

work, writes as follows: "The factory is satirized for the administration. The emphasis is on sociology all through. As an indictment of materialist tendencies especially in sex and social relationships, it is very shrewd and amusing. The ending, of course, is very cynical and depressing—his observations of the reasons that make for revolt and their insufficiency and also of the desperate trend of man to reconstruct the machines is brilliant. It is, in fact, a very clever and entertaining book, though I think ultimately a shallow book since it rests content with a completely nihilistic standpoint."

*Player Piano* is one of those stories that linger in the memory and we are confident that it will receive members' wholehearted approval.

### What, only six pages?

Even publishers need a holiday and on the eve of our annual we find ourselves pressed for time and momentarily out of words.

Not that subjects to write about are lacking. Or members' questions to answer—why not one a month? why not 16 pages of SF News? These two depend on greater numbers—a matter on which a large part of our energy is expended.

In our next issue we hope to have an interview with Alfred Bester, author of *The Demolished Man*, who is now visiting this country. Meanwhile our pages are open to any members who want to voice their opinions.

## SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB PROGRAMME SEPTEMBER '54—FEBRUARY '55

September/October 1954

### ODD JOHN

by OLAF STAPLEDON

It is remarkable that although Olaf Stapledon is the most celebrated Science Fiction writer of our time his works have not been readily available to the reader. For this reason alone the novel *Odd John* is assured of a warm welcome.

*Odd John*, though it lacks the tremendous vistas of *Last and First Men*, is perhaps Stapledon's finest novel. It has had many conscious or unconscious imitators, but no other writer has been so successful in giving a really convincing portrait of a super-mind—and Society's reactions to him. It is a tribute to Stapledon's skill that the reader's sympathy is evenly balanced between Odd John and his merely human companions—and that the ultimate destruction of the supernormals appears as a tragedy, not as a victory for *homo sapiens*.  
(First published by Methuen in 1935; SFBC 6/-)

November/December 1954

### THE DEMOLISHED MAN

by ALFRED BESTER

Alfred Bester has achieved in his first long novel the most successful fusion to date of science fiction and the detective story. In this murder mystery set in New York of the 24th century, when most people have powers of extra-sensory perception, Ben Reich, a ruthless master mind, seeks to destroy his rival for world supremacy. There is no mystery as to whodunit—the murderer is detected almost immediately by a peeper detective—but the proving of the crime and motive is a powerful study in suspense and an intensely provocative puzzle to the reader. The play of character against character is subtly conceived against a richly imaginative background of city life in the year 2301. The book was voted the best novel of the year by the 11th World Science Fiction Convention.  
(Sidgwick & Jackson 9/6, SFBC 6/-)

January/February 1955

### GREAT STORIES OF SCIENCE FICTION

Edited by MURRAY LEINSTER

This big anthology containing stories by twelve leading American writers is the perfect counterpart to the anthology of British writing *No Place Like Earth* published in the Science Fiction Book Club last year.

The stories in this omnibus have no bug-eyed monsters, no rayguns, no planet-bound space ships, they are all stories by masters in the art of science-fiction-writing which achieve a high degree of plausibility because they are simple extensions of our present scientific knowledge.

The writers include Michael Fessier, C. L. Moore, Oscar J. Friend, Lewis Padgett and Theodore Sturgeon, and there is an introduction by the distinguished American critic Clifton Fadiman.  
(Cassell 15/-, SFBC 6/-)