Gernsback tells SF Society

Most science fiction really fantasy

Hugo Gernsback, publisher, author and inventor, spoke on "The Prophets of Doom" last Friday.

The lecture, sponsored by the Science Fiction Society, was attended by about 50 people, most of them society members.

Gernsback criticized modern science-fiction writers for writing what he calls "fantasy," rather than true science fiction. Science fiction, he said, must "forecast the wonders of man's progress into the future." This main purpose must be instructive and educational.

Gernsback called much modern science fiction "decadent," adding that it has degenerated into science fiction. "It's main purpose must pale in the light of future events," he said. He cited several articles written in the late nineteenth century which predicted such "impossibilities" as flight through the air and the determination of the chemical structures of the planets.

Gernsback said that imagination has degenerated in the world today, and in conclusion cited a prediction he had recently made in an article on microminiature color television. In the article he foretold the use of extremely small television cameras and projectors into the body for observation of internal diseases.

Gernsback's speech followed a banquet held by the Science Fiction Society at Technology Square. The banquet was attended by 34 people, including Gernsback, his wife, and science-fiction author Hal Clement, author of a number of books noted for their depiction of alien planets and people.

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