

FIVE ENCOURAGING YEARS

Charles Bowen

WHEN a friend jokingly told me recently to "cheer up . . ." because ". . . you know what they say, the first five years are the hardest", I was somewhat encouraged. You see, my arrival at this page of the September/October issue of 1969 signals also my arrival at the five-year "milestone" as Editor of FLYING SAUCER REVIEW.

It was with aching heart, on the afternoon of October 22, 1964, that I wrote a short appreciation of my friend Waveney Girvan, Editor of this REVIEW, who had died earlier that day. The obituary appeared in the November/December issue of 1964, for in September that year I had been managing Waveney's journal for him during his final illness: in the article I made reference to his ". . . single-handed marathon for the best part of five years."

I now have intimate knowledge of what that marathon was like for Waveney, for he had had to make his effort at a time when UFO activity was low, and when interest in the subject was correspondingly slight. Editorially he played a lone hand, but he steered this journal through difficult times with very great skill. He died at a time when UFOs were getting back into the news in a big way.

Socorro, and other events of the 1964 wave, had sparked a revival of interest. This was very good luck for me, for after the first few weeks, during which time would-be contributors understandably stood back to see which way the new cat would jump, there was no shortage of news items, and a steady flow of interesting articles was forthcoming on all manner of topics. There was another stroke of great good fortune as far as I was concerned, for after a preliminary meeting and discussion with me, Gordon Creighton has stood by my side ever since, a veritable tower of strength.

I confess, however, that although I was excited by the new challenge, I was more than a little alarmed by the enormity of the task which I began to perceive way ahead of me. There were also a few immediate and alarming prospects, not the least of them being the responsibility of having to compose the editorial leading article for every issue of a journal which I recognised even then as being of prime importance. I am glad to say that the initial "stage fright" lasted for only one issue!

Right at the outset I realised that it would be important to gather around me a permanent team of honorary advisers, some already well known as regular contributors. Gradually their names joined mine on the page 1 "masthead": Gordon Creighton (Aimé Michel refers to him as my "electronic interpreter"); our medical man, Dr. Bernard Finch; physicist and radiation medicine specialist Maxwell Cade; engineer Bryan Winder; historian Charles Gibbs-Smith; assistant editor Dan Lloyd; photographer Percy Hennell; parapsychologist, science writer and UFO researcher extraordinary Aimé Michel, and, this month, psychiatrist Dr. Berthold Schwarz. I take this opportunity of thanking them all for their support and encouragement; more than anything, however, I prize their friendship.

There has also been much valuable assistance for me on the production side. Unfortunately my typographical assistant, like some of our scientist friends, has to remain anonymous, but I may say how much we have been indebted to my graphic designer daughter Pauline, who helped considerably with our artwork until becoming rather heavily involved with her professional commitments.

On the administrative side, I am grateful for the backing I have had

from my fellow-members on the Board which was reconstituted in 1964: former Editors Derek D. Dempster and Brinsley le Poer Trench joined with Messrs. Creighton, Gibbs-Smith, Winder and myself, to bring it up to strength. Thanks too to Company Secretary John Lade, who has held the post since 1956!

Then there is dear Mrs. E. Spencer who runs the subscription list and distributes the magazines from the stockpiles at 49a Kings Grove. There are few who realise that Mrs. Spencer, the longest-serving and most staunch member of the staff, has done the job ever since issue No. 1, in 1955! Thanks a lot, Mrs. S.

Last, but by no means least, my gratitude to those stalwart ladies, Mrs. Jo Hugill and Miss Eileen Buckle, who give up so many of their lunch times to collect mail, take dictation and type letters.

I stress that all this work is voluntary or semi-voluntary, and *all* of it is done in our spare time. Our policy is, as it has always been, that FSR must maintain its high standard of production. Quality comes first, and even though this makes for an expensive production in a time of continual inflation, we have got by with only one price increase (July 1966) and one minor adjustment (last year): otherwise cost increases have been absorbed thanks to rising circulation. During the past five years we have produced several magazines with 36 pages (plus covers) as opposed to the standard 32 pages. Again we introduced a gradual reduction in type size in 1966, and even so, our pages are always very tightly filled.

I must apologise at this stage for appearing to be such a poor correspondent. The crux of the matter is that there are just not enough hours every day to get all the work done, and my rule is that editorial work

must take precedence over all but the most important letters.

There have been many encouragements during the five years I have been Editor. Our circulation has risen steadily since January 1965, so that at 3,500 it now stands at nearly three times the figure it was in those days. Also, another great encouragement lies in the fact that we have now contrived to pay off the debts which were such a burden in the early sixties; debts in the form of interest-free loans from supporters who were determined that FSR's lone voice should continue to be heard through the lean years.

During the last five years we have ventured farther afield in our publishing endeavours, and the wonderful success of *The Humanoids* was largely responsible for the establishment of our present finan-

cial stability. The new and enlarged hard-cover version (Neville Spearman Ltd.) is in as great demand as ever. I feel I must record that the original suggestion that we chance our arm with a special issue on landings and occupants came from Jacques Vallée; he also suggested the name, and when he received his first copy, he forecast that it would be a best-seller. Thank you, Jacques!

Of the later special issues, *Beyond Condon* . . . is picking up very nicely, while *UFO Percipients*, with its staggering account of the experience of a French doctor who had a most remarkable sighting followed by strange after-effects—some of which, being physical, have been photographed—promises to be another best-seller.

Perhaps the most encouraging thing of all is that our REVIEW is now far more widely recognised as

a voice of sanity in a subject which, sadly, has a facility for provoking excesses of lunacy.

The first five years certainly have been hard; much hard work and, at times, a bruising fight against all sorts of opposition. Tough times made easier by so many new friendships, and so much help; times that have been exciting as well as encouraging. However, if I were a gambling man, I'd bet the next five years would be no easier.

Finally, I would like to thank all readers, and especially our overseas correspondents and tireless representatives like Nigel Rimes, Oscar Galíndez, Dr. W. Buhler, Elis Grahn, John Keel, Mrs. Judith Magee, Philipp Human, to mention but a few, for their continuing support which, above all else, has helped to put FSR so firmly on the map.

“MINIATURE MARTIANS” (continued from page 32)

The four creatures then questioned him at length and in great detail, enquiring all about human habits and customs, about the physiological functions of his body, about our manner of sexual reproduction, and so forth. They made him undress and he let them make a detailed examination of his body. This process included the introduction into his mouth of an extraordinarily luminous fine wire, “like a lamp”, which made him transparent as if he were being X-rayed. While two of them were conducting this examination, the other two were busy writing, in unknown characters, on

a sheet of material resembling aluminium.

Suddenly it seemed as though they had received orders from some remote-control station, for lights flashed, silent signals streaked across the walls, and the examination appeared to be at an end. Hastily taking him outside again, the creatures informed him that after their departure it would all remain in his mind “like a dream”. Terrified and dumbfounded, he stood on the road and watched the craft fly off followed by a trail of such astonishing luminosity that he would never forget it.

It should be noted that, while the Brazilian newspaper uses the words “inhabitants of Mars” in its account, this report contains no evidence that the creatures told him whence they came or that they said anything about Mars.

I am indebted to Editor J. Victor Soares of GIPOVND, Rio Grande do Sul Independent Group of UFO Investigators, for sending us Bulletin No. 4, July/August 1968, which contained details of this remarkable claim.

* The word “Filho” following a name in Portuguese is the equivalent of the “Jr.” used in the United States.

CRYPTO-SENSORY RESPONSE (continued from page 13)

less demanding than to induce directly into the brains of the recipients thoughts, emotions, dreams, or even waking hallucinations of other-worldly scenes and creatures?

Some months ago I commented (elsewhere) that perhaps the reason for the decline in physical phenomena at seances over the past eighty years was not due so much to increased skill on the part of the scientific sceptics as to the increased amount of man-made electromagnetic radiation permeating everywhere. It was always known that physical phenomena ceased suddenly if someone shone a light. Why should not other wavelengths have a similar inhibitory effect? Perhaps, too, the strangely garbled experiences of contactees would be clearer if they were not “hetero-

dyned” by so much terrestrial radio emanation. Perhaps this is why the visionaries of earlier times seemed to have such lucid experiences.

Somewhere, somehow, in the immensity of modern knowledge there must be clues to a whole new dimension of man—if only we have the wit to recognise them.

* EDITOR'S NOTE: Cade, C. M., *Other Worlds Than Ours*, Museum Press Ltd., London SW7.

YOUR CLIPPINGS of newspaper items are very welcome. We apologise here for being generally unable to acknowledge these items as the pressure of work on our tiny staff and on our postage resources is too great. However, please do not be deterred by this seeming lack of courtesy. We really do appreciate anything you care to send.