

OBSERVER

FUTURIAN

NO. 1

One notes with much interest and concern where Australian fandom stands at present. Not suffice that what there is of it may soon be wiped out by the threatening ban of magazines, it appears that very few are doing anything towards assisting in raising it to greater heights. If Australian fandom is to get anywhere then fans should show much more enthusiasm than the present chronic display.

Oh yes! We have fans in this country! That's a definite fact, proof lying in suburban and city bookstalls and to a certain extent in the magazines themselves! But where are all these fans? Most of them seem to have hibernated for the duration of the war. Letters have appeared in the pro mags stating the existence of an Australian club, which is badly in need of members, but very few or no enquiries are made at all! Letters were received regarding these clubs from various parts of New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, and South Australia; I will say that. Yet totalling the number received we find that altogether not more than approximately twenty out of all the fans have shown enough enthusiasm to bother writing. Still more only about five of these ever wrote more than once and when letters were written to fans whose names had appeared in mags not more than two answered! Surely some of them are eager for Australia to appear on the map as regards stf fandom! Or are they like some parties we know, and don't care two brass farthings what happens?

I am not necessarily insisting that they should spend ever minute of their spare time on science fiction. I am merely stating that they should wake up! There are many fans, I know, who do want to take up stf fandom in a big way. But they lack both support and co-operation! When they find they can't get other fans together they become discouraged and let it pass though there is still a longing to become active left in them. Those that wish to support a club and can't get news of one turn to overseas organizations. Result, an Australian club is formed and finds that it cannot get members. However, I don't think this will happen very often as every club formed in Australia in the past years has been advertised in one pro mag or another!

It is no secret that the present activity in the Sydney fan world (F.S.S.) is caused by the work of fans of whom only

(Continued on P.2 Col.1)

Scientifilms: Now in the making and soon to appear are an adaption of a well-known Jules Verne yarn, "Around the World in 80 Days" and "1, 000, 000B.C." a film dealing with early man's struggle for existence. The release of these two films is not known. Expected some time this year is the "Return of the Invisible man." The last-named should be good if it comes up to the standard of the first invisibleman film.

Fantafilms: Fantasy will again take the screen this year. Coming are "The Thief of Baghdad" a super-fantasy from the "Arabian Nights" starring Conrad Veidt, "The Enchanted Cottage" and the cartoon feature "Gulliver's Travels." "The Enchanted Cottage" is a fantasy of real life. It was made from Sir Arthur Pinero's play of many years ago. The "Women's Weekly" reviews it thus:-

"It concerns a badly scarred and shell-shocked man and the little plain schoolmistress who marries him out of pity. But, when they go on their honeymoon to the "Enchanted Cottage" they find themselves changed - he into the handsome, laughing lad of pre-war days: and she? Into the pretty girl she should have been."

The 'she' by the way is Ginger Rogers!

Radio: Remember "Ten Year's Hence - What?" the play from station 2UE last May? Well we have now found out these facts. The author was Victor Lloyd, a fellow of much in N.Z. And the U.K. He only arrived in Sydney last year to make "li'l ol' radio" sit up. This was his very first piece to go over the Australian radio and we all know what a tremendous success it turned out to be. Naturally, hopes are high for more of a similar pattern. Buck Rogers is back on the radio again in the U.S.A. Hope someone gets an idea that it would be popular out here! . . . Probably one of the best fantasy plays to go on the air last was the dramatized version of "Berkley Square" on December 24th, from the Lux Radio Theatre. As most readers know it tells of Peter Standish going back to the eighteenth century to live in the body of one of his forefathers, whose name was also Peter Standish. This portrayal of his adventures in the eighteenth century was excellent, especially when the girl Helen had a vision of the future through Peter Standish's eyes. Peter gives himself away by using modern phrases in his speech and by constantly making reference to the fact that "things that have already happened cannot be changed."

(Continued on P.2 Col.2)

(continued from page 1, Col 1.)

one is more than sixteen years of age. Adult fans ran the Sydney Science Fiction League and adult fans are needed to run present Australian clubs efficiently. Not that we younger fans are incapable of handling this situation! Far from it. . .but an adult majority would tend to produce a stabilization of matters. I have already stated that contracts were made in different states. In doing so I neglected to mention that in South Australia three of our correspondents were adults. In Victoria, all have been adults. Again, we have with us Mr Charles La Costez, who was a member of the old SSFL. He has assisted us greatly in our campaign to contact other former members of that organisation, even though this work has not obtained very satisfying results. But it shows that once the adult fans are awakened they can do much to raise Australian fandom to what it should be. . .

While I'm on the subject of Australian fans it would do no harm to look at New Zealand fandom. As far as we know N.Z. Has no sf fans or sf organisations, even though there are many fans there. When all is said and done, N.Z. Is a part of the huge area known as Australasia. In all probability there is some lack of co-operation among fans, so it's now up to both Australians and New Zealanders to join hands and form a larger Australasian scientifiction fan organisation!

WHY NOT?

---Bert Castellari

ODDS 'N' ENDS. (cont. from page 1.)

This last sentence is often repeated when he finds himself falling in love with Helen, whereas the real Peter Standish fell in love with and married Kate. He eventually returns to the present where he is told that he has been a sick man and has been acting strangely for a fortnight past. Peter, however, is the only one to know the real truth and visits Helen's grave in a certain churchyard. This was most certainly one of the best fantasy plays of 1939.

We notice in the "Books in Demand" list in the "Sunday Telegraph" supplement, THE MASTERMINDS OF MARS, by Edgar Rice Burroughs. . .Mr H.C. MacKay has been writing a series of interesting, scientific articles for "Smith's Weekly." "Rocket Flight" was first, then "Insect Invasion" Others are now printed weekly. . .L.W. Lower writing in a certain weekly magazine gave a humorous burlesque of space travel and in the "Daily Telegraph" gave his views on Mars and Martians. . .

(continued from Col 1.)

Mandrake the Magician has finally visited the Moon with Lothar, a scientist, and of course, the scientist's daughter. In their spaceship, "Stardust," powered by rockets and having anti-gravity motors they reach the Moon. When on the other side of the moon, they discover, and have adventures in, a city called "Lunatopia." On the return journey to Earth they find their fuel has run out. However, careful manipulation of the gravity-motors helps them to reach Terra Firma safely. Some time back, Mandrake ran into a different scientist and his daughter (why the heck do scientists have pretty daughters?) and visited the "X" dimension, wherein they met the "living metal men" and many other strange entities. . .Just on the quiet. Vol Molesworth has decided to retain the format in future issues of the second LUNA. . .

EDITORIAL NOTICE

This magazine is entirely an experimental venture and future publication depends entirely upon the amount of support received. Should, after several issues, it be found not too expensive to continue then the price will be raised to three pence (six cents) and the number of pages doubled.

Only contributions desired at present are leader articles and news. This particularly applies to any U.S. fans who would be kind enough to send us details of conventions, etc.

Unfortunately we have been forced to crowd out of this issue the "Poisonal Column", but this will definitely be included next issue. Also we may include a reader's chatter column. Cartoons will come later and almost certain is Futurian Society of Sydney news.

SUPPORT AUSTRALIAN FAN MAGS

LUNA:- 8 pages packed full of top-notch fiction, articles etc. Editor: Vol Molesworth, 11 Northumberland St. Clovelly N.S.W. Price 5d or 10¢.

ULTRA:- 12 pages of excellent material, from leading Australian and US fans. Editor: Eric F. Russell, 274 Edgecliff Road, Woollahra N.S.W. Price 6d.

Futurian OBSERVER: No. 1. Editors - Bert F. Castellari & William D. Veney. Editorial office: 10a Sully Street, Randwick, Sydney, Australia. Subscriptions:- 2d per copy, 7 for 1/-. US rates: 5¢ per copy or 6 for 25¢, or trade stf. Send for details of our trade offers. Contributions: any news of interest to sfans.