

## WRITING by David Diringer

'Writing has vital bearing on the culture of all civilized peoples, ancient and modern. [It] describes in a clear and careful text the mysterious evolution of the means of communication which links not only the thoughts of man and man, but enables the generations to hand on their ideas across time and space. . . . No wonder that in the mythologies of literate peoples the invention is described either to a godlike being or to a god in person.'

*Daily Telegraph.*

'One must congratulate Dr Diringer on this fascinating and beautifully produced account of a subject which is surely of universal interest, and hope that it may have the success it deserves.' *Discovery.*

262 pages. 78 plates; line drawing and maps. Bibliography and Index.  
*Thames & Hudson 35s; SFBC 27s, post free*

## THE MYCENAEANS by Lord William Taylour

'Mycenae fits the scheme of the series particularly well, since the evidence is nearly all archaeological, lightened by Homeric references. . . . The author, who has helped to excavate several Mycenaean sites, covers the ground thoroughly and clearly. . . . A fascinating book.' *Economist.*

243 pages. 60 photographs; line drawings and maps. Index.  
*Thames & Hudson 35s; SFBC 27s, post free*

## THE GREEKS IN THE WEST

by A. G. Woodhead

A detailed history of the Greek colonies and settlements in Sicily, Italy, France and Spain and of the achievements of the 'Greeks abroad' in politics, science, town-planning, art, exploration and warfare. 'Much to admire . . . a well-balanced picture of its subject. . . . The production is as fine as ever, with particularly good cross-references, and some of the plates are quite beautiful.'

*Antiquity.*

243 pages. 81 plates; drawings and maps. Index.  
*Thames & Hudson 35s; SFBC 27s, post free*

## THE BYZANTINES by David Talbot Rice

'This elaborate and lively civilization was first a bulwark against the barbarized West, and in later centuries against the Turks. . . . The persistent vitality and grace show how little the strength of a culture depends on the surrounding political framework. . . . Professor Talbot Rice provides an enlightening introduction to the study of these uniquely remarkable people.'

*Daily Telegraph.*

224 pages. 95 plates; drawings and maps. Index.  
*Thames & Hudson 35s; SFBC 27s, post free*

## CELTIC BRITAIN by Nora K. Chadwick

'An authority of international standing brings together the linguistic, archaeological, artistic and documentary evidence about the Celtic peoples of England, Wales and Scotland from late Roman times until the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings. She studies the political development of the local kingdoms, their social systems, laws, ways of life and settlements, the wonderful early Welsh poetry and prose sagas, Pictish art and finally the Celtic Church. No such survey has been written before: scholarly, finely illustrated, easy to read.' *British Book News.*

238 pages. 67 plates; drawings and maps. References, sources and index.  
*Thames & Hudson 35s; SFBC 27s, post free*

## EARLY CHRISTIAN IRELAND

by Máire and Liam de Paor

'The theme of the book is "the gradual absorption of Mediterranean culture by the unsubdued Celtic community who yielded, not to Roman arms, but to Roman letters and religion". Not all the new views and syntheses will command universal approval; but the need for a book like this was great, and the authors have placed scholars as well as the general reading public in their debt. . . . The text is written with a lightness of touch and a delicacy of feeling which combine with the excellence of the illustrations to make this volume a most attractive addition to Dr Glyn Daniel's valuable series.' *The Times Literary Supplement.*

263 pages. 76 plates; drawings and maps. Notes and Index.  
*Thames & Hudson 35s; SFBC 27s, post free*

THE JULY ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) IS  
**THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE** by Harold Kurtz  
(*Hamish Hamilton 50s; SFBC 27s 6d, post free*)

THE JULY EXTRA (OPTIONAL) IS  
**MAN, NATURE AND DISEASE**  
by Richard Fiennes  
(*Weidenfeld & Nicolson 36s; SFBC 24s 6d, post free*)

THE AUGUST ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) IS  
**THE GREAT PIANISTS** by Harold Schonberg  
(*Gollancz 45s; SFBC 32s, post free*)

THE AUGUST SUPPLEMENTARY (OPTIONALS) ARE  
**A Visual History of Modern Britain: THE TOWN** by  
**Geoffrey Martin** and **TRANSPORT** by **Jack Simmons**  
(*Studio Vista Books 35s (each); SFBC 25s (each), post free*)

Issued by the Science Fiction Book Club from 10-13 Bedford St, London, W.C.2  
from whom details of membership can be obtained,  
and printed by the Aldine Press, Dunhams Lane, Letchworth, Hertfordshire

# science fiction news

No. 99

July 1965

Selectors: John Carnell, Dr J. G. Porter

## All the Best Clowns . . .

You will remember that Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle* was the Contemporary Fiction selection for May, and so it is, of course, available to all members of SFBC. We find it very hard indeed to believe that we have not yet sold every single copy of it, for this was a book which we were really excited to issue. It was put deliberately into CF because it represents the standard of science fiction in which everyone should be interested, but we expected that it would have a special success with members of SFBC, if only because Vonnegut's work must already be known to most of them. We hope very much indeed that members who have not ordered will do so now: we cannot prove, of course, that it is a book with a remarkable claim upon your attention and respect: we can only ask you to discover this for yourself. Please decide to do so.

'The world is just a cunningly made device to keep its Maker's hands busy and amuse the children—or so one could infer from *Cat's Cradle*. No point, [it] seems to be saying, in asking solemn questions. Science cannot answer them. Religion does, but its answers are terrifying if true, or if comforting, untrue.

'But, for a fatalist, Mr Vonnegut is most impudently cheerful, as all the best clowns: and he writes like a poet, with a Salinger's stylish sense of the ridiculous and a pained Thurberian logic. . . . *Cat's Cradle* sounds a sad, discordant music. It is also bitingly funny.' *Daily Telegraph.*

*Gollancz 18s; SFBC 7s, post free*

## A new SFBC Optional

(Please order quickly)

## THE UNPLEASANT PROFESSION OF JONATHAN HOAG

A COLLECTION of five excellent stories by Robert Heinlein: 'The Man Who Travelled in Elephants', 'All You Zombies', 'They', 'Our Fair City', 'And He Built a Crooked House', and the longest of the group, 'The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag'. A mild little creature, Jonathan Hoag knew that he must do something during the daytime, but something so awful that his memory blotted it out entirely every evening. His only clue was the sticky, brownish-red substance under his finger-nails—not blood, but something so much more terrible that the doctor he consults will not tell him what it is. So he turns to other help, to Randall and Craig, investigators, and his case leads them into the world of the Sons of the Bird. . . . This is almost a horror story: the detail is built up slowly and calmly, so calmly that one is unaware of the menace behind a world so much like the here-and-now, and so full of terrors.

256 pages. *Dobson 18s; SFBC 11s 6d, post free*

## NEXT MONTH'S CHOICE ALL THE COLOURS OF DARKNESS

by Lloyd Biggle, Jr

IN THE summer of 1986 the Universal Transmitting Company, after a long series of inexplicable failures, financial problems and public indifference, finally perfect a matter transmitter capable of transporting a person instantaneously from terminals scattered throughout the United States to any major city in foreign countries. This transmitter represents man's ultimate conquest of time.

Opening Day in New York City is a tremendous success and throngs of travellers crowd into the terminal. But on the second day of operations two women fail to arrive at their destinations and they cannot be traced. So U.T.C. asks the help of a private detective, Jan Darzek.

Darzek discovers that the disappearances were engineered by two women in various disguises, that their identification papers were false and that no one has reported them missing. The plot behind this is something so vast and threatening that it could affect the fate of the whole of mankind.

'Fast-moving adventure . . . brilliant characterization of aliens.' *Books and Bookmen.*

210 pages. *Dobson 16s; SFBC 6s 6d*