

Science fiction was also the subject of a talk by Arthur Koestler on the B.B.C. Home Programme on Whit Monday. This talk has been reprinted in *The Listener* (May 28th, 1953) and the opportunity presents itself to interested members to enliven the correspondence columns of that excellent journal.

Speaking of members, did you use that Enrolment Form to good purpose? If you have a friend, or friends, who you think might be interested, and care to let us have his (or her) name and address we will try to bring them into the Club ourselves.

The Club, together with contemporary English writing, has suffered a loss by the death of Edward Shanks, who was a member of the Editorial Committee. His place on the Committee is taken by Angus Wilson, the well-known novelist and critic, who now introduces Science Fiction Book Club volume number 2.

The Martian Chronicles

BY RAY BRADBURY

(Rupert Hart-Davis 12/6; S.F.B.C. 6/-)

Angus Wilson writes:

Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* is a book that delights our fancy, moves our compassion and excites our terror. But it is a good deal more than that. For those who care about the future of fiction in the English language it is, I believe, one of the most hopeful signs of the last twenty years. The English novel, whether low, high or middle brow suffers above all from a failure in imagination and a failure in story telling; and no amount of subtlety in thought or feeling, no amount of sheer competence in writing can compensate for this loss. It is because Science Fiction offers such great possibilities in imagination and narrative, that I believe it to have so rosy a future. But unfortunately only a few science fiction writers have much subtlety or sensitivity of feeling, fewer still can write well. Ray Bradbury has a

they correspond with readers and fans in all countries of the world. Not as a necessity, but purely as an extended interest to an already interesting hobby.

So closely knit together are the fan groups of the world that it is now possible for a fan to circle the globe stopping at most of the major cities en route to be made welcome by the local clubs. In fact, one Australian has just arrived back in Sydney after a two-year trip by way of Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Toronto, London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Cairo and Cape Town, having stayed a while with fellow enthusiasts in each of those cities.

Both amateur and professional science fictionists visit regularly each year across the Atlantic to attend the yearly Conventions held in America and Britain. These Conventions, lasting for two or three days and held in a large hotel, bring the professional publishing field and the vast reader audience together for a brief period to enjoy each other's personal company in a round of talks, discussions, film shows, auctions of rare fiction and art work, and award presentations for outstanding works in the field. Over 1,000 delegates attended last year's Chicago Convention—two years ago representatives from eight countries (including Australia) were present at the London Convention.

Nearly all readers of science fiction are fans at heart, although no form of "activity" is required—merely the enjoyment of sharing a discussion about the thought-provoking concepts in a story is sufficient grounds to be termed a "fan".

Note:—We will return to this subject. Meanwhile, if editors of fan magazines care to send us specimen copies we would be grateful.