

find this a rattling good yarn. Its tail-piece, a fascinating clever build-up of the terror that came by thought-waves, is one of the most horrifying visitations an author has ever wished on his main character"—*Manchester Evening News*.

The Demolished Man is science fiction at its most readable and we are sure it will be a popular choice with all members, many of whom have asked for its inclusion in the Club.

We were greatly disappointed not to meet Alfred Bester when he was recently in this country. His letter explains:

Dear Mr. Jones: Ten thousand apologies for neglecting to pay my call and see you, but it wasn't neglect, it was the press of work. I've been slaving away at a new science fiction novel, and I got hot on the MS as soon as I reached London and have been working eight to ten hours a day without let-up. You probably know that when a writer hits one of these streaks he's afraid to break off for fear he'll dry up. So I haven't seen you, I haven't seen Ted Carnell, I haven't seen anything for six weeks outside of the keyboard of this Imperial Standard Typewriter. A hell of a way to spend a month in London!

Now, alas, we must leave for Paris and Rome, and I can't manage that appointment with you. I offer three alternatives: 1. Fake anything you want about me with my permission and thanks. 2. Cook up a lovely slander with Ted Carnell and with my blessing. 3. Write to me c/o American Express, Rome, and I'll answer any/all questions fully and with lurid detail.

Again, my apologies. There was nothing I could do. Writers aren't human. Abjectly... Alfred Bester.

That, and the portrait on page 3, are perhaps better than our own words of profile would have been.

We owe members an apology for being late with the last two issues of Club books, for which certain administrative and production difficulties are chiefly responsible. These are being overcome and we hope to be earlier in future. Meanwhile we trust members will bear with us.

To those who follow closely the fortunes of science fiction publishing we recommend a reading of an editorial in *New Worlds* (No. 29, November 1954) by John Carnell.

What you think about Anthologies

Donald Jeater, Havant:

"I enjoyed *I, Robot*, and *No Place Like Earth* tremendously, and only wished they were longer. Somehow, I feel, short stories on the whole, are more the medium of s-f than novels, and there are very few lengthy s-f novels that I can remember reading with pleasure. Collections like Frederic Brown's 'Space on My Hands' are far more absorbing (and highly amusing in such yarns as 'Now is the time for all good BEMS') than his full-length yarns, for example. Still, this is only one member's opinion, and you obviously can't please everyone!"

A. E. Lodge, Grangetown, Yorks:

"I have a grievance against the selectors of the SFBC, and I would like to get it off my chest. Why publish anthologies? I myself have read SF for twenty-two years and I have a collection of 350 books and mags, and out of the ten stories published in J. Carnell's anthology, I have, in copies of *New Worlds* and *Science Fantasy* eight of them, which means I pay 6s. 6d. for the pleasure of reading two stories. I class myself as an average reader, so there must be many more readers like myself who disagree with the publishing of anthologies so let's put it to the vote.

"Let's have more VAN VOGT !!!"

We do not suppose all our readers are fortunate enough to possess such a splendid collection of magazines as Mr. Lodge, and we do feel that a club of this kind would not be truly representative of the best in science fiction if it did not issue a few anthologies. As Mr. Jeater and many others agree, science fiction is often at its most outstanding in the short story. And even if one has read some of the stories in magazines it is good to own them in the more permanent form of a book. We should be interested to have more views from members on the publishing of anthologies in the Club. At all events we feel sure that the next choice, Murray Leinster's *GREAT STORIES OF SCIENCE FICTION*, will disappoint no one, with twelve contributions by the leading American writers, and a big saving in price.—Ed.