



NO. 21

20th October, 1940

SCIENCE FICTION SITUATION IN GREAT BRITAIN

Conflicting reports of the stf situation in England have been arriving in Australia for quite some time. In order to clear up any wrong impressions, we, the editors of Futurian OBSERVER, will give below a survey of the British fan and professional field. The information given has been collected from many sources, so if any acknowledgements are due we apologise in advance.

Prior to the outbreak of war, there were two British pro, TALES of WONDER and FANTASY. The first of had been appearing quarterly for well over two years and during this time had built up quite a large following. When the war broke out, fears were expressed for its continuance, but these fears were proved groundless when ToW continued to appear, although greatly reduced in pages.

Three have been issued since Autumn 1939. However, it seems as though ToW has gone for good now as Walter H. Gillings has been discharged by his firm for registering as a conscientious objector. Whether a new editor will be appointed is rather problematic. It remains to be seen.

FANTASY was another quarterly which saw three issues prior to the "declaration". Its editor was instantly called up for the air force and it was suspended for the duration. About this time rumours commenced to trickle through of a new British pro. A few words here, a hint there, and a confidential message somewhere-else, began to piece together into a definite scheme. It now appears that the leading British fan, Ted Carnell, had arranged with a company to issue amonthly pro known as NEW WORLDS (Carnell had a fan magazine of the same name) which would jump straight into the style of story used by ASTOUNDING in its peak years under Tremaine. Negotiations continued for a while, but eventually owing to technical difficulties the whole scheme had to shelved. Carnell, we understand, told the full story in a supplement issued with a recent VoM.

Cont. next column.

In the fan field, most of the amateur magazines went early because of the editors enlisting. Alas the powerful and efficient British Science Fiction Association went into suspended animation thus depriving fans of organised leadership. Never-the-less, a few such as FANTAST, FUTURIAN, SATELLITE, SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW continued for a while although their quality began to wane. With the introduction of higher prices of paper, ink, stencils, etc. and the increase in postage, even some of these dropped out of the picture. At the present moment our sole contacts with England are; "The Pseudo-Futurian", "SFR War Bulletin", and "Fantasy War Bulletin".

And there is the level to which British science fiction has been forced. The European conflict is not over and will not be over for a long time to come. What then will happen to British fandom by that time? We, in Australia, can do precious little to aid the Britishers.

We can only wait and see.

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REPRINT EDITIONS ARRIVE

Eight months after having been printed limited supplies of the British reprint editions of ASTOUNDING and UNKNOWN have arrived in Sydney. It is uncertain as yet whether copies have appeared in other Australian cities, but reports re this are expected to arrive anytime now.

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(Cont. from page 1.)

The issues released are reprints of ASTOUNDING for August, September, October of 1939 and UNKNOWN for September, October, November 1939. Though not many fans are buying them for their own collections, some are being bought in order to swap with Americans who may want copies for their collections. Americans who can't get the reprints from England should try Sydney fans for them!

Incidentally, the reprints of "Science Fiction" did not reach us.

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VOL MOLESWORTH has been taken to hospital, a victim of sugar diabetes. This happened a fortnight ago, but since being placed under treatment Vol has made remarkable improvement. Several fans have visited him at the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in North Sydney, and naturally will visit him again. While sick Vol has ploughed through quite a number of pro mags and books. 'Tis to be hoped that someone gets some more mags soon as he has read most that have been taken out - we'd hate to see him without any reading matter!

In a letter to ye editors Vol stated that on leaving the hospital he will bring out all back issues of Cosmos together (there will probably be only two) and requests that other fan editors continue to send their mags. Monsieur Molesworth requests that fans drop him a line to the following address:

C/- Men's Medical Ward,
Mater Misericordiae Hospital,
North Sydney
This applies to Aussie fans only...

Finally, visiting hours to the hospital are from 2:30 to 4:00 on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday afternoons, and from 7 to 8 on week nights. We hope to have these hours right Vol!

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PRO NEWS - (THANKS TO VM & EFR...) September THRILLING WONDER STORIES features "West Point of To-Morrow" as its supplement novel, with other stories being "The Stolen Spectrum", "The Tyrant of Mars", and "The Comedy of Eras" (a Pete Manx yarn). Cover is by a new artist - E.K. Bester.

Cover for the November, '40, STARTLING STORIES IS BY E.K. Bergy, cover artist for STRANGE STORIES. The novel is "1,000,000 Years to Conquer", by Hank Kuttner. This is illustrated by Wesso. Short stories are "The Man Who Evolved" by Edmond Hamilton (reprint from the old Wonder) and "Island in the Marsh", by Thornton Ayre. The feature story for the January SS is to be "A Yank at Valhalla". "The man Who Evolved" was once reprinted in a book "Horro of the Asteroid" a collection a collection of Hamilton's short stories.

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SYDNEY CONFERENCE SOON

Some time in November the Futurian Society of Sydney is to be revived. Also in November will the Society celebrate its first anniversary despite the fact that it has been in a state of suspension since September.

Last Wednesday the editors of OBS paid a visit to David R. Evans, Director of the Society, to find that he had relinquished his position. His statement was: "I have no further interest in the Futurian Society. I want nothing more to do with it." However, the purpose of the visit had been to find out what Evans' attitude to a Sydney Conference of fans (to decide on the action of the Futurian Society in November) would be. It has now been decided that the Conference will be held though where and when is not yet settled.

At this conference the first point will be to appoint a temporary Director for the Society. Then will commence the real purpose of the gathering - what the Futurian Society will start out to do in November. William D. Veney has drawn up a constitution which he thinks would be the best idea for the Society to adopt. This among other ideas will be put before the fans.

The FSS has lost many of its older members. However, before this happened many of them exposed themselves in their true forms. Much new blood will present at the November meeting and the Society will probably start out afresh and succeed where it formerly failed!

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ITEMS - Looking through a copy of the film weekly we came across these films listed for 1942:- "The Invisible Woman" and "The Mummy's Hand". The latter is described as being about "a lover living after 3000 years".

Ronald B. Levy tell us that he will be in military camp at the Showground for eight days commencing from November 2nd.

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Futurian OBSERVER (NO 21) Edited by William D. Veney and Bert F. Castellari at 10a Sully St. Randwick, NSW. 2d per copy, 7 for 1/- or 20 cents. This ish very crowded. See next ish.

OBS' HOLIDAY

The next issue of Futurian OBSERVER will not appear for about six or eight weeks. This is due to the fact that co-editor Bert F. Castellari wants a rest from it just as other co-editor William D. Veney took recently. As WDV is not inclined to issue it by himself, the issues of OBS which don't appear will be issued in about six or eight weeks – probably stapled together!! Fans are requested to continue to forward their publications as usual - - copies of the delayed OBS will be forwarded definitely!!

20/10/40

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