

SCIENCE FICTION

NEWS LETTER

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY



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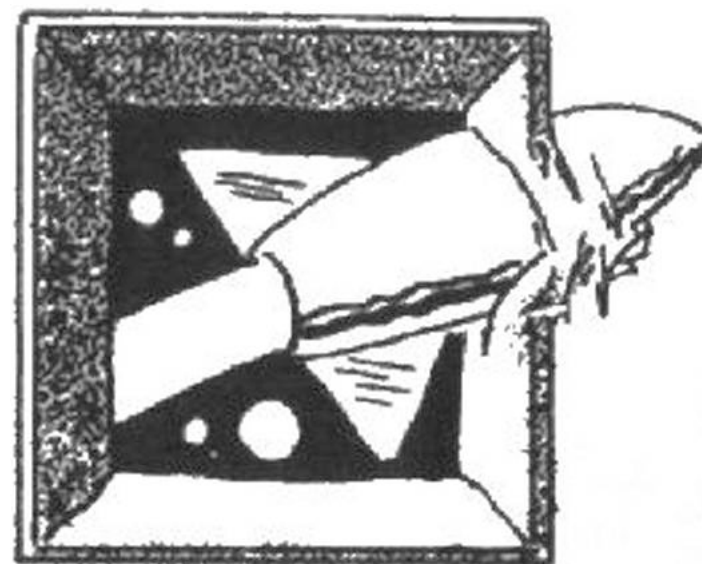
THESE AUTHOR CRITTERS

by Groff Conklin

Aside from four (Astounding, Galaxy, Fantasy & Science Fiction, and Fantastic) the current magazine output in the field of science fiction is not healthy. It has been estimated that there were on the newsstands in the fall of 1952 over twenty-four monthlies, bi-monthlies, quarterlies and annuals, not including comic books. Most of these were shaky newcomers, with life expectancies of no more than a handful of issues. A few were well-established operations, catering to various levels of education, intelligence and prejudice, but none could claim the designation of a quality magazine.

Sometimes, it is true, even the poorest fly-by-night pulp will publish a first-rate story, for one of the astonishing things about the typical science fiction author is his loyalty to his friends, even when they become editors of terrible magazines! Both author and editor probably were nurtured in the frenetic atmosphere of some science fiction fan club, and such ties are hard to break. In addition, of course, a great many top-grade science fiction writers are completely unable to operate themselves efficiently from the business point of view; they will sometimes turn over their best work to the first comer, avid for a sale and constantly remembering those dreadful years when there were so very few outlets for science fiction of any kind.

This helplessness on the part of the writer, this inability to deal with the economic world with any degree of instinct for survival, has brought about another special, though minor, phenomenon in the publishing field-- the agent specializing in science fiction and fantasy. As recently as five years ago only one or at most two literary agents could be said to have made s-f a specialty; and they were not doing too well. Today there are five or six, some of them with astonishing long lists of clients. Of the forty-four authors represented in this volume (see footnote) only nine or ten are still operating without agents, and some of them are beginning to wonder whether or not they are being smart.



Obviously, then, from every point of view the science fiction field has been expanding with almost unbelievable rapidity during the past few years. One of the most exciting aspects of this almost explosive growth in what was only recently an almost non-existent field for the writer is the way in which it has brought forth a host of new talent, young people who are swiftly exploring new horizons in science fiction ideas, and forcing the oldsters to look to their laurels. Of the writers represented in this book, only thirteen had published anything in the science fiction magazines prior to 1938, according to Donald B. Day's invaluable Index to Science Fiction Magazines, 1926-1950. Twenty-one were first published between 1938 and 1950, and eight in 1950 and 1951.



(Reprinted in part, with permission, from OMNIBUS OF SCIENCE FICTION, Crown Publishers, 1952. See review elsewhere this issue.)

BOOK CLUBS BUSTIN' OUT ALL OVER !



New York, London, and Portland (Oregon) all made book club news last month by launching three separate business enterprises catering to the science fiction novel reader. The first two are regulation book clubs while the last is mainly a rental service.

The Science Fiction Book Club (Garden City, N.Y.) is one of the many fingers of the giant Doubleday publishing corporation, and will operate along the general lines of that firm's other low cost clubs. The club was announced last November in a Chicago newspaper, and other advertisements appeared in recent issues of *Astounding*, *True*, etc. These advertisements vary in each magazine, some offering more titles than others. In their initial drive for members, the club offers a choice of three books for a dollar. In the *Astounding* advertisement, the three titles may be chosen from a list of six: *SANDS OF MARS* (Clarke), *THE PUPPET MASTERS* (Heinlein), *NEEDLE* (Clement), *THE STARS, LIKE DUST* (Asimov), *DOUBLE JEOPARDY* (Pratt), and *TAKEOFF* (Kornbluth). In *True*, nine books are listed: *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN* (Bradbury), *THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS* (Wyndham), *ROGUE QUEEN* (de Camp), *THE ASTOUNDING ANTHOLOGY* (Campbell), plus five of the previous titles. *SANDS OF MARS* is omitted. After choosing three and joining, the member must then buy a minimum of four others per year, at \$1 each plus postage. Each forthcoming monthly selection will be described in advance, with cancellation privileges. (Tucker's *THE LONG LOUD SILENCE* will be one of the spring selection.)

In London, the similarly-named Science Fiction Book Club will begin operations at almost the same time. Details of selection and distribution were not available at press time, except that Stewart's *EARTH ABIDES* will probably be the first choice, and that books will be distributed every second or third month.

In Portland, the again-named Science Fiction Book Club has opened a rental-service-by-mail system under the direction of Don Webber (3426 N.E. 11th avenue, Portland 12, Ore.) The first informative matter mailed out from this address lists 225 books which may be rented; costs are 5¢ per book per day plus postage.

BRITISH BOOK NEWS: Museum Press editor John Carnell informs that many outstanding American novels are slated for his company's Science Fiction Club (no connection) series this year: *DREADFUL SANCTUARY* (Russell), *THE PUPPET MASTERS* (Bob Heinlein), *THE BLIND SPOT* (Hall & Flint), and *DRAGON'S ISLAND* (Williamson), with several other titles pending for later in the year. Carnell is seeking one of the American series to publish, such as the Asimov "Foundation" novels or the Smith "Galactic Patrol" set. On his own, he will again this year edit an anthology of British science fiction.

Abridged versions of the *Galaxy* anthology, the *Astounding* anthology, and *DESTINATION UNIVERSE* (vV) are scheduled for spring. The Healy-McComas collection, *ADVENTURES IN TIME & SPACE*, appeared last month with only eleven of the original thirty-five stories. Arthur C. Clarke's *PRELUDE TO SPACE* will be published in full with jacket by Quinn. *HOUSE THAT STOOD STILL* (vV) was issued last month and *SLAN* will appear in July. Sidgwick & Jackson will publish the Heinlein Future History series (Shasta, in Chicago, started this series but seem to have bogged down after only two volumes.)

People in The News

Sam Moskowitz is the editor of a new science fiction magazine scheduled to appear this month-- the worst-kept secret of the year. With a heavy accent on science, and dressed in large-size format, the magazine is reported to be published by Hugo Gernsback. Despite all efforts to keep news of the new periodical quiet, this reporter found it discussed in four cities recently visited-- everyone seemed to be in the know. Magazine is monthly, 35¢, Gernsback-esque.

Sam Merwin & Leo Margulies are likewise back in the magazine business, already buying material for a new science book to appear this spring. Reports indicate the magazine might be a new twist: Jumbo-size, at 50¢ a copy.

Bea Mahaffey (with some help from Ray Palmer of course) has upped the word-rate for Other Worlds. Henceforth, stories up to 8000 words get a flat 2¢. Beyond that, old rates prevail.

Bob Pavlat & Bill Evans have published the first volume of their "Fanzine Index," a distinct service to fan magazine collectors and readers. This opening volume covers titles from "a" through "Contour" and of course the balance of the alphabet is to follow at a later date. Costing 20¢, the 16-page index lists fanzines as ancient as twenty-three years ago, and as new as last year. (6001 43rd avenue, Hyattsville, Md.)

Hitching Post: Judy May and Ted Dikty of Chicago, and the recent convention, were married last month. Ned McKeown of Toronto, who introduced the infamous "Canadian roulette" at a convention five years ago, was married in December. Also wed in December were Stan Skirvin and Joan Maxwell, both of Cincinnati.

Don Ford has announced the date of the next Midwest Conference, at Indian Lake, Ohio. "Beastley's-on-the-Bayou" is once more the scene of the crime, and the date is May 16th and 17th. Reservations not accepted until after March 1st.

Roger Dard continues to have trouble with Australian authorities, according to latest word received by his correspondents in the States. Local police "raided" his home, questioned him, and confiscated a part of his fantasy collection. Customs men still badger him over incoming magazines. Dard has given up most fan connections, and seeks to leave that country.

Walter Willis, resting comfortably in his Belfast home following his return from the convention, pens the story of his American Adventures in the current issue of Quandry. The opus runs to some 27 pages and better than 20,000 words; it follows his journey from the front lawn of the Willis ancestral manor to the final sunrise seen from the Little Men's Chicago penthouse, with many a bellylaugh in between.



THE PHILADELPHIA STORY

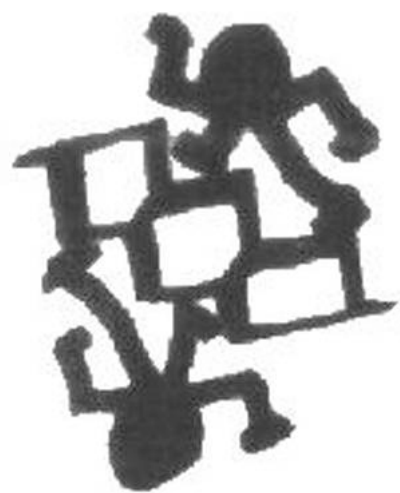


The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society will play host to the eleventh science fiction convention, next Labor Day. That's common knowledge; is there anyone who hasn't seen this mentioned in the fan press? The influence of the

Philly group was well demonstrated in Chicago when it literally stole the next convention site from San Francisco (when everyone "knew" that Frisco was "in" by a landslide.)

EARLY DAYS: The first meeting of the PSFS was held in October, 1935, with Milt Rothman, Ray Marlella, Bob Madle, John Baltadonis and Ozzie Train in attendance. At that time the meetings were weekly affairs and were devoted to science fiction discussions-- quaint and old fashioned as that may sound. Jack Agnew and Harvey Greenblatt became members at the second meeting. Rothman, Madle, Train and Agnew continue active to this day. In a few months the club received "recognition" when Charles D. Hornig (boy-wonder Stories editor) sent word of a coming visit. The elated members met at Rothman's house to greet the important man, who was accompanied by Julius Schwartz (then editor of fandom's greatest publication, Fantasy Magazine.)

Another important occasion in the life of the new club took place in October, 1936, with the news of another impending visit. The leading fan group of that day, The International Scientific Association, announced they were descending en-masse upon Philadelphia, which they did. PSFS members trooped down to the train station to meet the New York delegation, which included prominent names like Donald Wollheim, Will Sykora, Fred Pohl, Dave Kyle, John Michel and Herb Goudek. Again the gathering was held in Rothman's home, an event which went into fan history as the first science fiction convention ever held. The two groups decided that this meeting was only the beginning, and initial plans were made for the first world convention, to be held in conjunction with the World's Fair in New York City in 1939. (And that's how these annual crimes were launched, gentlefen.)



INK: The fanzine craze struck the city; the club published the Fantasy Fiction Telegram, a small hektographed thing which saw four issues, but it was the flurry before the storm. Baltadonis was editor of the Science Fiction Collector, Bob Madle published the Fantascience Digest, Ozzie Train got in with Science Adventure Stories, and other titles were Imaginative Fiction, The Meteor, Fantasy Fiction Pictorial, and the like.

Naturally, members tried their hands at pro-writing. Milt Rothman has enjoyed the most success (using the pen-name, Lee Gregor), but one of his early rejection slips is memorable. It came from Charles Hornig and read: "If we were awarding prizes

for the poorest stories this would be given the prize as the most hackneyed story of the month." Bob Madle, jealous of this, submitted a story. His slip duly arrived with the comment: "This is probably the greatest story we have ever received, but if we published it the readers would give it such acclaim that no other story could equal it, and we would be forced to go out of business. Therefore we must regretfully return it." Rothman finally sold his first yarn when he was seventeen; while Madle made the grade only last year with an article in *Sci-Fic Quarterly*, and still other articles to come in that magazine and in *Sci-Fic Adventures* ---the latter, a history of the Philadelphia group. That history embraces many of the now legendary events in fan affairs: the Wollheim post-card incident, the Taurasi spelling book, the Tucker deathhoax, the Futurian affair, and the fabulous fan feuds of the times.



Tom Clareson

WAR & PEACE: Soon after Pearl Harbor nearly all the PSFS members had entered the armed forces, and it seemed to be the end of the club itself. Ozzie Train, the only remaining original member of the club left in town, took it upon himself to hold the organization together through the issuance of the *PSFS News*, a sheet that was eventually circulated over the entire world. After the war, with the return of old members and the influx of new, it became necessary to locate a club room. PSFS members and their visitors will long recall that first clubroom at 56th & Pine streets, ---a cellar, decorated with originals and stuffed to the rafters with books and magazines. The PSFS club became one of the largest in the nation, and launched the fabulous, annual, Philadelphia Conferences each autumn.

SNATCH: In the summer of 1946, Milt Rothman and a delegation journeyed to Los Angeles with the intention of capturing the 1947 convention for their city. They did, and by an overwhelming majority. The first Philadelphia convention was noteworthy in many respects, chiefly because a college fraternity was also convening in the same hotel at the same time, and took the blame for much fannish hooliganism. It was here that Jack Speer won fame for his roof-fireworks, thereby starting a fannish precedent carried forward to this day. (However, naked people wandering about the halls were traced to the fraternity lads, in spite of boastful fan propaganda to the contrary.)

Again in 1952, the PSFS sent twenty people to the Chicago convention and, in what was probably the most sensational and most talked-about campaign in fan history, secured the event for a second time. The 1953 convention committee is as follows:

Jim Williams, chairman. Jim has long been a science fiction fan and is one-half of the publishing house of Prime Press. Tom Clareson, vice chairman. Clareson (however he may handle vice,)

continued on page 13



THE CURRENTS OF SPACE (Doubleday, New York, 1952, \$2.75.) Isaac Asimov is the author of many fine stories and a few poor ones. This one falls somewhere in between. It is hard to imagine this novel appearing in *Astounding*, but it did, and we can only assume Campbell has an odd editorial taste these days. While we mildly enjoyed the book and read it in two sittings, we would have never gone back to the newsstand to purchase Part Two the following month, much less the third installment. Asimov has apparently abandoned the interesting worlds of robots and engineers so prevalent some years ago, for political space-opera. His "Foundation" series reflect this change, as did "The Stars, Like Dust" and "Pebble in the Sky."

This novel deals with the erased mind of an ISB engineer; the man was psycho-probed, mentally mutilated, and left in a roadside ditch for an idiot, all because he stumbled across a secret concerning a sun and planet and attempted to warn the people of their doom. During the following year as he slowly regains his memory, political masterminds pull and tug at civilizations, rich men connive to grow richer, and skullduggery is everywhere. When the hue and cry is over, the engineer's mind is restored and the stolen secret revealed. We were slightly incredulous. -BT

PRISONER IN THE SKULL (Abelard Press, New York, 1952, \$2.50.) Charles Dye is the author of this, and we have since wondered why. The beginning quarter of the book reads as though he really meant it, as though his intentions were to write a good science fiction novel. The following three-quarters were thrown in for laughs, if you can laugh at blood on every page: murder, mugging, sapping, dumping, poisoning, stunning, stabbing, and so on into the bloody night. Somehow it is all vaguely connected with a beautiful woman bent on saving the world and maintaining the status-quo of a moon colony. -BT

SENTINELS FROM SPACE (Bouregy & Curl, New York, 1953, \$2.75.) Eric Frank Russell has done a good job on this novel, which was published two years ago in magazine form as "The Star Watchers." Prospective readers are advised to skip over the inside jacket blurb, and if David Kyle was responsible for that juvenile come-on, he should be forbidden to join our unique group for the next six months. This is the first s-f novel from a new firm to enter the field and makes an adequate starter.

The star-watchers are a man and woman alone in their home, the only two of their kind on earth. Faces to the stars, their task is to watch and to listen to space, to examine the many men and ships flitting there, always alert for one particular kind of ship, one particular enemy. They may not reveal themselves to mankind, and they strive to keep mankind from revealing itself to the unseen enemy. It is when the man steps outside this primary role and mixes into worldly affairs that they are caught; government security bureaus being what they are, a routine check into

his past puts them on the spot. He succeeds in short-stopping an interplanetary war, but loses his anonymity and his "life". -BT

OMNIBUS OF SCIENCE FICTION (Crown Publishers, New York, 1952, \$ 3.50.)

Groff Conklin is in again, with his sixth and largest anthology to date. This volume embraces within its 562 pages some forty-three stories, including two long novelettes: Lovecraft's "Color Out of Space" and van Vogt's "Recruiting Station." The remaining forty-one stories are more noteworthy in this reviewer's opinion.

"Counter Charm" by Peter Phillips is reprinted from the Walter Willis fanzine, Slant. Especially entertaining is that rollicking "Subway Named Mobius" (by Deutsch), "Catch That Martian" (Knight), "Shipshape Home" (Matheson), and "What You Need" (Padgett). Conklin has covered four decades in the search for material and the volume includes a Jack London from 1913, a Maurois from 1928, plus many magazine yarns from 1931, 1934, 1935, and the forties and fifties. The old Amazing is represented, as is Wonder Stories, Punch, Atlantic Monthly, and the original Astounding Stories. Conklin's introduction to the collection is worth your attention, and a part of it is reprinted in this issue. Highly recommended. -BT



LANDS BEYOND (Rinehart, New York, 1952, \$4.75.) Despite the stiffness of price, this volume by Sprague de Camp and Willy Ley is a gem of wealth and worthy of your attention. The two men pool their wit and talents to parade for inspection the many never-never lands of the earth, the fabulous places men are always seeking and never find. Here too is the answer to why they are not found, here are the stories of Atlantis, Lemuria, Mu, Prester John, the Ten Lost Tribes, the Sea of Sindbad, even Homer's epic Odyssey. De Camp and Ley follow the looting Spaniards up the Amazon in search of golden men and warrior-women; it was here, too, that the tale of Mu was born, and a more ridiculous birth would be hard to discover. And just for the hell of it, in their epilogue the authors polish off the legend of Mount Shasta, a never-never story which started in the present century.

The incidental intelligence strewn through the pages is as rewarding as the whole; one-eyed giants from the Mediterranean, Queen Isabella's unpawned jewels, the pyramid prophecy, and the explorer who exhibited a certificate of sanity before setting off to explore the inhabited hollow center of the earth. Great fun, and quite worth your time! -BT

BEYOND HUMAN KEN (Random House, New York, 1952, \$2.95) is a fine collection of twenty-one stories, gathered by Judith Merril and second only to the above because of its smaller size. While the book claims that none of the contents have been anthologized before, still, copyright credits show that "Helen O'Loy" (del Ray) appeared in AND SOME WERE HUMAN; and that "A Gnome There Was" also appeared in a book by the same name. The

del Ray title, incidentally, might be pointed out as one of the finest science fiction love stories published. Someday, some anthologist searching for a theme will collect a volume of same.

Miss Merrill has made some happy choices here: Boucher's "The Compleat Werewolf" from Unknown Worlds; Laurence Manning's "Good-bye, Iliad" (never before published); Christopher's brilliant and memorable "Socrates"; and Heinlein's "Our Fair City," a fantasy. Editor Merrill closes with another interesting idea, a bibliography listing seventy other absorbing stories the casual reader might like, stories and novels by all her competitors. -BT



SPACE SERVICE

(World, Cleveland, Ohio, 1953, \$2.50.)

A collection of ten stories edited by Andre Norton, some dating back to 1946 and some as new as 1952. In certain of their advertisements, the publishers bill this volume as teen-age reading. Well, maybe. Two years ago they issued Jameson's "Bullard" series under the same label; Miss Norton is a noted teen-age writer and "editor of the Gnome Press teen-age ... department." Contents of this volume: Command (Kahn), Star-Linked (Fyfe), Chore for a Spaceman (Sheldon),

The Specter General (Cogswell), Implode and Peddle (Fyfe), Steel Brother (Dickson), For the Public (Kahn), Expedition Polychrome (Winter), Return of a Legend (Gallun), and That Share of Glory! (Kornbluth). Eight of these tales are from that magazine for teen-agers, Astounding SF; and one each from Planet and TWS.

THE PETRIFIED PLANET

(Twayne Publishers, New York, 1953, \$2.95)

Billed as a new departure in sciencefiction publishing, this book offers four writers and does succeed in presenting something unique--not altogether satisfactory, but indeed unique. Dr. John D. Clark writes an Introduction, to create two worlds: the petrified planet of "Uller" and its neighboring fluorine world. He furnishes the necessary scientific documentation to make these worlds go 'round, and the writers take over. What comes out is rather curious.

Fletcher Pratt starts things with a standard space opera in which science is dictator, and a father coldly watches the eugenics board arrange a marriage for his daughter. There are spies, the hero who at first does not desire to marry her, and a shortage of interstellar fuel. The outcome will surprise no one. H. Beam Piper then takes over for a ride on the standard planet-opera--which has some humorous redeeming features. The Company is having trouble with the Natives whose planet they are exploiting, and finally the Natives revolt. The Company puts them down in the nick of time by discovering the method of making an old-fashioned A-bomb in a pornographic novel. The biological touches aren't apt to appear in any magazine, but it all will remind you of the East India Company, Bengal Lancers, and the Black Hole of Calcutta. The bomb-in-a-book episode is rewarding. Finally, Judith Merrill contributes the only genuine "Uller" story in the volume, a tale of the daughters of earth who (generation after generation), hop from Earth to Moon to Pluto to Uller. Her story is the one of colonization on that planet, and the awkward task of establishing communications with the natives of Uller. It fits no "opera" category. -BT

Lion Books have issued Jerry Sohl's THE HAPLOIDS, and Signet has published Heinlein's THE PUPPET MASTERS. (Each 25¢.)

MAX BRAND, The Man & His Work (Fantasy Publishing Company, Los Angeles, 1952, \$3.) This is a labor of love by Darrell C. Richardson, an ardent admirer of Frederick Faust whatever the pen-name the man used. "Max Brand" was the best known and most successful, and so this volume is not only an eulogy but a statistical report of Brand, one of the most prolific writers the world has known. Included are several articles which originally appeared in national magazines before and after the author's death, new critical material by Richardson and William Nolan (Brand wrote fantasy), and the really fabulous bibliography of a writer who used nineteen pseudonyms. This bibliography contains all of Faust's published works in the book, paper back, magazine, newspaper and film fields from 1917 thru 1950.

Richardson, a fabulous Faust fan, owns such an extensive collection of his works that book publishers now borrow magazines from him, to set old serials into type for new books. -BT

NEW BOOKS

Bantam has published the Fredric Brown anthology, SPACE ON MY HANDS. Signet will pub DESTINATION UNIVERSE in March.

THE STAR MEN (Gnome Press, New York, 1952, \$2.75) is space-opera by Leigh Brackett. It was originally published in Startling Stories (March, 1951) as "The Starmen of Llyrdis."

JUDGEMENT NIGHT (Gnome Press, 1952, \$3.50) is a selection of C.L. Moore's stories: Judgement Night, Paradise Street Promised Land, The Code, and Heir Apparent. Definately the better of these two recent volumes from Gnome Press.

FUTURE TENSE (Greenberg, New York, 1952, \$3.50) is the second anthology to be edited by Ken Crossen. The book is divided into two parts: seven stories reprinted from magazines, and seven others never before published. Review upcoming.

BALLROOM OF THE SKIES (Greenberg, 1952, \$2.75) is the latest novel by John D. MacDonald. Upcoming.

THE CONTINENT MAKERS (Twayne Publishers, New York, 1953, \$2.95.) A collection of eight tales by L. Sprague de Camp, the Viagens series. To be reviewed next issue.

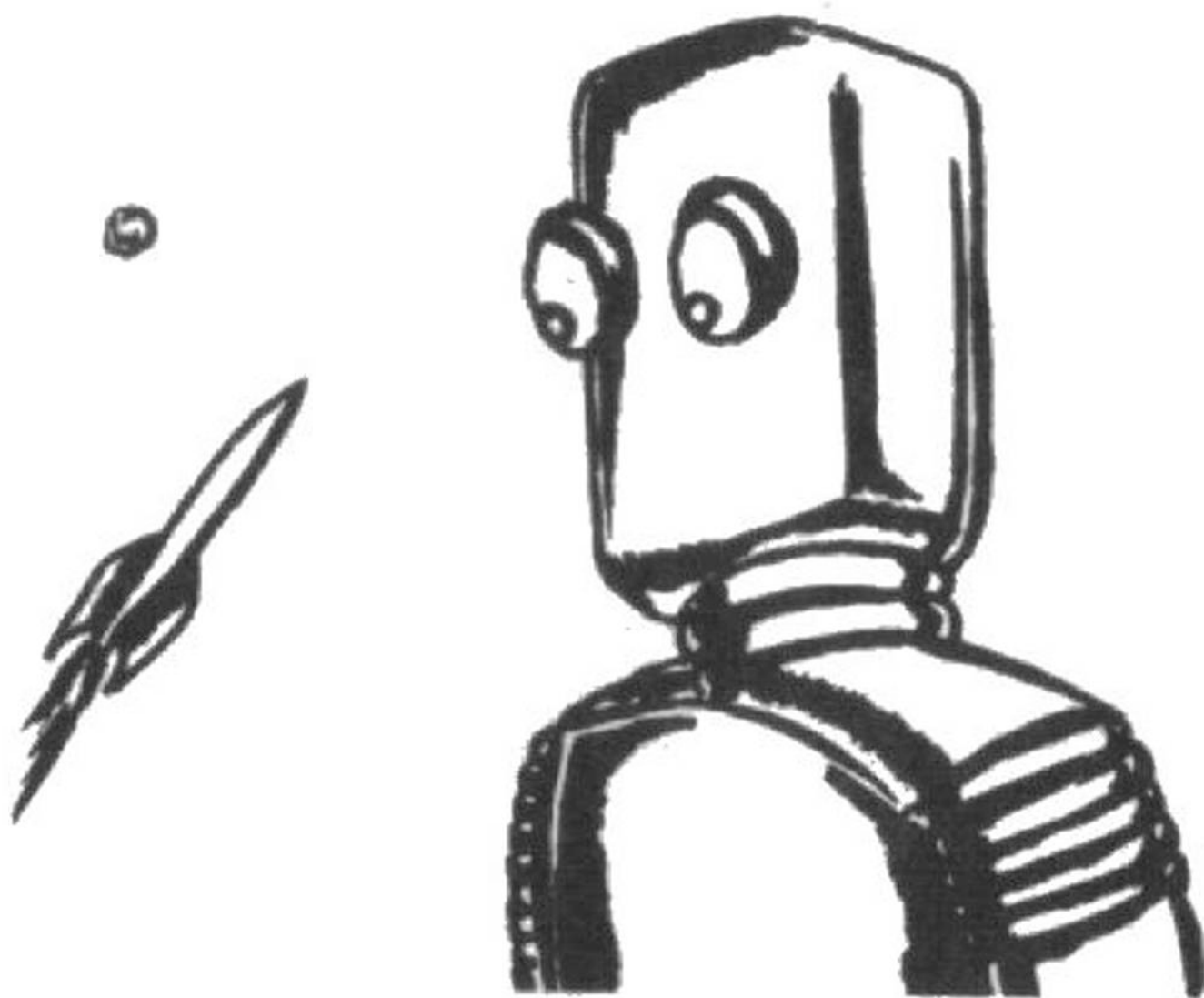
THE FANTASY BOOKMAN

by Darrell
C. Richardson

THE TITAN (Fantasy Press, 1952, \$3) is by P. Schuyler Miller. This is the story of an earthman on Mars -- and thousands of stories have been described in this general manner, but THE TITAN is more than simply another tale of the Red Planet. Perhaps it is the viewpoint which makes it different-- It is told from the Martian's point of view, and the visitor called "Man" from another planet is so strange to them that they dub him "The Star-Beast" and house him in a zoo for twenty years. It is then that he becomes "The Titan" and aids in the survival and romance of Thorana, Princess of the Master Race, and Korul, First Man of

the Blood-Givers. I enjoyed Miller's vivid descriptions of Mars and her ancient, dying cities and her very real "people." Especially enjoyed was the punch ending which was quite different. The remainder of the volume contains Miller's better short pieces which have appeared in magazines (mostly Astounding) during the past decade or so.

I was impressed by "The Arrhenius Horror," oldest tale of the lot (Amazing, 1931) which I had not previously read; it is similar in scope to Merritt's "The Metal Monster" plus the deft scientific punch of Taine. "In the Good Old Summertime" is a good old yarn based on Venus; while "Gleeps" must be described as "bad luck with a personality" --- perhaps first cousins to the gremlins. The only tale I didn't like was "Spawn." On the whole, a very worthwhile collection. Grab a copy!



THE LEGION OF TIME (Fantasy Press, Reading Penna., 1952, \$3.) If you liked Jack Williamson's LEGION OF SPACE as space-opera, you will probably like this one as a time-travel space-opera. Ever since Wells' THE TIME MACHINE, I have been a sucker for time travel tales. The conflicting possible future worlds which confront Dennis Lanning and his ghostly ship, "The Chronion," add spice and suspense to the yarn; you'll find the story both interesting and unusual. A short novel, "After World's End," is included in the volume.

DROME (FPCI, Los Angeles, 1952, \$3.) This early Weir Tales serial, by John Martin Leahy, is something of a legendary item. Leahy published very few stories; I recall a short one from WT of 1925 called "The Voice From the Cliff," and a 1924 serial concerning the planet Venus entitled "Draconda." The only other longer work that I can remember is "The Living Death" which was a nine-part serial beginning in the October 1924 Science & Invention. DROME is neatly bound with jacket, end sheets, and four illustrations (two of which are double-spread) by the author, who seems to be quite an illustrator. The title refers to the secret land beneath the slopes of Mount Rainier, Washington. Some of the imaginative ideas are top-notch. I would recommend it as being definitely off-trail, fantastic adventure.

And an important P.S.: I bought my eight-year old boy a pair of books for Christmas at \$1 each, which he liked very much. As a matter of fact, I too like them so well that they are about to join my collection. I refer to Jack Coggins & Fletcher Pratt's ROCKETS, JETS, GUIDED MISSILES AND SPACE SHIPS (1951), and BY SPACE SHIP TO THE MOON (1952), both published by Random House, New York, and both with forewords by Willy Ley.

A collection of the best of Olaf Stapledon's works, TO THE END OF TIME, will be issued by Funk & Wagnalls in May, at \$5.

PHILADELPHIA, continued:

is the author of a forthcoming book on science fiction and is an English teacher at the University of Penna. Ozzie Train, secretary. Ozzie needs little introduction, other than that he is the remaining half of Prime Press, and a genuine completist. Bob Madle, treasurer. A better man never made off with the loot.

The Executive Board boasts a list of well-known names, beginning with popular author Sprague de Camp, as rules committee chairman. Irvin Heyne, a high school English teacher and man of wit, heads the arrangements committee. Jim Williams' daughter Allison is handling the registrar's post. Writer-editor Lester del Ray has charge of the programming committee, and Tom Clareson is chairman of the eleven-member publicity committee. The convention will be held in Philadelphia's Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, the establishment which beds down the American Legion when they meet in the city. The sponsors have thoughtfully tied the hotel to a contract which forbids the jacking of prices on rooms later. (In Chicago, by the way, 271 rooms were rented by conventioners. The Morrison management passed this information along to the Bellevue, with the result that Philadelphia will get advantages denied to the Windy City: free meeting hall and adjoining rooms, two free suites for the guests and the committee.) Inasmuch as Philadelphia has a no-sale-of-liquor-on-Sunday law, the sponsors are purchasing beverages for a cocktail party (free) on Sunday. No other convention is booked into the hotel for that date. The date? September 5,6,7, 1953. The membership fee is one dollar, and same should be mailed to the Eleventh World Science Fiction Convention, Box 2019, Philadelphia 3, Penna.

Already from the committee have come the fateful words: the meeting hall is large enough to hold 1800 people. The guests? Well, with a cocked eyebrow we learn that Hizzoner the mayor of the town will give a short welcoming address. The shorter the better say we. On the credit side, Willy Ley has been chosen as guest of honor, and Isaac Asimov the banquet toastmaster. Cleveland's own Harland Ellison holds membership card number-one and from Britain, Norman Ashfield is making arrangements to attend. (But meanwhile, committeeman Dave Hammond has been drafted into the Air Force. What will the local girls do now?)

(Material for this (edited) article furnished by Hammond and the publicity committee. Same was considerably chopped and rewritten)
.....

CORRECTIONS: Life would indeed be dull if there were no mistakes to point out and correct with each new issue. A large boner was pulled last issue when we published a Dave Hammond cartoon on the cover, and credited it to Lee Hoffman. Both Hammond and Hoffman registered indignation. Let this be a lesson to illustrators who fail to sign, or even initial, their work. And to Portland's hard-working Don Day goes still another abject apology. We maligned him a year ago in another convention report and then did it again last issue. In his words: "... the Norwescon was the first to top \$1000 (with an \$1800 gross), the first to top 400 registration and 500 membership, the first to use lithographed pre-convention fanzines, the first to get uniformly good and sympathetic press coverage and the first to be run on professional standards --though not in the derogatory sense that has many fans up in arms. ..."

THE CONVENTION REPORT

by Walter Willis

(Note: the following extract is reprinted from the December issue of Quandry, and is part of the Willis convention memoirs. This fragment deals with the opening session; Bill Hamling has just made "a graceful little speech of welcome and Erle Korshak got up to introduce the guests").



In some ways this was the best turn of the convention. Korshak's eyesight is on par with his knowledge of present-day fandom, and he spent more time apologizing for the first than introducing the second. After picking out the few notables in the front rows he peered despairingly about the auditorium, being finally reduced to calling on just anyone whose name he happened to know. He had announced first that he was going to "jump from table to table," a prospect which delighted many of us who felt that an acrobatic turn of this sort was just what the convention needed and we were looking forward to the review of it in the Burroughs Bulletin. But before he even started beating his breast and swinging on the chandelier, Korshak unaccountably turned vicious, threatening to "strike here and there at random" and to "hit as many people at the tables as he possibly could." Naturally, this terrified the guests and they cowered in the shadows so that he couldn't find them. This seemed to infuriate Korshak even more. He knew they were there all right. He produced the registration papers to prove it, and revealed blackly that he was going to "shoot up and down the list, picking out the highspots."



Among the highspots so picked out were various ornaments of antediluvian fandom, well known to fan historians, and such luminaries of tomorrow's fandom as Harlan Ellison and Roger Sims. Among the non-entities left to their obscurity were Lee Hoffman, Max Keasler, Shelby Vick, Henry Burwell, Rich Elsberry, Eva Firestone, G M Carr, and virtually every other fan who has been hyperactive in the last few years. The only reason that I got among the immortals was that for a good halfhour Henry Burwell had been shouting "Walter Willis!" and passing cards up under Korshak's nose with "Introduce Walt Willis" written on

them in block letters. He was on the point of organizing a fireworks display with my name spelled out in colored lights when Korshak, running out of names he remembered from the most recent issue of The Time Traveller, reluctantly introduced me. I stood up and waved a program, grinning foolishly. After a decent interval I sat down again, and noticed to my dismay that Korshak was still peering despairingly about the auditorium. I looked around for something to throw at him but before I could lift the table he asked for me to stand up again. I stood up, my program above my head like a helicopter, and was about to let off a small hydrogen bomb when he saw me. I was the only fan introduced twice to that convention. No wonder (Vernon) McCain thinks I have a split personality.

LETTERS



Eduardo Scaron (Montevideo, Uruguay): "I enjoyed a lot your SFNL copy. Thank you very much. Please send me subscription rates airpostage included, for an year. Is the photo - bulbing schmoo depicted in the lower left angle of the picture, inside-cover, a caricature of Roy Martins? Also, if you don't mind, I should like to make some other questions. Is "thru" accepted in current SF writing or was intended as a joke? What in hell does "een misdragt uyt verdorvene harssenen" mean? Marsian perhaps, or modern Venusian? I hope it hasn't an obscene meaning. I showed the mag to my friends. Let me congratulate whoever is Joe Fann on his page 22 letter. I did not understand a word, but I enjoyed it thruly. Please send me a translation to Historic English of the first paragraph. It amuses and baffles me at the same time.

That letter shows what I call the true essence of good reporting: never let the reader understand what's going on. I should give my left arm away to be able to write in that way. What is an Xconhovel? A beanie line? Promags? A fmz looks like something with a good deal of alcohol in it, but I cannot get the exact meaning. What is to live in a swamp, figuratively? (I suppose I live in a swamp too.) And a set of Unknown? Dawn of Flame also looks like something in a bottle. What are Laney's memoirs? Anncon and likker also perplex me. I did not know gate crushing was so highly developed in the States. Why didn't you gatecrushed the "attractive lobby decoration" in the lower stories (page 7)?

I am alarmed at the Ray Palmer - Willy Ley estimates on FS. If this trend goes on, I wouldn't be surprised at the Air Force stating that from every 100 sightings, 120 are imaginative. I've devised an SF flying monster of my own and I don't want any scientist going around massproducing my monster without written permission. If possible get me the minutes of Mr. John H. Pomeroy speech on "How to be an Expert Without Actually Knowing Anything." I feel that's exactly my ambition.

Can I affiliate to the NFFF (whatever it is)? Get me a formula or something. From what I see in Lee Hoffman drawing, they are pretty anxious to bet new members in. How is NFFF financial situation? If it's in good shape, tell them to send me all kind of exportable propaganda stuff. Maybe I organize a local chapter for them here. Find which edition of Look covered your convention so I can buy it at newsstand. From the W & L Hoffman cut in the upper corner page 9, I think perhaps The Gulet Man was not so nervous as you say. In any case he had good reason to be nervous. And maybe he was not so quiet either.

What do you think of Ray Bradbury? I cannot gulp him. I'm sorry if he's a friend of yours or if you are the very Ray Bradbury. But I should like to know your opinion. If you have to hire a dicks agency to answer this letter, skip it. I'm content if you can get my hobble-gobble in print."

(Note to the NFFF: please send your exportable propaganda stuff to Mr. Scaron at: Ramon Fernandez 270, Montevideo, Uruguay, South America. Meanwhile we have passed your address on to him. -BT)

LAST BLAST:

A return to mailing envelopes was made because those previous issues having no protective cover were often chewed-up in transit. The cost is but a penny a copy more, and in addition gives us this extra page in which to inflict our wit upon you. On the other hand, the usual number of pages is being reduced because printing prices went up approximately 15% with this issue; and eliminating four pages seems to be the answer to that. We wonder why each of the pro-magazines don't adopt some worthy fan-publication, by underwriting its expenses? Offhand, we can think of nothing nicer than being adopted by Bea Mahaffey. Eh, Mother?

WE BIT ONCE BEFORE:

Lately the new name of P.H. Economou has been appearing in the fan-magazines; a recent issue of Peon carried an exceptionally humorous article under that by-line. In addition those fan-magazines have been referring to P.H. as "Peter" and "Phil." We can remember when we fell hook, line and sinker for "Lee" Hoffman. Last Thanksgiving Day it was our pleasure to have dinner with Phyllis Economou and her husband, in Coconut Grove, Florida. P.H. Economou is a beautiful young woman, thank you. She and her husband edit and publish the Florida Opportunity Bulletin, a "fan-magazine" with near 15,000 circulation.

NEWCOMER WITH WIT:

The letter by Eduardo Scaron, of Montevideo, is reproduced elsewhere in this issue exactly as it was received. A few months ago Mr. Scaron sent us a humorous science fiction yarn, under the impression that News Letter was a pro-magazine. We corrected him, and with his permission passed his story along to Quandry, where it will appear. We urge you not to miss it, for it is a lalapalooza. (Note to Eduardo: "lalapalooza" is a slang term meaning something unexpected, or highly unusual.)

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