FSM '53 July features THROUGH THE BLACKBOARD by Joel Townsley Rogers, and PI IN THE SKY by Frederic Brown....and an editorial on the debunking of Chlorophyll that is

No.4 are a 22,000 word yarn from Syd Bounds, ADAPTABLE PLANET, and PAWN IN REVOLT by Bill Temple, of 7,500 words. The first is space-opera, the second psychological warfare...plus a fantasy by Eric Frank Russel, THIS ONE'S ON ME...and shorts by EE Evans, Peter Ridley, Paul Enever and T.D. Hamm ...for number five, ALPHABET SCOOOP, 8,000 words by Ross Rocklynne, DESTINY IS MY ENEMY, Bill Temple (14,000 about a submarine civilisation), GREAT ORGAN, J.T. M'Intosh, 5,000 sociological.... this information unofficial, but reasonably reliable...subject to alteration by the editor, I fearOF member Mrs. Berta Burrall of 2644-48th Ave SW, SEATTLE 6, Wash., USA, wants cheap copies - Talbot Mundy: C.I.D.; Wheatley: THREE INQUISITIVE PEOPLE; Donald McPherson: GO HOME UNICORN - can anyone help her?...and from Ron Robertson, 15a. Westwood Road,

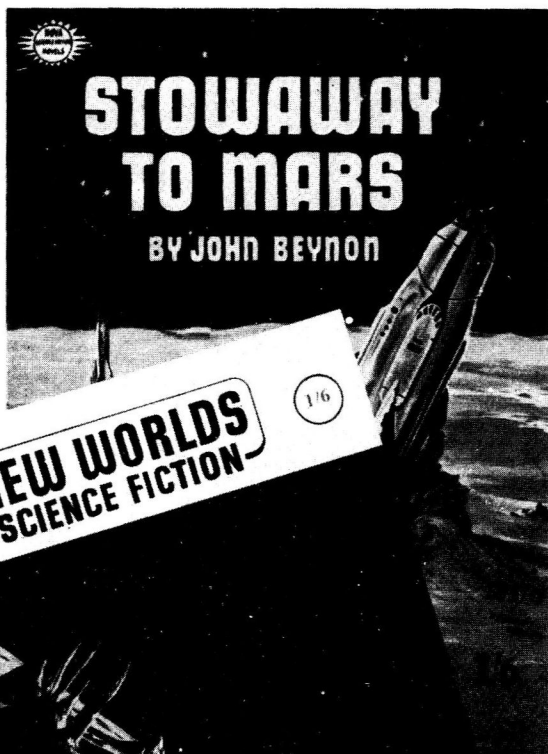
very good reading....Ron Robertson, 15a Weetwood Road, South End, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, needs Amazing Stories '47 Feb./Jun. & Jul. to complete his collection of that mag...Brenda Houston, 52, Whipstow Lane, Exeter, Devon, England has sundry old fanmags, such as FANTAST, ZENITH, GEMINI, and SATELLITE, to swap or sell....due in July is British edition of BEYOND HUMAN KEN, edited by Judith Merrill, 238 pp, 15 yarns, at 9/6 from Grayson & Grayson, and following that they have the third series of BEST IN SCIENCE FICTION - TWENTY-SECOND CENTURY, the collected yarns of John Christopher, two volumes to be drawn from Groff Conklin's OMNIBUS OF SF, and two to come from John W. Campbell's ASTOUNDING SF ANTHOLOGY....these last four are as yet untitled....from John Lane The Bodley Head you can get THE CRIBBLE OF POWER, containing the title yarn by Jack Williamson, BUT WITHOUT HORNS by Norvell Page, and CRISIS IN UTOPIA, by Norman L. Knight, 3 from the FIVE BEST, in 240 pages, at 8/6, due in September....also in September will come MEN OF TIME AND SPACE, 224pp, 8/6, a selection by Ted Dikty and Everett F. Bleiler....and then in October will come IMAGINATION UNLIMITED (Bleiler and Dikty - who else ?) 192pp, 8/6.....now available should be a new fanzine from Henry Robertson, 19 Victoria Road, Elgin, Moray, Scotland, an item devoted mainly to fiction...bi-monthly...3/9...24pp 8"x5"....on the subject of fanzines, my recommendations are Race Matthews - BACCHAWATIA (Mo.1 dated April) at 2/- a copy, with "Random Notes on HP Lovecraft" by Tom Cockerott, Reflections of a Marrowman, by Terry Jeeves, and sundry other stuff....also from down under comes a new newswine, ETHERLINE, edited by I.J. Crozier, mainly about Australian doings, but just the thing to keep you in the picture.....but for general news for down-under let me recommend Graham Stone's SCIENCE FICTION NEWS, photolith in a 6 1/2 x 9 1/2 format, very well produced and very readable....biggest things from downunder, running very close in size and worth, are PERHAPS (I've not yet seen a copy of the first issue but recd 2nd by air mail !) with a photolith cover and mimeo-ed innards, 42 pages of quite excellent articles and yarns, and the second issue of FORERUNNER, 45 photolithographed pages - top note in that is a yarn by editor Doug Nicholson titled Young Man of Middle World....prices of these are 2/- and 5/- respectively....reviews will appear in THE FAN PRESS No. 2....but I will try and fix subs for anyone who wants....In UK PERI finally is out....SPACE TIMES and SPACE DIVERSIONS keep coming on their quite standard....first issue of CAMBER appeared with XXXVI pages (that is: Fred Robinson's idea of numbering, not mine - it means 36) and the best bits of the issue are Bill Price's drawings for the covers...tho the rest is pretty good....FLYING SAUCER NEWS at 6d a copy is a new mimeo-ed item to reach me from Richard Hughes, 42 Rothbury Rd, Hove 3, Sussex, and is the OO of the Flying Saucer Club...worth it if you are interested in FS....biggest and bestest item from the U S A is THE JOURNAL OF SCIENCE FICTION, fourth and final issue, with 80 pages at 50¢....long article by some verbous geezer called Capt. K.F. Slater about British Pocket Books, rather out of date, the '52 magazine index compiled by Ed Wood, articles by Robert Bloch, Wood and sundry other folks...no fiction !...then there is FANTASTIC - WORLDS? at 30¢ a copy, 30pp, fiction, articles - including a lengthy one by Farmer about LOVERS, etc - subs to that can be obtained thru me, 7/- for 4, by the by...and then DESTINY, a very effort by Malcolm Willits and Earl Kemp...sub rate \$1.00 for 5, litho, 32pp, articles, fiction, etc....there are a few thousand more fanzines I have received, but those are perhaps the "best" - at least in appearance - I'll cover more of 'em in FAN PRESS 2....I was rather of the opinion that Bernard Wolfe's book LIMBO (Random House, 3.50, & 438pp) would have caused more controversy than it has...for a tome with such a wealth of debatable matter it has received suprisingly little comment from fandom....but let us see what happens in the British fanworld when the Secker & Warburg edition appears - by the by - slight change in title - LIMBO '90 - at 15/-, 438pp, due out on July 23rd....well worth reading....review in next O.F., folks..for it appears to me that I have come to the end of this issue....and so adios for now.....

.....KFS

COVER
ILLUS
OF
THE
NEW
NEW WORLDS
AND
THE FIRST
NOVA NOVEL

5 1/4 x 7 7/8"
approx.
128 pp,
at 1/6

NOVA SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS No. 1



NEW WORLDS
SCIENCE FICTION

1/6

21

NEW
WORLDS
HAS
NOW
LASTED
LONGER
THAN
ANY
PREVIOUS
BRITISH
S-F MAG