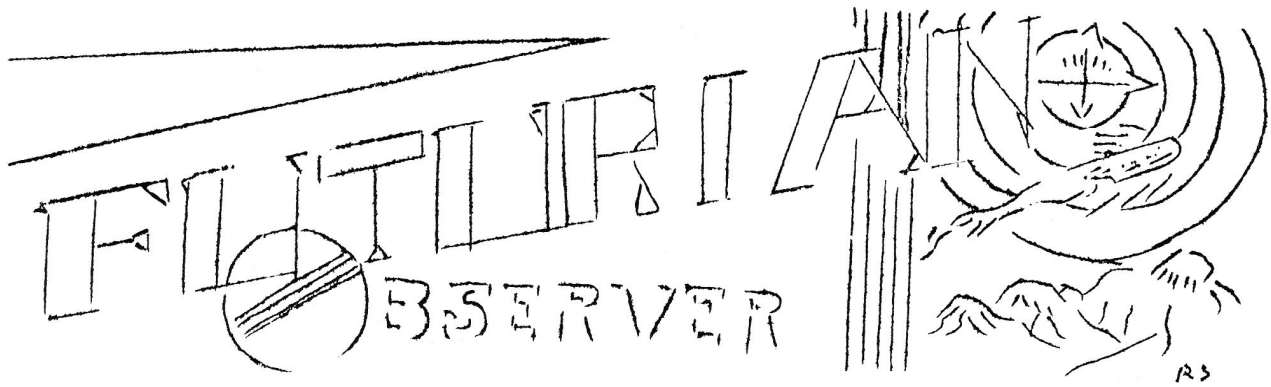

No. 36 | 18th May, 1941. | 7 for 1/-

AGAIN WE publish five issues in a bunch. Readers we know must be sore at this sort of treatment, but how the blazes can one publish a newsmagazine without news.

Most of these five will be devoted to letters, commentary and similar folderol. If anyone can suggest what we should do with Obs these days we would be interested – and we do not intend to do what some people think out to be done with it.

There is also another magazine published by the editors of this mag – it's called Zeus. It has not folded up. It will not fold up. It's just becoming a real fanmag by appearing late.

Finally, we hope you don't object to our space fillers. These editorials are space fillers. But then something had to be done.

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LETTER FROM A GUY named Russell (Edward H. Russell): "I have just finished reading over numbers 31 to 35 OBSERVER, (We are glad to hear someone finishes reading them) and following you will find some comments to fill those blank spaces you complain about.

"NUMBER 31: Does the Awakening refer to the editor(s) of Obs? I thought so, and if you remember, I rang you up on the night of 2nd Sydney Conference and asked you when it was coming out (more than a month ago). As to the printing, I can at least say that it has improved, tho' it could be better with a little more care. I suppose you are just as bad off for material? (Something tells us that there should have been a "quote" and an "unquote" around this letter – Obs.)

"NUMBER 32: Concerning the FSS Notes: Future (off. Organ) is now out, and has sold 12½% of its circulation. More expected!! Since RBL says what he found in his mailbox (or on doorstep) I'll say what we have received recently: (Letter proceeds with long list of mags – Obs.)

"NUMBER 33: Ah! White paper, good! And the Sydney Conference. I, like you, hoped it would be a success. PROFAN: Mimeoing needs improving, but it shouldn't be judged by the first issue so much. Allowing for the rest of the material I think I can say that SPECIAL ADVERTISEMENT was the best included.

"NUMBER 34: Skip it. But wait - - - you missed some good buns!

"NUMBER 35: You will probably have seen SPACEWARD, official organ of the Futurian Federation of Australia. Re. that newssheet: I don't believe that Hockley had anything to do with it! But seriously, who has a flat? (Duplicator – obs.) Hockley, Me You, Vol. 'Twas probably Vol (I think).

(Continued over page.)

FROM ROBERT CUDDEN, Newcastle fan: "Re conference: Everything can be used or absurd (correction: abused should be the last word), though more scientific results were desired, we don't yet know what will grow from the meeting, even your letter. Don't be hard on anyone – we are all victims of our environment. The grub may yet be a beautiful butterfly or something even more useful."

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TSK! TSK! TSK! Oh boys, how could you? Surely, things are not as bad as all that! Not with six of you working on it. Wee are surprised!

Frankly readers we think Future, organ of the Futurian Society of Sydney, is very disappointing. It has been advertised – not too much, or not too little – and some of its associate editors said it would be something more than threepence worth. What did we get? Twelve pages of no more than ordinary materials and several hearty laughs. On the whole it was a "below-average" for an Australian fan mag.

Perhaps if some people hadn't talked so much, we might not have felt so let down, but the trouble is that from the silence of some and the talkativeness of others we really thought that Aussie fanmags were going to find some really heavy competition. But the Futurian Society's effort is competition for no magazine.

We're sorry to see this happen. Tell us, gentlemen of the Futurian Society, why did the mag come out like that? Surely, three experienced fan editors and three good club members can produce something which effects a fan in more than a "just add it to the collection" manner.

What can we expect in number two Future? Something better we hope!

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Correction: In Obs 35 we state that the Futurian Society has seven members. Which is wrong for there's only six!

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MORE REPRINT EDITIONS ARRIVE: Reprints of the September '40 ASTOUNDING and October UNKNOWN have arrived in Australia and are now on sale at most City bookstalls. Another arrival was the thirteenth issue of TALES OF WONDER with its new standard cover.

The production of the ASTOUNDING cover is not very clear, but we do not think that this was so with all the copies. Some fans have expressed a likening for the variation in the colour shade on the British job, and some a preference to it rather than the American original.

Sydney fans are both glad and annoyed to have discovered that Woolworth's is selling the reprints at 7½d a copy while they have been paying a 1/- each.

The bookstall owners are, however, not to blame for it has been discovered on enquiry that they themselves pay more than this. Woolworth's have apparently bought a very large number and therefore got a special price.

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