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September 1950

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Fantasy Advertiser

Contents

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Notes From the Editor

STIRLING MACABOY'S "The Snake Mother" was voted last issue's best drawing. The cash prize has been won and remains only to be awarded. Thus far, however, Mr. Macaboy has escaped detection by our spies. Ausies please note and pass the word that an informer is sought.

One of the compensations of single-handed little magazine publishing is that the publisher is not restricted by opposition from partners or stockholders. He is responsible for serving the interests of the subscribers and advertisers, true, but after assembling a given issue to the point where he feels those groups to have been given their money's worth, the publisher is free to deliver himself of anything he has on his mind (well---almost) at lengths limited only by his pocketbook.

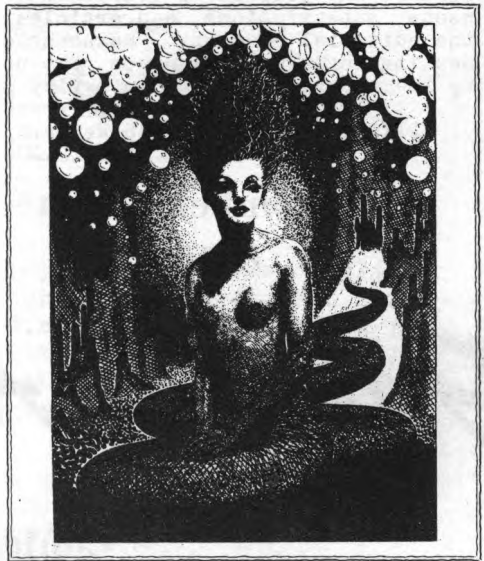
That, in a way, should explain why you occasionally find in these pages references to books that are not science-fiction or fantasy and have no direct tie-in with them. When such items appear, you will probably detect the influence of one of my major interests which I shall here define loosely as "The History of Ideas".

All of which, I trust, suitably introduces a brief reference to two fine little books, the first of a projected series titled "The Harvard Case Histories in Experimental Science". These initial two were written by James Bryant Conant*, the general editor of the series. The titles are "Robert Boyle's Experiments in Pneumatics" and "The Overthrow of the Phlogiston Theory". They're obtainable from the Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., for 90¢ each.

In his introduction to the series, which is found in each volume, Mr. Conant recommends the books primarily to students who are majoring in the humanities or the social sciences and says, "Experience shows that a man who has been a successful investigator in any field of experimental science approaches a problem in pure or applied science, even in an area in which he is quite ignorant, with a special point of view. One may designate this point of view 'understanding science'; it is independent of a knowledge of the scientific facts or techniques in the new area. Even a highly educated and intelligent citizen without research experience will almost always fail to grasp the essentials in a discussion that takes place among scientists concerned with a projected inquiry. This will be so not because of the layman's lack of scientific knowledge or his failure to comprehend the technical jargon of the scientist; it will be to a large degree because of his fundamental ignorance of what science can or cannot accomplish, and his subsequent bewilderment in the course of a discussion outlining a plan for a future investigation. He has no 'feel' for what we may call 'the tactics and strategy of science.'" And in these historical discussions of two very significant scientific advances the application of "the tactics

(continued on page 10)

* (He terms himself "editor" of the individual titles also. But the material quoted from original sources is interrelated by much original analysis and commentary that is both interesting and cogent.)



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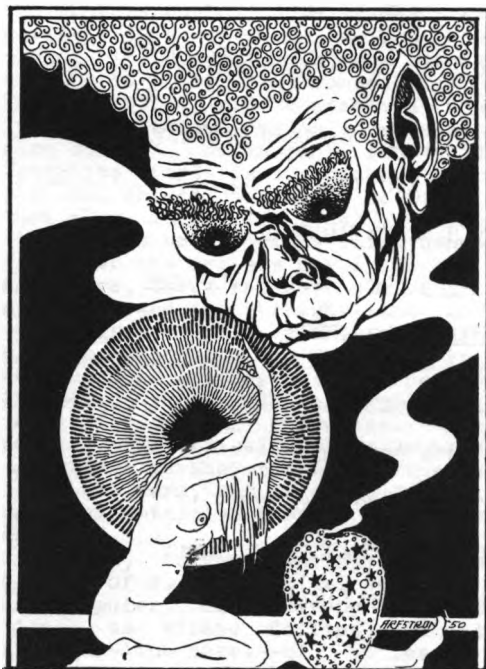
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Prognosis Favorable

by Henry Kuttner

Something has happened to the science-fiction field. There is a good deal of loose talk going around about how science-fiction has got respectable, but in my opinion it's just got popular. There's a distinction. The detective story became popular long before it became respectable, and that final achievement didn't come until a new variant, the suspense novel, had been created--or recreated, if you prefer.

It seems to me that the science-fiction yarn and the whodunit are children of the same dam: the Gothic romance. But it's hard to define rigid compartments. Huxley's Brave New World is more of a social novel than a science-fiction novel--pseudo-science is merely the vehicle there, just as the mystery skeleton is the vehicle for Huxley's Gioconda Smile, which can also be traced back to the Gothic school if you shut your eyes and take a deep breath. Labels will have to be a matter of convenience, nothing more, unless we're aiming at shrill and unresolved arguments. Technically, the term "science-fiction" means no more and no less than the term "detective story." No whodunit fan would contend that Kingsley's play, Detective Story, is a detective story, but the measure of that fan's critical eclecticism would be his ability to appreciate and evaluate that play fairly for itself, without being blinded by his rigid limitations to a formula which cannot stay rigid without attrition.

When the mystery novel and the detective story first started a new genre, there was not much of a line of demarcation between the new type and the straight-line novel. The story had to be a good novel first of all, and then something new had to be added. So we have The Moonstone and The Woman in White. Both are good novels as well as good mystery novels, perhaps partly because they drew upon the solid, basic well-springs that had been helping to develop the novel for several centuries. Afterward, a stream of detective stories began trickling from the presses, experimentally trying such variations as the spy story, the pure-deduction tale, the mystery-adventure yarn, and so on. Gradually aficionados laid down rules for "the detective story," and magazines specializing in whodunits appeared.

Then, in the twenties, Willard Huntington Wright, under the by-line of S. S. Van Dine, suddenly made the detective story generally popular. He did it by packaging a familiar and practical device. As Wilkie Collins had added a fairly new element to the straight-line novel--or, at least, as Collins emphasized and balanced the mystery element as it had seldom been done before--so Wright took what had become a formula for whodunit fans and added elements which would make that formula palatable to the general public. Today Philo Vance's intolerable virtuosity does not seem too effective, but strong, bright colors, rather than realistic treatment, were required at that time to interest the reader who wasn't a whodunit fan. So the general reader acquired a taste for detective stories, and there was a flood of detective books--good, bad, and pure formula. The whodunit habit spread until every circulating library put in a whodunit section.

The inevitable result was to broaden the base. The flood of Van Dine imitations presently became less restricted. Again, as had occurred after Collins, the experiments began. But this time the authors were not starting from a basic formula or type limited in appeal to a small group of fans. The assured audience was much larger, and, from the purely commercial side, this naturally had some influence. More important, however, was the fact that the formula had stood a test, had survived, and, whether meretricious or

not, provided a sufficiently solid foundation for further experiment. Very often, these later experimenters were authors who would never have thought of trying this field unless they had become familiar with it over a period of years. Excellent writers of other types of fiction became intrigued with the whodunit, and new writers as they came freshly to their profession were able to integrate the principles and examples of the whodunit with their education in other types of literature. Eventually part of the whodunit field merged with the straight-line novel, completing the spiral Collins began.

The important point, it seems to me, is that whenever a field broadens sufficiently to embrace other fields, it cannot help but be enriched. It will lose its protectively narrow restrictions of thought, and expand sufficiently to develop sub-forms that will appeal to all types of readers. Some of the lousiest science-fiction has yet to be written. So has some of the best. One is impossible without the other, as a rule.

This theoretical "best" to come may not fall very easily into the "science-fiction" classification, as some of the best "whodunit" novels in recent years can't be called merely whodunits any more than Crime and Punishment can. It will use science-fiction as a vehicle but transcend its limitations. There will still be the "pure" science-fiction story, as the "pure" whodunit continues to have a market, but there will also be possible other types of fiction, embracing and including science-fictional treatment, which must necessarily pay more attention to what Robert Graves calls "the graces of writing." Such work will have to stand the test that any novel must stand in order to survive at all.

In the past there have been a great many complaints from various readers whose critical standards of "science" have been outraged by some science-fiction. I can't recall many readers who demanded that more attention be paid to the other half of the hyphenated term. That, perhaps, is because such readers are found mostly among the general public who haven't discovered science-fiction until lately.

I don't mind stories that are all science--of a sort--and no fiction--except bad. I can't read 'em myself, but there is a market, and any market should have what it wants. In the detective story line, some of the British writers especially write whodunits full of time-tables and maps, with no pretense at any kind of literary standard. These are turned out to provide escape literature for readers who don't care anything about literary standards of any kind except, of course, clarity.

The "gadget" science-fiction story is apt to parallel this example. It has its place, certainly. So do other imbalanced types of science-fiction which, for one reason or another, would fall short on any sort of literary yardstick. From now on, I believe that there will be more and more science-fiction written, and also that it will be less and less possible for the non-eclectic fan to use his own outmoded yardstick on what has finally begun to be a generally popular form of writing. If he wants one certain type of science-fiction which he considers the only pure form, then he'll be able to get it--but he will be in the position of the detective story aficionado who, for example, declares that all feminine interest in a story is wrong.

H. G. Wells, perhaps, parallels Wilkie Collins as the author who set the prototype. After Wells, as after Collins, there was a steady trickle of the new formula, but I don't think a parallel to Willard Huntington Wright has appeared yet, to write a definitive science-fiction novel and introduce the elements that will make the formula generally popular. Perhaps no Wright is necessary, in this case. The chances are that such a writer would have to be, like Wright, a science-fiction fan but not a science-fiction writer, though sufficiently experienced in writing and analysis in his own field--as Wright was.

But no Wright may be necessary, of course. In any case, it seems at least possible that science-fiction will follow the evolution of the detective story, consolidating the formula on one hand but raising the general literary standard on the other. The former science-fiction readers who considered science-fiction their own peculiar treasure can no longer do so, except by re-defining science-fiction. In future, except for the "pure" science-fiction tale which need be nothing else but, science-fiction will more and more have to be measured against honest literary standards, and stand or fall by that harsher yardstick. It's about time, too.

Genus Homo, by L. Sprague de Camp and F. Schuyler Miller; jacket by Cartier. Fantasy Press, Reading, 1950; 12mo, 225pp, 3.00.

P. SCHUYLER MILLER

This is a tale of 10^6 years hence. By a means suggested with a vague gesture in the direction of the aestivative abilities of the lungfish, a bus-load of contemporary humans awake in a world otherwise devoid of their genus. The characters include a group of AAAS meeting-bound scientists, some vacationing school teachers (female), a troop of night club dancers (also female but more so), and a finite variety of other individuals who were travelling less gregariously.

It was an earthquake, probably, that trapped the bus in a tunnel and caused the release of a strange gas being carried by one of the scientists, the only passenger who didn't survive the accident.

As the group sets out to explore a terrain that looks increasingly strange to them, they chance upon a variety of beasts that show great evolutionary changes over types known today. By the time astronomical evidence appears the mentally more flexible members of the group understand their predicament and attempt to indoctrinate their more normal fellows.

In an attempt to establish a purpose and efficiency a provisional government is appointed, one of the scientists its leader. The presentation of his difficulties, his forced resignation, and eventual reinstatement displays a character-drawing craftsmanship that one suspects is principally Mr. Miller's. Be that as it may, there follows a deftness of plotting and creation of suspense that is typical of the best work of both authors.

Midway in the book, as the dust jacket (depicting a monocled gorilla in a machine shop) suggests, a civilization of gorillas is discovered. Whereupon the "Genus Homos" are imprisoned---or rather,

inzoo-ed---and given intelligence tests remarkably similar to the classic tests Koehler gave his chimpanzees. In due time, the intelligence of some of the homos is discovered if not tested, and the inevitable language classes begin. (Very well done.)

The introduction to the gorillas' society is followed by contacts with other cultures. In a convincing war between the gorillas and equally cultured baboons the men distinguish themselves and for the first time gain the trust of the gorillas. The story ends with all hands aware of and confidently looking to their future as an influential minority group in a fantastically changed world and with several women pregnant.



L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP



George D. Martindale

*No criticism intended here. This story was not written as a medium for displaying a theory of suspended animation; rather, the latter is a device to establish the situation and the authors are to be commended for "tying the story down" with this biological hint. GDM

Malcolm M. Ferguson
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Shadows of Ecstasy, by Charles Williams

London: Victor Gollancz, 1931; Faber & Faber, 1948. 224 pp.

This is a superman story told from a mystical rather than a scientific viewpoint; a supernatural thriller which refuses to be merely a thriller. One feels on every page Charles Williams' sincerity in attempting to express profound feeling through allegorical fiction. As a mystic, he must indicate his ideas through symbols rather than direct expression; the symbols he chooses are those of a tale of fantastic conflict between ordinary man and mystically enlightened man.

The superman is Mr. Nigel Considine, and the most immediately impressive thing about him is that though he seems to be in vigorous middle age, he is actually two hundred years old. He has mastered old age and death by turning to this task the passions which lay waste to ordinary lives: love and hate, hope and fear, agony and ecstasy. The transmuted power of these passions gives Considine superhuman life and force. Yet he proclaims that he is not a freak, but an ordinary man who has learned how to utilize humanity's usually dormant powers.

Feeling that materialistic civilization has thwarted man's spiritual potentialities, Considine starts a crusade from Africa. Under his leadership, the black nations revolt; armed with weapons of modern warfare, they arise to throw the yoke of white imperialism from Africa and start a new civilization. London is attacked by Negro invaders, England is thrown into panic. The story rises to a taut climax in a house by the sea where Considine plans the conquest of England, of Europe, and of death.

This tale is told through the reactions of a group of upper-class English people who come in contact with Considine. Their responses vary with their well-differentiated personalities -- indeed, Williams so carefully keeps his own interpretation out of the story that one is left in some doubt as to what the reader is supposed to feel about Considine.

Charles Williams' exceptional narrative skill is much in evidence, maintaining constant suspense. His literary style is smooth-flowing and vivid, his characterization penetrating. Horror, ecstasy, and ironical humor are skilfully interwoven. The numerous element saves the story from what might have been an excess of sententiousness -- for the tale's progress is weighted and slowed by passages of vague, pontifical mysticism. Happily, Williams' sense of humor and his story-telling ability come to his rescue.

Those who insist on the most direct narrative style and the swiftest possible action will be bored by SHADOWS OF ECSTASY. More sophisticated readers are likely to find it continuously fascinating.

Yet the enigma remains: what does Considine "mean"? At times he seems a man of inspired vision, at others his actions seem those of a ruthless fanatic. Perhaps the underlying idea is that humanity is capable of isolated spasms of supernormal vision and power, but that so far it remains unable to live consistently on that level.

The total effect of SHADOWS OF ECSTASY is marred by vagueness of ideas, a suggestion of racial prejudice (partly redeemed by the noble character of the Zulu king), and occasional flaws in technique. It must be ranked below Williams' best level. Yet its novelty, the effectiveness of such scenes as the rioting in London and the experiment in a return from death raise this book far above the usual run of fantasy novels.

Paul Spencer

(Notes From the Editor continued)

and strategy of science" is successfully delineated.

I found my interest in this introduction (a respectably-lengthed essay of some ten pages) to be equal to that in the texts proper and would call it recommended reading to all s-f fans and particularly those writers who have not been associated with scientific workers.

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THE AUCTION

Fantasy Advertiser's 2nd auction offers a wide variety of interesting items. There should be something here to tempt almost every collector. There are at least four of the scarcest and most desirable titles in the fantasy field, as well as some relatively inexpensive items of considerable interest. To make your bids, send us a list of lot numbers and your maximum prices, accompanied by a deposit of one dollar. The dollar will be applied to your successful bids or returned if none are successful. However high your bid, you will pay no more than 10% over the next highest bid. Please make no bids lower than fifty cents---each item's owner has paid half that to enter it. Where there is no second bid on an item, the owner may accept or reject the single bid at his discretion. The closing date for bids is September 30th. If this doesn't allow our crippled post office to get your issue to you in time, we give up.

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9. "DEATH INTO LIFE". Stapledon. Mint with d/w.
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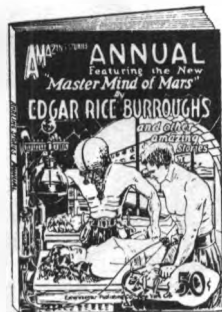
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Lancelot Biggs: Spaceman

, by Nelson Bond.
Doubleday, N.Y., 1950; 2.50.

Offhand I remember three authors whose work James Branch Cabell has commended: E. R. Eddison for his The Worm Ouroboros, Donn Byrne for his Messer Marco Polo, and Nelson Bond for his The Thirty-First of February. Now, as Nelson Bond's Lancelot Biggs: Spaceman is launched, Mr. Cabell is getting married again. Mr. Cabell has a right, therefore, to be preoccupied, for this title is clearly not his dish.

This is a melodrama of the spaceways. It's hammy, but may well be enjoyable for all that. As I say, the humor is not the subtle or Cabellian, but spoofing, punning, cliché-capping, and rambunctiously bludgeoning. Who knows but that this title will find a wider audience than the book which Mr. Cabell enjoyed. Its pages are not overburdened by the concerns of "a kind of genius" as the other title allegedly was.

It is the story of a ramshackled lugger of the spaceways, drawing phrases and plot-fragments from all the books of the Tugboat Annie, Bartimeus, W. W. Jacobs school (except my favorite, Halliday Witherspoon's Liverpool Jarge whose whoppers are clearly told tongue-in-cheek); but it's space travel that adds the spike that makes the drink. The compound of novel and familiar elements account for the pleasurable moments in this yarn. It isn't the best book in the series, because, unlike the Bradbury title, it has stock rather than truly familiar elements.

Dan Imbrifer



"Space Opera"

by Frank Jonbrian

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M. P. Shiel

Being a Guide to His Works for the Neophyte and Including a
Bibliographical Miscellany Here Published for the First Time

by **Malcolm M. Ferguson**

The best introduction to this writer is through **THE PURPLE CLOUD**. June 1949 FFM has it; or the \$1 World edition will put a copy in your hands cheaply. The 1929 (Gollancz - London), the 1930 (Vanguard - N. Y.), and all subsequent editions introduce a more streamlined version than the 1901 Chatto & Windus first, which opens rather slowly.

Lovecraft seems critically in the wrong when he says in **SUPER-NATURAL HORROR IN LITERATURE**: "Unfortunately the second half of the book, with its conventionally romantic element, involves a distinct 'letdown'". Rubbish. The story is at its greatest when Jefferson, alone, after escaping the world-blighting cloud is confronted with the problem of whether to flee or stay with the one woman who also has escaped. Dramatically the situation resembles that of Shakespeare's **ANTHONY AND CLEOPATRA**, where the then-known world was used as setting for that lady's love.

I was interested to see that A. Reynolds Morse agreed with me on this point in his bibliography, **THE WORKS OF M.P. SHIEL** (Fantasy Publishing Co., Inc., Los Angeles, 1948, \$6).

After **THE PURPLE CLOUD** I would try **LORD OF THE SEA** which turns up fairly readily in second-hand copies in the Gollancz or Knopf editions. There's a lot of action in it, involving the building of vast fortresses afloat to permit the hero to try lording it over the seas and gain world power to institute social reforms he has his mind set on. The underlying social theory for this book is Henry George's **PROGRESS & POVERTY** which you could keep on the other side of your bed to put you to sleep.

I found Shiel's writing in **THE YOUNG MEN ARE COMING!** to be too tricky. It should be noted that this is science-fiction, whereas many of his titles are not. Shiel always took care of scientific explanations in his work, though.

His fantasy **THIS ABOVE ALL (ABOVE ALL ELSE)** is my next choice. It deals with Prince Surazal, the Lazarus of the Bible, and Rachel Jeshurah, who live down through the ages since they were doomed in New Testament times. Rachel seems a young creature, half gamine, half innocent, a freemartin to all but Prince Surazal, though continually kept from him by injunctions which come by mail from a mountain retreat, and presume that Jesus, too, is alive.

The story is set in a time that is technically modern (1930s), but plotting involves politics in France (as it does in **ISLE OF LIES**, written over a score of years earlier) and has some remarkably rich writing in it. Shiel's best trick is his ability to pick up pace as no other writer I am familiar with can. In one of his **PRINCE ZALESKI** stories, in this novel, and elsewhere we are treated to chases -- across London, in old castles, and so on. It sounds like a simple matter, like a cowboy-and-Indian business, or a cloak and dagger affair. But there's apt to be a good deal more to it than that.

Probably John Gawsorth's collection, **THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF M.P. SHIEL** (Gollancz, London, 1949, 10/6) will be the best means of getting at them, for **THE PALE APE** is by no means common, nor is **SHAPES IN THE FIRE**. August Derleth hopes to publish a collection which will have better selection of text versions and choice of tales (by and large Derleth seems to have better discrimination, or at least the opportunity to exercise it as anthologist, than Gawsorth). This will of course be available in America.

Derleth's anthology SLEEP NO MORE does have the topnotch yarn, THE HOUSE OF SOUNDS. Other fine short stories by Shiel are THE PRIMATE OF THE ROSE (anthologized with THE RACE OF ORVEN in Dorothy Sayers' British edition of TALES OF DETECTION, MYSTERY AND HORROR, SECOND SERIES, but missing in the American equivalent called the SECOND OMNIBUS OF CRIME), and the "noxious fragment" XELUCHA.

In the letters column of August 1949 FFM, and in Morse's bibliography I told of my visit to "L'Abri", Shiel's home in Sussex while I was in England with the army. I was introduced to Shiel by a V-mail letter from Derleth, and it is probable that Lovecraft suggested his work to Derleth.

Shiel died at the age of 81, after a full life. He enjoyed exceptional health, travelled widely, and was at home in eight languages. He wrote 29 books, appearing between 1895 and 1937.

In the 1930s a teen-aged clerk named John Gawsworth struck up an acquaintance with twenty or more writers whose works interested him most. Among these were John Collier, Oliver Onions, Arthur Machen, Thomas Burke, and M.P. Shiel. Gawsworth was an energetic wight and soon was prodding Shiel to write and revise and dig out more material. Gawsworth published two volumes collating first editions of ten favorite authors each. And now as Shiel's literary executor Gawsworth has just seen into print eighteen essays culled from a variety of sources. The volume is entitled SCIENCE, LIFE, & LITERATURE (Williams, Norgate, London, 1950, 10/6). The double essay ON READING -- OF WRITING is worth the price of the book. Gawsworth's forthcoming biography should be most interesting, too, if it can convey the richness of interests that Shiel had.

I was interested to watch Morse's bibliography shaping up, though from the sidelines. I had learned of Gawsworth from London bookseller Andrew Block, and had a fair collection of Shiel started myself (at never-to-be-duplicated reasonableness of cost). I had also checked the British Museum listings and those titles in the Widener stacks at Harvard. Yet I was sufficiently detached from the book, and found on its arrival so much I had not heard about to permit me to review it for a Boston paper.

I've gone into this because I feel more research has been done by Americans on Shiel than some of the remarks in Everett Bleiler's Arkham Sampler review imply, and because I want to add here a few items which I have turned up since Morse's book went to press, and show the nature of the game. Curiously, it appears that since the day Dr. Bleiler refused my loan of the two Gawsworth bibliographies for his excellent CHECKLIST, (with resultant poor showing on the gentleman involved, I note with the same accent used by the witch-who-wasn't-invited-to-the-princess's-wedding-but-came-anyway) he has tried to belittle Morse while praising Gawsworth.

Incidentally, the finding of these minor omissions is no fine

SHADOW ON THE HEARTH, Judith Merrill, Doubleday, 3.00.
SECRET, Michael Amrine, Houghton Mifflin, 3.00.

Unless atomic bombs make an s-f story, these two fall without the boundary of the genre. But among peripheral novels they're outstanding.

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Coming Up...

Next issue's feature articles haven't been chosen yet; perhaps, even, they haven't been written. But we can tell you that the fall publishing season will be well under weigh and there'll be a greater number of books reviewed.

feat, and can be done with any bibliography. You want such a reference book on your shelves to tell you what you don't know or can't remember. It should be good enough so you can tip in any missing information without pulling the whole thing apart and starting afresh. I rate both Morse and Bieler efforts highly, but must rate Scott's BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HAGGARD lower for such important omissions as the first American magazine appearance of SHE, a key work.

For anyone interested in a further range with Shiel, either for itself, or for exercise (Shiel used to run five miles before breakfast of mornings, but this is an exercise in bibliography, for which I happen to be glad at the moment):

1.) PRINCE ZALESKI, Roberts Bros., American first edition, appears bound in red brown cloth. No priority established. Quite possibly no real priority exists here, as the Keynote Series, which this belongs to, could appear uniformly, in the green cloth probably, or in attractive color combinations. This is a fantasy detective volume, highly regarded by detective experts like Ellery Queen.

2.) THE MESSAGE OF FATE, by Louis Tracy, appears from stylistic evidence to have been written in part -- Chapter 5 to be exact -- by Shiel. The style of Shiel is so much more alive and sharper than Tracy's that it can easily be sensed. Tracy is flat and stilted, while Shiel shows originality, an acute sense of words, with tricks that should instruct and stimulate a young writer. Tracy was a good Joe, and spent prodigally to run soup kitchens in London during a bad depression winter, doing this almost by himself. He turned out about 70 novels, including some that may be retitled; was serialized heavily, and published in America fully as well as at home. This title may also be THE MESSAGE -- I haven't checked.

3.) THE MAN-STEALERS turns up in a paperbound Lippincott 1900 edition. "In paper, 50¢, cloth, \$1".

4.) HOW THE OLD WOMAN GOT HOME, Richards Press, appears in blue cloth, bound more cheaply, as if a final batch of sheets had been so bound before another printing.

5.) THE BLACK BOX, in Richards Press, was similarly bound up in plain red cloth, without dye on fore-edges.

6.) SLEEP NO MORE, Derleth's anthology, appeared as an Armed Forces paperback, giving this title as large a printing as almost any other Shiel work.

7.) THE LATE TENANT, by "Gordon Holmes" (Shiel and Tracy) in the Clode 1906 edition was remaindered by A. Wessels Co., in a brown cloth binding.

8.) NO OTHER WAY, by "Gordon Holmes" (apparently just Tracy this time) was serialized in 1912 in the Boston Sunday Post magazines and others in Associated Sunday Magazines. As this outfit also printed Doyle's LOST WORLD and Donn Byrne's first yarns, Gordon Holmes was in good company. Incidentally, is this the same book as THE ONLY WAY by Louis Tracy?

9.) AN AMERICAN EMPEROR, by Louis Tracy, one of Tracy's best-known books, in which, Morse relates, Shiel helped a hundred pages worth, also appears in a Bell's Indian & Colonial Library paper edition, #192.

10.) A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE, by "Gordon Holmes", was serialized in The Household in 1913.

This should be enough of these odds and ends to show you what the bibliographer is up against. The chances are he has no way of finding out that a Sunday supplement ran a novel by his author, or exactly what a pen-name of this dual nature conceals. While the above are minutiae, they are often revealing in quantity, whether the author be Shiel, or Burroughs, or Haggard, or for a really hard one, say, LeFanu.

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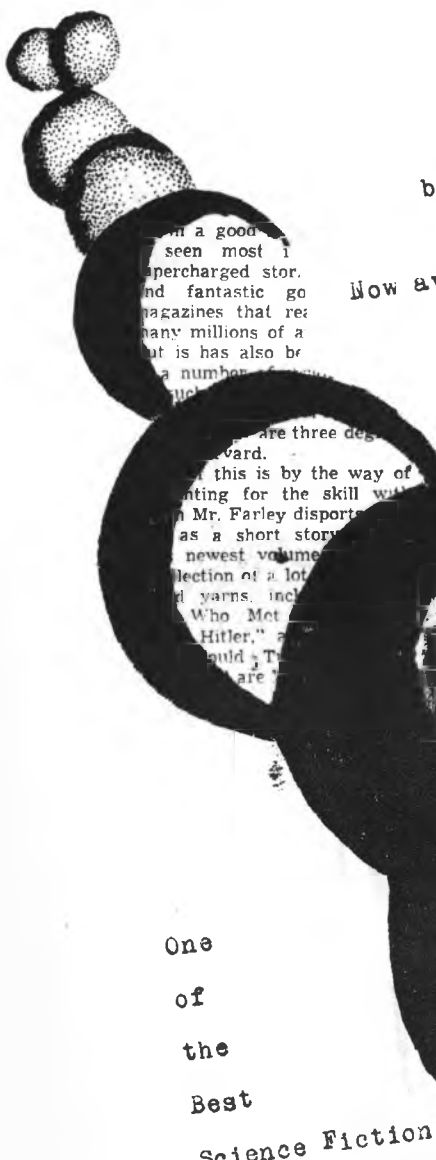
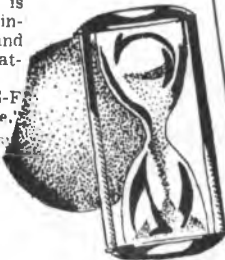
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The Antiquarian Bookshelf

a department conducted by various hands, this month...

by Frederick Shroyer

Probably Biloxi has forgotten 1893, its year of glory (--much has been forgotten, Cynara; gone with the wind--) but somehow it would seem that the Flying Cows deserved a better fate than that of a precipitous descent into oblivion.

Benson Bidwell, Inventor of the Trolley Car and the Electric Fan (sic) wrote his slight book, The Flying Cows of Biloxi, in 1907, and it was published by the Henneberry Press of Chicago in that same year. There is no record that a vast migration swept down the curved land, way down Souf' to Biloxi, but if the book had been widely read such a migration might well have occurred for who would want to miss the pleasure of an aerial cow-hunt, or the joy of riding astride a winged bovine? All of these activities were possible in Biloxi, Benson tells us, because an inventor visiting there observed that terrestrial cows depended for their sustenance upon Spanish moss. He further observed that this moss was to be found in most inconvenient places: high in the trees that beared the Biloxian savannahs. Despite the somewhat apathetic efforts of small moppets who were hired to tear down the moss from its aerie and place it within reach of the hungry cows, there was always more moss in the trees than there were satisfied and contented cows on the ground.

We are told that invention springs from such necessities and that in the forced oxygen of such situations the candle of genius ceases its flickerings and becomes a steady, blinding light. Certainly the subsequent occurrences in Biloxi attest to the accuracy of this herbal observation.

The narrator fashioned wings of branches and boughs. (It is interesting to note, if we may interpolate, that after the success of his experiment a song came out of Biloxi: Branches and Boughs. Recently it was revived in the North and has enjoyed considerable success despite a slight alteration in its title.) He next fertilized the roots of the wings with dried blood and strapped them to an obviously apprehensive cow who had been chosen for the experiment. When the sings were affixed, the test cow immediately soared high into the blue skies of Biloxi.

Benson tells us that a great crowd of typical suth'en fo'k who had assembled for the test flight burst into spontaneous song, and he further records the words of this happy madrigal:

"Now de cow can eat the moss
And fly faster than de race hoss;
Like Jordan, de milk will flow
No longer with hunger will she low,
And the pickaninnies like will grow,
In dis promised land of milk and honey,
And dis nigger never more will need money."

Soon such wings were attached to all the cows of Biloxi and, in a short time, the inventor was elated to notice that the wings were taking root; were, in effect, becoming integral parts of the cows themselves. Then, to add to the wonders that were bursting so rapidly about the delighted heads of the Biloxians, it was discovered that oranges were growing on the foliage of the wings. One suspects that orange milk-shakes became the thing to drink, but of this Benson is silent.

Through the magic of Bidwell's pen it is possible for us to picture today a scene of ineffable loveliness which has, alas, now passed into history. Through the aery lanes of sunset, high against

the golds and orchids of the evening sky, we see the flying cows browsing soft against the evening star on their way to home and stable and the relaxing joys of milking. One sees them silhouetted against the declining sun, their little silver bells tinkling high and sweet above the world, their gentle lowings descending upon the tired folk below like a calm benison....

It is with understandable regret that we reluctantly return to a work-a-day world wherein we are beset with rumors of wars, hot-rodders, child evangelists and adult evangelists, and engrams. It should be of some consolation to us all, though, that the Biloxians, like us, were probably worried about Flying Disks.

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Flight Into Space,

compiled by Donald A. Wollheim.
Frederick Fell, Inc., N.Y., 1950; 251 pp, large 12mo, 2.75.

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Jack Kelsey

At left...
"Into the Void"
by Jack Gaughan

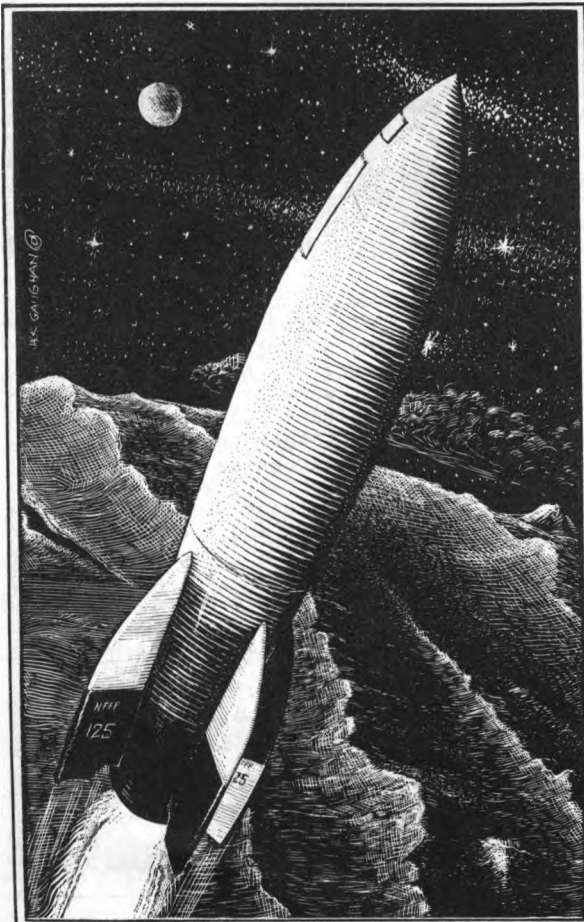
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Clara Thompson graduated from Brown University in 1916, and received her M.D. from Johns Hopkins Medical School in 1920. She was a member of the resident staff in psychiatry at the Phipps Clinic, Johns Hopkins Hospital for four years, working under the direction of Adolf Meyer.

Since 1925 she has been in private practice in psychiatry and psychoanalysis. She received her early training in Budapest with S. Ferenczi, and for many years was closely associated with Harry Stack Sullivan and Erich Fromm.

Dr. Thompson has taught psychiatry and psychoanalysis at Johns Hopkins Medical School, New York Medical College, New York Psychoanalytic Institute, New School for Social Research, Washington School of Psychiatry, and William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry.

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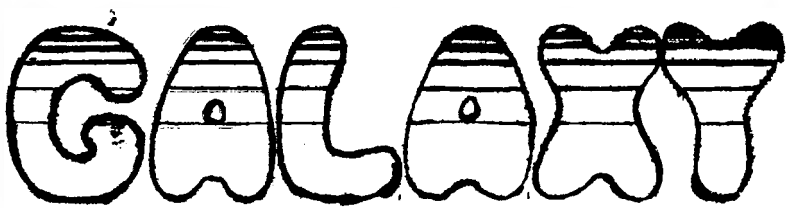
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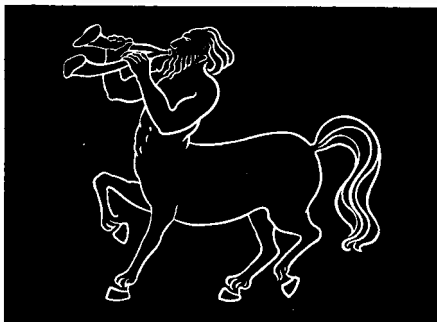
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- UNCANNY TALES - Canadian, numbers 1 thru 9.
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- MYSTERY TALES - any issues.
- SPICY MYSTERY - any issues.
- STRANGE TALES - any issues.
- THRILL BOOK - any issues.
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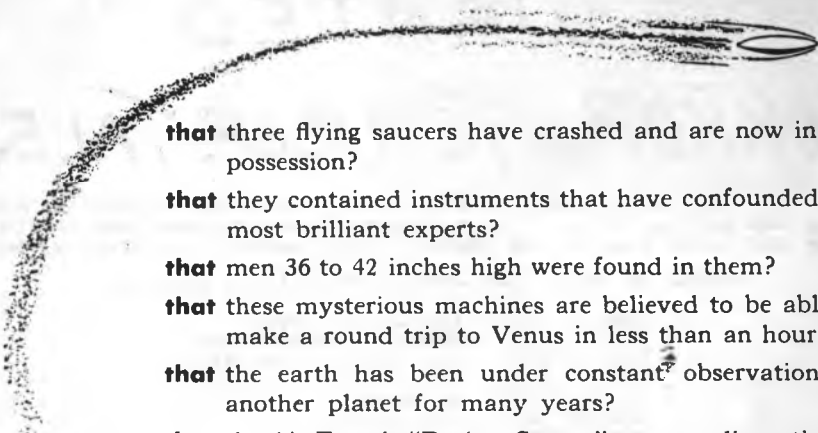
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