

D I F F E R E N T



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# FRENCH NOVELS

## (SCIENCE FICTION-OF COURSE!)

One of the most unusual aspects of Hugo Gernsback's old Wonder Stories and Wonder Stories Quarterly was the number of translations he ran of foreign science fiction, notably from the German and French. Editorially, Gernsback promoted these translations as a means of bringing the best science fiction from all over the world to the readers of his magazines. But many of those same readers scoffed at his claims, suggesting that the foreign stories were being utilized as a means of cutting editorial costs.

The strange part about it all was that they were wrong. Gernsback could have bought all the American science fiction he wanted for half cent a word back in the early 'thirties. It cost, even during the depression, at least that to get the stories translated, plus payment to the copyright owners. Gernsback really was trying to present something different and something better to his readers.

Gernsback, himself, read both German and French easily. He conceivably performed most of the first reading in the old days, though it was not completely necessary, since he had available to him C.A. Brandt, the greatest science fiction fan of his period, who could read in those as well as other languages.

Among the translators Gernsback engaged to Americanize the works of Otfried von Hanstein, Otto Willi Gail, Friedrich Freksa and others were Fletcher Pratt, Francis Currier, and Konrad Schmidt.

When Gernsback tried Science Fiction † in 1952 - 1953, there were a record number of science fiction titles on the stands and the publishers engaged in a fearful scramble for the available supply of good stories. In hope of providing a new source, Gernsback began to solicit literary agents in Germany and France for original science fiction novels.

Gernsback could not read all these novels himself, so he hired readers at \$10 per book to do some of the reading and give a report. We eventually did translate and publish one novel, "The Stolen Minute", co-authored by Pierre Devaux and H.G. Viot (the former had written a long series of science fiction novels in French). It was Gernsback himself who first read and decided to use "The Stolen Minute". When he told me of his decision I was almost overcome with a feeling of utter helplessness, because being unable to read French, I had no way of personally evaluating the worth of the novel.

A young fellow named Leonard J. Wang was hired to translate "The Stolen Minute", which he did with the help of his wife, Sabine. The translation was brought to me in sections for editing. I had no way of judging the novel in the original French, but while the translation was scarcely literary, the first half of the novel was extraordinarily well developed and unified and would have made a satisfactory long novelette as it stood. The second half degenerated into a continuous series of action incidents for action's sake, but I must say, that Devaux and Viot explored the concept of the super-accelerated man more completely and originally than any author who previously used the theme. In their enthusiasm, they lost track of some elementary scientific facts, but their eyes were wide open to the potentialities of their plot.

The story ran as a two part serial in the June and August 1953 issues of Science Fiction †. We did not publish any other foreign translations, but we continued to read them. Exploring my records I



discovered a number of reviews of French science fiction novels with opinions submitted by paid readers. I present these here not only for historical interest, but to give Americans some idea of the plots of these stories.

Sam Moskowitz

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XP. 15 EN FEU ( XP 15 ON FIRE) by Pierre Devaux. Editions Magnard, Paris, 1945. 314 pages. 150 Francs hard cover; 108 Francs, paper bound.

This adventure story, subtitled Voyage Into the Solar System, is a more thoughtful, credible, and informative book than its sequel, The Exile of Space. It is well suited to the taste of juvenile readers of science fiction and adventure.

The fifteen-year old Robert Lyax, thanks to a bold, quick-witted act in a "cops and robbers" chase through Paris, comes to the approving attention of the police and is granted his ambition of being allowed to attend the School for Interplanetary Aeronautics. The psychophysiological tests of fitness, the curriculum, and the school life are entertainingly described, as well as the great air drome, the rocket planes, and all the complex system of regulating their flight.

The basic plot rests on the desire of a super-gangster, Oenigs-Courmeyer-Recarral (as he is variously known), to seize a planet for his own. His schemes are suspected by Lyax and his friends. This is followed by a flight and pursuit that leads through the entire solar system and is beset by incident, danger, and hair-breadth escape up until the final phase, in which the villain has his pilot set afire by stellar grenade the innocent XP15, merely to distract his pursuers, Lyax et al. Needless to say, they do delay to rescue this party, and then rush back to deal a final blow to the malefactors. The title is taken from a rather minor incident.

Critique: The scientific background and information, while thorough and extensive, varies from the strictly factual to the purely hypothetical, with some excursions into the frankly fallacious. For instance, critically speaking, the author's concept of a tremendously deep and extensive, inhabitable depression on the other side of the moon, with its own fauna and flora, belongs to the Jules Verne period. In extra-galactic regions one can postulate almost anything, but the closer home one gets the closer one must stick to known or reasonably inferred data.

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L'EXILE DE L'ESPACE (THE EXILE OF SPACE) by Pierre Devaux, Editions Magnard, Paris, 1948. 267 pages, 150 francs in hard cover; 108 francs paper bound.

Synopsis: Professor Malappert, historian and archeologist, glancing at his young son's second-hand copy of Caesar's Gallic Wars, is thunderstruck to observe amongst the ink blots and scribbles a cipher message in the Latin text, referring to the "secret of Vercingetorax." Following these instructions a scientific party digs up the first of the "Square Stones", which leads them to the Isle of the Menhirs on



the Brittany Coast. Their discoveries here convince them that Paulus Maximus, a Roman centurion has, by means of the ancient Gallic secret, colonized Venus.

The party, not knowing what means the ancients used for interplanetary travel, take off in an ordinary (for the current time of this story--about 1990) interplanetary rocket-ship, landing at the established space port Cypris. The planet Venus, similar to Earth in its Cretaceous period, has been very little explored because of its many dangers and because air observation is useless above its dense vegetation. The party must travel on foot to seek any possible Roman remains. However, logic reduces this area to two likely spots, and after sundry tribulations they start out. Their experienced leader, Robert Lyax, is able to steer them past many dangers, but eventually the "Alligator Men" attack them and they are nearly overcome and their radio-transmitter is destroyed. Lyax leaves part of the party under the command of an Italian officer in a somewhat fortified spot and himself takes off, accompanied by his steward and the Brittany dog whose instincts have proved valuable in the Menhir interlude, hoping to find means of rescue. He finds a traveled path marked with Roman milestones, but he and the steward are suddenly captured by the Alligator men beating tom-toms, while a human in a Roman toga prepares for sacrificial rites before an altar to Jupiter.

There follows a dream interlude, in which Robert addresses the old priest in Latin, is freed from his bonds, becomes a popular citizen in the handsome Roman city behind the gates, falls in love with the priest's daughter, becomes unpopular because of his brilliant deeds, etc.

Suddenly he awakes, finds himself being removed from the flower and placed on the sacrificial altar. His own struggles are proving unavailing when the dog, Ker-Faou, comes to the rescue, followed quickly by the landing of the IF 13, his rocket plane. The two Earth men and the captive Roman priest are hustled aboard and return to the refuge where the rest of the party were left. However, the traitorous Italian (who turns out to have been responsible for sundry sabotage efforts throughout the adventure) has led them away to another Roman temple, now the den of tyrannosaurs. Eventually the party is reunited, revisits the Roman City, where the streets and buildings are just as in Lyax's dream but decayed and deserted, and all return to Earth with their living "Exile of Space."

The Roman tells of the extensive colony they once had, and its decay, when he became sole survivor, and eventually they get from him a hint of Vercingetorix's secret. The ancients, he says, built the Menhirs and dolmens and flew to the "Great Star" by music, which is translated into modern terms as ultrasonics.

Summation: A late 20th-century adventure story of a French-Italian exploring party seeking traces of ancient Rome on the planet Venus. "L'exile de l'espace" is the last remaining descendent of the Roman colony on Venus, found by the explorers. Packed almost too full of action and hair-breadth escapes on this saurian-infested planet. Interesting but vague references to ultrasonics as solution of old problem of how the Menhirs, Dolmens, etc., were raised and as means used by ancient people for their Venusian migration.



Edgar Rice Burroughs with scientific trimmings. Standard space ship and hackneyed Venusian locale. Considerable corroborative scientific detail, mainly basic stuff following common patterns; some imaginative and conjectural with some doubtful points. Development of opening idea concerning archeological lead to early migration intriguing but fantastic.

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SOUCOUPE VOLANTE (FLYING SAUCER) by Jean de la Hire. Andre' Jaeger, Paris, 1953. 249 pages.

A flying saucer from Saturn zooms across the Earth at a tremendous speed destroying cities and sucking up people and buildings into its hold. Among those who are sucked up are a Spanish girl, Lola Mendès, her servant Francisco, and three men on a geological expedition in Colombia--Paul Civrac, a Frenchman, and two Americans, Jonathan Bild and Arthur Brad. The people of Earth are terrified and Torpène, the Prefect of Police of Paris asks the mysterious Indian spiritist Ahmed-Bey, who is a man of great learning and occult powers, to explain why the saucer is bent on creating havoc on Earth and to help mankind prevent any further catastrophes. Ahmed-Bey tells Torpène that he will do his best, but will not say what he plans to do.

Back in the saucer, the three geologists examine their strange prison, meet Lola Mendès and Francisco, and come face to face with their Saturnian captors who resemble luminous green columns surmounted by fiery white globes and who do or say nothing to them. Paul and Lola fall in love. As the saucer spins through outer space towards the sun, the Earthlings are confronted once more by the Saturnians. They fire their revolvers at them. At the very second that the guns go off the floor of their cell suddenly opens up and the five captives drop out of the saucer and hurtle through space. They land unhurt on a strange planet (which they later discover to be Mercury) where the light and heat are intolerable and the terrain is covered with reddish grass and metallic grey forests. There is no other vegetation. Nor is there any sign of animal life. The Earth people encounter the "men" of Mercury--creatures with short, round bodies, ratlike heads, one arm, one leg, and one eye. These monsters have no mouths but communicate with one another by means of hissing sounds which emanate from long trunks situated in the middle of their "faces."

Paul, Francisco, and Lola are captured by the Mercurians after a short and bitter struggle, taken down a golden river, and brought to an underground Mercurian city. There, they observe to their horror, that for lack of other nourishment the Mercurians devour one another. The two Americans, who escaped the Mercurian onslaught, are sucked up again by the flying saucer when it makes a foray on Mercury. Paul, Lola, and Francisco escape from the Mercurians and proceed to the dark part of the planet which the sun never reaches. There they receive an interplanetary message from Bild and Brad who were dropped on Venus by the Flying Saucer. Bild and Brad who were dropped on Venus by the Flying Saucer. Bild and Brad inform them that the saucer has been destroyed and that they themselves have been warmly welcomed by the Venusians who are highly intelligent creatures and who have ways of projecting messages to other planets by means of huge light projectors.



Meanwhile on Earth Ahmed-Bey, who knows how to disincarnate and reincarnate living souls by means of ancient magic Indian incantations, disembodies himself, speeds to Venus, disincarnates Brad (Bild refuses to leave his corporeal being) and goes to Mercury to rescue Paul, Lola, and Francisco. Ahmed-Bey and Brad arrive a moment too late. Lola and Francisco are recaptured by the pursuing Mercurians. Ahmed-Bey and Brad are reincarnated in the bodies of fallen Mercurians and set out with Paul to find Lola and Francisco. They rescue them at length, but Lola faints and cannot be revived. The Earthlings flee from the hordes of pursuing Mercurians, come across various species of the unintelligent brutes in the course of their travels, and are finally trapped. Ahmed-Bey disincarnates himself and his companions and their souls speed to Earth in the form of sparks while the Mercurians tear their lifeless bodies to pieces.

On Earth again Ahmed-Bey restores the souls of Brad, Francisco, Paul and Lola to bodies which had recently been deprived of life. He restores his own soul to his own body which he had left in his laboratory before leaving the Earth as a spirit. Ahmed-Bey and his companions construct a machine which permits them to converse with Jonathan Bild on Venus. Bild in his turn speaks to them and informs them that he will come to Earth with six Venusians in a machine which had been specifically made by the advanced scientists of Venus to clear the interplanetary spaces. Bild and the Venusians arrive on Earth, but the Venusians are carried out dead. Bild, Brad, Ahmed-Bey and others examine the Venusian space ship and are blown to pieces by a mysterious explosion. Thus the world will never know about Venus, its inhabitants, the destruction of the Flying Saucer, or the occult manner in which Ahmed-Bey was able to bring his miracles about. Lola and Paul are married and go to India where they try in vain to learn from the Brahmans the secrets of reincarnation and disincarnation. Paul, Lola, and Francisco die natural deaths in the course of time.

CRITIQUE: "Flying Saucer" is a well written novel. Its author is endowed with a vivid imagination. However, on the whole, I believe that it is inferior to "The Stolen Minute" (Published in two installments in the June and August, 1953 issues of SCIENCE-FICTION PLUS). Outside of a half dozen or so exciting and fast-moving situations and a number of interesting descriptions it is a slow moving, wordy and uninspiring work. Its characters are strictly "type" characters in every sense of the word. It contains a trashy love affair in the tradition of the dime love magazine. It has a "Deus ex machina" ending which is unsatisfactory. Its hero is a Frenchman--the two Americans are clearly the Frenchman's inferior and remain for the most part in the background (which would perhaps be resented by the average American reader). The incantations of Ahmed-Bey, which the author plays up, strike me as being hocus-focus and old stuff. The author would rather sidestep a problem or produce a "coup de theatre" than provide an ingenious, cleverly contrived solution for his reader. The title of the book itself is somewhat of a misnomer, for the Flying Saucer merely gives an impetus to the action but does not constitute the main action itself. In a word I would say that "Flying Saucer" would not appeal to the average American reader. It is not a constantly gripping adventure story. Its length is disproportionate to the excitement which it has to offer. (Special Note by S.M.: The author's name, Jean de la Hire bears a striking resemblance to Jean Delaire who wrote the very unusual and worthwhile interplanetary "Around a Distant Star" published by John Long, London in 1904. Jean Delaire was noted for her non-fantasy "A Dream of Fame.")



UN MARTIEN SUR LA TERRE (A Martian on Earth) By Louis Arraou, Editions Eugeng Figuiere, Paris, 1932, 190 pages.

The author lives on Montmartre in Paris. He is puzzled by the actions of his next door neighbor--a mysterious man of ageless countenance--who disturbs his sleep every night by operating a gadget whose nature he cannot define, but whose sounds remind him of those which emanate from a telegraph instrument. All of the author's efforts to become acquainted with this strange person, whose name is Cleophas Abscons, prove fruitless until one night Abscons enters his room and relates to him his story. He is a denizen of the planet Mars who has come to the Earth in order to discover the nature of its inhabitants. He has now found out as much as he wants to know and is about to return home. Before leaving, however, he desires to disclose his impressions to an Earthling of superior intelligence who will listen to him without scoffing. He has elected the author to listen to his tale in the belief that he is worthy of hearing it. He promises to open the author's eyes to the essence and truth of all things in the universe which he--as an Earthling limited by five imperfect senses--cannot see and understand. He further promises to leave with him at his departure a copy of a document which he is going to turn over to the Academy of Mars, and which may one day help bring together the inhabitants of both their planets.

The author, astounded and incredulous, thinks that his visitor is mad, but decides to listen to him rather than arouse his wrath. The man from Mars then proceeds to indict the ignorance, hypocrisy, pride, pettiness, brutality, and selfishness of mankind. Notwithstanding what he considers his great scientific discoveries, man, he observes, knows almost nothing about everything. The inhabitants of Mars are infinitely more intelligent and have discovered countless secrets of nature, because they, unlike man who is composed primarily of matter animated by a spirit, are pure minds. Since they are made up of pure minds they are consequently better able to understand the most intricate secrets of life, the forces of nature, and the cosmos. The author, infuriated by the criticisms of his visitor, loses his temper and strikes him with his fist. The blow rebounds, however, without doing the Martian any harm, for his body is not composed of flesh and blood, but of some elastic rubber-like substance which he has fashioned into a human form to resemble the people of Earth during his sojourn on their planet.

The author, still astounded but less incredulous, asks his visitor to explain to him how he was able to bridge the vast interplanetary spaces between Mars and Earth. The Martian discloses that his spirit, which, he reminds us, constitutes his entire being, proceeded along the concentric undulating radio-telegraphic waves from his home to the Earth as easily as if he were bounced from one wave to another of a great ocean. The magnetic attraction between these waves kept him going in the right direction and prevented him from being deposited on any other planet except the Earth. During his voyage he observed the moon, the sun, and numerous stellar bodies of our universe and marvelled at the awesome immensity of space.

Upon arriving on Earth he examined the creatures and objects of all sorts which are found there and sought to discover whether it was ruled by beauty, force, brutality, reason, or wisdom. Finally he dis-



covered that man was the sovereign of the world. His disappointment was profound, for it seemed to him that neither man's anatomical nor mental characteristics were commensurate with so exalted a function. He was surprised no end to see that man--an almost infinitesimal being living on a tiny globule--proclaimed himself king of the universe. He tells his now respectful listener that man has no right to this title, for there are beings, both smaller and larger than he, to whom it is more fitting--birds and beasts which are more beautiful, or graceful, or because they possess a greater number of senses--more intelligent.

Realizing man's weaknesses he did not reveal to him who he really was or what he could do for him for fear that his reaction would be unfavorable. For after all, the son of God once came to man to enlighten him, and he rewarded him by crucifying him.

The Martian then asserts that since the inhabitants of his planet know how to transform matter to suit their needs it was not difficult for him to shape a human form for himself so that men would take him for one of their own. This body had no heart, digestive tube, lungs, or reproductive organs. It was only, however, with great difficulty that he managed to squeeze his infinite intelligence into the cramped confines of the human brain. After securing for himself a human shape he learned to imitate human movements and languages. He points out that men have never been able to communicate with Mars because they used a large, complicated, yet weak antenna instead of one of almost microscopic size which would contain enough energy to reach other planets and, indeed, to move the Earth itself. He himself has such an instrument and the noises which the author heard every night emanated from it as he sent messages back to Mars.

To change the scene of their conversation the Earthling and the Martian go to the Red Mill cabaret where the latter sees once more the more brutal and coarse side of human nature. Speaking of man's development the Martian says that man's corporeal being is in a constant state of movement and change but never develops. His spiritual being, however, is slowly and progressively evolving and will one day subsist without its material shell. Professing belief in metempsychosis he alleges that the body dies but that the spirit lives forever and possesses one body after the other.

Returning to the author's room he asserts that the shape of the entire universe is that of man himself. If one could see the universe at a glance one would observe that it is a superman--in the sense that each of its parts--planets, stars, sun, and moon, etc.--corresponds to a part of man. Thus, for example, the milky way corresponds to man's vertebral column and is actually the backbone of the universe. Indeed all material forms in the universe which are superior to man have man's form and differ from man only in size. This is so because God has ordained that the prototype of the form of all things should be the human form. He advises man to read the open book of nature in order to discern the laws governing his life. Thereby he will emancipate his spirit and be no longer dependent on the vicissitudes of nature. Man must subjugate chance which is nothing more than the resultant of the forces which surround him. So speaking the Martian, as dawn approaches, bids his listener good-bye and puts a pinch of powder into the pipe he had been smoking. An explosion follows, his body is volatilized, and he disappears through the window in the form of blue spirals of smoke leaving the author standing aghast. The Martian has begun his long journey home.



# CLAYTON ENTERS SCIENTIFIC FICTION WITH "ASTOUNDING"

TO BE PULP SIZE, 144 PAGES & 20¢

NEW YORK, December 1929, (CNS) - Clayton Magazines will issue the first pulp-size scientific fiction magazine, Astounding Stories of Super-Science some time this month, it was announced by W. M. Clayton, publisher of that popular fiction chain. The first number, out soon, will be dated January, 1930 and the magazine will appear monthly thereafter.

Astounding Stories of Super-Science possesses some unusual features. It will be standard pulp-size in contrast to all other scientification magazines to-date, approximately the dimensions of Weird Tales. Though its physical size will be smaller it will compensate it by offering 144 pages, more than any other scitification magazine in history.

Astounding Stories will be priced at 20¢, the lowest price ever placed on a scientification magazine. Up until now, all scientification magazines have been 25¢ for the monthly editions and 50¢ for the quarterly issues.

Editor of the new magazine is Harry Bates who also edits Wide World Adventures for Clayton. Mr. Bates was formerly a newspaperman and his only previous experience with scientification was the writing of a one-act play "Monkey Gland" which proved popular with the Little Theatre Group in New York and was

broadcast over radio. Mr. Bates states that the idea of the periodical had been in the mind of the publisher W. M. Clayton for some time and he was now testing its feasibility.

"There is little question that Astounding Stories of Super-Science will QUICKLY BECOME THE PREMIER MAGAZINE OF its type", predicts Mr. Bates. "It is a matter of simple economics. Our rates are two-cents a word on acceptance. The other magazines in the field pay one-half cent a word on publication. All writers will submit their material to us first and we will have the pick of the field. Our rates will also attract writers to scientific fiction who were not willing to write for the previous low rates."

"Already we have secured some of the leading writers in the field", continued Mr. Bates. "The line-up of our first issue will be as follows: THE BEETLE HORDE (Part I) by Victor Rousseau; THE CAVE OF HORROR by Captain S.P. Meek, PHANTOMS OF REALITY by Ray Cummings, THE STOLEN MIND by M. L. Staley, COMPENSATIONS by C. V. Tench, TANKS by Murray Leinster and INVISIBLE DEATH by Anthony Pelcher. Coming up we have stories by Hal Vincent, R. F. Starzl, Charles Willard Diffin and Sewell Peaslee Wright."

The cover of the first issue will be by H. W. Wesso, who proved so popular when he was discovered by Amazing Stor-



ies last Fall. Interior illustrations will be by John Fleming Gould and H. W. Wesso.

To aid him, Mr. Bates will have as consulting editor Dr. Douglas M. Dold, who has written fantastic stories for Argosy and Ghost Stories. Though his editorial director is F. Orlin Tremaine, who gained fame as the man who piloted True Story Magazine under McFadden to the two million circulation mark, Mr. Bates states that he will answer directly to his publisher who must approve every story before it can be accepted. This is because of Mr. Clayton's deep personal interest in the magazine.

Astounding Stories of Super-Science

marks the entrance into the scientific-fiction field of one of the largest pulp chains in the country. Including Astounding, Clayton publishes 12 pulps: Ace-High Magazine, Ranch Romances, Cow-boy Stories, Clues, Five-Novels Monthly, Wide World Adventures, All-Star Detective Stories, Flyers, Rangeland Love Story Magazine, Western Novel Magazine, and Big Story Magazine. In addition Clayton also issues the popular Forest and Stream and Miss 1930.

"Our Policy", states Mr. Bates, "will be to present stories that not only are scientifically accurate but which will be vividly, dramatically and thrillingly told."

# Gernsback Launches Another: "Scientific Detective"

NEW YORK, December 1929, (CNS) — Scientific Detective Monthly, a magazine of scientific fiction detective stories was announced by Hugo Gernsback, publisher of the newly-launched chain of magazines Science Wonder Stories, Air Wonder Stories and Science Wonder Quarterly. A 16-page advance issue featuring the first installment of S. S. Van Dine's novel THE BISHOP MURDER CASE has already been mailed to readers of Gernsback's other magazines as a teaser.

The black and white cover by Frank R. Paul on the "advance" issue is not the same one that will be used on Scientific Detective Monthly, informs Mr. Gernsback. The first issue of the new magazine, dated January 1930, will feature the art work in full color of a new artist Jno Ruger.

Scientific Detective Monthly will be identical in format with Science Wonder Stories and Air Wonder Stories, large-size, book paper, 96 pages, monthly and sell for 25¢.

Editorial Commissioner of the maga-

zine will be Arthur B. Reeve, creator of the famed "scientific detective", Craig Kennedy, whose exploits in scientific detection have thrilled the nation since 1910. A new Craig Kennedy story will appear in each issue of the magazine. In addition to the Van Dine and Reeve stories, the first issue of Scientific Detective Monthly will also run a "Luther Trant" story by Edwin Balmer and William B. McHarg and other fiction by R. F. Starzl, H. Aston-Wolfe, Capt. S. P. Meek, U.S.A., and Ralph Wilkins. There will be a feature article by Mr. Reeve on "What are the Great Detective Stories and Why?"

A new series of "Taine of San Francisco" stories by David H. Keller, M. D. are being written for future issues of the magazine.

As a statement of policy Mr. Gernsback makes this point: "And while Scientific Detective Monthly may print detective stories whose scenes lie in the future, it should be noted that whatever is published in this magazine is based upon real science; and whatever will be



published will be good science. We describe no fictitious apparatus, no methods not based upon present-day science."

# Sequel To SKYLARK Set For AMAZING

## "AMAZING" TO ADD 16 PAGES

NEW YORK, December 1929, (CNS) —A sequel to THE SKYLARK OF SPACE by Edward E. Smith, Ph. D., will be announced in the January 1930 issue of Amazing Stories. T. O'Connor Sloane, editor of that magazine revealed in an exclusive interview with a Science-Fiction Times reporter. The novel is now in the house but the publication date has not been scheduled yet. Dr. Sloane believes he will retain Smith's own title of SKYLARK THREE.

THE SKYLARK OF SPACE is generally conceded to have been the most popular story in the four-year history, to-date, of Amazing Stories. It was published serially in the August, September and October 1928 issues of that magazine. Mr. Smith is a chemist for a Chicago doughnut firm and only writes in his spare time, therefore new novels from him will be an infrequent event.

"While waiting for the Smith serial, readers can cut down their impatience by reading BEYOND THE GREEN PRISM by A. Hyatt Verrill, a sequel to the very popular INTO THE GREEN PRISM of a year back," Dr. Sloane informs. "This novel will begin in the January 1930 issue of Amazing Stories which will add 16 pages, bringing its total to 112, thereby offering more fiction than any other scientific fiction magazine on the market. Each page of Amazing Stories runs 1100 words, so the additional pages are equivalent to an 18,000 word novelette."

"I am also proud of a new discovery of mine who will be given the cover of the January 1930 issue, Dr. Sloane said. "He is a young student of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology named John

W. Campbell, Jr. and his novelette WHEN THE ATOMS FAILED contains some of the most advanced theories on atomic energy yet published, as well as being very excitingly written. I commend this story to you."

The feature novel in the forthcoming Winter 1930 edition of Amazing Stories Quarterly will be the famous John Taine, author of THE PURPLE SAPPHIRE, THE GOLD TOOTH and many other novels and will be titled WHITE LILY.

## SCIENTIFBOOKS

Coming Stf Books In 1930

### BURROUGHS, KLINE, CUMMINGS, TAINÉ, ALL WILL HAVE BOOKS IN 1930

Two outstanding scientific fiction novels by Edgar Rice Burroughs from Blue Book are among the many fine books being offered to scientific fiction fans during 1930, according to a listing of scheduled titles included in a recent issue of Publishers' Weekly. Both of the Burroughs' stories deal with the center of the earth, the first of them TANAR OF PULLUCIDAR was serialized in Blue Book from March to August 1929; the second, TARZAN AT THE EARTH'S CORE began in Blue Book for September 1929 and is still running. Both books will be issued by Metropolitan.

Two books are also scheduled by the author generally conceded to be Burroughs' closest competitor, Otis Adelbert Kline. The first, MAZA OF THE MOON will appear as a four-part serial in Argosy starting some time in December, the second THE PRINCE OF PERIL is a sequel



to THE PLANET OF PERIL and will be issued in the Fall after magazine appearance in Argosy. McClurg of Chicago will publish both titles.

Other books of special interest to scientifiiction fans include TARRANO THE CONQUEROR by Ray Cummings, scheduled by McClury, which ran in Science and Invention during 1925 and 1926, and which many regard as Cummings best story; THE WORLD BELOW by S. Fowler Wright, well-known English author of the bestseller DELUGE is scheduled by Langman's and is advertised as a fantasy of the far future; THE IRON STAR by John Taine is good news for all of his fans; MUKARA by Muriel Bruce from Henklw is a tale of Atlantis and another new author, Philip Wylie will have a superman story, GLADIATOR issued by Alfred A. Knopf.

GUEST EDITORIAL

30 YEARS AGO, TODAY  
by Sam Moskowitz

As part of its salute to the 30th anniversary of the late-lamented Astounding Science Fiction, soon to become Analog Science Fact Fiction, Science-Fiction Times has asked me to write the feature stories for an imaginary Second December 1929 issue of this newspaper as they would have appeared then, including the announcement of the New Astounding Stories of Super-Science. That is as far as poetic license goes. Every fact reported in these write-ups is not only historically authentic and easily verifiable by evidence on file, but could have been obtained by any competent reporter of the period.

What does it mean in the light of historical persoeective?

First, we must dispose of one of the greatest literary coincidences in history and one pointed enough to strengthen the cause of astrology. Astounding Stories of Super-Science published its first issue dated January 1930 and John W. Campbell, Jr. entered the science-fiction field with his first story WHEN THE ATOMS FAILED in the January 1930 issue of Amazing Stories. The fate of the two crossed and became one a few years later.

In December 1929 the science-fiction world was experiencing its greatest boom

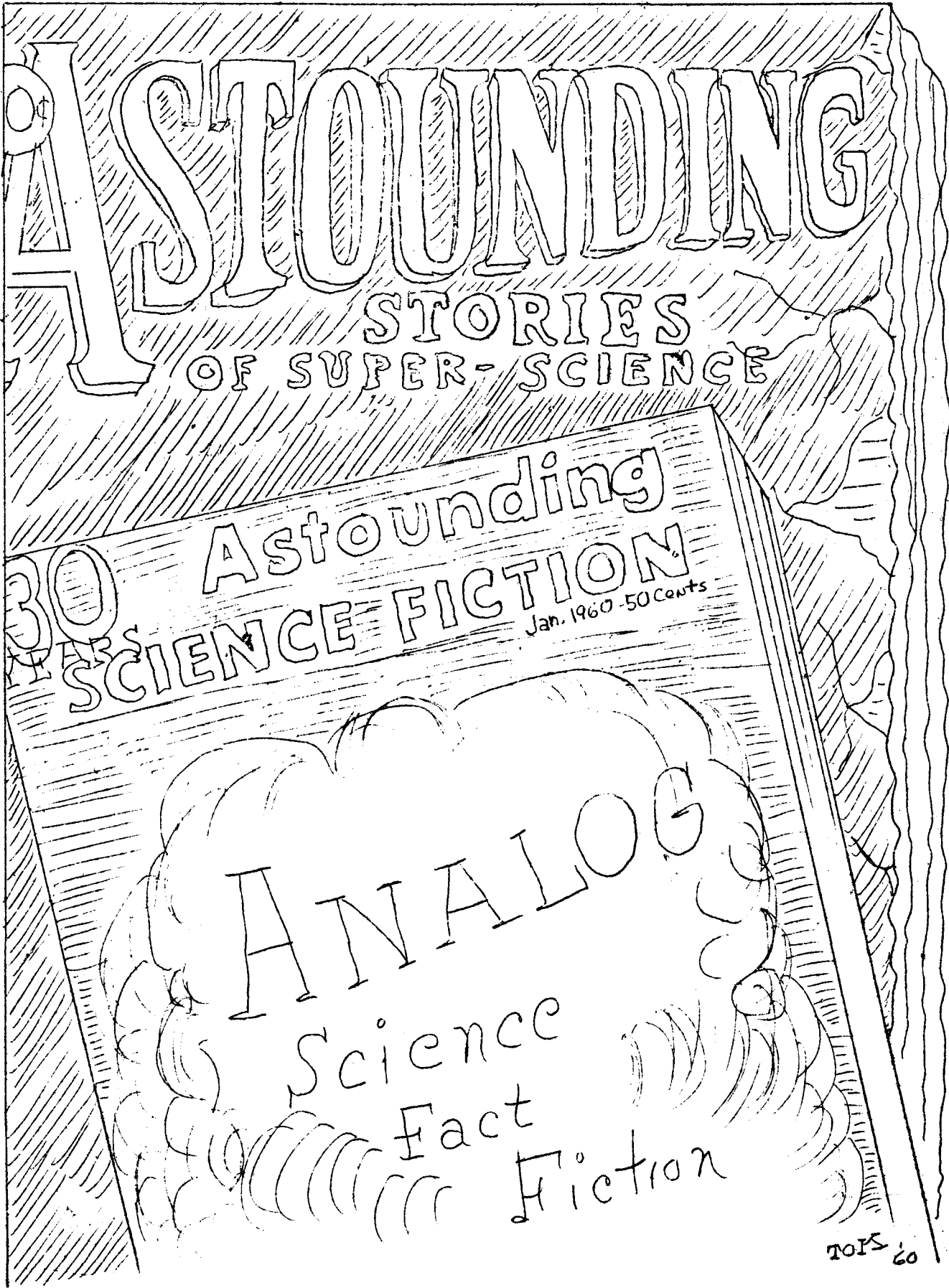
since the first magazine appeared in 1926. This boom was set off when Gernsback lost Experimenter Publications and began Stellar Publications in June 1929. Gernsback launched four new science-fiction magazines, Science Wonder Stories, Air Wonder Stories, Science Wonder Quarterly and Scientific Detective Monthly. He sought to determine what type of fiction was most popular and promote it, but he maintained everything on a dignified if colorful and imaginative level. He worked hard at establishing a scientific tone. His periodicals were handsome and commanded attention. He appealed to the intelligence and imagination. In no real sense were his periodicals pulps nor were those of his competitor Amazing Stories and Amazing Stories Quarterly, still very much the field leaders, despite his challenge.

Astounding Stories of Super-Science CHANGED ALL THAT! In every aspect, save the author's rate, it was the epitome of everything cheap, lurid, sensational, pulpish, juvenile and asinine that has ever been charged against science-fiction. Its first cover featured a bug-eyed monster and a scantily draped damsel; its format conformed with the pulps and its rough edges were to become the symbol of its debasement of science-fiction.

The stories were strictly low-grade adventure formula, in writing and enjoyment below the level of Argosy's "Pseudo science" tales which it copied and its pretext of scientific versimilitude insulting to the intelligence.

Its 32-year old editor Harry Bates almost arrogantly suffused with an aura of superiority, proved one of the most inept in the history of science-fiction. His boasts, in an interview, that two-thirds of his stories were sent back for rewrites when equated to titles of stories he claimed to have rejected forced the conclusion that the stories he received were not quite juvenile enough and had to be written down to comply with what he thought were needed. This was all the more ironic since he eventually developed to be one of the most brilliant writers of a later period. His two-cents a word over the three years of his editorship, bought him on the average, far inferior material than to his (continued on page x6)





**ASTOUNDING**  
 STORIES  
 OF SUPER-SCIENCE

**30** Astounding  
 SCIENCE FICTION  
 Jan. 1960 - 50 Cents

**ANALOG**  
 Science  
 Fact  
 Fiction

TOK 60



30 YEARS AGO, TODAY  
(concluded from page x4, column 2)

competitor's half-cent, indicating that there was far more to editing a science-fiction magazine than the word rate.

While we cannot blame Bates or Astounding for the decline of science-fiction that followed, the depression being the prime culprit, the taint which its policy gave the field have never been washed away, though under Tremaine and Campbell Astounding was one day to become the spiritual as well as circulation leader of science-fiction.

Finally, in the note of books scheduled for 1930 of the science-fiction variety we see a level of titles that relative to their desirability in the year they were published, equal or surpass the publishing schedules of today. If we couple this with the very evident thought and planning of policies on the part of both Gernsback and Dr. Sloane and the emphasis on outstanding stories and development of new talent, you obtain an inkling of the basis of the almost religious fervor which causes old timers to swear by the "good old days".

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"The World Of Yesterday Today!"

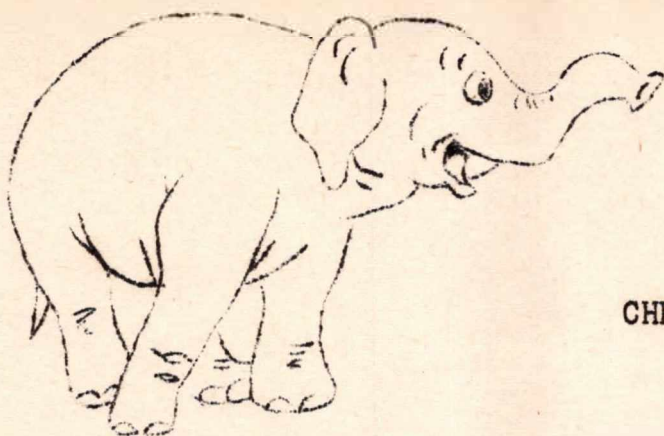
Vol. X Minus 1 2nd Dec. 1929 No. 1

Published to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION By SCIENCE-FICTION TIMES, INC., P. O. Box 115, Solvay Branch, Syracuse 9, New York. Free with issue #329.

All material in this issue researched and written by Sam Moskowitz. Basic idea suggested by James V. Taurasi, Sr. This issue edited by J. Harry Vincent. Drawings illustrating the first and latest covers of Astounding Science Fiction on page x5 are by Herman Von Tokken.

FAMOUS FIRSTS OF "ASTOUNDING"

- 1st pulp-size science-fiction magazine.
- 1st s-f mag to sell for less than 25¢.
- 1st s-f magazine to be published by a magazine chain publisher.
- 1st digest-size s-f magazine.
- 1st s-f mag published over 25 yrs by the same publisher.



## COMMENTS

BY

CHRIS

In the past two years that Sam and I have been married, I have sat down as each FAPA mailing came in and carefully gone through them looking for articles or items of interest.

I regret to say that at the pickings have been mighty slim! If in a whole mailing there have been one or two fanzines that really have made an attempt to create something worth reading I've been lucky.

I'm getting pretty fed up reading how Joe Blow smashed up his car in Oshkosh while looking for a lost fan, or how Bob Beanie's cats chewed up his only copy of Weird Tales, or how Dick Neofan finally swapped his old mimeo for a new Gestetner.

Sure, it's O. K. to include a gossip column in the fanzine, but does it have to fill half of it?

I say half of it because the other half is usually filled with comments on the other fanzines, or comments on the comments in past fanzines.

Good Lord, have all of you lost your ability to create some individual writings? Are you all so lacking in writing ability that you can't sit down and at least try to create an original story, poem or critique of a new book, play or movie? Even a poor story attempt would be better than some of the stuff you have been wasting paper on. Or how about bringing up a real topic of interest to discuss instead of feuding like the hillbillies? Or worse yet making a big joke out of the whole thing.

I'm not anti-humor, but I get the impression that most of you overdo the comedy, and most of it is just silly. Satirical comment certainly has its place and even I like a good joke, but poor humor is worse than none at all.

What gets me the most is that too many of you write stuff that sounds like gossip between two women over the backyard fence while they hang up the laundry.

Sam says I'm really about to stir up a storm. Good! Now let's see you all prove me wrong!

---

DIFFERENT, Vol. 2 No. 2, Whole No. #5 is published by Sam and Chris Moskowitz at 340 7th Ave. West, Newark 7, N. J. for The Fantasy Amateur Press Association, October, 1960.

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STEVENS, Vol. 2, Issue No. 22 is published by Sam and Chris  
Hoskins at 340 7th Ave., West, Newark 7, N. J. for the Fantasy Fan  
and Fanzine Association, October, 1963.