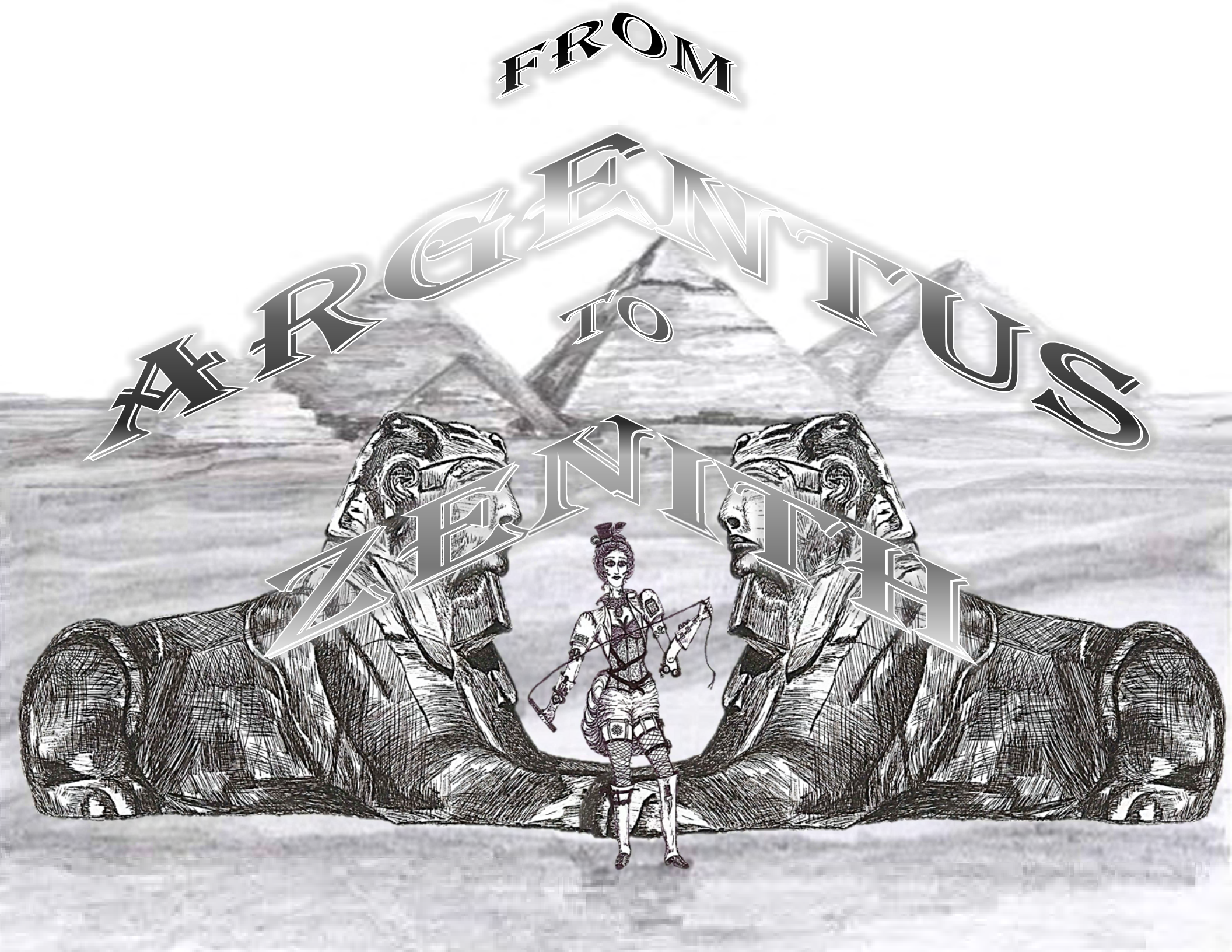
FROM ARGENTUS TO ZENITH



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Editorial...

So it happened that I was looking through the archives at fanac.org on April 25 and I had a brilliant, idea for a fanzine, or, if not brilliant, than interesting. Or at least clever. Perhaps. The idea came to me as I read through the first issue of British fan Harry Turner's fanzine Zenith, which was published in August 1941. In a nutshell, my idea was to invite several fan writers and illustrators to create an all new fanzine using the article titles that Harry used in 1941. I sent out a wave of invitations simply providing the deadline for the articles and the title of the article in question, without explaining the overall concept for the issue or what I was looking for in the article. I wanted each contributor to come to the project without fully understanding what I was trying to do and without reading Zenith to get an idea. In fact, most of the contributors will only learn of the underlying concept for this issue of Argentus when they read this editorial.

(Continued on page 13)

Mr Wells and Mr Huxley

Robert L. Rede

Many of the works of H. G. Wells show strong evidence of Wells's understanding and approval of the theory of evolution expounded by Charles Darwin in 1859 in On the Origin of Species and in 1871 in The Descent of Man. Given that these theories were being debated when Wells, who was born in 1866, was growing to adulthood and forming opinions, it isn't surprising that as he turned his attention to them realm of what would be called science fiction, he incorporated these cutting edge, if controversial theories into his writing. However, Wells had another tie to the theories of Charles Darwin.

Following the publication of On the Origin of Species, Professor Thomas Henry Huxley reviewed the book for the Westminster Review and referred to what he called "Darwinism" as one of the leading weapons in the arsenal of liberalism for use in promoting scientific naturalism over the stagnating forces of theology in the understanding of the way the world worked. In 1860, Huxley debated Darwin's theory with Samuel Wilberforce at Oxford which, along with his subsequent defense of the theory led Huxley to receive the nickname "Darwin's bulldog."

In 1884, the eighteen year old Wells attended the Normal School of Science on a scholarship and found himself studying under Huxley. Wells ascribed Huxley with teaching him how to think and frame his own arguments, noting that the professor "left [him] under the urgency for coherence and consistency, that repugnance from haphazard assumptions and arbitrary statements, which is the essential distinction of the educated from the uneducated mind."

Evolutionary theory is broadly exhibit in Wells's fiction, not only in the divergence of the Morlocks and the Eloi, which is often seen in light of the class struggle which Wells so often focused his attention on, but also in the practices of Dr. Moreau, who turned his island into a vivisectionist laboratory for applying some of Darwin's theories. It is only natural that Wells would subscribe to Huxley's vision of Darwinism, even as he applied it to the sociological and political fields around which Wells's own theories had a tendency to formulate.

If you look at Darwin and Huxley from the point of view of the mutability of life, their ideas permeate all almost all of Wells's early science fiction. In addition to the works previously mentioned, the Invisible Man changes the physical properties of his own body and the Martians are laid low in The War of the Worlds because they had not had the chance to evolve immunities to the microbial life on Earth.

While viewing species as changeable, Wells's writing brought his own pessimistic view of humanity into play. Rather than evolving to a higher plane of intellectual and physical achievement, as would happen to the human race in Olaf Stapledon's The Last and First Men, Wells's future of humanity almost leaves the reader wishing that the race would stagnate and remain at its current level

of evolution for fear it would devolve in the manner in which Wells described.

Wells, undoubtedly, would have developed his views whether he had taken that class at the Normal School of Science or not. Darwinism and evolution were both hot topics of discussion during his formative years, but Wells had a very positive experience with regard to Huxley, who had been championing Darwinism for nearly twenty-five years when the young Wells took his class. Wells says that Huxley taught him to think coherently and it is logical that Wells found Huxley's own arguments, whether offered in the classroom or in the accounts of his debates from before Wells was born, to be convincing and coherent.

Demonstration

by Peter Sullivan

Demonstrations are a fairly common sight on the streets of London. The demonstration on Thursday, 10th May 2012, was not. More than 20,000 police offices, from all over the country, gathered to march in a protest against cuts in the police service, and to protest government proposals to increase their retirement age to 68. Because, after all, nothing improves public safety like having a 67-year-old police officer running after those young oiks running away from the scene of their latest bout of anti-social behaviour...

What would be an interesting statistic would be to know how many of the 20,000-plus marchers were on their first ever demonstration. I suspect a fairly high number; maybe even 20,000. (For the purposes of this calculation, I mean people on their first demonstration as a demonstrator, of course. I suspect that nearly all of the officers present will have been involved in demonstrations on the other side of the crush barriers.)

For me, my own first (and, to date, only) demonstration was in my halcyon student days, on 26th February 1989. This was my third and final year at Durham University, up in the north of England. The logistics of us getting to a demo in London were not trivial, but we always managed to send a respectable number of people to National Union of Student demonstrations in London, certainly compared to similar student unions that were much closer. (Although the numbers were not, perhaps, quite so respectable when considered as a percentage of the overall student body at the university; I think we took two coaches of up to 50 people each. So not more than 100 out of a total of about 5,000 students.)

The coaches left from outside the student union building--then, as now, Dunelm House, the Brutalist concrete building next to the River Wear designed by Sir Ove Arup in the 1960s. (And precisely the type of building to wind up Prince Charles, whose fear and loathing of modern architecture is legendary.) We left at some unearthly hour; I believe it was some time about midnight.

My plan to sleep on the way down was fairly unsuccessful. Being

6 foot 6 inches in height, I have never really fitted that well in coach seats. Plus, the driver had the radio on, as that night was also the boxing title fight between Frank Bruno, just about the only British boxer since Henry Cooper to whom the label “national treasure” can be applied non-ironically, and an at-his-peak Mike Tyson. With minimal interest in boxing, then and now, I wasn't really interested, although, some 20-plus years later, it does have the unintended consequence of allowing me to tie down the date exactly with a quick visit to Mr. Bruno's Wikipedia article.

I do remember that we stopped at about 4 am for breakfast at one of the service stations along the M1 motorway. I think I declined the “full English” breakfast (basically just about every breakfast food that's bad for you, fried in grease thick enough to clog not just your arteries but the whole motorway), and just had an (over-priced) sandwich and coffee.

Because of our schedule, we got caught up in the rush-hour traffic on the way into London, and just about made it to the site of the start of the demonstration (Waterloo Bridge) by the scheduled start time of 10. Fortunately, science fiction fans are not the only ones for whom “fashionably late” seems to apply for the start of pretty much any activity. So, as it was, we had about a 20 minute wait in a slightly chilly but (crucially) dry February day standing about before the march moved off. An unseen march organiser was “warming up” the crowd, doing “shout outs” to the different unions who had made it to the demonstration, and complimenting us on our banners.

Durham Student Union actually had a fairly large banner, which was quite plain in design, but had the words “Durham Student Union” in big, friendly green letters, on a background of the university's traditional purple colours. (We––or some of us, anyway-–may have liked to think of ourselves as dangerous student radicals, but we were still, when all was said and done, Durham men and women, and proud of it.) I ended up carrying one end of the banner for at least part of the march, which thus obviated any obligation for me to carry a placard.

The placards were provided by the Socialist Workers group, who happily handed them out to anyone who wanted one, on condition that they were returned at the end. In true adherence to Lenin's principle of making use of fellow travellers on the journey to socialism. (“Fellow travellers,” for once, being a literal description rather than a political metaphor.) Needless to say, they all had the words “Socialist Workers” displayed prominently across the top, thus making it look as if much of the crowd were SWP members. Although at least one of the Social Democrat students from our group had clearly planned for this in advance, and had a sticky label they plastered over the end of this to make it read “Social Democratic Party”

The march itself took about two hours, albeit at a very slow pace, but with much chanting to keep spirits up. Afterwards, the rest of the day was our own, until a scheduled early evening departure back up North. At the time, I was part of a crowd of fellow proto-geeks (the term “geek” not really being in common parlance at that time, even in its earliest sense of an insult) who

were members of the Science Fiction Society, the Games Society, and the LARP Society, but who were also active in various ways in the Student Union. So we did several fannish things throughout the afternoon, including a visit to Forbidden Planet and the original Games Workshop. (Such opportunities to visit London specialist shops were highly valuable in pre-internet days, as they were just about the only source of such essentials of life as comics graphic novels, board games, role-playing books, and other difficult-to-source items.)

The other thing we did (since we all had day passes for the London Underground) was to ride on the Circle Line. All of it. As the name suggests, the Circle line is a circular route around the middle of London. We got on at Victoria, and did a complete counter-clockwise circuit all the way around to Victoria again. Just (as the saying goes) because we could. A proposal to then do another full circuit, but this time clockwise, was vetoed, as the trains were beginning to get busy from the evening rush-hour. Plus, we weren't completely 100% sure that we'd have time to finish it before we needed to be back at the coach pick up point, also located near Victoria (although, confusingly, not the main coach station itself). The trip back was fairly uneventful, with us getting back just in time to head back to bed and try to catch up on the sleep missed on the way down.

You'll notice that I haven't really said much about what we were demonstrating about yet. This is not as inappropriate as it seems, as the student demonstration in London was pretty much an annual event, and were as much a social networking event for students as an effective protest. (Although I did get verbally slapped down by one of our union officials for suggesting this-–her response was “The reason there is a demonstration every year is because the government is always fighting student rights every year.”)

The hot issue that year was actually student tuition fees, which the then Conservative government was seeking to introduce for the first time. This was, needless to say, not popular with students, and we had representatives from all the four main political party groups within the student union on the march, protesting against them-–plus the less-organised group of self-identified independents such as myself. This included, perhaps surprisingly, the Conservative student group, who had either been given permission to deviate from the party line on this, or had decided to break out on their own in any case. Shortly afterwards, the plans were dropped-–although I have to say I suspect that the main reason from this was pressure from middle-class, Conservative-voting parents, who suddenly woke up to the impact that this could have on their own finances. Nevertheless, I can still claim to have taken part in perhaps the only student demonstration in history to have actually achieved its objectives.

The sad thing is that many of the student activists on that demonstration who went on to become MPs (I know of at least one from the Durham contingent, and I'm sure there were others from the other local unions present) would have ended up voting in favour of student tuition fees, either in their original introduction by the

Labour government from 1998, or their dramatic increase to a maximum of £9,000 a year by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government in 2011. Having had the benefit of a tuition-fee free university education, the student protestors of 1989 went on to draw up the rope ladder and prevent future generations from benefiting from what they had, at 18 or 21, regarded as something worth marching for. Funny business, politics.

End of the Crusades

Steven Pitluk

Never again the battlecry
“For God and for His glory!”
I’ve left behind The Sar’cen for
He is, no more, my worry
Behind are the rocky walls
Of golden Jerusalem
Eternal city of war, instead
I roam the forests of Auvergne
I climb the Monts du Cantal
And look back towards the Holy Land
Where long I fought and toiled
The sun beats down upon my face
It blisters and it burns
Harsh Levantine air scrapes my lungs
As the sands of Damascus
Scratch my skin and a Moor
Rides off, triumphant
I never shall see Auvergne again.


ALL THAT WE SEE OR SEEM...
...IS BUT A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM.
E.A. POE
©brad w. foster 2012

The Reprint Racket

By Christopher J Garcia

It was a dark and rainy night on the streets of Fandomtown, and I was on the scope. I had to score. This was a night when I needed, no NEEDED, one and I needed it bad. Too bad. Bugs under my skin bad. BIG bugs under my skin bad. I had to have it, and there was only one place to go.

I walked down the streets, more of a shamble, really, and came upon the source of my salvation--

Internetia

I kept my steps steady, as steady as they'd go, and made my way in. I didn't say a word, not to no one, but I didn't pretend like they didn't exist either. I played it cool, maybe a touch too cool for this phantom world so fair. I did not strut nor amble nor saunter nor hike; I walked in tones less often played than heard. I looked for my marketman, the gentle provider of my soul's release.

And he showed, a man in a shirt from some antique con.

"You looking for something?" he said to me, reading my mind or the almost visible shakes.

"Yeah. I need...something." I said in a voice almost my own.

And he turned from me and I knew to follow and I followed in steps exactly as long and measured as his. We passed others, researchers and students and fen long thought forgotten. We walked, and walked, and could see the past on shelves displayed, a future spoken of in pages graying. Brittle corners missing, inks fading, these were histories. My host led me to a spot where my rejuvenation lived.

"So, what do you need?" he asked.

"I've got issues," I said, trying to control my volume with little success, "two issues, of The Drink Tank."

"Ah, that does sound like a problem. What's the theme?"

"The greatest Worldcons."

He turned from me and there was a shelf and from it he pulled pages stapled, two equally spaced, as it is meant to be.

"This," he said, handing it to me, "this is what you need."

I looked at it, an issue as old as myself, and turned the pages. Dave Kyle, Forry, Tucker, White. I saw the one, the piece that would bring me up.

"What will this run me?"

"We'll talk about that later." He said.

I took it back with me, hurryhustlehassling. I got back to the grinding stone, my nose returned where it belongs. I read a line, I copy it into the zine. Another line, and then another. Soon it was in there, another Drink Tank masterpiece, fragments dim of lovely forms come trembling back, courtesy of an unseen benefactor pubbing before I could read. I had barely hit send when I heard the knock.

"Is this the home of The Drink Tank?" I heard called out.

"I...it's..."

“Open up, it’s Fandom Police!”

And out the window I dove, praying for the fannish updraft that putting out an issue should provide.

Thoughts of the Great...Zamboni

By John Purcell

When Steven H (no period) Silver requested an article from me for upcoming issue of Argentus, I was completely flummoxed as to what to write. The only prompt he gave was “Thoughts of the Great...,” which didn’t help much. So I fired back an e-mail asking, “the ‘great’ what?” “That’s up to you,” came Steven’s reply. “Insert what you want after the ellipse.”

So I struggled. What could I put after that phrase to complete the thought? The first idea was “Unknown,” so it could read “Thoughts of the Great Unknown” and I could prattle on about that wonderful pulp magazine. But no, I concluded: that would require too much research, and I have enough of that to deal with for writing my dissertation this year. Nope. Need another idea. So while Spring Semester raced to its inevitable end, I would think of potential topics while driving to and from Blinn College.

Here are some of my other brain-droppings:

Thoughts of the Great Book Treks (the monthly used bookstore jaunts Steve Glennon and I used to take up in Minneapolis when we were in high school, but that was so long ago I forget the names of half of the stores); Thoughts of the Great Books (naw, too much research again); Thoughts of the Great Hangovers (understandable topic for an SF fanzine, but I couldn’t remember a damn thing about the conventions that caused those hangovers); Thoughts of the Great Petting Zoo (Nope; wrote something like that for Challenger #29); Thoughts of the Great Grillmeister (a good idea since I love to grill just about anything); and Thoughts of the Great Whatever (a nice catch-all title allowing me to ramble like this until a coherent thread emerged).

Finally the word “Zamboni” popped out. It sounded great at the end of that phrase, and could be about magicians, Italian sausage pizzas, or some other esoteric, non sequitor topic. But, being a Minnesota born and raised lad, I recognized the opportunity to write about a passion of mine: ice hockey.

When I think of it, I probably learned how to ice skate before riding a bicycle. In Minnesota, that wouldn’t be unlikely since the state is essentially iced over half the year. Oak Hill Park was only half a block from our house, and my brother and I would walk over after school and on weekends November through March to ice skate and play hockey with other kids. It was fantastic: the hockey rink was at one end of the double baseball field, and the rest of that vast expanse was a big honking sheet of ice just for skating. On that, kids would either simply skate, practice figure skating, or play pom-pom pole away, dodge ball on ice (simply a blast), form huge

whiplashes that would send kids careening into the snow banks rimming the ice field, and gigantic games of Red Rover or Tag (dozens of kids would be involved with this last one so a single game of Tag would last nearly an hour). The neighborhood pick-up hockey games were fast and furious, and this was before the advent of helmets and face masks, our only protection being layers of bulky clothing necessary to ward off the winter chill. I still remember my next door neighbor, Pat Lyons, losing two teeth from taking a puck in the mouth while playing goalie. Ah, it was grand being a kid in Minnesota back then.

Ice hockey is one of those team sports in which a mediocre or average player like me can be on a team featuring really good players. I tried out for the ninth grade hockey team at Central Junior High (St. Louis Park, Minnesota), but when the physical revealed I had asthma (not severe, but still there), that ended that endeavor. So I switched to soccer, which requires a much warmer climate for playing, but that is another tale for another fanzine some year.

In Minnesota one of the biggest events of the year is the annual state high school hockey championship, held in mid-March and usually accompanied by a blizzard or two. That's how we knew it was time for the tournament: monster winter storm? Must be tourney time! My school, St. Louis Park, wasn't known for its hockey team; that distinction was literally the domain of either Edina, Minnetonka, or Wayzata; each year one of those teams would be the Lake Conference representative to the State tournament, and a quick Google search reveals that the Edina Hornets have won ten state ice hockey championships, most recently in 2010. Man, the rest of the schools in the Lake Conference detested the Hornets, they were so dominant. Not surprisingly, quite a few Edina players found their way into the NHL: Bill Nyrop (Montreal Canadiens), Brian Burke (General Manager and executive VP of the Toronto Maple Leafs), Gord Hampson (Calgary Flames), and Paul Ranheim (Calgary Flames, Hartford Whalers, Carolina Panthers, Philadelphia Flyers, and Phoenix Coyotes).

You would think that with so many NHL players coming out of Minnesota--remember the 1980 USA Olympic Hockey team? That's the bunch of college kids who whupped the Soviet team in Lake Placid then took the gold medal by defeating Czechoslovakia; they were coached by University of Minnesota hockey head coach Herb Brooks (who does not look like Karl Malden, believe me) and half the team was from the U of M or Minnesota-Duluth--that there would be a long history of professional ice hockey in the state. Well, there is, but the first true NHL team was the Minnesota North Stars, which played at the Metropolitan Sports Center from 1967 to 1993. The North Stars were one of the six expansion teams (others were Philadelphia, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Oakland) added to the National Hockey League in 1967. Needless to say, having a professional hockey team in a hockey-mad state was an instant hit: the team consistently sold out the arena, and I remember going to a number of games with my family. To this day I still vividly remember a game against the Oakland Seals that first year where we were seated just behind and to the right of the North Stars bench, and head coach Wren Blair had one foot on the boards, ready to spring onto the ice following a

non-call after a flagrant hit on a Stars player, wildly giving that “off with his head” gesture at the referee. He stayed on the bench, but moments later things were evened up when North Stars defenseman, the aptly named Elmer “Moose” Vasko (who stood 6 foot 6 inches and weighed something like 270 pounds) got up a head of steam and leveled a Seals forward with a body check that made the 13,000 fans issue a collective “OOOHHH”. Ghods, but I love this sport!

The North Stars actually made the Stanley Cup playoffs during their first season (losing in the semifinals to their arch rivals, the St. Louis Blues, who would eventually lose the Cup to the Montreal Canadiens), and the team had a number of wonderful players: Bill Goldsworthy, Cesare Maniago, Wayne Connelly, J. P. Parise (whose son Zach currently plays for the New Jersey Devils), and Bill Masterton, for whom the Masterton Trophy was named; he died two days after suffering severe head injuries in a game against the Oakland Seals on January 13, 1968. A direct result of that tragedy is why all NHL plays now must wear helmets, masks and other protective gear.

Over the years the Minnesota North Stars would make the Stanley Cup Finals only two times, each time coming up on the short end of the stick. In 1981, they lost to the New York Islanders (game four was one of the most exciting Cup finals games I’ve ever seen, mainly because that was the only game the Stars won in that series). The North Stars returned to the finals in 1991, powered largely by players Brian Bellows, Bobby Smith, Mike Modano, Jon Casey, Curt Giles, Neal Broten, and Dave Gagner. Unfortunately, the other team was one of the greatest teams ever, the 1991 Pittsburgh Penguins, which had on its roster future Hall of Famers Mario Lemieux, Mark Recchi, Bryan Trottier, Phil Bourque, Paul Coffey, Gord Dineen, Ulf Samuelsson, and Jaromir Jagr. A damn good series, that was. The Penguins took the Stanley Cup 4 games to 2, but it still remains in my memory as a fun run to the finals: the North Stars had finished the regular season with a lackluster 27 wins, 39 losses and 14 ties, but still made the playoffs, then defeated the Chicago Black Hawks, St. Louis Blues, and the defending champion Edmonton Oilers (sans Wayne Gretzky, but they still had Mark Messier) before facing off against the mighty Penguins. It was grand while it lasted.

Then two years later North Stars owner Norm Green moved the team to Dallas, Texas, dropping the word “north” from the team name, forever earning the ire of Minnesota hockey fans. He claimed that the move was strictly for financial reasons, but apocryphal tales exist that say Mrs. Green wanted badly to move back to Dallas (her hometown), and that she had Norm by the cojones, threatening to blow the lid off his indiscretions (sexual, of course) if he didn’t move the team--or else. I don’t know if this is true or not, but it makes for a great story.

Losing a franchise in the State of Hockey--a moniker that Michigan respectively claims as its own--was an insult to the NHL, so the Powers That Be immediately began seeking a new expansion team to play in Minnesota. Unfortunately, the old Met Center had been razed and replaced with the Mall of America (the same fate befell Metropolitan Stadium, the home of the Twins and Vikings, and the earlier professional soccer franchise Minnesota Kicks), so there was

no place for a new NHL team to play. The capital city, St. Paul, came to the rescue, and so the Xcel Energy Center was built to house the expansion Minnesota Wild, which began play in 2000. They have yet to make it to the Stanley Cup Finals, but made it into the playoffs in 2003, 2007, and 2008. The best player the Wild have ever had was Marian Gaborik, who is currently playing for the New York Rangers. Needless to say, the Rangers are in the Cup playoffs this year largely because of Gaborik. *grumph*

The funny thing about all of this is that even though I currently reside in College Station, Texas, where it is summer virtually year round, I still consider ice hockey my favorite sport. Believe it or not, there is actually a hockey rink in town--Wolf Pen Creek Ice Center--that is the home arena for the Texas A&M University hockey team. Yes, the Aggies have an ice hockey team. Go figure. Their arch rivals are the Texas Tech Red Raiders, and when these teams play each other it's an ugly game, filled with fights and the penalty box occupied from start to finish. My daughter Josie worked at the Ice Center for a few years, even started playing hockey there, too. During one game--in a non-contact league, which doesn't make sense to me since hockey is a very physical sport--she actually got into a fight! Josie dropped the gloves, even though it was mostly a shoving match. She got a game misconduct penalty and suspended for three games. That's my girl.

Not only that, but while working at the arena Josie learned how to operate the Zamboni, the machine that resurfaces the ice after a hockey game. And now you know why I chose that word to follow the ellipse in the title prompt. After all, a Zamboni always appears after three periods.

Editorial...continued

In addition to creating a fanzine which would mirror Zenith, I decided that the one new article I would commission would be a biography of Harry Turner, whose fanzine inspired the whole project, and Mark Plummer was able to oblige me with the requisite profile. I also reached out to Harry Turner's son, Philip Turner, to inform him of the project (the only person I revealed the concept to). Philip not only granted me permission to see the project through to completion, but also offered to provide me with a clean version of his father's first fanzine. When you finish reading the modern fanzine and Mark's article, you can turn the page and, thanks to Philip's offer, read Zenith as it appeared 71 years ago.

SHS

The Future of Civilisation

By Gregory Benford

For cities, the future promised progress, because by the early 1900s the rural past was definitely over.

Twentieth Century Americans got visions of better homes and streets from the World's Fairs and visual lures like the megastructures of Buckminster Fuller. These Fuller skyscrapers were enormous hyperboloid towers "machines for living" a hundred stories high. (Freed of gravity, the same grand scales turned up in space stations.) These visions were secular utopias, without the anti-free market bias of the 1930s or the isolated feminist utopias of the 1970s. Their predictions reveal the culture that shaped them.

Zealots abounded. Science fiction writers, auto designers, architects, and advertising mavens--all thought that technologies could solve social problems better than lectures or spiritual appeals. Futurism, an art movement based on a passionate loathing of everything old, merged with commercial consumerism, reinforcing each other. In the USA, which invented the consumer culture, planners thought that they could fashion better communities with better buildings.

This fit with older storylines. Americans often saw cities as fabulous and yet also dark. To frame this tension, they invented film noir in the 1930s and 1940s, using stylish techniques of shadow and light they borrowed from European directors, especially Fritz Lang. This reusing of older images extended everywhere. Even the spaceship heroes, from Buck Rogers to Han Solo, geared up with zippy ships and powerful weapons, came to us straight from the virile mavericks of the Wild West.

Such futures resurrected the past, because audiences could buy into technologies that followed well-trodden narrative paths. This helped sell technologies, because if they changed only the material world, leaving social arrangements intact, these futures were easier to digest. So we saw megacities whose men wore bowler hats and attended genteel concerts with ladies whose skirts grazed the ground. Nobody foresaw massive rock-concert amphitheatres with mosh pits filled by skimpily clad sybarites.

Historically, though, technologies hasten social change. Cities change people, and people change cities in response. Science fiction and technologists did not merely sell futures, they shaped them. Fritz Lang's 1926 film Metropolis was hugely influential, but it is based on his 1924 visit to New York, a city that impressed him with its fresh buildings and furious energy. Lang contrasted stunning landscapes of skyscrapers (surely one of the ugliest invented words of the century) with the unseen city. In the shadowy basements cowered oppressed workers enslaved to machines. H.G. Wells foresaw the same imagery in The Time Machine in 1895.

Their agendas got stripped away, though. Audiences carried away images of the sparkling towers, the light, airy suspension bridges, and the swarms of strange vehicles in the sky. They wanted that, and forgot about the basement.

Clearly, cities are winning in the 21st Century. Megalopolises housing tens of millions grow around the world. A majority of humanity now lives in cities; in 1900 it was less than one in ten. Cities are energy efficient compared with suburbs, but can still damage the environment around them. The flight from cities to suburbs, which seems to be waning now, could reverse. Where this will saturate will be one of the biggest social questions ahead. One

clear sign: the educated flock to cities, at least until they have children. Then a fraction moves to nearby (often to distant cities, but further from the core). Still later, in their 40s and 50s these reasonably elite families (nearly all are married, unlike the less educated) begin to move for comfort, not primarily schools or convenience (cities are usually convenient, at least with money).

This may portend a new way of separating populations by the endless run of self-selection.

Cities will be in the middle of all this, no matter their size.

Harry Turner: The Grand Old Man of British Science Fiction Fandom

by Mark Plummer

When Claire Brialey and I were putting together our first joint fanzine in 1996, Greg Pickersgill supplied us with a list of suggested names and addresses we might wish to use to expand our embryonic mailing list. Most of the names were familiar but a few weren't, and amongst the latter was Harry Turner of Romiley, near Stockport. Still, working on the basis that Greg knew what he was talking about, we sent Harry a copy of the then rather cumbersomely named Waxen Wings and Banana Skins, and received a perfectly pleasant if slightly baffled reply on headed notepaper for the "Septuagenarian Fans Association." This was to be the first of many communications over the next decade or so, including letters, artwork, reprint fanzines, and the odd Thelonious Monk cassette.

At this point Harry had been involved in fandom on and off for sixty-odd years. As a teenager he'd been part of the Manchester Interplanetary Society and had taken part in a rocketry demonstration in March 1937, making the front page of the Sunday Express ("Rocket That Was Meant For A Planet Explodes In Manchester And Police Say — 'Stop It'"). He wasn't at the first British convention in 1937, but he was there for the second in London in 1938, and contributed covers for eight of the final nine issues of Britain's first fanzine, Maurice Hanson's Novae Terrae, in 1938 and 1939 and all four of the 1939 fanzine issues of Ted Carnell's New Worlds. He also did some professional artwork for the British magazine Tales of Wonder: a number of interiors between 1938 and 1941, and the cover for #11 in Summer 1940.

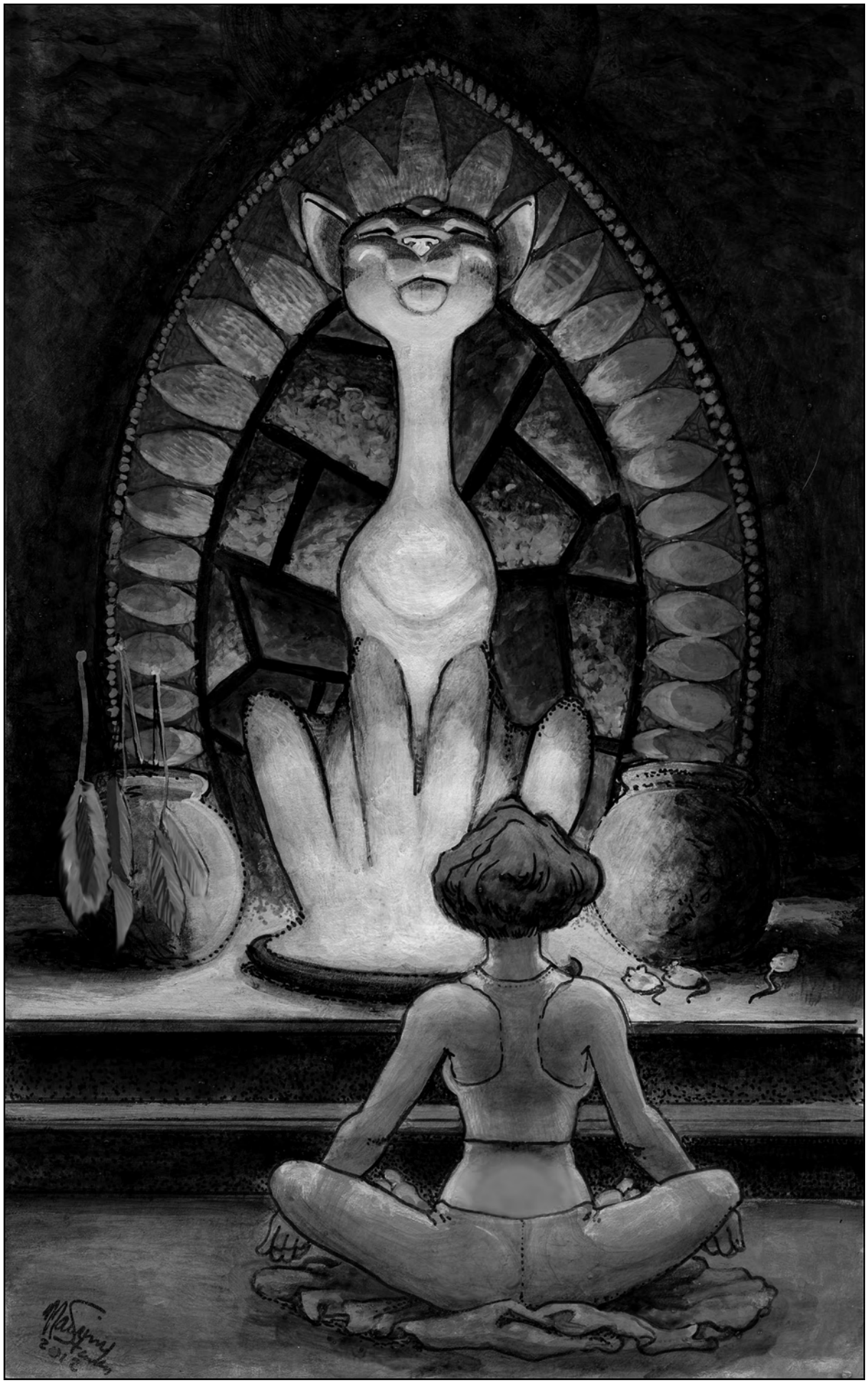
His own first fanzine was Zenith, initially a slim contribution of mostly artwork and poetry (by Harry's future wife, Marion Eadie) distributed along with J Michael Rosenblum's Futurian War Digest in mid-1941. The first full issue came in August 1941, with contributions from Carnell, Hanson, and C S Youd (John Christopher), and with Arthur C Clarke's story "The Awakening" appeared in #4. As you might expect, Harry did all the covers and many interiors, often with fine two-colour mimeography.

He served as a radar technician during the Second World War--

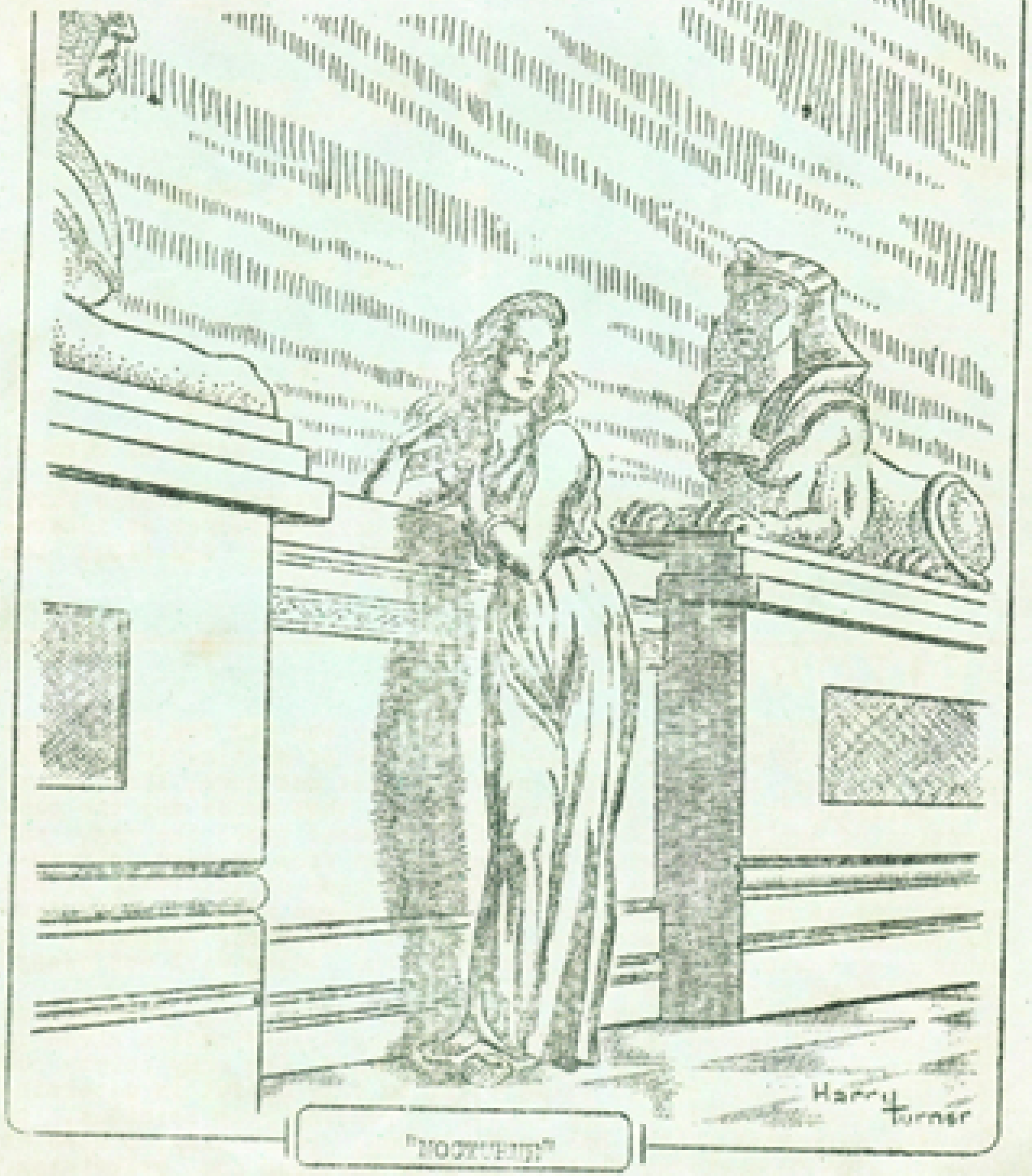
for a while alongside Clarke-–and was later posted to India before returning to the UK in 1946. More pro artwork followed, the cover for the second issue of Ted Carnell's Science Fantasy and a number of interiors for both that and Peter Hamilton's Nebula, but "I suspect that most of the illustrative work I turned out in the 1950s was pot-boiling; I fancy I put my heart and soul into the amateur publications." These latter included a single revival issue of Zenith in June 1953 (the title would later resurface in the Sixties, on a wholly unconnected publication from Peter Weston) and, starting in June 1954, Now and Then co-produced with Eric Needham and purportedly the "Proceedings of the Romiley Fan Veterans and Scottish Dancing Society." As Claire described it, N&T "featured some entertaining and faintly surreal fan writing of the sort that demonstrated that our fannish forebears were our kindred spirits but also managed to make it sound as though they were always having more fun."

Harry dropped out of fandom at the end of the 1950s but resurfaced in the 1970s with covers and interiors for Lisa Conesa's Zimri. His work there often featured "impossible objects" with which "I try to provide the reader with graphics of apparently concrete objects that can be handled and manipulated. This, I hope, gives assurance that the finished results have a commonsense credibility despite the visual anomalies that creep in." These objects were a staple of Harry's art across the next several decades, appearing in Krax, Tortoise, The Reluctant Famulus, YHOS, and our own Banana Wings amongst others, while Chuck Connor's Thingumybob included several full-page illustrations showing how "the ambitious DIY fan" might construct them. There's even a colouring book from Dover Publications, The Triad Optical Illusion Colouring Book (1978, reissued 2006). Harry provided numerous pieces of artwork and design for Steve Sneyd's Hilltop Press, and in 1993 he was the subject of an art portfolio in the thirty-third issue of British newszine Critical Wave.

We kept in touch with Harry and even met him once, at the 1998 British Eastercon in Manchester. The "Septuagenarian Fans Association" evolved into the "Octogenarian Fans Association," and the flow of communication slowed, especially after a stroke ended his artistic output. He died on 11 January 2009 at the age of 88, one of the last veterans of pre-Second World War British fandom. His wife Marion is now, as best we can tell, the last surviving pre-War British fan, and his son Philip maintains an obituary page at http://www.htspweb.co.uk/fandf/romart/het/hetobit.htm with scans of Harry's fanzines and many examples of his fan and professional art, and from which the quotes used in this piece were sourced.



ZENITH



ZENITH

Contents

August — 1941 — Number — One

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EDITORIAL . . .

PROVIDING that I am not claimed by the RAF for a few more weeks, that ARP work doesn't claim too much of my time in thedark nights to come, that the paper ration is not cut down, that there is a sufficiency of material contributed, that funds for the publication of Zenith are available, that someone likes the mag, and providing all other provisos that may arise from present circumstances, I expect to inflict the mag on Fandom at intervals of six weeks. It is my pious hope that the next issue will be ready during the first week of October. I think I can safely guarantee a minimum of three issues and for the time being will not accept subscriptions beyond that number.

In the meantime, I should be pleased to have your comments on this issue; it hardly fulfils the sparkling specification given in Fantast, but still . . . ! The usual ratings (so many points out of a possible ten) on all items would be very useful in determining your tastes, so do please write. Pending your opinions, no definite editorial policy has been adopted; personally, I have no objection to fans airing their views on anything and everything.

(Continued on page 9)

MR. WELLS AND MR. HUXLEY

By JOHN F. BURKE

IN a recent article Mr H.G. Wells, discussing, as usual, the world of the future that is to be built on the ruins of the present system, declared that his new world would have no room for people like Aldous Huxley. Mr Wells, the eternal optimist, is revolted by the pessimism of the poor unfortunate who could see no way out of the "Brave New World" but suicide. There is little doubt that he would be equally appalled at Stanley Weinbaum's "New Adam". Are we to accept Mr Wells's optimism as the best way out of our troubles, or must we admit that Huxley is right ?

Whatever possibilities the future may hold, there can be little doubt that Aldous Huxley's books are much more realistic and derived from everyday life among certain classes of people, despite their satirical extravagance. His highly- (perhaps over-) educated intellectuals commit suicide with more conviction than Mr Wells's innumerable Little Men - the Kippses, the Lewishams, the Britlings, and all that monotonous family - face up to life. Huxley's defeatists are sensitive; Wells's optimists have the optimism of stupidity: he insults the class he is endeavouring to glorify by making its representatives in his books mere puppets, all turned out in the same mould. We are apparently faced with the alternative of a death self-inflicted because of over-sensitivity, or a blind, futile, unaesthetic life that only goes on because the race is too dull to realise its own ugliness.

Somewhere there must be a compromise. If the purpose of "Brave New World" was to persuade readers that they must forsake science and take up life on the land, using bows and arrows to catch their food, it must be discounted; I do not think it was written with such a purpose. If Mr Wells, on the other hand, thinks that his world, like that of a somewhat earlier philosopher, will be better off without the writers - and particularly writers like Aldous Huxley -- then Mr Wells cannot expect much praise from the discerning.

It is possible for the intellectual to compromise, because the well-educated man has an intelligence that will, sooner or later, show him he is wrong and must make some adjustments; but for H.G. Wells's puny heroes, stuck in their rut, there is no compromise or alteration possible. They have dogged determination ? Say, rather, stubborn incomprehension. They have not the necessary intelligence to achieve the change, even if they could be persuaded to recognise how essential it is.

The Little Men who run in and out of the innumerable pages of the books of H.G. Wells can be made useful; they are ideal material for dictators to shape into automatons, but they are also potential helpers for the thinkers of the world. The Huxleyan philosopher, wild as he may be at times, is trying to find his way out by attacking the more obvious faults in the world, until

he is left with something that will stand up to his attacks and thus provide a satisfactory basis for reconstruction. In the work of reconstruction he needs labour, and here is where the Wellsian legions come in. Let Mr Wells recreate his happy dreams of a mid-Victorian Utopia peopled with replicas of Mr Polly. One hopes that all those silly little nondescript men are creations of an author's imagination; if they are real, and if the future of the world is in their hands, then let us sit down and weep.

The Wellsian optimist will give you life, but no opportunity to see the beauty there may be in life; the Huxleyan pessimist will see all the potentialities of this "world, unfathomably fair", but realise that in the midst of such crass materialism he will never have an opportunity to use these potentialities.

If you are satisfied with the plodding, unambitious life, you will not be appalled by Mr Wells.

Woe betide the unbeautiful stodginess of his optimistic future world if there is "no place" for Mr Huxley's analytical satire.

DEMONSTRATION

By MAURICE K. HANSON

THE teacher looked grimly at his class. Inside himself he laughed.

"The subject of our studies now", he said, "is death".

He paused.

"We cannot turn you into sane, responsible citizens if you are but half-educated. You have studied life and living things yet you know nothing of death and dead things. A knowledge of one without the other is useless, a horrible distortion of truth. You are all alive and you are aware of the basic processes of life - how you eat and drink, breathe, grow, excrete and reproduce. Now you are to learn how you die".

His back was turned to the class as he moved over to the demonstration bench. The students were silent; his discipline was good.

"One thing I must impress upon you. There is nothing distasteful about death. It is part of a logical sequence. Life - death, life - death, life - death. It is not to be avoided. If the interests of the community demand your death you must die".

He opened a drawer in the desk and took out a revolver.

"You have studied the history of education and you know that our educational system is the best, the finest, the most powerful and productive the world has ever known. It will not be improved, it is perfect. You know that it is based upon one simple principle, on one word. Experience. 'Live and learn' our forefathers said in the twentieth century: 'live to learn' we say in the

twenty-first".

His grim eyes wandered speculatively over the class as he began to load the revolver.

"And so today, for the benefit of the State, one of us will experience death. He is the fortunate one who will learn most; the rest will participate only at second-hand in the role of observers, but they too will be rewarded by knowledge gained. We have not much time before the end of the lesson and if there should be any among you who fear death I must ask them to step out in front of the class immediately".

No-one moved.

"Good. Your hypno-psychological training is such that you could not lie, even if you wished. We will now proceed with the demonstration. Watch well how death takes the place of life".

Again he laughed inside himself for the sheer joy of the moment. Carefully he placed the revolver to his head, pressed the trigger and died.

Outside a bell rang softly. The class rose and filed out. School was over for the day.

END OF THE CRUSADE

Wisdom and war, said Merlyn,
  And never the twain shall meet,
But once in a generation
  Savage the war-drums beat.
  And then, drawing dole, I meet
  You standing in the street.

Squeeze the orange, said Halifax,
  Until even the pips must squeak.
Not knowing a law of dynamics
  Which makes strength out of the weak.
  There are other pips now that squeak.
  Blessed are the meek !

This is your world, said Wells,
  The future is yours, as the past
Crumbles away in its spells --
  The magician enraptured at last.
  Learn from the arrogant past,
  With youth as your flag at the mast.

C.S. YOUD

. . . a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of SPACE - out of TIME.

Edgar Allan Poe.

THE REPRINT RACKET

By TED CARNELL

THERE'S going to be plenty of opposition to this article. I can feel the ozone burning even before the darn thing's written, but it may give some of you "lifers" an opportunity of turning me over on the other side to fry. This article, by the way, is directed at the heads of the readers and newer fans, who have too long been pushed around by the old-timers like a ghost in a thick fog.

Mild, gentle, harmless reader -- don't let 'em fool you with their droolings of "classic" stf stories of the past. Don't let those letters in the Gasbag Section of the prozines, raving about "The Skylark of Delirium" and other 'great' stories, turn your head and make you think that stf died about 1935. Don't, because the dopes worship at the shrine of Grandfather HGW, think that there haven't been any new ideas. You're being kidded along by a set of fossilised grannies who haven't changed with the times --- yet the secret ambition of these guys is to become authors !

Take a look at some of the reprinted "classics" of recent years, now running in the Munsey mags. You - and you - newcomers since 1938; can you honestly say that they bog you down with their masterfulness ? That compared with the epics of 1924 and 1934, today's stories are senile ? I doubt it very much. You probably think the same as I do. That those earlier stories were exceptionally good, considering how stf was in its infancy, but that they seem just - well, a little old-fashioned in style. That is, the writing technique, not the plots which the master-minds evolved. Agreed ?

There is a great gap between the stories and style of ten years back and the present-day equivalent, and it is this gap that is the stumbling block to a better understanding of the advancement of stf. Probably the greater majority of readers and fans haven't realised that there has been much of a change. Stories still deal with Space and Time and the host of other interplanetary adventures and inventions used a decade ago. But firstly, the writing technique has altered enormously since Merritt penned "The Moon Pool" - compare his literary style as then written, with say, van Vogt's "Slan". Secondly, those interplanetary adventures and ideas have been written about so long and often that they are almost second nature to us now. It would be useless to give us a graphic description of the first take-off from Earth on a round-the-moon trip.

The greatest fault with those older stories is that their plots did not warrant the length to which the stories were written. The stories were over balanced - top-heavy with excess verbiage. Merritt, in particular, over-wrote all his lengthy stories. At times, there are whole columns of so-called illuminating descriptive matter which slow the stories down, and the reader finds that he is wading thru paragraphs flooded with words irrelevant

to the action on hand.

In today's stories, American streamlined writing calls for Action, the cancellation of superfluous wordage (at so many cents a word), and concise explanations of any sciences involved - not the long-winded variety as previously doped up. This is the point which brings classics to the fore - the adherents to the past cannot bear the modern streamlining, and they clamp down on every new story that is rated as exceptionally good. If Smith's "Galactic Patrol" and "Grey Lensman" had been published six or seven years ago, they would have frothed at the mouth with excitement, and the entire "Skylark" series would have mushroomed into angelic heights. If you haven't read the "Skylark" series yet but get an opportunity later on, you'll be very disappointed in them. They are but milestones along the road . . .

This brings me to the title of this article and to my contention that the reprinting of the older stories is nothing more than a racket for publishers to make a make-off without a very high overhead. The Munsey mags - ADVENTURES and NOVELS as they were until recently - pegged third place in recent American polls(ASTOUNDING and UNKNOWN being first and second respectively). You'll admit that, apart from WEIRD, the competition drops away after those two have been eliminated. The vast majority of voters on that poll were ardent fans, many of them long-term readers. Be that as it may, those earlier stories were good, and still are, providing comparison with modern yarns isn't brought into play.

Therefore, the reprints honorably earn third place as the best stories, you'll say. I'll agree with you there, but the old ARGOSY hasn't sufficient good stf yarns to be able to make a reprint stf mag - they have to include weird, fantasy and horror stories to fill out the pages. Doesn't it strike you as strange, too, that Miss Gnaedinger seems to be having such a lot of trouble standardising her mags (now fused as one, I believe ?). Despite the fact that she has had to pay out very little in authors' fees the magazine has been more erratic in price, publication and make up, than any other we've had. I think that the general reading public are not taking too kindly to the reprints, despite the eulogies from the fans. The style is too obsolete to pull the mag into higher circulation figures.

The exceptionally good stories have all fallen at times when there have been "highs" in stf : 1928-31; 1934-36; and, believe it or not, from 1940 up to the present. Today's stories may rate as "classics" in another five years or more, but I hope new readers then won't be fooled into believing that we were having super-stories in 1941. Such stories as "Slan", "If This Goes On...", "Final Blackout", "The Stars Look Down" and many others will be spoken and written about then as we today speak and write about "The Comet-eers", "Skylark of Valeron", "Three Thousand Years" and "Rebirth" today. Or of earlier stories such as "The Moon Pool" and numerous others of the 1928-32 era.

So - don't let them fool you. Science fiction is as good today as it ever was, probably far better, owing to the rise in the literary standard. The war has shaken the publishing world quite a bit, both here and in America, and it will probably be shaken a

lot more before things are finished. But we don't have to go back to reprints as our sole means of support.

THOUGHTS OF THE GREAT . . .

IN Edward Garnett's excellent book of criticism, " Friday Nights", there is one chapter, written in 1914, in which he refers to the "insatiable appetite of the public for an art of sensational shocks and sentimental twaddle", adding a footnote - "We quote an American publisher's advertisement: '"The Book of Thrills" , DARKNESS AND DAWN. By George Allan England'; and so forth. 'Also you have a wonderful wooing under perfectly unheard-of conditions; an ideal love, pure, tender, unselfish. . . Beatrice's abduction, Allan's fight with a giant gorilla, the air-ship wreck, the thrilling defence against a horde of half-animal savages, and the building up of a new world and a beautiful idealistic civilisation on the ruins of a blasted planet - these but suggest the possibilities of entertainment of this big romance,' and so on". JFB

EDITORIAL . . . continued

Indeed, I should welcome discussion and at the suggestion of San Youd have started a series of articles on the Future of Civilisation,(on the admittedly optimistic assumption that it has a future), just to get things warmed up. Contributions to this series are invited and should attempt to trace present trends and determine the position that the arts, science and religion will assume in the world of tomorrow. A correspondence section will be included in the next issue, which will be enlarged slightly to accommodate this feature . . .

Whilst I have some good material on hand, articles, short stories, verse, drawings and even suggestions are welcomed for use in future issues. I hope some of the fans in the States will take the hint - I'll always be glad to hear from them. And to those American fans who are tempted to take out a subscription to the mag, I might whisper that current pro- and fanmags are most acceptable as payment, Indian or hard cash . . .

In conclusion, I should like to thank those fans who have helped in the production of Zenith - in particular Mike Rosenblum and Doug Webster for their helpful adverts in Fido and Fay, and Art Williams for kindly sending along the contributions he had on hand when ill-health forced him to relinquish the publication of his fanmag.

HET

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next issue..."PELICAN ISLAND" by Marion F. Eadie

THE FUTURE OF CIVIL

ARTICLE 1 - The Town of Tomorrow

"We cannot build a good town while we hate the town, while we degrade it by regarding it only as a workshop from which to escape as often as possible, as a mere place of amusement or commerce, never as a home. The good town, therefore, must exist as an idea before it can be created as a fact. For it is more than a mere material fact, far more than an economic organisation. It is also, and perhaps principally, an attitude of mind. The good town will never be built until people again believe in the possibility of its being built. That belief, after a hundred years of the worst kind of town building, may be difficult to achieve. But upon its achievement rests all the hope of the future".

Thomas Sharp in Town Planning.

o o o o o o

WITH the advent of the Industrial Revolution, social welfare became a subsidiary factor in the organisation of production - the quantity and quality of that produced was more important than the life that production involved. As a consequence of the feverish industrial activity of the last century, we have the oppressive congestion and absence of amenity in modern towns, the dismal rows of slums and careless intermingling of grim and grimy factories, railway yards and gasometers with shops and houses. It is not surprising that town dwellers should seek to escape from these degrading relics by departing to more open surroundings. But this exodus only results in the gradual encroachment of the town upon the rural districts with a ragged fringe of suburb and the whimsical disorder of ribbon development. Valuable agricultural land and beauty spots are remorselessly absorbed; time, money and traffic space are wasted on suburban travel and those unfortunates forced to remain in the town find the real countryside slipping further out of their reach every day. Those living in the suburbs find they have not only lost direct contact with the social excitements of the town - the crowds, shops, theatres, music and art - but with the pleasures of the countryside.

The semi-dispersal of the population in suburbs is no answer to the problem presented by our archaic towns. It has been suggested that the concept of suburbs be carried to its logical conclusion to bring about the "disurbanisation of the towns and urbanisation of the country". Such an absolute decentralisation and dispersion of urban districts is in some respects desirable, but under normal industrial conditions impracticable. It might be possible if we were an agricultural community; but we are mainly dependent on an industry based on mass production which demands the concentration of the workers at specific points. This complete union of town and country would only accentuate the economic and

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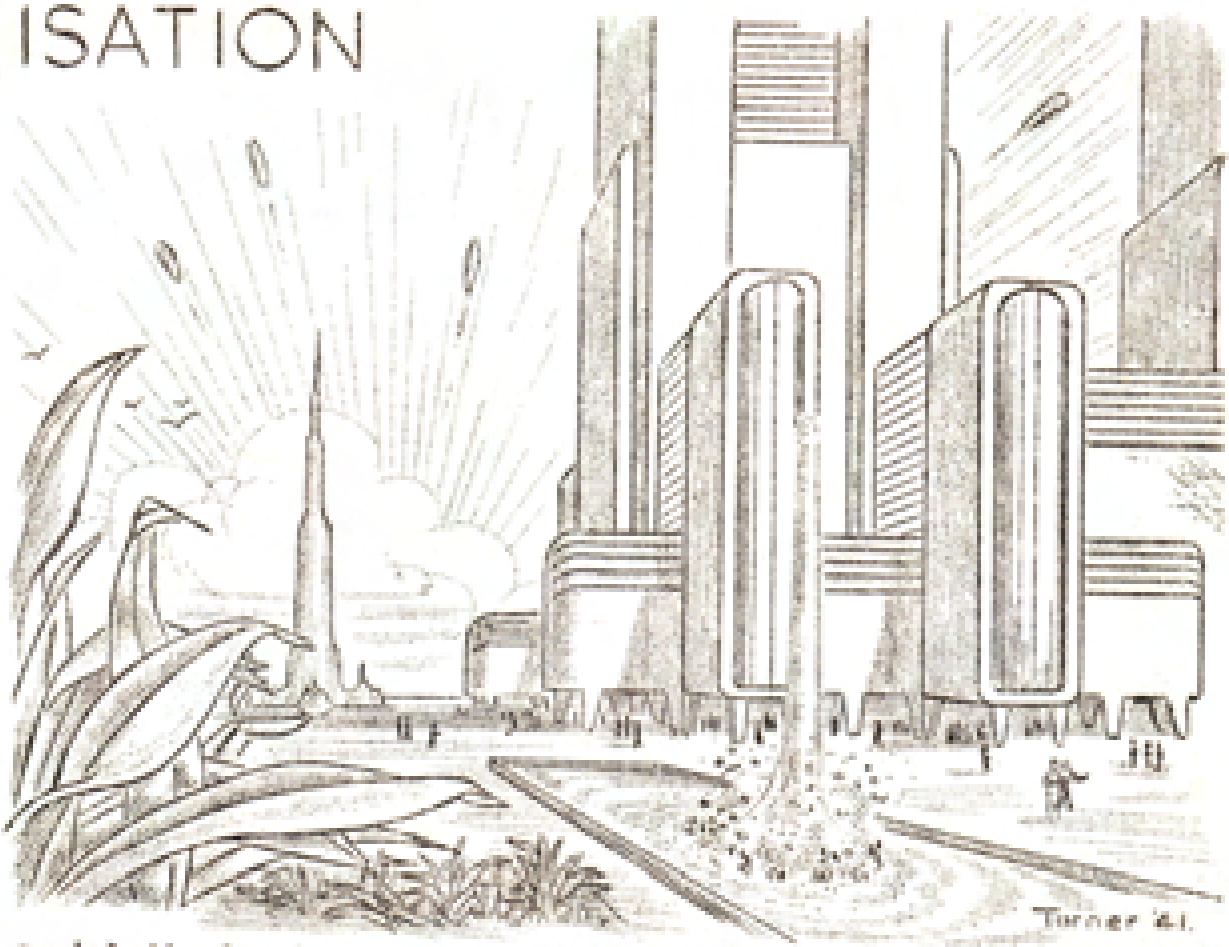

social disadvantages of suburbia; industry could not be run efficiently under such conditions.

It would seem that, despite such superficially attractive alternatives, the present division of town and country, suitably adapted to modern needs, is the ideal solution to the problem. By erecting small self-contained towns and transforming the old towns to make them healthy and efficient, we can put an end to the urban expansion that is despoiling the countryside.

But it is patently obvious that successful post-war reconstruction of the towns cannot be left to the whim of individuals or influenced solely by the profit motive; that only means a repetition of the sins of the Victorian age. There must be rational planning under national control, with social welfare as its essential motive. The town dweller should be provided with a home and work planned for his needs, so that his life is as rich and varied as he can make it - he should be emancipated from useless labour, wearisome travel and drab surroundings. Though in contact with the excitements that only urban life can produce, the citizen can only appreciate them to the full if the complementary pleasures of the countryside are readily accessible from all parts of the town. This means that the old towns must grow smaller and more compact, and must have far more open spaces and green belts in them. Those of our architectural beauties and historical relics which do not seriously interfere with the proper growth of national life will, of course, be preserved.

To have the towns compact and at the same time provide plenty of open ground can only be achieved through height and obviously calls for flats or skyscrapers. Both types of dwelling have been used in the wrong way; the mention of flats usually evokes visions of gloomy, stuffy tenement buildings - of skyscrapers, the ravine-like streets of New York's business quarter. But the proper use of flats or skyscrapers is not necessarily to crowd more people into a limited space, but to preserve most of that space as open land. If, in a certain area, nine out of every ten houses are built on top of the tenth, then no more people have been crowded into the area, but the ground that would have been occupied by those nine houses is extra open space. By adopting this principle at least 90% of a town could be open space, the remainder being given over to buildings distributed in an orderly pattern and at a considerable distance from each other over landscaped parkland.

The actual form of a town will be largely determined by geographical and economic factors, but it seems likely that the larger towns will be divided into two specific section; one the business area, the other the residential area. The garden cities at Letchworth and Welwyn provide examples (but not entirely satisfactory ones) of how industrial and commercial enterprises can be included as units in a planned community. We are used to the idea of the heart of a town being the busiest place, but obviously a town centre is the most impractical place for traffic congestion. The residential and civic buildings might take the form of a central group with the business areas and main highways forming an outer ring, so transferring the town 'centre' to its borders and removing any possibility of traffic congestion.

The primary consideration in planning the central region is to get as much sun and air into the buildings as possible. So far as flats are concerned, the courtyard principle is unsuited to our climate; we need the benefit of the maximum amount of sunlight and the best arrangement to ensure this is to place the flats in lines running roughly from north to south with, say, a 30 degree light angle. Thus one face of every flat receives the benefit of the sun during the morning and the other face is sunlit during the afternoon. The small houses will be arranged in ordered groups, on the same lines, around the large apartment and civic buildings, combining variety with unity.

The towns should be designed for beauty as well as convenience; there should be no necessity to resort to a bogus 'modernistic' style or imitate some architectural style of the past. The newly evolved technique using steel and ferro-concrete has produced a new aesthetic of expressive massings and plain, clean lines. The radical innovation of suspending floors from a steel skeleton disposes of the need to pile up masonry to support the weight of a structure. Weight-bearing walls can be replaced by an outer wall that is no more than a protective skin, that can be glazed continuously without structural interruption if needs be.

Whilst not an immediate likelihood, it does seem probable that in the not-too-distant future, great blocks of apartment buildings will supersede the house as a home in the main cities. Most of the continental rehousing schemes have resulted in the erection of impressive blocks of flats; in this country, the flat colonies arising from the sites of demolished slums are symbolic

of the new era. These flats are more than mere dwellings - they are miniature towns housing thousands, with their own shops, schools, amusement,welfare and recreation centres, communal halls, libraries and gardens. Similarly, in the more distant future, the "town" will be concentrated into one huge building -- Olaf Stapledon draws a picture of such a development in the chapter "An Americanised Planet" in his book Last and First Men. Each "town" will take the form of a huge pylon, perhaps half a mile in diameter at the base and tapering to a height of two or more miles. Around the pinnacle of the structure will be platforms for the use of commercial and private aerial traffic; residential floors will occupy the mid-portion while business offices, shops, theatres and so forth, will be placed on the lower floors.

These gigantic columns will be spaced over the country, between industrial and agricultural areas,parkland and wild reserve. A system of broad thoroughfares and speedy monorail transport will link up the"towns", while mails and heavy freight will be sent by pneumatic underground tubes.

However, while it it interesting to speculate in this manner, we must not lose sight of the fact that present-day science and technology have provided us with the means of restoring order to our out-of-date towns - of transforming them into places planned for beauty and efficiency, for cleanliness and comfort. We should seize that opportunity . . . —

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