

# SCIENCE- FANTASY REVIEW

Vol. IV. No. 18

SPRING '50

ARTHUR C.  
CLARKE *on*  
*Spaceships  
of Fiction*

FORREST J.  
ACKERMAN *on*

## 'DESTINATION MOON'

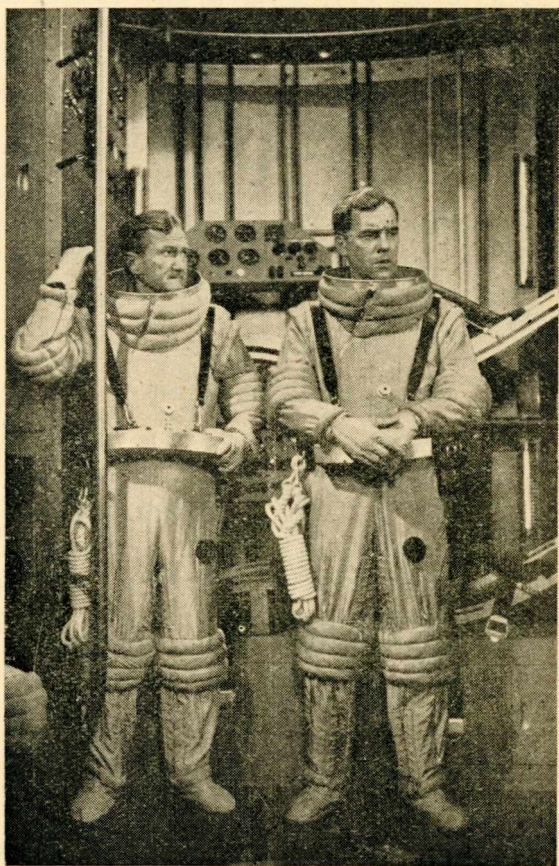
Hollywood Puts  
Space-Flight  
on the Screen

THOMAS SHERIDAN

*on*

## HUGO GERNSBACK

Pioneer of  
Scientifiction



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**FORREST J. ACKERMAN reports on**

# ' DESTINATION MOON '

## Hollywood.

The cinemagicians of Celluloid City have completed a 240,000-mile trip on a Hohman orbit to the crater Harpalus, a pock-mark on the forehead of the man in the Moon. In semi-documentary style, and in Technicolor, this space-flight of 1960 has been filmed for audiences of 1950—and the greatest miracle of all is that Hollywood seems to have done the job *right*. There is no girl stowaway, no sabotaging villain, no bug-eyed monsters on the Moon—and no atmosphere there either!

The picture is "Destination Moon," adapted by the author and Rip van Ronkel from the boy's book, "Rocket Ship Galileo," by Robert A. Heinlein (Scribner's: '48). The juvenile element has been completely eliminated from the film, for which Heinlein himself was engaged as technical adviser. He kept cigarette smoke out of empty space and candy wrappers off the surface of the Moon; he also designed the rocket-ship, one beautiful 15-foot model of which took ten days to construct at a cost close to \$600. For more than nine hours a day, six days a week for six weeks, he kept a watchful eye on the scientific accuracy of the enterprise.

When the white stars in the back-cloth of space (miniature bulbs wrapped in cellophane and strung on net) photographed with a red halation, they were covered with green so as to shine white. To simulate the magnetic

soles of spacemen's boots, suction cups were employed. The space-suits they wore\* weighed about 100 lbs. And to show the effect on the passengers of a rocket in free fall, a giant gimbal representing the vessel's interior was built for \$25,000 and so operated that walls and ceiling could become floor. Heinlein took particular care with the weightless sequences; he wants no wrong-moment laughs from the audience when they see them. "If, in spite of all our precautions to keep the picture serious and sober, they still snicker," he said, "I'm leaving for the Moon—on foot!"

Another clever trick was worked out to give an illusion of the spacemen labouring under six gravities. Transparent gauze was placed across the actors' mouths, then pulled taut with invisible thread, thus distorting their features to give the effect of strain. But the best illusion of all, to my mind, is the use of midgets for perspective purposes; in duplicate, smaller-sized space-suits, and carrying equipment to scale, they substitute at times for the normal-size actors to give the appearance of the Moon explorers at great distances. Eventually the figures were reduced to puppets on table-tops; but if George Pal, the producer, famous for his Puppetsoons, has used his skill sufficiently, the transition from live action to animation will never be noticed.

## MOONSCAPE BY BONESTELL

Chesley Bonestell, the astronomical artist whose painted products anticipate the effects of the camera's lens, was secured to create the Lunar landscape. He first made a remarkable model, thirteen feet long, after which studio technicians reproduced his work on a grand scale—173 feet long, 120 feet across and 25 feet high. Bonestell is a kindly, modest, grey-haired man who

\* To make them more easily distinguishable against the Lunar landscape, the suits are of different colours. The cover photo shows Tom Powers as General Thayer (left) and Warner Anderson as Dr. Charles Cargraves, leading atomic physicist of 1960, inside the Moon rocket.

## SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW

QUARTERLY: ONE SHILLING

Editorial, Advertising and Publishing Office: 115 Wanstead Park Road, Ilford, Essex.

EDITOR: WALTER GILLINGS

Vol. 4, No. 18

SPRING '50

was often to be found on the sets during the filming of the live action; and he gave me some interesting sidelights on his part of the book, "The Conquest of Space," which has caused such a stir both within and without astronomical circles in two countries. "I began my work as a hobby, to amuse children. Now a new encyclopedia wants to buy some of it. My wife helps me by making models, which are photographed and then painted."

Naturally, all the science fictionists in the vicinity wanted to take a look at the film in the making, and Heinlein was able to arrange for many visitors to the nominally closed sets. Henry Kuttner, his wife Catherine Moore, A. E. van Vogt, and several members of both the Los Angeles Fantasy Society and local rocketry organisations were admitted. Photographers came from **Life** and **Mechanix Illustrated**, and on one occasion William Cameron Menzies, director of "Things to Come," was there to watch the rescue-in-space takes.

The television feature, "The City at Night," also visited the sets to make a programme which was broadcast over ETLA and lasted the whole of an hour. It opened with a view of the Earth falling away beneath the spaceship, followed by a shot of the Moon as the vessel nears the satellite preparatory to landing. In this case, the visitors were the man-and-wife interviewing team of the programme, who on arrival (without spacesuits) met the four explorers

† See Walter Gillings' "Fantasia," this issue.

of the film. Viewers were also introduced to producer Pal, director Irving Pichel, Heinlein and Bonestell, whose book was well in sight; while Heinlein had something to say, in authoritative tones, about the imminence of space-flight.

Veteran director Pichel, too, takes the film and its subject quite seriously, though he expressed to me his private opinion that "all of us will get to the Moon—simultaneously and in a million pieces, propelled by an atomic explosion of the Earth—before a rocket-ship gets there."

Producer Pal, who years ago made "The Ship of the Ether" in Holland, has said that he intends to make a whole series of scientifilms, and has indicated that he will consider the perennially popular Gernsback novel, "Ralph-124C41+."† His attention has also been called to other stories which may prove suitable for filming, including Heinlein's "Space Cadet" (**FR**, Feb-Mar. '49). Meanwhile, the release of "Destination Moon" will be rushed, "to keep ahead of reality," and its successful reception will result in the early filming of the Balmer-Wylie classic "When Worlds Collide." There is a possibility that this will be given a four-dimensional climax, thanks to a process being perfected by a Los Angeles inventor well-known to local s-f fans; and, again, it will be in Technicolour. At last, science fiction will begin to fulfil its destiny on the screen.

‡ See page 8.

—And **GEOFFREY GILES** sees

## SPACE-FLIGHT ON THE STAGE

Although Hollywood has risen to the occasion at last, to expect the stage to utilise the dramatic possibilities of space-flight would seem like crying for the Moon. So far, no established dramatist has dared to exploit the idea, probably because no producer in his right mind would take kindly to a theme which not only bristles with difficulties of presentation but demands very careful treatment if it is to be taken seriously by an audience which naturally associates it with "Flash Gordon" and "Superman" movie serials.

But to E. Frank Parker, a member

of the former Teddington Cosmos Club who has written science fiction and a few one-act plays, it was not too formidable a task to write a three-act drama which would put the idea of a journey into space on the stage for the first time. Three years ago, while on the way over to America on a business trip, he settled down to "Goodbye Tomorrow," which he finally completed after eighteen months of spare-time industry. Nor did he have to look far for a competent group of players willing and able to present it, once they were sold on the idea. Although not one of them had ever encountered the

subject outside of the comic strips, his fellows of the Teddington Theatre Club were prepared to take a chance.

In fact, their producer, Edward Sinclair, became quite enthusiastic; soon communicated his enthusiasm to the cast, and got them rehearsing the "intriguing new play" with as much gusto as they had shown over "Alice in Wonderland," their furthest previous departure from tradition. With the result that the three performances they gave at Ronayne Hall, Hampton Wick, marked one of their biggest successes in twenty-three seasons, of which their supporters, no less than themselves, will be talking for many more seasons to come.

The drama, of course, was not greatly concerned with the technical niceties of rocket-flight, nor even with a particular destination for the spaceship in whose control-room all the action took place. Yet it presented a novel angle on the as yet incalculable contingencies of astronautics with enough conviction to make the climax effective rather than merely baffling. As it turns out, the eight voyagers, trapped in the "tiny metal cocoon" over which they have no control (due to a bit of devilry by a discharged manservant), find on returning safely to Earth that they have completed a circuit of the System which, though it seems only to have lasted days, has actually taken "more than a lifetime." Without going into the mathematics of the subject, Parker contrives to account for this denouement by some clever dialogue between a man of the future who greets them in the last scene and the expiring scientist-abductor, who realises dimly that the speed at which the vessel has been travelling for most of its hectic flight, having exceeded that of light, must have played some devastating tricks.

The shocks and sensations of the journey were more than adequately conveyed by the players, in spite of their never leaving the safety of the boards upon which they were required to throw themselves violently several times during each evening. The plausibility of the setting had, too, been ensured by careful labour on the part of the scenic artist, even if there were points which no BIS technician would pass and the dialogue indicated a surprising laxness in the ticklish operation of landing a rocket-ship on Earth. His assistant in the observation room

## SKYLARKS OF SPACE

The world's first interplanetary travel bureau has been started by a New York business man, according to facetious accounts which appeared in London newspapers. Said the *Evening Standard*: "Already more than 200 atom-age flight pioneers have rushed to book passages (on) space-cruisers when they go to the Moon. The bureau has time-tables worked out for the rocket ships Lunarian, Martian, Saturnia and Solar Queen (which) will leave every day, except Sundays and holidays, from the New York 'space port' in Central Park, starting in March 1975."

Prices, said another report, will be announced 'later.' The time-tables include a provision that the spaceline 'cannot be responsible for delays caused by meteor showers.' But, said an "official": "Flying to the Moon will be as safe as a transcontinental flight — some day."

shouts down to the Professor, at the control levers, to "give her a side blast." The Professor, anxious enough already, seeks elucidation: "Confound you! Which side?" Comes the answer, pat: "The side away from the doors!"

But the principal business of "Goodbye Tomorrow" is to depict the effects on a mixed bunch of humans (most unlikely candidates for such a venture, under any other circumstances) of an unexpected trip into the void; and in this it succeeds only too well, with many emotional outbursts as violent as rocket explosions. Conducting his "social experiment" without asking anybody's permission, the elderly scientist takes off with a motley crew: his cantankerous sister, a jobless ex-Army major, a couple on the verge of separation, a simple soul with religious mania, a young scientist on the fiddle, and a selfish minx. But after their terror and indignation have passed, they pass the time playing parlour games, their personal problems solved by the remoteness of their position; and when they find themselves returning to Earth they scarcely relish the prospect. How they eventually adapt themselves to the world of 2030 A.D. or thereabouts, dramatist Parker leaves to the imagination. Or, perhaps, for due consideration on a future trip to America.

# Walter Gillings' FANTASIA

**Daily Express** ran three-day feature based on "The Conquest of Space," by Chesley Bonestell and Willy Ley (reviewed last issue), due to see British publication by Chapman & Hall. **BIS Journal** reviewer Arthur C. Clarke decided: "No better introduction to astronautics could possibly be imagined" . . . **Boys' Own Paper** took up the subject in articles by BIS Councillor H. E. Ross; while, in **Tit-Bits**, Atlantis Researcher Egerton Sykes predicted "Rockets to Moon in Seven Years" . . . **Coronet** featured artist Bonestell's latest notions on "Mr. Smith Goes to Venus" . . . Robert A. Heinlein turned up in **American Legion Magazine** with new tale of "Rebellion on the Moon" . . . Ray Bradbury sent "The Veldt" to **Satevepost**; seven days later got cheque for \$1,000 . . . Doubleday will issue volume of "Lancelot Biggs, Spaceman" stories by Nelson Bond, whose "Conqueror's Isle" was on Radio City's Playhouse . . . George O. Smith wrote of fictional villains, or "Fiends in Human Form" in **Writer's Digest**, which reported: "Science and fantasy continue to be popular reading trends, with open markets in the pulps . . . Give them some real science background. It is not enough to take an old detective or Western plot and stick it up in the stars" . . .

Latest pocket-book collection of s-f, "Shot in the Dark" (Bantam, New York: 25c.), including tales by Sturgeon, Heinlein, Padgett, Leinster, Asimov, etc., edited by Judith Merrill . . . Collection of S. Fowler Wright "phantasies" published during past thirty years reassembled in "The Throne of Saturn," now available from Arkham House, whence will come volume of M.P. Shiel reprints titled "Xelucha and Others" . . . Pellegrini to publish "Conjure Wife," by Fritz Leiber, Jr., tale of modern witchcraft from **Unknown Worlds** . . . **Avon Fantasy Reader's** Donald A. Wollheim is editor of "Flight into Space," new Fell anthology of great interplanetary stories . . . Another unpublished novelette by John W. Campbell, Jr., "Frozen Hell," to appear from Fantasy Press in volume including some of his **Thrilling Wonder** stories . . . Former **Astounding** editor F. Orlin Tremaine's "Short Story Writing" adopted by University of Vermont as official textbook . . . University of California, Los Angeles, formed first campus s-f club, heard agent Forrest J. Ackerman talk of bearding "Editors in Their Lairs." . . .

**New Yorker** went to annual party of New York Hydra Club, "outfit composed of writers of the Buck Rogers school," found "crowd . . . consisted largely of men in need of haircuts and ladies in dresses no more streamlined than the frocks that were in fashion long before the invention of the gas mantle. Sprinkled among them were a couple of dozen autograph hunters . . . Two s-f writers beside us were agreeing heartily that cosmic rays, crystalline mutations and space warps have been done to death" . . . Also mourned: 116-year-old **New York Sun**, originator of Richard Adam Locke's "Moon Hoax," and London's **Strand Magazine**, promoter of Wells and Conan Doyle . . . In **John o' London's**, Ruddick Millar recalled "The Crack of Doom," by Robert Cromie, which in 1895 "foretold . . . the atomic bomb. . . indicated . . . that with it the whole Earth might be destroyed, and that the explosion might even wreck the entire Solar System" . . . Astronomer Royal H. Spencer Jones reassured **Star** readers concerning an "Explosion on Mars," coinciding with scary headlines on the H-bomb . . . In spite of declaration by **True** magazine that "for past 175 years . . . Earth has been under systematic close-range observation by living, intelligent observers from another planet," U.S. Army Air Force abandoned two-year Project Saucer, concluding that flying discs are no more than "(1) a misinterpretation of various conventional objects, (2) a mild form of mass hysteria, or (3) hoaxes" . . .

Murray Leinster's **Astounding** story, "First Contact," being adapted for U.S.A. radio . . . "The Angry Planet," by John Keir Cross, presented by BBC as children's serial . . . George Orwell, author "Nineteen Eighty-Four" (S-FR Autumn '49), died at 46 after long illness . . . "Progress," **Evening News** short story by Lord Dunsany, told of atomic catastrophe in far universe . . . **Daily Mirror's** "Man of To-morrow," Ronald Bedford, predicting life "Fifty Years On," foresaw "Interstellar Problem . . . much like Cold War of '48," ending when discovery of life on Mars forces "squabbling Earth Powers (to) co-operate against the threat of possible invasion" . . . Beverley Nichols, interviewing Professor A. M. Low for **Sunday Chronicle** "Diary of a Nobody in A.D. 2000," reported: "Low talks at top speed; ideas seethe and bubble in his brain; his conversation is lit with strange volcanic flashes" . . . **Redbook** also featured "What the World Will be Like in the Year 2000," according to Aldous Huxley, Philip Wylie and others . . .

THOMAS SHERIDAN

reintroduces

HUGO GERNSBACK

who some may remember as the

# Pioneer of Scientifiction



The latest, Campbell-worshipping generation of science fiction fans will hardly have heard of Hugo Gernsback, unless they happen also to be radio-television hams who read **Radio-Electronics**. The story goes that a devoted reader of that highly technical journal, in which Editor-Publisher Gernsback still indulges the flair for fantastic prophecy which has been his speciality for 40 years, once wrote in suggesting that the President of Radcraft Publications had missed his vocation. "Why," he asked, "do you waste your time editing a radio trade magazine when you could make a fortune writing science fiction for **Amazing Stories, Astounding Science Fiction or Fantastic Adventures?**"

The query brought a smile of fond reminiscence to Gernsback's saturnine countenance. He had been through all that long ago—between 1908 and '36, to be exact. Although he hadn't made a fortune, and had spent most of his time encouraging others to write (and read) s-f, he had had a lot of fun. It was he who, in '26, actually started the first magazine to develop "scientifiction" (his own word for it) as a specialised form of popular literature—**Amazing Stories**. Three years later, when he seceded from that pioneering publication, he launched the rival **Science Wonder Stories** and its companion magazines, and continued through the vicissitudes of the times to build up an enthusiastic following for such stories, sufficient to persuade other publishing houses to stake their claims in the new territory ("The Story of **Wonder**": **Fantasy Review** Dec. '48—Autumn '49).

**Amazing** was not the first American

magazine to feature s-f, nor even to devote itself entirely to the fantastic story: Street & Smith's **Thrill Book** had started to work the vein in earnest in '19, but gave up after 16 issues. **Weird Tales**, too, had commenced in '23 to cultivate the interest of lovers of fantasy-fiction to the point of life-long addiction. However, having played with it since the days of his earliest technical publications, Gernsback was the first to realise the possibilities which the science story offered for further high-pressure development\*. During the early '20's, his **Science and Invention** carried almost as much science-fantasy of the fictional sort as it did of the factual kind, in a special rotogravure section which went down so well that a "Scientifiction Issue" eventually presented half-a-dozen such tales.

Soon afterwards, Gernsback circularised his science-and-radio hobbyist readers concerning a proposed story magazine to be called **Scientifiction**; but the response was hardly encouraging enough to justify the venture,

\* In his "History of Science Fiction Fandom" (**Fantasy Commentator**, Fall, '45), Sam Moskowitz recorded that Gernsback also "did something for the s-f fans that had never been attempted before: he gave them self-respect. He preached that those who followed this sort of reading matter avidly were not possessed of a queer taste, but actually represented a higher type of intellect. And he tried to lay down rules for s-f. Primary among these was plausibility: nothing was to appear in the stories . . . that could not be given a logical, scientific explanation."

which he abandoned—until a less frightening title suggested itself. **Amazing Stories**—why not? “With the ever-increasing demands on us for this sort of story,” he wrote in his first editorial, “there was only one thing to do—publish a magazine in which . . . scientific fiction (would) hold forth exclusively. Towards the end we laid elaborate plans, sparing neither time nor money . . .”

Since it could not go on indefinitely reprinting Wells, Verne, Garrett P. Serviss and others of the old American school, some of the money he spent subsequently went in prizes to the authors he persuaded to write for the new magazine through his now-famous cover contests. By constantly soliciting the efforts of untried writers, he gave many of the leading exponents of modern science fiction their first opportunity; among them Edward E. Smith, Dr. David H. Keller, Jack Williamson. But although **Amazing** caught on (“We are printing 150,000 copies,” Gernsback reported within a year) and gave birth to a bigger **Quarterly** edition, it did not do well enough to keep its enterprising publisher out of trouble. After three years, at the same time that he relinquished his older magazines and the radio station from which he had broadcast regular talks on science, his name disappeared from “The Magazine of Scientifiction,” which for the next nine years was conducted by his former helpmate, the late Dr. T. O’Conor Sloane.

Magazine publishing is a precarious business; and new ideas, as Dr. Sloane sagely observed on taking over Gernsback’s chair, are “very dangerous.” Ever blessed with more imagination than cautiousness, however, the Pioneer miraculously recovered himself, formed the Stellar Publishing Corporation to launch **Science Wonder**, and proceeded to pull it through by much the same methods he had used to build up **Amazing**, while at the same time replacing his lost technical mags. with new ones and adding to them with others. Substituting for **Radio News**, which had run for 20 years, came **Radio-Craft** and **Television News**; instead of **Science & Invention** it was **Everyday Mechanics** (later **Science and Mechanics**), while **Aviation Mechanics** made a flying start. In the fiction department, **Air Wonder Stories**, **Scientific Detective Monthly** and **Wonder Quarterly** were not far behind; not to

mention a **Science Fiction Series**.

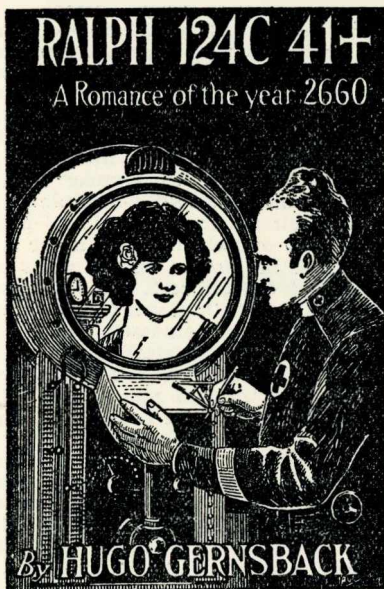
This recovery, it would appear, was the direct result of some more of the renowned Gernsback circulars to prospective readers, 20,000 of whom were said to have rallied to the cause of **Everyday Mechanics** with enough advance subscriptions to get him back in business. Similarly with **Wonder**, whose title his well-wishers selected while they placed their dough on the line. Said Gernsback, overwhelmed: “I never experienced the like in my 25 years of publishing experience.” Of such was the faith and enthusiasm of the army of followers he had amassed, and out of which the fanatic contingent known as science fiction fandom was to coalesce and flourish through such movements as the Science Fiction League. It was understandable that when, in ’36, he surrendered the fading **Wonder** and retired into obscurity as far as they were concerned, the thousands to whom s-f had become something inseparable from the name of Hugo Gernsback should feel a twinge of genuine regret.

#### ‘THE OLD BUZZARD’

But “Gernsback the Amazing” (as **Time** called him in devoting a page to his triumphs in ’44) has no cause to regret his decision to abandon science fiction for the science-fantasy which first made him famous and in which he is still adept. Among the readers of his prosperous **Radio-Electronics**, which grew out of **Radio-Craft** and **Television News**, are many who learned their radio among his magazines of earlier days and who still pay careful heed to his prophecies in this field—because they have seen so many of his bold predictions come true. As **Time** related:

One of the most fertile of U.S. inventors . . . Hugo Gernsback is widely and affectionately known among (them) as a bottomless well of incredible notions. For more than 30 years fantasies have come in such profusion from his brain that there is hardly a modern invention he cannot claim to have anticipated. The father of pseudo-scientific fiction, . . . he has given laboratory workers some suggestive ideas . . . Alumni of (his) numerous publications to-day hold many important positions in the U.S. radio industry. They fondly call Gernsback “the old buzzard” . . .

Of some 80 inventions of his own he has patented, **Time** slightly observed that “none of them, his admirers are proud to say, has ever proved of the slightest practical use.” At least, his



Gernsback's 1911 version of television, as drawn by artist Paul.

first invention—of a new-type electric battery—seemed practical enough to bring him, at the age of 20, from his native Luxembourg to seek fame and fortune in the U.S.A. A year after his arrival, in 1905, he found himself a partner, formed the Electro-Importing Co. to bring from Europe the sort of gadgets which appealed to the new American hobbyist, the amateur electrician. The next year he was offering for sale at \$7.50 what he claims was the first commercial radio set, capable of sending dot-and-dash signals or ringing a bell a quarter-mile away.

A few years later he had founded the Wireless Association of America, and the "Telimco" catalogue had evolved into the first radio magazine, **Modern Electrics**, which proved so successful that Gernsback turned from selling to editing and publishing. So followed **The Electrical Experimenter** ('13), **Radio News** ('19) and **Science and Invention** ('20), in all of which he continued to experiment with science fiction, much of it his own work. For s-f had fascinated him since he was eight years old, and was obviously the most convenient vehicle for the half-humorous, half-serious prognostications

he was always making, with particular reference to radio—and something he called "television," back in '09. In that year, a decade before the U.S. had a single commercial radio station, he published a map envisaging a network of them spreading right across the continent; in '20, he printed all the dope on how to build a walkie-talkie. And in '46, when the U.S. Signal Corps established radar contact with the Moon, he reprinted a **Radio News** article of '27 in which he had predicted the achievement, even to the wavelength used.

Though his remarkably accurate conception of radar was by then 16 years old. In 1911, in **Modern Electrics**, he had considered the use of a "pulsating polarised ether wave . . . to locate a machine thousands of miles distant from the Earth, speeding in an unknown direction," by means of a "parabolic wave reflector (and an) actinoscope . . . which records the reflected waves." The speeding machine was, of course, a space-flyer; and this first authentic record of radar, as he claims it, was but one of many fantastic notions he crammed into his memorable serial story\*, "Ralph 124C41+ : A Romance of the Year 2660." One of the most ambitious science fiction pieces ever attempted up to that time, it was a full-blooded interplanetary adventure, full of anti-gravity flyers, disintegrator-rays, televisors, a solar power plant, a gadget to produce invisibility, and a pigeon-chested Martian villain (named Llysanorh' CK 1618) to boot.

The title was a pun on the name and serial number of the scientist hero, who wooed his Swiss sweetheart by "telephot." When her life was threatened by an avalanche because the "meteorotower" operators were on strike, leaving the weather to its own devices, he sent out electronic waves from his New York laboratory and melted the menacing snow, saving the situation. He also performed the miraculous feat of reviving a dog, three years after it had been placed in suspended animation, by replacing its blood with "Radium-K bromide," thus anticipating Russian biologists' experiments of later years; and the "menograph" which transcribed his thoughts as he sat meditating was not far short of the electroencephalograph which records brain-

\* Later published in volume form (Stratford, Boston: '25), and reprinted in **Amazing Stories Quarterly**, Winter '29.



impulses to-day. The "hypnobioscope," too, which enabled students to learn while they slept, had materialised in experimental form by '23.

The use of rockets in warfare, and their development for extra-terrestrial flight, were other Gernsback visions which have come true. The A-bomb? During the second year of World War I he wrote a piece in **The Electrical Experimenter** in which he visualised what might happen "when the scientists of 100 years hence begin making war on each other. Suppose that by that time our scientists have solved the puzzle of the atom and have succeeded in liberating its prodigious forces . . . The results will be overwhelmingly astounding . . ." And he painted a gruesome picture of an "Atom Gun" in the hands of a would-be Emperor of the World, of a fleet of "Radium Destroyers" which, by "setting off spontaneously the dormant energy of the atom," might dissipate a city of 300,000 souls (population of Hiroshima when the Bomb fell: 320,000) in "a titanic vapour cloud, (leaving) only a vast crater in the ground . . . After this demonstration the enemy sues for peace; resistance would be folly." In '15, he agreed that all this might seem "very fantastical," but thought it "not only very possible but highly probable." Thirty years later the world was duly astounded—and overwhelmed.

### PROFITLESS PROPHET

Of this unerring facility for scientific crystal-gazing, Dr. Lee de Forest, inventor of the vacuum-tube, told Gernsback: "You may . . . take justifiable pride in the farsightedness of many of your startling suggestions." In another write-up, **Coronet** referred to "the modern Leonardo de Vinci," and furnished an answer to the question which always occurs to people in respect of his inventive capacities, and which he actually keeps hanging on the wall of his office: If you're so smart why aren't you rich? Gernsback himself supplied the answer: "I have neither the time nor the patience to translate my ideas into money. People of my type are never good businessmen."

Now aged 66, Uncle Hugo (as s-f fans have dubbed him) presides over an old-fashioned office in Manhattan, on another wall of which hangs a death-mask of his friend Nikola Tesla, who

until he died was constantly claiming to be on the verge of interplanetary communication. In 43 years of publishing, Gernsback has experimented with a score of publications, some of which have departed from his customary field of science-fantasy and gadgetry to embrace such subjects as beautycraft and sexology. In '37 he produced **New Ideas** as "the first scented magazine": as they riffled through it, a pleasant odour wafted into readers' nostrils from the perfumed printer's ink of its pages. The smell didn't last longer than four issues—but the idea was taken up, years later, in newspaper adverts. for scent. He had pioneered again . . .

Perhaps his fecundity in respect of ideas which eventually surprise even him by proving practical is due to the rich sense of fun which gives rise to the more fanciful of them. A persistent impishness has pervaded his writings since the days when **Electrical Experimenter** readers guffawed over "Baron Munchhausen's New Scientific Adventures" (reprinted in **Amazing**, Feb.-Jul. '28), which nevertheless contained some interesting notions regarding the Martians. Now, he takes time off from the serious business of producing **Radio-Electronics** to indulge in a bit of leg-pulling in the shape of an article, by "Mohammed Ulysses Pips" (he was always fond of preposterous pen-names), describing a "new invention" which exists only in his own imagination—but is almost certain to solidify as sober fact before many years have passed. Thus it was with the radio that could be held in the palm of one hand, and the "fountain-pen radio" to be clipped inside the pocket, which the "rice-grain" tube made possible almost before the laughter induced by the gag had subsided.

And as Christmas approaches every year, Gernsback really has fun—producing a unique greeting card to send to his subscribers. This takes the form of a miniature magazine which guys, in title, make-up and contents—including advertisements—a well-known American publication. Hence "Harpy's Bizarre," "Jollier's—The Notional Weakly," "Like" (**Look**), "Popular Neckanics" ("written so you can't understand it"), "Radiocracy" (which burlesqued his own journal for a change), and others that have appeared through recent years. Sometimes they have

ARTHUR C. CLARKE examines the

# SPACESHIPS OF FICTION

Years before he became one of Britain's leading protagonists of astronautics, Arthur C. Clarke (**FR**, Apr-May '47) was an assiduous student of science fiction, and particularly of interplanetary stories. Smith's "Skylark" series, John W. Campbell's **Amazing Quarterly** novels, **Wonder's** *Interplanetary Issues*, all helped to quicken his vast enthusiasm for the idea of space-travel. Now, in between his voluntary work as a Councillor and lecturer for the British Interplanetary Society, his duties as an assistant editor of **Science Abstracts**, and his contributions to various technical magazines, he writes an occasional science fiction story, and tells his friends all about it long before it appears in print. (Not so many of them know about the astronomical text-book he recently completed, which will be published shortly.)

On April 1st—he was the first to see the joke—he made a handsome concession to those BIS members who mix their study of astronautics with science fiction reading (most of them do, but not all will admit it), by lecturing in his usual light-hearted style on the fact and fiction of space-travel. Having first made acknowledgments to Professor J. O. Bailey, author of "Pilgrims Through Space and Time" (**FR**, Oct.-Nov. '47), and to Miss Marjorie Nicolson, studious collector of "Voyages to the Moon" (**S-FR**, Autumn '49), as well as to various friends whose libraries he had invaded, he proceeded to trace the origins of the spaceship in its various literary forms back to the days of Lucian (A.D. 160), while he illustrated them with a colourful array of slides he had prepared, largely from a treasured collection of fantasy magazines.

Avoiding any attempt at historical sequence, since he was mainly concerned with techniques, Clarke divided his specimens into two main groups: mechanistic and non-mechanistic. In the first group he placed stories in which some engine or other technical device was used to bridge space; in the

second, those in which dreams, supernatural intervention, psychic forces and the like were invoked. Although most of the very earliest works (e.g., Kepler's "Somnium") fell into the second category, he found that some of the best stories of our age did likewise. The notion that a mind or even a body might travel to other worlds faster than the speed of light is to be found, for instance in Stapledon's "Star Maker" ('37), C. S. Lewis' "Perelandra" ('44), David Lindsay's "A Voyage to Arcturus" ('20), and the exploits of John Carter as related by Edgar Rice Burroughs.

Before the age of science, such paraphysical means of conveyance seemed as plausible as any other: an air-borne broomstick would have been less surprising to onlookers than a Tiger Moth chugging across the sky. When a modern writer uses such means, he is not being lazy; he may have good reason for his choice, especially in a story of cosmic scope in which the speed of light must still hold good. Some of the most thoughtful of recent authors have suggested that in the long run the mechanical methods will be superseded by the paraphysical, as in Jack Williamson's "The Humanoids" (**S-FR**, Winter '49-50). If Dr. Rhine's latest work is any indication of possible developments in the field of astronautics, Kepler and his demon carriers may have the last laugh.

## CYRANO'S RAM-JET

Among natural, as distinct from supernatural, forces used by other space-voyagers were: wind (Lucian's "True History"), birds (Godwin's "Man in the Moone"), evaporation (Cyrano de Bergerac's vials of dew), and an Earth-grazing comet (Verne's "Hector Servadac"). With the development of the scientific method, however, writers went to greater pains to introduce plausibility and the first primitive spaceships began to appear in literature. To Cyrano goes the credit for first applying the rocket to space-travel and for inventing the ram-jet. Having

got no further than Canada on his bottles of dew, he took off for the Moon in a flying chariot festooned with fire-crackers, without regard for mass-ratios and exhaust velocities. But his last attempt at interplanetary flight, in a box propelled by air heated with the aid of burning glasses, in spite of his misunderstanding the principles involved showed that he at least realised the thrust would fall off with altitude.

With the discovery of the non-mechanical forces of electricity and magnetism, new possibilities were opened up, but few writers took advantage of them—apart from Cyrano, who tried everything once, including a lodestone which attracted an iron chariot, Swift's flying island of Laputa, four and a half miles in diameter, was also propelled by an enormous lodestone, although forever Earth-bound. And if "The Conquest of the Moon," by Andre Laurie (1894), in which an iron mountain was turned into a vast electro-magnet for the purpose of pulling the Moon down to Earth, hardly ranks as an interplanetary voyage, it is certainly a spectacular case of the mountain coming to Mahomet.

Towards the end of the 18th century, writers became more cautious in describing their subtle devices for space-flight, partly because the public was educated enough to see through their proposals, and partly because the invention of the balloon had turned attention towards navigation of the atmosphere rather than remoter regions. The 19th century was well under way before the interplanetary story got into its stride again; but it has steadily proliferated until, now, few corners of the cosmos remain unexplored. In the last century, too, the types of propulsion still used in fiction began to establish themselves. These fall into three main classes: the projectile, anti-gravity, and the rocket.

The idea of the space-gun did not, as so many believe, originate with Jules Verne in his famous story of the Baltimore Gun Club's lunar project. The conception first appeared in print as early as 1728 in "A Trip to the Moon," by Murtagh McDermot, who travelled outwards by rocket after the style of Cyrano but came back in true Verne fashion after inducing the Selenites to dig a great hole containing seven thousand barrels of gun-powder. In this he designed "to place

myself in the Middle of ten wooden Vessels, placed one within another, with the Outer-most strongly hooped with Iron, to prevent its breaking . . . which I know will raise me to the Top of the Atmosphere . . . But before I blow myself up, I'll provide myself with a large pair of Wings . . . by the help of which I will fly down to the Earth."

So much of Verne's "From Earth to the Moon" (1865) is facetiously written that it is difficult to judge how seriously he took the idea of his mammoth cannon; though he went to much trouble to check his facts and the ballistics of the projectile were worked out by his brother-in-law, a professor of mathematics. Probably he believed that if such a gun could be built it might be capable of getting the projectile to its destination, but it is doubtful that he seriously imagined the occupants surviving the shock of take-off. Willy Ley, in his "Rockets and Space-Travel," shows that not only would the initial acceleration of 40,000 gravities have converted the occupants to a nasty smear in a few microseconds, but the projectile itself would have been destroyed before leaving the barrel owing to the air in its path. None the less, Verne's ranks as the first space-vessel to be scientifically conceived; it had hydraulic shock-absorbers, air-conditioning plant, padded walls with deep-set windows, and similar arrangements now commonplace in any well-ordered spaceship.

Scarcely less famous is the space-gun devised by Wells for his film, "Things to Come"; but a much more plausible use of the device, in conjunction with rocket propulsion, was made in the book, "Zero to Eighty" ('37), written by electrical engineer E. F. Northrup, under the improbable name of Akkad Pseudoman. Although disguised as fiction, this was a serious attempt to demonstrate the possibility of space-flight—and the only interplanetary romance ever to include a 40-page mathematical appendix. A practical scientist, the author realised that human beings could only survive the ordeal of being shot from a gun if the barrel was immensely long and the acceleration sustained for a much longer period. His gun, therefore, was an electro-magnetic one, stretching for 200 kilometres along Mt. Popocatepetl. Even this didn't give the full escape

velocity required, so the final impulse was provided by rockets.

Actually, travelling at five gravities acceleration, one would have to cover a distance of over 1,000 kilometres to reach escape velocity, and since any reasonable launching device could never measure more than a fraction of this length, the space-gun is recognised as impracticable in these enlightened days. But it does not follow that it will never be used, under ideal conditions. It may come into its own for the projection of fuel from a lunar base to spaceships orbiting the Moon or the Earth, where the required initial velocity is relatively small and no restrictions would be set by air resistance or acceleration.

### DEFIERS OF GRAVITY

Anti-gravity has long been a popular method of propulsion, dating back at least as far as 1827 and the publication of "A Voyage to the Moon," by Joseph Atterley—the pen-name of Professor George Tucker, under whom Edgar Allen Poe, creator of "Hans Pfaal" (1835), studied at Virginia University. Atterley's hero was fortunate enough to discover a metal with a tendency to fly away from Earth (how it managed to stay here, no-one ever explained), and by coating a vessel with it was able to make his voyage without further effort. In much the same way, the hero of Wells' "The First Men in the Moon" (1901) employed "cavorite," a substance impenetrable to gravity as a sheet of metal is to light\*.

Of course, anti-gravity won't work either—at least, in the way that the fiction writers make it. There is no fundamental objection to a substance which is repelled by gravity, and such a boon could be employed to lift a spaceship—but it would take work to pull it down again, to the same extent

\* If he never encountered Professor Tucker's book, it is possible that Wells knew of Kurt Lasswitz's "Auf Zwei Planeten," which has been popular in Germany since 1897 and was recently reprinted in an illustrated edition. One of the most important of all interplanetary romances, it includes, in addition to anti-gravity, the idea of explosive propulsion systems ("repulsors," as the Verein für Raumschiffahrt called its own early rockets), and—more surprisingly—of space-stations, all the technical details being worked out with great care by the author, who was a professor of mathematics at Jena.

as would be required to lift an equivalent mass of normal matter to the same altitude. Thus, the only way the travellers could return to Earth or land on another planet would be to jettison their anti-gravity material. An anti-gravity screen can also be ruled out of court on the ground that, if it could exist and was employed in the manner described by so many fictionists, one need only place it under a heavy object, let it rise to a considerable height, remove the screen and let the object fall—and obtain a source of perpetual energy. Or, as Willy Ley has put it, to step on to a sheet of such material fastened to the floor would require just as much effort as jumping clean off the Earth!

But an anti-gravity device which is driven by some appropriate source of energy, and does not therefore produce something for nothing, is not beyond the bounds of practicality. Those stories in which the release of atomic energy provides propulsion through an unspecified "space-drive" are not, consequently, implausible: the chances are that, one day, it will. For the moment, however, the rocket-drive holds sway, having gained in favour since Verne used the principle in "Round the Moon" (1870) to alter the orbit of his projectile. He clearly understood that the rocket was the only means of propulsion that would operate in space, but it never occurred to him to use it for the whole voyage.

As the work of Oberth and other German rocket experimenters became known, a new class of stories of painstaking accuracy evolved, some being little more than fictionalised text-books. The German writers themselves (Max Valier, Otto Willi Gail, etc.) were adept at this; and although their works, some of which appeared in translation in **Wonder Stories**, were of slight literary merit, they are still historically valuable. An instance of a story which had both entertainment value and convincing technical background: Laurence Manning's "The Wreck of the Asteroid" (**Wonder**, Dec. '32-Feb. '33). Manning, an early member of the American Interplanetary Society, once introduced the rocket exhaust equation, complete with root signs and awkward exponents, into a story—doubtless to the great annoyance of the compositor.

The almost universal acceptance of the rocket having left writers little

room for ingenuity, one spaceship is now very much like another; but very few of them bear much resemblance to the vessels which will have to be built for the first space-voyage. Mass-ratios and similar inconveniences do not bother the science fiction writer, much less the fantasy artist, who gaily runs a row of portholes the whole length of the hull and depicts thousand-ton rockets racing low over exotic landscapes without visible means of support. More probably, Clarke thinks, the space-ships of the next century will be so unlike our popular conceptions of to-day that we wouldn't recognise one if we saw it. If orbital refuelling techniques are developed as expected, the vessels designed for true interplanetary flight will never land on any world or even enter an atmosphere, and so will have no streamlining or control surfaces. Their natural shape would be spherical; but if the necessity for atomic shielding rules this out, a dumb-bell shape might be adopted, enabling the radio-active plant to be placed well away from the crew's living quarters†.

### THE MAN-MADE MOON

The idea of the space-station has attracted very few writers, probably because it is still comparatively novel. But we may expect increasing attention to be paid to this theme in the near future; and when the first orbital rockets are set up it may well become, for a while, one of the main preoccupations of contemporary science fiction. Although the idea was first advanced, as a serious proposition, by von Pirquet and Noordung in the '20's, at least one story broached the subject as long ago as 1870. In Edward Everett Hale's "The Brick Moon," some young men decided that it would be of great assistance to navigation if the Earth had a second moon, and so they set about to construct one‡. The artificial satellite was to be projected upwards by the expedient of releasing it at the required speed from the rim of an enormous rotating wheel. The tale derived its excitement from the unfortunate event

that the brick moon, in which the workmen constructing it had their lodgings, broke loose too soon and was cast into space with them as unwilling passengers complete with their own atmosphere!

What will happen to the interplanetary story when space-travel actually begins? Will it become extinct? A test case, Clarke points out, has already risen in connection with atomic power. Five years ago, the first release of nuclear energy was still being anticipated in fiction, where it is yet a familiar subject. Similarly, when space-travel is achieved, the frontier will merely shift outwards, and we can rely on the ingenuity of the science fiction writer to keep always a few jumps ahead of history, especially with so much more material on which to base his forecasts. Without some foundation of reality science fiction would be impossible; therefore, exact knowledge is the friend, not the enemy, of imagination. It was only possible to write stories about the Martians when science had discovered that a certain moving point of light was a world. By the time science has proved or disproved the existence of the Martians, it will have provided hundreds of other interesting and less accessible worlds for authors to base their speculations upon.

Even if a time should come at last when all the cosmos has been explored and there are no more universes to beckon men across infinity, our remote descendants may still enjoy the interplanetary theme—by looking back wistfully to the splendid, dangerous ages when the frontiers were driven outwards across space, when no-one knew what marvel or terror the returning ship might bring, and when, for good or ill, the barriers set between the peoples of the Universe were irrevocably breached. With all things achieved, all knowledge safely harvested, what more will there be for them to do than to go back into history and live again the great adventures of their remote and legendary past?

Yet we have the better bargain—all these things lie ahead of us. Some of them, at least, we shall live to see.

†See "The Shape of Ships to Come," by Arthur C. Clarke, B.Sc. *New Worlds*, No. 4.

‡This also is a surprisingly modern idea. It was put forward quite recently by Dr. Sadler, Superintendent of the Nautical Almanac Office, in an address to the Royal Astronomical Association.

Coming in SCIENCE-FANTASY  
**OLAF STAPLEDON,**  
 Master of Fantasy

# The Spell of Merritt

By ARTHUR F. HILLMAN

Cast over the years like the threads of a glittering web, the exotic fantasies of Abraham Merritt now span a whole generation of readers. It was in 1917 that the appearance of his short story, "Through the Dragon Glass," in **All-Story Weekly** opened his career as a fantasy writer; yet time has not lessened his spell. Rather, it would seem to have strengthened it; for the continued demand among new devotees for his noted "classics," all of which have been reprinted several times already\*, has resulted in the launching of a bi-monthly publication bearing his name to cater specially for those who have not yet enjoyed the whole of his output. A collection of his surviving literary fragments, recently published in a popular pocket-book series†, and a Memorial Edition of "The Ship of Ishtar," are other indications of his having acquired an increasing posthumous following, much as Lovecraft has done of recent years.

And, just as the name of Lovecraft is associated with **Weird Tales**, so is that of Merritt inseparably linked with **Argosy** of the early '20's, and the Munsey magazines. Among the circle of notable fantasy writers of that era (including such as Edgar Rice Burroughs, Ray Cummings, J. U. Giesy, Homer Eon Flint), A. Merritt was not only the most popular at the time but has continued to find favour long after others have been forgotten. All through the '30's, fresh converts to science-fantasy who sampled his tales constantly clamoured for more; and when, in '39-40, the Munsey organisation gave a new lease of life to the time-honoured

classics through **Famous Fantastic Mysteries** and **Fantastic Novels**, it was Merritt's work on which they drew most generously to lure and hold the seeker after such treasures as "The Moon Pool" and "The Metal Monster." And, the advance of story technique notwithstanding, his work still proved as enthralling as it had done twenty years before.

The first short tales that preceded his most successful novels gave evidence of an exceptional ability to weave the eerie atmosphere which has captivated so many lovers of fantastic fiction. Following "Through the Dragon Glass" (**All-Story** 24/11/17), which infused all the legendary colour of ancient China in an account of a magical mirror, came "The People of the Pit" (5/1/18), which in spite of its brevity achieved a tremendous effect. The picture of a man padding on bleeding hands and feet up a gigantic stairway, winding mile after mile, relentlessly pursued by the nightmarish remnants of an ancient race, is one that has remained indelible in the memory of Merritt fans. Conveyed in a style of writing that wasted not a single word, its impact on the uninitiated reader is breathtaking.

It was in his next and most famous work that he reached the height of his imaginative power. "The Moon Pool" (22/6/18), which ranks as one of the finest weird tales ever written, tells of a strange Dweller in the depth of an island pool which rises to the surface when the moon's rays pour down upon it; and the somnolent splendour and brooding mystery of the ancient South Seas locale are skillfully transmitted to a story which, artistically, is perfect. It is hardly surprising that the sequel which succeeded it, "The Conquest of the Moon Pool," a six-part serial (commencing 15/2/19), was received with conflicting feelings by his most ardent readers; for although he had continued the theme of "The Moon Pool," the ex-

\*Notably in bound book form (see subsequent footnotes), in **Famous Fantastic Mysteries** and **Fantastic Novels**, and in the **Avon Murder Mystery** and **Pocket Book Series**.

†**A. Merritt's Fantasy Magazine** (see "Among the Magazines.")

‡**"The Fox Woman and Other Stories"** (Avon, New York).

tended narrative passed beyond the boundaries of weird fiction into the realm of strict fantasy.

One of the canons of a good weird story is that the atmosphere—which includes any alien entities it features—should dominate the situation, rather than the human characters it involves. Merritt violated this principle in his sequel by etching his human characters, Larry O'Keefe, the slightly saccharine Lakla, and the evilly fascinating Yolara, with as much force as their almost incredible surroundings; and the mysterious character of the Dweller receded somewhat into the background. This caused the weird-tale coterie among his followers to rate the sequel as inferior to the original: for example, H. P. Lovecraft, in a list of his favourite weird stories in **The Fantasy Fan** (Oct. '34), stipulated the original novelette version of "The Moon Pool" as one of them\*.

Yet "The Conquest of the Moon Pool" represented a great step forward for Merritt. The longer form allowed room for sustained splendour of settings and swift clash of action, while still retaining the imaginative conception and convincing treatment which had been evident in his shorter pieces, resulting in a fantasy novel whose characters and bizarre creations lived. Since their first printing "The Moon Pool" and its sequel have seen frequent publication through the years, with no diminution of popularity, their combined qualities of utter strangeness and plausibility, plus human interest, finding favour alike with the general reader and the inveterate fantasy fan.

The last Merritt piece to appear in **All-Story** before it merged with **Argosy** was "Three Lines of Old French" (9/8/19), a delicate tale of an idyllic romance that spurned the barriers of time. The welding of the magazine with **Argosy** brought fresh impetus to his pen, and the opening of an eight-part serial entitled "The Metal Monster" (7/8/20). The author himself confessed that this story contained "some of my best and some of my worst writing." Certainly, concerned as it is with an isolated race of metallic intelligences governed by a Metal Em-



**A. MERRITT**—from a sketch by Neil Austin for **Famous Fantastic Mysteries**. A descendant of Fenimore Cooper, Merritt was born at Beverly, New Jersey, in January 1884, his parents being Quaker folk who later moved to Philadelphia. After studying law he became, at 18, a newspaper reporter; then he spent a year in Central America, where he hunted treasure in Yucatan and penetrated the ancient Mayan city of Tulum. Returning home, he resumed his newspaper career on the **Philadelphia Inquirer**, running the gamut of murders, executions and politics until he became Night City Editor. At 28 he moved to New York to become Assistant Editor of **The American Weekly**, and in '37 he succeeded Morrill Goddard as Editor. It was during that period he wrote the short stories and novels which made him famous, weaving into them much of what he had learned on periodical jaunts into Central America of archaeology and folklore, and drawing on his store of reference books on demonology and magic, astronomy and botany. He kept a strange garden of rare plants, and a key of twenty acres on the West Coast of Florida, where he died of a heart attack in August '43, leaving a wife and daughter.

peror, its appeal is more limited than his earlier work; it is fantasy reduced to its rarest, most potent ingredients, too heady a draught for some. Again, Merritt splashes his colour with a lavish hand, and as the reader turns the pages he plunges from one gorgeous panorama to another.

\*The book version of "The Moon Pool" (Putnam, New York, '19) comprises the two stories made into one. Like other Merritt novels, it is a slightly abbreviated re-write of the original serial story.

Merritt was never a prolific or consistent writer, and it was three years before his next story appeared. "The Face in the Abyss" (8/9/23)† was actually the prelude to a later novel, "The Snake Mother"; but the novelette itself, with its account of a lost civilisation and strange alien gods, proved a fascinating story. Here, too, were signs of a fresh trend in Merritt's writing. Where before his style had an easy, flowing rhythm, it began now to tighten up, become concentrated. The beautiful descriptive remained, but his imagery became clear-cut; instead of following the old, relaxed school, he drew his pictures with a knife-edged sharpness. And with "The Ship of Ishtar" (comm. 8/11/24)‡ he reached the culminating point of his talents as a writer.

Succeeding novels, such as "The Snake Mother" and "Dwellers in the Mirage," seriously challenge it for pride of place; but to me this six-part serial remains the finest example of Merritt's artistry. Its plot is not as complex as in other cases, but its strands are woven with superb delicacy; the story of the strange ship sailing on a timeless sea, a tiny craft whose web of enchantment enmeshes a present-day adventurer, is alive with vivid action. The characters of Kenton, the lovely Sharane and the menacing black priest, Klaneth, are among the best that Merritt has created; while the setting of the Ship, manned by slaves and overseer, priests and maids, forever on its voyage to an unknown destination, forms a perfect background. The briefer style is used with telling effect: each scene is a polished cameo, a word-picture photographed with Technicolor precision. The result is an adventure novel transmuted by Merritt's unrivalled gift of imagination into fantasy of the highest order.

"The Woman of the Wood," his only contribution to *Weird Tales* (Aug. '26), was a short story which caused a minor sensation even among the case-hardened initiates of this magazine; after which, in *Argosy-All-Story*, came "Seven Footprints to Satan" (comm. 2/7/27)\*. A melodramatic tale of a master criminal, this does not properly rank as fantasy, yet Merritt's flair for

descriptive and eerie atmosphere lifted it into the category of a best-seller which Hollywood later transferred to the screen. With "The Snake Mother," a seven-part serial, (*Argosy*, comm. 25/10/30), he returned to the field of pure fantasy, and to the strange legends he had only hinted at in "The Face in the Abyss." Packed into these effulgent pages are facets of imagery perhaps more amazing than anything he had attempted before. Kon the Spider-Man; the Dream Makers, with their webs of unearthly beauty; the Lord of Fools and the Lord of Evil; the all-wise, inhuman Snake Mother herself—all are rare tools from which Merritt fashioned a novel of startling depth and uncanny lustre.

"Dwellers in the Mirage," another six-part serial (comm. 23/1/32)‡, is regarded by his admirers as the last of the truly colourful canvases which have made him great as a fantasy writer. It is, truly, not one of the least. In his picturesque descriptions of the Lake of Ghosts, the Little People and the octopus-like Khalk'ru the same fertile imagination is evident; in the unfolding of the tale of another lost race, the writing has not lessened in effect. The characterisations are unusually strong, particularly that of Lur the Witch-Woman; and with its fast, adventurous sweep, the story is one which appeals even to the non-fantasy reader. For its first appearance, a happy ending was substituted for his own against the author's wishes, but later printings had the original tragic conclusion which gives it an added power of melancholy.

Two more Merritt novels had their original, serial presentation in *Argosy* before the demand for his work started this magazine on the reprinting process continued by *FFM* and *FN*. "Burn, Witch, Burn!" (comm. 22/10/32)‡, an intriguing tale of modern witchcraft in which the souls of the gross Madame Mandilip's victims are imprisoned in tiny, lifelike dolls, was also turned into a film, "The Devil Doll," starring Lionel Barrymore. "Creep, Shadow!" (8/9/34)\*\*, another story of present-day sorcery, is hardly as successful, but both contain some of the most powerful ele-

†Liveright, New York, '32; Skeffington, London, '33.

‡Liveright, New York, '33; Methuen, London, '34.

\*\*Published in book form as "Creep, Shadow, Creep!" (Doubleday, New York, '34; Methuen, '35.

†Liveright, New York, '31.

‡Putnam, New York, '26.

\*Boni and Liveright, New York, '28; Richards, London.



ments of Merritt's writing, although not invested with the soaring fantasy of his earlier novels.

His original touch was also evident in two other short stories which, appearing originally in **Fantasy Magazine**, were presented by **Thrilling Wonder Stories**: "The Drone Man" (Aug. '36), and "Rhythm of the Spheres" (Oct. '36), otherwise "The Last Poet and the Robots." Apart from a few unfinished pieces, two of which—"The Fox Woman" and "The Black Wheel"—have been extended and completed by his disciple, Hannes Bok (**FR** Oct.-Nov. '47; Aug.-Sep. '48), nothing more of fantasy came from his pen; nor could we expect more. Never a hasty writer, his workaday duties encroached increasingly upon his time, and no economic necessities drove the spur to his imagination. So it is that practically the whole of his work shows the care and thought of a true literary craftsman.

However, while admitting his supre-

macy as a master of fantasy, it is as well to examine his faults as a writer; for it must be conceded that many readers are repelled by his stories. The richness of his colourful style is more than some can stomach, and the freedom of his vision has been held as distracting to those who are more concerned with plot. His plots are, in fact, noticeably repetitious in their fundamentals: the battle between good and evil, personified by gods or goddesses, is a constant theme; and the idea of dual identity, especially in the person of the hero, is present more than once. His style, too, is often curt to the point of brusqueness, contrasting uneasily with adjacent passages of vivid descriptive. Yet these defects fail to dim the glory of his genius as a narrator of marvellous tales of alien places and peoples; and so long as there are readers who revel in such stories there will be no end to the adulation of A. Merritt, Lord of Fantasy.

## HUGO GERNSBACK—continued from page 9

been full of his prophecies; for example, "Tame—The Weekly News-gabazine" presented "a feeble preview of the next 100 years—the first atomi-century." Dated 2045, it put the first atom-powered rocket to the Moon in 1972, World War III in '75, to be followed by world government. (The war, waged by Asia against the Western world, was won in six weeks by the Americans turning their giant Lunar mirrors on Hyderabad and vaporising the city.) By 2040, man had reached Venus.

Most of his forecasts, in this instance, Gernsback asked to be taken seriously, since "many of them are certain of realisation. If," he added, "in hundreds of (past) predictions I have recorded a . . . fair score of hits, I do not take any special degree of pride in the achievement. As a scientist, I **should** know how to evaluate the future . . . The only difference between (other scientists) and me is that I have never hesitated to stick out my neck."

Last Christmas, he was able to congratulate himself on having pioneered once more—this time, in the format he has adopted for his little 'gazines.' On the strength of **Quick**, the new vest-pocket-size news magazine, he produced "Quip," in the style of a "Special Mars

Number" which revived memories of halcyon **Amazing Stories** days and the creations of the "world-famous" Paul (**FR** Feb.-Mar. '49). It gave a 48-page account of the exploration of the planet Mars by "Grego Banshuck" and his crew, and of the life of the Martians, as depicted by Gernsback's long-service artist once beloved of s-f fans. One of the peculiar features of life on Mars: "There is, of course, no money, no such vicious, cancerous outgrowth as interest on money, no taxes. Consequently there is no such thing as business, as we know the term, because on Mars no one can make a profit . . . *Whatever is produced belongs to the race.*"

In this flight of fancy, as in others in the past, Hugo Gernsback revealed some of his own idealistic philosophy. Nor is it too fantastic a dream for him to make it work himself, when the spirit of goodwill is abroad. "QUIP," he reminded the reader elsewhere, "is an annual Christmas card of Hugo Gernsback's. Over 5,000 copies have been printed for the publisher's friends in and out of the radio, electronic and television industry. Please do not send money for extra copies—the booklet is NOT for sale. Requests for single copies . . . will be filled as long as the supply lasts."

# AND STILL THEY COME

## Old Tales for New Readers

Latest news to hearten British fans is that in consequence of the increasing success of **New Worlds** Nova Publications is to launch a second magazine, to be edited by Walter Gillings (see special announcement on pp. 20-21). This publication will present the material which would have appeared in **Fantasy**, as edited by Gillings, if it had been able to continue beyond the three issues which set a new standard for British science fiction, and which for the past two years has been lying idle awaiting a possible revival of the magazine. This includes stories by Arthur C. Clarke, J. M. Walsh, P. E. Cleator, John Russell Fearn, F. G. Rayer, Norman Lazenby, E. R. James, and several other authors whose interest in the field is certain to quicken in the light of this development, even if it has languished of late.

**Science-Fantasy**, which will also derive much interest from the best features of this **Review**, will therefore be tantamount to the revival of **Fantasy** for which fans have been hoping since its enforced suspension. It was just such a resumption that the sponsors of Nova Publications had in mind, when the project was first conceived, as a possible follow-up to the revival of **New Worlds** (**FR**, Feb.-Mar. '49). With the two magazines being edited separately and issued by the same organisation, it should be interesting to watch their progress. In fact, the publishers themselves anticipate some lively competition between them!

The first issue of the new Nova magazine will appear following the seventh issue of **New Worlds**, due at the end of May, which in addition to the sequel to John Brody's "World in Shadow" (No. 4), "The Dawn Breaks Red," will feature a new story by Peter Phillips, "Plagiarist"; "Quest," a tale of a derelict spaceship by F. G. Rayer; a highly original piece by J. W. Groves entitled "Robots Don't Bleed," and something quite out of the ordinary—even for him—"Martian's Fancy," by William F. Temple. The cover will

again be by Clothier, illustrating Brody's novelette.

Meanwhile, the issue of British reprints of the American magazines continues. Latest to appear here, at least up to the time this column went to press, is **Fantastic Novels**: a complete but undated reprint of the original U.S. edition of last November, featuring Charles B. Stilson's "Minos of Sardanés," is on sale at 1/-. Published by Thorpe & Porter, of Leicester, it comes from the same source as the British editions of **Super Science Stories** and **Weird Tales**, of which the latter continues to make its appearance at intervals. The Atlas reprint of **Thrilling Wonder** has also reached its second issue, dated May '50; and the publishers now anticipate regular publication for it. With prospects of **Startling** also continuing, and rumours of **Amazing** and **Fantastic Adventures** being reprinted here again shortly, there seems no cause for British s-f readers to complain—at least on the score of quantity.

### NO MORE NOSTALGIA

But we are still way behind America, where the continued glut of material in the book field seems to have given another fillip to the production of magazines vying for the fantasy fan's affections. There are still more new publications to report. First, **Fantastic Story Quarterly**, which plans to draw on the early issues of **Thrilling Wonder** and the earlier Gernsback publications, long since acquired by Standard Magazines, to bring to the new generation of s-f readers the stories whose titles older devotees associate with "the good old days"—or, at least, the latter part of that halcyon period. For instance, the first (Spring '50) issue features Edmond Hamilton's "The Hidden World," from the first (Fall '29) issue of **Science Wonder Quarterly**, along with two new stories. The cover and illustrations are also new, and there are 160 pages for 25c.

The magazine, according to Editor Sam Merwin, is an experiment, designed to ascertain if there are suffi-

cient readers to whom such material will prove as acceptable as it did in the days of its first presentation. If the success of **Famous Fantastic and Fantastic Novels** is an indicator, there seems no doubt about it—until one considers the limits imposed by questions of copyright, which will exclude many of the finest of the time-honoured pieces which appeared, for example, in **Amazing**. However, as an earnest of their confidence in the nostalgic power of the Gernsback products, the same publishers have also produced **Wonder Story Annual**, which appeared in February featuring more reprints from early **Wonders**—196 pages of them, at the same price. This, apparently, is to be a regular publication: if so, it will be the first **Annual** in the field ever to see more than a single issue.

Early in March, from Columbia Publications came **Future Fiction combined with Science Fiction Stories**, under the editorship of Robert W. Lowndes. This is a revival of two wartime magazines which, after starting separately in '39, were combined in '41, to revert to the title of **Science Fiction** before disappearing altogether in '43. First (May-June) issue of the new magazine features stories by George O. Smith, Murray Leinster, Frank B. Long, Lester del Rey, and others. With a cover by Earle Bergey, it has 96 pages and sells for only 15c.

And, having safely launched **Other Worlds**, Editor-Publisher Raymond A. Palmer (**S-FR**, Winter, '49-50) now promises to introduce, in June, a companion mag. called **Imagination**—for which title he gives thanks to Forrest J. Ackerman and his former fan-mag. Tentative contents of No. 1, at the time of going to press, included "Automaton," by A. E. van Vogt, "Forget-Me-Not," by William F. Temple, "Homeward Pilgrim," by Kris Neville, with other pieces by E. E. Evans, Charles R. Tanner, and Ackerman.

Finally comes news that the publishers of **Avon Fantasy Reader** (of which, incidentally, the twelfth issue should have appeared in January, but has not turned up as yet) will shortly issue a regular pulp magazine to feature science fiction. Titled **Out-of-This-World Adventures**, according to Editor Wollheim's preliminary announcement, it will first appear as a quarterly at 25c. for 128 pages, but bi-monthly publication is intended. Adventure and discovery on other worlds, and the impact

of interplanetary travel on our own, will be the keynote. No. 1 will carry a cover story specially written by Ray Cummings, "The Planet Smashers," with other tales by van Vogt, del Rey, William Tenn, and our own A. Bertram Chandler. Avon are also launching a cartoon magazine featuring s-f strips, with the title **Out of This World . . .**

#### ON THE HIGHER PLANE

To turn to finer things, it's good to see that **The Magazine of Fantasy**, announced in this column two issues ago, is to be a regular quarterly publication—one which has already dignified the field with contents that bear little resemblance to the general run of fantasy pulps. Following the first trial (Autumn '49) issue, which fully justified publisher Lawrence Spivak's claim to presenting "a superb cross-section of fantasy writing" by old and new masters, the second (Winter-Spring '50) number has appeared; and it continues to set an almost unbelievably high standard with new pieces by Bradbury, de Camp and Pratt, Margaret St. Clair and Damon Knight, as well as reprints by writers better known to **Collier's**, **New Yorker** and **Harper's** than to the s-f field, not to mention such oldsters as Anthony Hope and W. L. Alden. The title, too, has now been extended to **The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction**: and subscriptions are being taken, at \$4.00 for twelve issues. You should do something about it . . .

Ray Palmer's **Other Worlds** also continues to forge ahead, and to make amusing reading. The fourth (May '50) issue features a cover story by Eric Frank Russell, "Dear Devil"; a novella, "Colossus," by S. J. Byrne, and short stories by van Vogt, Raymond F. Jones, Forrest J. Ackerman, and others. In the March issue, Editor Palmer frankly admitted that some of his authors gave their stories without fee to help get the magazine started; and he had further candid comments to make on other mags. and their editors. Reiterating his aim to make **OW** representative of the whole field, he promised to strive for "a truly adult approach," while knocking **Amazing** for denying its readers the ability to think. At the same time, he offered a Henry Hasse tale as "an **Astounding** reject," another as "a direct steal out of **Thrilling Wonder**," and Malcolm Smith's cover as "a

Out in May:

# NEW WORLDS

Fiction of the Future

No. 7 1/6

featuring

The Dawn Breaks Red

JOHN BRODY

Plagiarist

PETER PHILLIPS

Martian's Fancy

WILLIAM F. TEMPLE

Robots Don't Bleed

J. W. GROVES

Quest

F. G. RAYER

Cover by Clothier

Have You Read No. 6?

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## NOVA PUBLICATIONS

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NOW, ON TO—

# Science-

Since *Fantasy Review* began, just over three years ago, its readers have constantly testified to the success with which it has fulfilled its original object—to inform and advise the devotee of science-fantasy who takes an intelligent interest in its past, present and future development. In addition to reflecting the increasing growth of the medium which has taken place in America during that period, it has also served to encourage the progress of science fiction in this country. In particular, the conception of the project which resulted in the re-birth of the British magazine *New Worlds*, at a time when conditions seemed to have stifled all such enterprises, may be traced to the influence of this journal.

It now becomes evident that the further success of the Nova Publications undertaking, in which I have been privileged to assist from the start, is inextricably involved with the future of *Science-Fantasy Review*, and vice versa. It was, until recently, intended that this journal should continue as an independent entity to guide and inform *Science-Fantasy*'s followers on both sides of the Atlantic, while extending its scope to embrace all spheres of interest impinging on this field. Such an extension has, indeed, proved vital to its maintenance thus far; for the fate which has overtaken its American contemporary has proved once more that the number of aficionados whose interest is confined within narrow limits is not sufficient to support a publication such as this on a subscription basis.

In spite of the encouraging appreciation which *S-FR* has received in all quarters to which it has had access, it is clear that only wider distribution can enable it to continue to fulfil its purpose among the larger circle of science-fantasy readers which it is, at the moment, unable to reach. At the same time, the increasing success of *New Worlds* has persuaded those who guide the destinies of Nova Publications that there is scope for a second British magazine of science-fantasy, to appear alternately with *New Worlds* and make its own individual appeal; and for this new publication my services as Editor are required. The next step in the development of *S-FR*—and of Nova Publications—is, therefore, as inevitable as it is desirable.

In July will emerge, under the Nova imprint, a new magazine with the title *SCIENCE-FANTASY*. It will comprise 96 pages, and will incorporate *Science-Fantasy Review*, partaking of all the best

# Fantasy

features of this journal in addition to presenting science-fiction and articles designed to appeal both to the general reader and the inveterate fantasy fan. *SCIENCE - FANTASY* incorporating *Science-Fantasy Review* will be on sale at 1/6 at all newsagents' and bookstalls where there is a demand for it, in the same way as *New Worlds*, and will appear regularly every three months.

If your subscription to *S-FR* has not yet expired, you will receive automatically as many issues of *SCIENCE-FANTASY* as the balance of your subscription allows at the increased price, after which you will be invited to renew your subscription through Nova Publications. Those whose subscriptions expire with this issue should subscribe to *SCIENCE-FANTASY* without delay, at the rates which appear in the announcement of Nova Publications on this page, or they should place a regular order with their newsagent.

This, then, is the last issue of *Science-Fantasy Review* to appear in this form. If it were the end of a journal which has been as pleasurable to edit as it has, by all accounts, proved acceptable to its readers, that fact would be regrettable, equally to me as to our subscribers. But its incorporation in a magazine whose greater circulation will ensure its continuance, and will enable me all the better to implement the policy of development I have always had in mind for this journal, is rather a matter for jubilation in which its supporters will share.

There may, we suspect, be some who will have doubts about the fusion of *S-FR*'s more esoteric features with those of a magazine mainly devoted to publishing science fiction; especially those readers who have urged us to ignore the requests of other subscribers for fiction. Can such a magazine cater for both types of reader and still give satisfaction? We think it can—and that is the task to which we shall set ourselves, without any qualms. The stories we shall publish will be of the highest standard (many of them will be those which would have appeared in *Fantasy*, had it continued), and we shall make a regular feature of articles and reviews which will be specifically attuned to the interests of our present nucleus of followers as well as to those which, we believe, are latent in the ordinary reader of science-fantasy—who is generally only too ready to have them awakened.

So—on to *SCIENCE-FANTASY*!  
THE EDITOR.

And in July—

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# SCIENCE- FANTASY

incorporating

SCIENCE - FANTASY  
REVIEW

Editor: Walter Gillings

ONE & SIXPENCE

featuring

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Black-out JOHN RUSSELL FEARN

The Cycle P. E. CLEATOR

Advent of the Entities E. R. JAMES

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## NOVA PUBLICATIONS

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## AMONG THE MAGAZINES—continued from page 19

combination of **Astounding's** astronomical covers and Paul's **Amazing** covers."

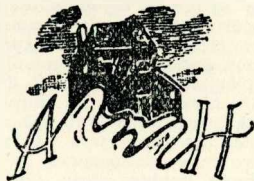
He even departed from editorial tradition so far as to recommend his readers to stories appearing in other magazines, and anticipated keen competition from **Amazing** on the strength of his knowledge of what was going on in its editorial sanctum. "Howard Browne," ran a footnote to a fan letter, "is making many, many changes. After all, Palmer aimed primarily at a top circulation, and quality be hanged. In **GW**, we . . . do want quality." To clinch the fan interest, he ran a really clever stunt: a story by Frank Patton, "Mahaffey's Mystery," whose setting was the recent World Science Fiction Convention at Cincinnati, and whose characters were well-known s-f authors and fans—including visiting British editor Ted (John) Carnell, who apparently addresses everybody as "old chappie." The title refers to the local lady-fan, Bea Mahaffey, who Palmer promptly appointed to his staff and has since promoted to be his Managing Editor. He is also implementing his policy

of "giving amateur artists in the s-f field a break," without any disastrous results that can be observed so far.

Another recent starter, **A. Merritt's Fantasy Magazine**, looks likely to stay the course—and to give that excellent artist, Finlay, a good deal more work to do. A reader's column promptly reared its ugly head in the second (Feb.) issue, which featured a comparatively recent **Argosy** novel, "The Smoking Land," by George Challis (otherwise Max Brand, Frederick Faust, etc), with two shorts of older vintage: Victor Rousseau's "The Seal Maiden" and Merritt's "Three Lines of Old French"—enough, apparently, to justify the title of the new mag. The April number features "The Ninth Life," by Jack Mann, a novel of ancient Egypt with a distinct Haggardish cast, and a tale of voodoo by Theodore Roscoe, "The Little Doll Died." Oh, and a piece by A. Merritt, of course . . .

It only remains for me to wish **Science-Fantasy** long life and many thousands of contented readers.

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## About Books

By Herbert Hughes

# MR. PRATT'S ANALYSIS

Mr. Fletcher Pratt, who is known in his native U.S.A. as a naval historian and biographer of Napoleon as well as a newspaper writer on military matters, recently appeared in a new guise—as a book critic who, according to the **New York Times Book Review**, “is making an intensive study of fantasy-fiction and its influence on popular literary patterns.” He is, of course, no stranger to this subject. To a more select audience, he has been known for twenty years as an author of science-fiction who has also collaborated with several others (Irvin Lester, I. M. Stephens, Laurence Manning, Sprague de Camp). He is also a distinguished member of the Hydra Club\*, the New York organisation of professional science-fictionists to which such leading writers as Willy Ley, Theodore Sturgeon and Lester del Rey belong.

In short, Mr. Pratt is in a very good position to command a both respectful and respectable audience whenever he has anything to say about s-f's current offerings. Which he had, to the extent of almost three full pages, in an article on “Science Fiction and Fantasy—1949” in a recent issue of **The Saturday Review of Literature**, in which he examined no less than twenty-five titles which have been added to the field in the last twelve months or more. In the same issue, Robert A. Heinlein also reviewed that “Baedeker of the Solar System,” Bonestell & Ley's “The Conquest of Space” (**S-FR**, Winter '49-50), from which the Bonestell view of Mars from Deimos was adapted as a two-colour cover. Further, the letter page carried references to s-f, following upon Editor Norman Cousins' leading article in a previous issue suggesting a plot for a novel; the deliberate hoodwinking of the world by scientists, in the

\*Where he was encountered by a **New Yorker** guest at its annual party, last January, as “a small bearded man smoking a huge cigar (and) addressing himself in authoritative tones to a spellbound youngster in a black sweater . . . ‘Who was that?’ I asked the youth. ‘Fletcher Pratt,’ he said. ‘He's wonderful. Kind of the dean of science fiction. He lives with marmosets’ . . . ”

form of an impending “catastrophe,” in order to avert war on Earth. Of course, it had been done already, and twice only lately: in “The Flying Saucer” (**FR**, Dec. '48-Jan. '49), now published in America, and in “The Big Eye” (see Book Reviews, this issue).

Mr. Pratt introduced his subject in now familiar fashion, by harking back to the end of the war when “something new came over the literary horizon (in the shape of) a series of books whose jackets bore pictures of Adonis-like youths clad in airtight coveralls surmounted by glass bubbles from which stubby radio aerials projected. They were usually accompanied by . . . a damsel wearing an ornamented bra, a pair of shorts and boots halfway up the calf. Both were commonly armed with pistols of strange design, and not infrequently accompanied by monsters. They are the people of space, refugees from the pulps . . . ” And the books, as he explained, were the productions of the specialist fantasy publishers, which older houses were surprised to discover sold to a public whose devotion to the field was unbounded, and which, far from ending up as remainders, increased in value the longer they took to sell out.

### ESCAPE FOR PSYCHIATRISTS

Now, with at least seven of the big publishing concerns paying attention to the medium, Mr. Pratt thinks the oft-repeated prediction concerning its challenge to the detective story as the dominant form of escape literature “measurably nearer realisation.” The fact that the possibilities of variation in the whodunit have been exhausted, plus the prevailing interest in atom-smashers and jet-planes and “the fascination of new frontiers for a world where there are no more unknowns to be explored,” is sufficient to explain the trend to his satisfaction; and in view of the Ley-Bonestell volume, which in itself is indicative of the laymen's curiosity about such matters, he is not surprised that “no less than eight of this year's crop of s-f novels are what is known in the trade as ‘space operas’—books built round the theme of inter-planetary travel.”

Comparing these works, he finds that all but two of them advance the theory "that what lies beyond the heavens is war—against races formidably armed and so utterly alien to our own thought patterns that no compromise with them is possible. (But) this no doubt represents less a judgment than a convention; five of the eight books mentioned are rewrites and extensions of stories which have already appeared in the pulps, whose readers respond only to shock treatment." More significant, he thinks, is the fact that all but one of the eight stories have interstellar rather than interplanetary settings. In explaining the common pulp device of an "overdrive" or "spacewarp," which conveniently ignores what the mathematicians have to say about the effects of velocity on mass, he pointed out that "the writers who use (it) are evidently producing pure fantasy, escape literature. It may also be significant that psychiatrists are among the leading devotees of science fiction, and almost invariably they take theirs in the form of space opera."

Having mentioned other generally accepted conventions (e.g., telepathy, tractor and pressor beams, contraterrene matter) which occur in these and two time-travel tales also currently available, he went on: "Like the overdrive and the ability of the heroes . . . to invent on the spur of the moment whatever technical device is necessary for victory over the alien monstrosities, these conventional aperturances patently represent wish-fulfilment dreams. So does the whole story in the straight fantasy, without any scientific element, of L. Ron Hubbard's 'Triton' (S-FR, Autumn '49), which is, by the way, about as bad a pure fairy tale as the year has produced. But one of the most important features of the whole . . . literature is that it has no general convention in favour of wish-fulfilment or of escape either. If the fantasy element be sufficient to entertain the reader, the author is permitted to employ any thematic material he desires for the discussion of any subject that falls upon his attention. Thus even among the strict space operas there is often some fairly serious consideration of ideas underlying the pulp approach and the wild adventures . . .

"But if the use of science-fiction-fantasy has enabled light writers occasionally to catch a heavy idea by the tail without damage either to the

reader's power of concentration or his ego, it has also placed in the hands of the serious writer an unsurpassed weapon for attacking in fictive form matters hitherto reserved for more ponderous treatment. It is important, and not alone because of wider readership; for fiction possesses the capacity . . . of demonstrating the impact of ideas on the living individual. It is no accident that two of the novels rated among the most distinguished of the year by general critical standards conform very strictly to the definition of science fiction, and another to the requirements of pure fantasy."

Here he referred to George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-Four" (S-FR, Autumn '49), the framework of which he finds of a type long familiar to s-f readers; and while it differs from the pulp stories in emotional intensity, characterisation and sheer good writing, he recognises in it the same devices to achieve the suspension of disbelief. Similarly, the concept and basic device of George R. Stewart's "Earth Abides" (Random House, New York: \$3.00), which presents the problems of the civilised individual in a world decimated by disease, are almost exactly reproduced in Eando Binder's "Lords of Creation" (Prime Press, Philadelphia: \$3.00), which originally appeared in *Argosy*, as well as in two stories by Isaac Asimov and Nelson Bond appearing in current anthologies. Although the purposes of the four stories are far apart, "in all four the remote future is . . . a new stone age and . . . the decay has come about through war and epidemic." And there is no question, says Mr. Pratt, but that Bond's "Pilgrimage" in "The Thirty-First of February" (S-FR, Autumn '49) is the best short story, and Stewart's "Earth Abides" probably the best book, of all last year's s-f crop.

#### POLITICAL POINTER

Analysing further, he noted that S. Fowler Wright's "The World Below" (Shasta, Chicago: \$3.50) was the only book of the year "which exhibits the slightest faith in democracy as an operable system for the future . . . and the democracy is of a very peculiar sort, laid in a future so remote that man has evolved into several different species, some of them extremely repulsive. The other authors do not find Mr. Orwell's horrible totalitarianism in the future, except among alien and

unpleasant races, but they have been unable to conceive of a form of democratic government that will function for some two billion people on Earth, to say nothing of the populations of remoter planets. This may only mean that the writers of fantasy are not political thinkers, or that the old aristocratic tradition of fiction still retains a firm grasp on the collective imagination. But it may also mean that there is some political thinking to be done. The writers in this form are very quick to seize any new idea going around; there are hardly enough in circulation to serve as starting points for stories as it is."

As evidence of this, he instanced three fantasy novels of '49 which have the same supernatural theme: Nelson Bond's "Exiles of Time" (Prime: \$2.50), Charles Williams' "Many Dimensions" (Pellegrini, New York: \$3.00), and Donald Wandrei's "The Web of Easter Island" (FR, Dec. '48-Jan. '49). Emphasising that Williams' novel is in a different category from Bond's pulp-type adventure story—"the third of the really distinguished novels of the year"—and observing that Wandrei's "Web" is dedicated to its inspirator, Lovecraft, he added: "Mr. Wandrei might have spared himself the trouble; not only is it a far better story as story than anything Lovecraft ever produced, but it goes straight as a string from beginning to destination, without any of the long passages of undigested description and piled adjectives in which Lovecraft . . . indulged."

To draw a comparison between the old school of s-f writing and the more recent products, Mr. Pratt singled out

Olaf Stapledon's "Worlds of Wonder" (Fantasy Publishing Co., Los Angeles: \$3.00), and Dr. David H. Keller's "The Homunculus" (Prime: \$2.50) and "Life Everlasting" (FR, Jun.-Jul. '48). Of Stapledon's stories he says that their "delicate mysticism is hard to extract because (they) are so wordy and complicated"; while Dr. Keller's "will be eagerly read by aficionados because they are period pieces and as such neglected by non-specialists, to whom the excellence of the scientific ideas will fail to compensate for the stilted dialogue and the lacunæ in plotting.

"In fact," he summed up, "if any one thing emerges from this year's group, it is that the boys who began by writing fantasy fiction are now writing fiction. The scientific or fantastic element is still present, but the problems have become human problems caused by the advance of physical science, which is fundamentally the major problem besetting the world to-day. Much science-fiction-fantasy writing is light, and sometimes the ideas involved will not bear a great deal of weight. But with the exception of the Stapledon volume, there is not one book in the group which fails to have narrative drive, people moving around, and things happening to them. The specialist s-f writers learned that in the pulps; they have been forced to learn the other things because people who knew them already, like Orwell, Stewart and Charles Williams, have entered the competition. Now they are reaching out beyond the specialist public to bring to an increasing number of general readers an appreciation of the most lively form of fiction to-day."

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## Walter Gillings' FANTASIA—Continued from page 5

Edgar Rice Burroughs (FR, Dec. '48-Jan. '49) died at Tarzana, aged 74 . . . . Robert L. Farnsworth, U.S. Rocket Society king-pin, running for Congress . . . World Citizen No. 1 Garry H. Davis, writing in **Doubt**, recalled that "Charles Fort's name was introduced to me many years ago in the pages of (**Astounding Stories**) which was a constant companion" . . . Olaf Stapledon's judgment on science fiction, in letter to **Operation Fantast**: "I find myself in a hole about (it). I never was a fan of it, and read very little of it. I recognise it as a legitimate means of expression, . . . think it has a future. But it is also rather dangerous, because it may so easily be indulged in as mere escapism" . . . Issuing invitation to "Norwescon," Eighth World S-F Convention, Chairman John de Courcy explained: "Broadly, (its) purpose is to demonstrate that s-f is an integral part of our civilisation; that without it, our progress would be materially retarded" . . . Wailed Rober Bloch, in **Bloomington News-Letter**: "Every once in a while I make an extra effort to turn out a yarn suitable for adult readership, and just as I indulge in a little self-congratulation . . . up pops a mental picture of an army of goons wearing beanies, false beards and Buck Rogers blasters. Then I go into the washroom and have a good cry" . . .



## Book Reviews

# The Mixture As Before

**FROM OFF THIS WORLD**, edited by Leo Margulies & Oscar J. Friend. Merlin, New York. \$2.95.

Reviewed by **Walter Gillings**

When I had ceased to ponder the mystery of how the typographer had curved the letters on the title-page of this volume, I began to examine the contents. Having smiled a smile of recognition, as one does when one encounters old friends across the street, I could not help recalling that when, two years before the war came to stunt its already uncertain growth, I contrived to launch the first British magazine devoted to this medium, it was not without misgivings that I began to introduce into **Tales of Wonder** reprints of stories which had appeared much earlier in **Amazing** and **Wonder Stories**. I had hoped that, few as they were, our British writers would suffice to regale our readers with science fiction they could appreciate, whether or not they were accustomed to such unorthodox fare. But although several new writers did develop, I found it difficult to get enough good stories based on ideas which could be easily assimilated by the ordinary reader yet which might still be acceptable to the jaded fantasy fan.

So I accepted only too readily the assistance of such favourites as Dr. David H. Keller, Edmond Hamilton, Murray Leinster, Jack Williamson and others, in my search for stories of mellow vintage than those appearing in the U.S. magazines of the time. Hence the reappearance of such "classics" as "Stenographer's Hands" (in No. 2), "The Comet Doom" (Autumn '39), "The Mad Planet" (Spring '39), and several of the **Wonder** stories of Clark Ashton Smith and our own John Beynon Harris, which were admirably suited to the larger audience we were trying to attract to s-f in these isles. But by using such material (which, with the war distracting our own writers, became an absolute necessity), I brought down on my unsuspecting head the wrath of the Elders—those stalwart fans who had not only read the U.S. magazines as religiously as I

since the days of Gernsback's seed-sowing, but had kept and filed away the best, if not all, of their contents to re-read and re-read again. They didn't want these fusty reprints; they were no downy initiates, these British grey-beards of fantasy. The only stories they hadn't read were those that had yet to be written—unless it were the old **Argosy** tales which **Amazing** hadn't reprinted, in spite of oft-repeated demands through the years.

This was before the advent of **Famous Fantastic Mysteries** and **Fantastic Novels**, which brought those ancient, well-copyrighted classics back for a new generation of fans as well as for their elders; long before the **Avon Fantasy Reader**, which now scours the whole field for a still younger generation of readers—and, again, for those old devotees who have grown more tolerant of vintage tales whose flavour is worth reviving. It was before **British Reprint Editions of Astounding and Unknown**; before "The Best in Science Fiction," or any of the anthologies and collections. Even before **Startling Stories** and its "Hall of Fame" classics, here now assembled between hard covers jacketed by Finlay.

It was with somewhat mixed feelings, therefore, that I browsed through the 430 pages of this initial volume from the Merlin Press, which purports to present "The Gems of Science Fiction" as reprinted from the Gernsback **Wonder Stories** (for the greater part, anyway) by two of its subsequent editors. It was strange indeed to read in their Introduction that they had been assembled for re-reprinting largely to benefit that "large proportion of new readers (more recently) drawn to s-f (who have) found themselves caught in a bewildering world of space-lingo, of yet-to-be-discovered sciences, of words no dictionary has included to date. They, of course," we are told, "needed and (still) need indoctrination—indoctrination in the most fascinating study of prophetic learning ever made available to public and expert alike." In fact, we learn that "it was with this need for reader indoctrination in mind that

**Startling Stories**, back in '39, inaugurated in its first publication the policy of reprinting in every issue one important story-landmark from the s-f past."

And this is in the land of science-fiction, in Ackerman's **Imagination**, where Junior is reared on **Superman** and **Flash Gordon**; where, in the year that **Tales of Wonder** was born, the kids played with rocket-ships propelled by rubber bands, belonged to "Buck Rogers' Solar Scouts," and wore uniforms to match, interplanetary navigation helmets, toy rocket-pistols and all . . . Can it be that there is any necessity for indoctrination (fearsome word!) on the other side of the Pond? We had thought that there, if anywhere, science-fantasy reading was one of those things which just came naturally. American s-f editors, evidently, have their problems too.

We can, of course, appreciate the desirability, if not the actual necessity, for every s-f reader to understand the evolutionary background of this field whose history is as fascinating as any of the latest products it has to offer. Once more, the editors of this anthology give it a brief outline, while offering their volume as "a measuring stick of s-f progress." A generation of fans which has embraced Heinlein, van Vogt and Bradbury may, however, find it difficult to appreciate why some of its contents should have been selected, either in the first place or for presentation here, as "outstanding for

imaginative pioneering as much as for literary merit," which few of them display when judged by present-day standards in a medium which is "in the full flower of its first adult development."

None will dispute the inclusion of Clark Ashton Smith's "Singing Flame" stories (first reprinted, with general approval, in **Tales of Wonder**), or the "Tweel" tales of Stanley G. Weinbaum, except on the ground that they have been too much reprinted already, for all their undoubted merits. Some may admit the originality of concept displayed, at the time, by Benson Herbert's "The World Without," Arthur G. Stangland's "The Ancient Brain" and Louis D. Tucker's "The Cubic City." But apart from P. Schuyler Miller's "The Man from Mars," Edmond Hamilton's "The Man Who Evolved," and "The Eternal Man" of D. D. Sharp—three good men who have worn well through the years—the rest of the selection, judged apart from sentimental value, seems more likely to have qualified for the Hall of Fame on the strength of convenient length than any intrinsic worth.

There are only three which I had not read before, as far as I could remember, and they are those which appeared originally in the early days of **Thrilling Wonder**, I found them neither thrilling nor wonderful, and wished that their fame had been short-lived. As for Mr. Kuttner, thank goodness he has improved out of all recognition since the days of "When the Earth Lived."

## The Sage of Providence

**SOMETHING ABOUT CATS and Other Pieces** by H. P. Lovecraft, collected by August Derleth. Arkham House, Sauk City, Wis. \$3.00.

Reviewed by **Arthur F. Hillman**

The fantasy fan who does not belong to the coterie of Lovecraft worshippers may be somewhat disconcerted to encounter still further books dedicated to the Sage of Providence. Time and again his ghost would seem to have been laid to rest with due solemnity and finality, yet always his spirit wings its way back into the orbit of current production. Once it was thought that "Beyond the Wall of Sleep" (Arkham: '43), that magnificent companion volume to the still more admirable initial collection of his stories, "The

Outsider and Others" (Arkham: '39), had completed his resuscitation; yet with "Marginalia," in '44, the industrious August Derleth carried a step further the literary presentation of all that Lovecraft had conceived.

This melange of bits and pieces of his work, together with certain revisions he had made of the writings of others, seemed a little remote from the mainstream of Lovecraftiana. But the reception of the volume proved the insatiable curiosity of his followers concerning anything attaching to the life's work of their idol, and emboldened his Boswell to cast around for more evidence of his labours. One result was "The Lurker at the Threshold" (**FR**, Dec. '48-Jan. '49), a rather top-heavy structure which Mr. Derleth



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himself erected on two slight foundation stones left behind by the Master; and now we have another collection of fragments which, its compiler asserts, "is primarily a volume for the collector who insists upon comprehensiveness."

Despite the somewhat warning note in this description, however, the volume contains much that is worthwhile. Those who remember the **Weird Tales** of the late '20's and early '30's will not lightly dismiss any opportunity of encountering once more the stories of that period; and in "The Horror in the Burying Ground," by Hazel Heald, and "The Last Test" and "The Electric Executioner," by Adolphe de Castro, are found distinct evidence of Lovecraft's flair for revision. In these, as in "The Invisible Monster" and "Four O'Clock," by his former wife, Sonia H. Greene, are also well-shaped facets of the pattern of his own supernatural themes, making them all the more acceptable to his fans.

The title essay, in which the Sage discourses upon the superiority of cats over dogs, is cast in derisive vein with words of singular power, and will probably prove the most enjoyable item in the whole collection. Among the appreciations, that of Fritz Leiber, Jr. on "A Literary Copernicus" is outstanding: as he says, Lovecraft shifted the focus of dread from man and his world to the stars and the unplumbed depths of intergalactic space, and he elaborates on this theme most interestingly. In general, though, the poetry and articles are inferior to what has been published already under the same heading. In his efforts to unearth the whole of Lovecraft, Mr. Derleth has delved to the uttermost strata, and the minerals have run pretty thin. And in one respect, at least, it might have been best to leave certain matters buried.

I refer to the piece on "Lovecraft as I Knew Him,"\* by Mrs. Sonia Davis. Curious though many of the coterie must be concerning the circumstances of his marriage, I am sure that most would not want to pry into the details; and in her story of their life together the former Mrs. Lovecraft has left very little unrevealed. Her account of the way she provided for him and tried to "humanise" him, only to divorce him

\* Which originally appeared in **The Providence Journal**, Lovecraft's hometown paper.

when she failed, casts a pitiless light on what should, I believe, have remained discreetly veiled. One can imagine the blow to his own sensitivities if he were alive to read such an exposé; and in spite of Mrs. Davis' efforts to command the sympathies of her audience, one is left feeling much more sympathy for the man who is now so much less of the legendary, mysterious figure she predicted he would become.

Still, even if this book is perhaps the least of the links in the chain of Lovecraft's works, all his admirers should have it on their shelves. Apart from the forthcoming "Selected Letters," it represents what may well be the last of such collections to appear, however many reprints of his more ambitious pieces have yet to materialise in response to continued demands.

## The Honourable BEM

**FIRST LENSMAN**, by Edward E. Smith, Ph.D. Fantasy Press, Reading, Pa. \$3.00

Reviewed by **D. R. Smith**

Ever since his first interplanetary epic, "The Skylark of Space," set the pattern for such stories, the appearance of a new work by Dr. Edward E. Smith (**FR**, Apr.-May '48) has been considered a major event in science fiction. There are many writers who have surpassed, in actual quantity of words, this painstaking author of ten novels and a handful of short stories which have appeared over a period of twenty-two years; but few others can be said to have had such a great influence on such a loyal band of admiring readers. For these two decades his name has been a household word in this field, as much with that minority which condemn his stories as shallow and superficial as among the thousands who have fallen completely to his spell.

The appearance of "First Lensman" is particularly notable because it is the first Smith novel to be published in book form without having been presented earlier as a magazine serial. It is actually the second story in the "Lensmen" series, which started with "Triplanetary" (**FR**, Aug.-Sept. '48) and continues with "Galactic Patrol," "Grey Lensman," "Second Stage Lensman" and "Children of the Lens," the **Astounding Science Fiction** serials which are to see book presentation in due course. And it may well prove the best of its bunch, I fancy: partly because it is the most recently written—and Dr. Smith is always striving to improve his technique as a writer.

As usual, he gives us ample doses of his two most exhilarating ingredients: the battles in space, with the tremendous scientific weapons he has wielded

from the start, and the fascinating pictures of the alien life-forms of strange planets which are a more recent development of his work. He was among the first exponents of space opera to play with the idea that a Bug-Eyed Monster might really be a decent sort of creature at heart. Now he has gone further, and suggests that the BEM might have an inner personality and code of morals as monstrous to our conceptions as its outward shape yet still be a worthy citizen of the Galaxy. This, coupled with the fact that his present villains are mainly Earth politicians and financiers—and Americans, too!—surely removes him well away from the ranks of the superficial writers.

The pattern of the story is similar to the later Lensmen tales, however: it is a detective thriller of the future. The plot is engagingly intricate, but fairly developed; and although the good scientists contrive to out-invent the evil ones as usual, they are not allowed to overdo it and the Lens does not degenerate into the magic wand it might easily have become. Its introduction and gradual development as a weapon is, naturally, one of the principal features of the story, and Dr. Smith handles it with an adroitness which leaves me satisfied that the Lens deserves to rank very high in the scanty list of really desirable inventions of science fiction.

The Lens being what it is, and doled out by the Irisings so carefully, it is almost inevitable that the good characters tend to appear so morally perfect that they become much of a muchness; and the wicked types cannot be given more varied personalities lest they steal the show. Dr. Smith has always been faced with this difficulty, and here he solves it fairly satisfactorily by em-

phasis on the minor facets of personality and the use of suitable non-human characters. That he has not had to write initially for magazine publication has evidently allowed him a little more freedom (there is one brief passage which James Hadley Chase might consider quite acceptable), and this helps to add a few deeper, if more sombre, splashes of colour. The episode in a uranium mine, which is only one of a rich store of intriguing situa-

tions in peculiar places, displays a handiness with technical terms uncommon in any grade of fiction.

The days when I used to read and re-read the tales that appealed to me most strongly were, I thought, long past. But when I had reached the end of this book I straightway turned back to the first page and began to read it through again. And now that I have set down my feelings about it all, I shall probably start on it a third time.

## Doomsday in Moronia

**THE BIG EYE**, by Max Ehrlich.  
Doubleday, New York. \$2.50.

Reviewed by **John Beynon**

The Big Eye is, of course, the 200-inch telescope at Palomar—up to page 130. Thereafter it is a runaway planet, which in the first stages of its approach towards Earth shows a turn of speed that makes light look like a loitering hobo, but later seems to loiter considerably itself. It is the second object which, it appears, is referred to in the title of this science fiction novel, in attempting which Mr. Ehrlich set himself a very difficult task.

There have been few successful s-f novels. In general, science fiction, whether intellectual, exciting or merely ropey, is most easily handled as an adventure story or a thriller; it is usually an action story where the conflict is between the protagonists and the circumstances. In the novel proper, however, conflict is the outcome of human character. It follows, therefore, that in a s-f novel there must be two conflicts running simultaneously and interlocking, and even the most expert hands have found this difficult. In this case, I suspect, half the readers will tick because characters tiddle along with their petty emotions and love affairs while the end of the world draws near, and the other half will complain that a good human story keeps being sidetracked by an event which, they may feel, no one could take seriously anyway.

Mr. Ehrlich has obviously been to some trouble to adjust his balances. He has weighed the proportions of interest, arranged for the domestic events to be caused by the cosmic, and given a human motivation to link the whole. So one assumes that he did

have in mind something of more general appeal than the average s-f serial—but one doubts whether that can be attained by flouting the rules of probability. Whatever the class of material, unless a certain standard of logic is maintained it will inevitably damage the rest of the story, however good. It becomes the more distressing when an author who is obviously in earnest in some parts of his tale allows others to run so wild as to offend logical possibility and so detach interest.

For instance, nobody is greatly troubled if, in some dimension-warping space opera, every creature on Alpheratz IV is of exactly similar mind. But the picture of an America—and, by implication, a whole human race—which will accept as gospel, instantly and without question, the statement of a few astronomers that the world will end on a particular day, is more convenient for the author than convincing to the reader. One crazy doubter is mentioned, but that is a low proportion of scepticism for the world I thought I lived in; and the presentation of every kind of American—except astronomers and their wives—as the unflinching exhibitor of panic and hysteria upon the least excuse is not only unflattering but silly.

Mr. Ehrlich's New York, in the last two years of the world's lease, is a bewildering place, run upon curious economic lines. Money, under the threat, is not worth saving, so—guess what! Everyone draws out all his deposits, cashes in on his insurance and, the banks being able to stand this drain imperturbably, sets out to spend his lot. Business stops, office blocks stand empty; but apparently business was a phoney, for newspapers still

appear, lights blaze, radio persists, so do theatres and movies, every woman has a mink coat, crowds converge on New York, nobody is producing but everybody is fed, and all this is presumably paid for and kept going by the money that it's no longer worth anybody's while to hold on to.

Whereas under the threat of atomic bombing this New York is all panic and flight, under that of planetary obliteration it whoops it up; and after it has had its fun on useless money without any inflationary unpleasantness, it is overcome by some variant of boozier's

gloom, goes into a religious funk, and appears to think this is a moral triumph. A good basic story and vivid writing can be ruined by such nonsense. I feel strongly that there must be some individuals left (besides astronomers), even at the fount of mass-production. If the setting is American, surely behaviour should approximate to the American pattern rather than the Moronian. In the face of calamity, either money and organisation collapse or they don't—they can't do both, and whichever they do must affect the story.

## Mr. Long and Mr. Lovecraft

**THE HOUNDS OF TINDALOS**, by Frank Belknap Long. Museum Press, London, 8/6.

Reviewed by **Arthur F. Hillman**

In this collection of twenty-one fantastic tales which appeared originally from Arkham House four years ago, there is a remarkably similar parallel with that of Robert Bloch ("The Opener of the Way"), which was published about the same time. Long, like Bloch, was a member of the Lovecraft circle, that select group of **Weird Tales** contributors whose intimacy extended even to the scenes and characters of many of their respective stories. And, as in the case of Mr. Bloch's collection, a definite schism in style is evident in this assembly of tales which Mr. Long is supposed to have gathered himself. One section, comprising his earlier work, exhibits the slow, methodical Lovecraftian style, with every word a corner-stone in the building of an elaborate but sturdy structure; the other shows the curt, smart finish of the current American school, patterned after Hemingway.

Examining Mr. Long's work in detail, one realises that here is a writer with a deft, mature touch and a brilliant imagination. Of those stories which show the obvious influence of Lovecraft, the title-tale, "The Space-Eaters" and "A Visitor from Egypt" are outstanding for plot-construction and effective description. These, and others that appeared in the early days of **Weird Tales**, certainly deserve their new lease of life in book form. They are better, in fact, than Mr. Bloch's Lovecraftian stories, which bear traces of his youthful naivete: at the time of

writing them he was not yet twenty. Mr. Long is fourteen years his senior, and the accumulated wealth of his experience as a writer has gone to enrich the potency of his brew. These are not just stories; they are works of art in their own tiny niche.

With the other side of his work I am not so content, though his imagination has soared to even greater heights. "Bridgehead" is an ingenious piece of science fiction that well merited its first appearance in **Astounding**, and there are several **Unknown** episodes that amuse with their pixie atmosphere; but in some cases, such as "A Stitch in Time" and "Golden Child," the whackiness seems overdone and irresponsible. One wishes that he had devoted his talents to something rather more to the point.

However, that Mr. Long was the sole arbiter of the contents of his volume is, I think, doubtful; and if he was, the fact remains that many of his admirers might have made a better selection, including stories that are still languishing in dusty magazines—unless by now they have been rescued for a further collection. For example, "The Dark Beasts," here present, came out of a fan magazine, the old **Marvel Tales**, where it should have remained, to be replaced by another of Mr. Long's **Astounding** stories.

A word about the jacket, which is unusual, revealing a flair for the macabre seldom met with in British book illustrators. It is, I am told, the work of Powell, who did most of the illustrations for **Fantasy** and all (under the name of Frederic) for the ephemeral British **Strange Tales**. His skeletal wench is horribly fascinating.

## A Nice Drink of Moonjuice

**WHAT MAD UNIVERSE**, by Frederic Brown. Dutton, New York, \$2.50.

Reviewed by **Thomas Sheridan**

Many years ago I was completely taken in by "A Voyage to Purilia," by Elmer Rice\*, which turned out to be a fantasy depicting that impossible world that existed according to the early silent films—full of demure heroines, scoundrelly squires and dauntless heroes with Right on their side. What Mr. Rice did for the movie melodrama Mr. Brown has done for science fiction—or, at least, for s-f in its most conventional form. With a fine appreciation of the principles he himself has to observe in his writings for the pulp magazines, he has produced a novel which every fan who can see the funny side of its established extravagances—and which one cannot?—will thoroughly enjoy. Amid a constant flood of tales which we are not always inclined to take as seriously as their authors—or editors—expect, here is one

\* Cosmopolitan, New York: '30.

that is frankly burlesque; yet one that, if you will accept its basic premise, is more believable than the rest—and makes the rest just as believable.

You may, of course, already have savoured, in the version which appeared in **Startling Stories** (Sept. '48), the delights of the situation in which Keith Winton, editor of "Surprising Stories," finds himself on being whisked into another dimension where some things are very much the same as in his proper universe but others are very different. Where, for instance, there are still drugstores and Model T Fords, yet space-travel is taken as much for granted as the seven-foot purple Lunarians who walk the streets, and a '28 25-cent piece is a rare coin worth 2,000 of any collector's credits. Where Wells' "Outline of History" has a chapter telling how the development of the spacewarp drive started with an accidental discovery involving the abrupt disappearance of a sewing machine; how the first man landed on the Moon in 1910, and the first Earth colony was

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Now, in 1954, in this mad universe, General Eisenhower commands the Venus Sector of Earth's space fleet in its battles with the Arcturians, who destroyed Chicago twenty years before. "Surprising Stories," as might be expected, is a magazine of ordinary adventure stories—and the ravishing editor of "Perfect Love Stories" (always attired, as befits a "space girl," in scanty shorts, bra and topboots) is affianced to Dopelle, 23-year-old universal super-genius who puts Buck Rogers to shame. And who, in the end, turns out to be the Doppelganger of—

But in case you haven't yet visited it, let me say only that the explanation of the whole amazing set-up, as it eventually dawns on poor, bewildered Editor Winton, is convincing enough to render Mr. Brown's universe *a la*

Doppelberg, in which all BEMs are as hideous as any carping cover critic could desire, as plausible as it is entertaining. And the corollary that all science fiction, however incredible, may be actual fact in some other limbo is a sobering thought which comes as a fitting climax to this very diverting piece of esoterica. I must say I am somewhat nonplussed to find a big publisher, intent on developing science-fantasy, selecting for its initial sally a book which seems to laugh it out of court, and which can hardly be appreciated to the full by the uninitiated; but for those of us who have drunk long and deeply of moonjuice ("It's funny stuff, all right. The more of 'em you've drunk, the shorter a time they knock you out, but the longer a time you're gone"), it is worth every cent of 10,000 credits.

## Grand Space Opera

**THE STAR KINGS**, by Edmond Hamilton. Fell, New York. \$2.50.

Reviewed by **D. R. Smith**

For the fourth book in their Science Fiction Library, the publishers who have seen fit to recognise the medium's coming-of-age as a major literary development have chosen a novel which appeared originally in **Amazing Stories** (Sept. '47), from the rattling type-writer of that old adept, Edmond Hamilton. And in spite of its containing a rare example of an unhissable hiss ("You traitor!" he hissed at Gordon), which is fairly indicative of its general style, I have to confess that I found it much more engrossing than its fellows in this series.

The situation which so engaged me concerns an adventurous young man of the present century who exchanges minds with a student of two hundred thousand years hence in a spirit of purely scientific curiosity. The body he temporarily inhabits turns out to belong to the youngest son of the ruler of the biggest single empire in a galaxy; and to his dismay, he is swept into a maze of military and political intrigue quite unexpected by the princely student with whom he has changed minds. His private life is complicated by a political marriage with the princess of a neighbouring empire whom the previous occupant of his body considered no more than a charming

friend but with whom the inteloper falls in love, and by a morganatic marriage to a most affectionate lady whom he prefers to regard quite platonically. The intricacies are increased by the necessity of keeping secret the exchange of minds, in spite of the important part which Gordon-Zarth is due to play in the approaching inter-planetary war.

The success of the story lies in the fact that throughout all this the hero remains an entirely credible character: a reasonably intelligent, reasonably daring young man, buffeted hither and yon by the peculiar nature of his fate, doing the best he can and no more, favoured by remarkable—but not outrageous—luck. Because he is so believable, the reader may take a genuine interest in his struggles and find pleasure in following them to their conclusion. The plot is neat and tidily designed, advancing step by step towards the climax, smoothly and logically. The subsidiary characters are adequate, particularly the villain, Shorr Kan, who in spite of his name is much less of a stock character and more of a real person than one expects to find in space opera.

Space opera it is, of course, pure and simple, and the writing is little more than glib. But it is a seductive piece of escapism; and I shall be sorry if ever science fiction ceases to produce such tales, so long as they are of this calibre



## The Misadventures of Carstairs

**JOHN CARSTAIRS: SPACE DETECTIVE**, by Frank Belknap Long. Fell, New York. \$2.50.

Reviewed by **Donald Warwick**

His ever-loving secretary, Vera Dorn, is of the opinion that John Carstairs from one aspect is "shy, sober, scholarly and curator of the finest botanical exhibit in the Solar System"; from another, he "stands six feet three in his stockings, s built like a young tornado, and likes to pretend he is a detective." Study of his accomplishments leads me to a rather different analysis. I can't see that he ever appears in the least bit bashful, while the description of his physical structure is a piece of meaningless literary extravagance and a fair sample of the writing to be found in these stories. I am, however, in agreement with Miss Dorn as to her hero's pretences, which he appears to enjoy more than I do; for his detection consists chiefly in selecting the right type of extra-terrestrial super-plant to tell

him what he needs to know without further cerebation on his part. Cheating is what I call it; and I am surprised that the long-suffering Inspector McGuire, who collaborates with him on the official side, doesn't up and say so.

Undoubtedly, there are some wonderful specimens of exotic flora to be found in these pages; some of them unsuspecting aides of the "young tornado," others very active enemies. The first story introduces us to a plant capable of containing within itself such immense temperatures and pressures that it can actually make synthetic diamonds—and that's not all it can do. There is not much scope for detecting here. Even McGuire knows where the stolen Diamond Plant is manifesting its formidable self, and sleuth Carstairs has only to give it a whiff of ether to overpower it. Even so, he manages to get himself into considerable danger—quite unnecessarily, as far as I can see. At least, nobody could accuse him of excessive caution; the

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fact that most of the dangerous situations in which he finds himself are merely the result of his own incompetence is, indeed, one of the major flaws in these accounts of his misadventures.

There are actually six separate stories in this assembly\*: five short, and one as long as the others put together, the whole being presented as a "novel." Possibly the long story is slightly more satisfying than the rest, mainly because the villain assumes the appearance of a genuine character; but there is little coherence to the various

incidents and little more excuse for a considerable part of them. In all the tales, the preposterous plants play a key part. My favourite is the Mimas mould which, due to a tendency to gather in masses to feast on the "infra-radiant auras" left behind by departing humans, reconstructs solid, detailed images of persons who have left the vicinity hours before. It is my pet because these highly respectable fungi produce images that are fully clothed, and I cannot think of any better indication of the general level of intelligence of these stories.

Nor can I think that this book will make converts of the right sort to the gospel of science fiction. Even in the U.S.A., its social standing must be pretty low; in England it has the added disadvantage that the name Carstairs is not one to be taken seriously by anybody who has read Beachcomber.

\*Which appeared as a series as follows, in **Thrilling Wonder**: "Plants Must Grow" (Oct. '41); "Snapdragon" (Dec. '41); "Plants Must Slay" (Apr. '42); "Satellite of Peril" (Aug. '42); "Wobbles in the Moon" (June '43); and in **Startling Stories**: "The Hollow World" (Summer '45).

## Fun For Mr. Leinster

**THE LAST SPACE SHIP**, by Murray Leinster. Fell, New York. \$2.50.

Reviewed by **D. R. Smith**

The background to this tale—or, rather, these three tales—is not unfamiliar: it is that of a galactic-wide civilisation which has gone off the rails and is doing its best to imitate the degeneracy of Nero's Rome. The forces of law and order have discovered an invincible method of enforcing their commands and, as if that were not obnoxious enough to most citizens, have fallen for the oft-quoted doctrine that "all power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely." A law is only a good law when its enforcement is enabled by the acquiescence of the majority of those bound by it. In this case, all laws could be enforced by a minority whether or not the majority approved; and so, suggests the author, that worst law of all which holds that the king—or those in power—can do no wrong was enforced *ad lib*.

Invincible method—to all, of course, save the hero, Kim Rendell, who succeeds in breaking away from the "disciplinary circuits" in the last spaceship (interplanetary communication now being effected by matter-transmitters), proceeds to make good his escape and, ultimately, to set the wheels in motion to free his fellow slaves. A praiseworthy hero is Kim,

whose main object after escaping is to find somewhere to land so that a proper marriage ceremony will stop the neighbours talking about the girl he has taken with him; a man given, perhaps, rather too much to tight-lipped, grim little speeches to make a really jolly companion, but a most useful type in many ways. Particularly in his ability to twist two or three wires together and so perform miracles does he appear almost super.

If I seem to sound sarcastic, let me say that it hurts me to have to admit it—for Murray Leinster is a favourite writer of mine—but I found this story falling short of perfection on several counts. The author, in his Foreword, anticipates that many people will find it a very odd book, but insists that he has had fun with it, even if they decide that he is "more than a little bit cracked." His regular devotees will need no justification for his "batting ideas around," but they may be concerned, as I was, over the fact that nothing has been done to blend into one continuous novel what were, as published originally, three separate stories\*. It is tedious to find in the last one a recapitulation of the back-

\*In **Thrilling Wonder Stories**: "The Disciplinary Circuit" (Winter '46); "The Manless Worlds" (Feb. '47); "The Boomerang Circuit" (June '47).

ground material which had appeared in the previous two, however briefly summarised. The effect is of a magazine serial which incorporates in the latest instalment what has gone before, for the benefit of the casual reader—which, indeed, makes a very odd book.

Mr. Leinster's style has always been distinguished for its curt emphasis on bare statement and its lack of flowery descriptive. At its best it can be most refreshing, but if insufficiently supplied with subject-matter it can easily become very dull. The inanimate subject-matter is present here in almost indigestible amounts, but we seem to learn little or nothing about the

human characters. Kim Rendell we know only by the way he says what he says; his bride Dona we sense to be pretty and to talk in much the same way. The other characters—such as there are—appear vaguely as a bunch of oafs. It all makes for dullness—much greater dullness than is found, for example, in a normal history book; for most historians at least mention the more outstanding characteristics of the people of whom they write.

If, of the series to which it belongs, this book is the least likely to provoke scorn from a newcomer to science fiction, I fancy it is also least likely to arouse interest.

## Magical Pushover

**SIXTH COLUMN**, by Robert A. Heinlein. Gnome Press, New York, \$2.50.

Reviewed by **John K. Aiken**

Given: your country overrun, your army wiped out, your government and its seat destroyed, your countrymen enslaved. Given also a super-power, and a well-hidden handful of technicians who know it. Problem: to dispossess the enemy. Solution: use the power to found a new "religion."

This is neither Mr. Heinlein's first nor last shot at the science-disguised-as-religion idea, which is clearly one of his favourites; it has pervaded or inspired much of his best work in **Astounding**, from "Universe" (May '41) and "Common Sense" (Oct. '41), where the religion is accepted as such, to "With Flaming Swords" (Sept. '42), where it is known by its exponents to be a fake. "Sixth Column" is one of his most successful attempts in the second category, having at once made the reputation of "new" author Anson MacDonald when it originally appeared in the issues of Jan-Mar. '41. Since then it has been appreciably revised and tightened up, and is now a really first-class tale of the hundred percent wish-fulfilment type.

The trouble with a limitless power, from a literary point of view, is that there's nothing it cannot do—in fact, it's sheer magic. But to make their ultimate triumph over the PanAsians plausible, ex-publicity agent Ardmore—now C.O. of the half-dozen-strong U.S. Army—and his staff need such a power. They have it; and it is author Heinlein's task to prevent the science

fiction enthusiast from realising that it is not so much scientific as supernatural. In this he is not wholly successful. The veneer of magnetic-gravitic spectra and so forth is a thin one, and beneath it we find tractor and pressor beams with which huge "temples," shining with chromatic radiance, are built single-handed; a healing ray which kills disease germs without affecting the essential symbiotic bacteria of the intestines (a point Mr. Heinlein overlooks); a transmutation ray which will convert unknown poison gases into nitrogen and unknown alloys into gold; and, least credible (not to say creditable) of all, a simple little gadget which kills PanAsians while leaving Americans unscathed.

Mr. Heinlein tries to infuse realism by making an odd thing or two go wrong: here a traitor, there a madman, somewhere else (a good long way off) a "congregation" actually wiped out by the PanAsians. But the result is at best a pseudo-realism: the conflict remains one between an irresistible force and a not-quite-immovable object. In short, a pushover. Yet a pushover described with all of Mr. Heinlein's humour, ingenuity and attention to background detail is a very enjoyable spectacle, in which the blood and squalor of a real war would be out of place. The best things about the story are the human things: the psychological tricks used by Ardmore to undermine the yellow men's morale and cause their own methods to backfire; the inter-relationships among the

tiny task force; the final touch of the chess problem that breaks the Asian prince. Judged among its competitors, it is a very good, even an outstanding, tale. But like so much of this author's

work, top of its class though it invariably is, it leaves one with the tantalising feeling that it could—and should—have been better still, if only a little better.

## Mr. Campbell on a Limb

**THE INCREDIBLE PLANET**, by John W. Campbell, Jr. Fantasy Press, Reading, Pa. \$3.00.

Reviewed by **Kemp McDonald**

It is an almost sufficient description of this novel to say merely that it is a sequel to "The Mightiest Machine" (FR, Feb.-Mar. '48). Any discoveries and inventions in astronomic physics that Aarn Munro, muscular Jovian scientist, overlooked in the earlier tale, are taken care of in this one. He and his aides flit about space in super-ships carving chunks out of dwarf stars and tangling in bitter stellar war, in the course of a desultory search for the Home Planet which they have unaccountably lost. Military and cosmic cataclysms impend, super-weapons abound, and physics is exhaustively discussed, with never a leavening trace

of characterisation, emotion, philosophy, ethics or aesthetics; nothing but action and science.

Mr. Campbell is, we fear, hoist with his own petard. It is due to his brilliant editorship of **Astounding** over the past dozen years that this particular style of space epic is now as moribund as UNO and will soon, we suspect, be as dead as the dodo. Like the eagle which found itself transfixed by an arrow winged by its own feathers, he himself "nursed the pinion that impelled the steel." Or, to complete a metaphoric trio, Editor Campbell has all but finished sawing off the limb on which author Campbell has taken refuge.

It's sad; for there is a nostalgia about the story, at least for a reader of twenty year's standing. But there's no doubt that progress in the field has left it far behind.

## Fantasy Forum

Readers' letters on any aspect of science-fantasy are welcomed. Address: The Editor, SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW, 115, Wanstead Park Road, Ilford, Essex.

## When is a Film Fantasy ?

Once again, my compliments on **Fantasy Review**; it is a pleasure to read so orderly and adult a compendium. Our U.S. output has sadly degenerated the last few years; there is nothing presently comparable here.

It occurs to me that in your search for fresh subject-matter you might do well to consider the cinema. True, there have been articles on fantasy and science fiction films printed on this side of the Puddle in the past, but none, to my knowledge, either complete or well-written. After reading the Penguin book, "Film," and the other film review titles they put out, I am convinced that you chaps take a much more objective and analytical attitude towards the cinema, and surely could turn out a *definitive* article on the fantasy film. It would be, of course, a major project, necessitating a great deal of research and effort. Perhaps a team of writers would be necessary to complete such a task, but it surely would fill a gap.

There are all kinds of criteria which would have to be established preliminary to this work. For instance, where is the line of demarcation between fantasy and pure horror-melodrama? Peter Lorre, in MGM's '35 film, "Mad Love" (French version, "Les Mains de Orlac," with Conrad Veidt), is a fantasy film by virtue of its theme. But is Lorre's RKO film, "The Stranger on the Third Floor," a whodunit or a fantasy? It has a dream sequence which is pure fantasy, but the plot is "realistic" enough. Lugosi in the early Universal talkie, "Murders in the Rue Morgue"—not fantasy: just the title, tacked on to a prosaic yarn with an ape in it. What about "The Most Dangerous Game," refilmed four years ago as "Game of Death"? Is the old German UFA silent, "Faust," with Jannings, a fantasy?

There are lots of problems like this; but maybe Ackerman, with his extensive cinema background, could help. Maybe somebody like Roger Manvell, who did

the Penguin "Film," could be enlisted in the enterprise. I'd very much like to see somebody do something along these lines.—Robert Bloch, Milwaukee, Wis., U.S.A.

[How about it, chaps?—Ed.]

## GROUSE

In my opinion, S-FR is dead right in size, content and composition. Any radical attempt at change would not, I think, benefit the readers, and might well degrade the publication in a manner well exemplified by numerous past (and present) imitators. The booklet is, after all, a review, and a very good one at that; fiction has no legitimate place in it, nor have scientific articles.

As far as its proper function is concerned, I have one grouse, and this is directed towards the author of the article on "The Porcelain Magician" (Autumn '49). It is a fine little book, but I very much resent the reviewer's derogatory remarks concerning other authors; and to state that a "scorn of education" is typically Oriental is rubbish—the very reverse is the case.

The nearest approach to Hearn (no one will ever equal him in my estimation) is Daniele Vare, and to call Bramah "puerile" is to do a great injustice to an amusing and enchanting writer.

Best wishes for continued and successful publication; you fill a real place in the field of science fiction.—Dr. S. Walport, Newlands, Glasgow.

## TOO MUCH INTIMACY ?

S-FR looks much more like a magazine now, thanks to its extra pages. But there is one production fault—the cover panel, which, with its space gangsters, etc., depicts the worst in science fiction. About the contents, I'd like to make two rather unorthodox requests:

(1) Why not stop publishing authors' photos and life stories? For myself it detracts slightly from the enjoyment of their stories, and others (perhaps less sensitive) surely cannot find them more interesting or valuable than your other features. There is too much of this intimacy between author and reader in fantasy—just the literature where, I think, it should be kept to a minimum, since it destroys the omniscient, esoteric qualities essential to its convincingness. Thus: "The \_\_\_\_\_," by \_\_\_\_\_. Oh, that bald-headed coot! I suppose he wrote that in that tumbledown old shed of his . . ." Obviously, nothing in that story is going to awe that reader! I don't know if this point has ever been raised before, but if it has, it has evidently been ignored.

(2) Can't we have more news of science fiction actually aiding or stimulating scientific discovery? If this news is rare, I suggest it should be made much more of when it does appear. If s-f is to have

any significant relation to contemporary life, this could be one of its main points. It could act as a kind of philosophy, indicating avenues of research and speculating on the implications of discoveries—all in entertaining form. But before this happens, authors must pay far more attention to the scientific content of their tales; in this connection I am in sympathetic agreement with Mr. Gernsback, writing in "Fantasy Forum." The science content of a story can itself provide excitement, if it is used properly.—John A. Wiseman, Sidcup, Kent.

[The space gangsters, etc., are duly banished henceforth. But (1) we are soundly of the opinion that fantasy fans, like film fans, are curious about the people who cater for their enjoyment; and (2) we do not know of a case where a scientist has admitted he got the idea of his thingumajig from a science fiction writer. We do, however, try to support the idea, which has been current for many years, that s-f exerts a constant influence on the advancement of science, and whenever we can put our finger on specific cases we shall do so. Perhaps the life story of Mr. Gernsback, in this issue, is excusable on these grounds?—Ed.]

## WHICH SHALL IT BE ?

Erik Fennel, like many others, seems afraid of Utopia. Perhaps this is because he, and they, imagine it will be either a vegetative society wallowing in a mechanical produced abundance of creature comforts, or an ant-like rigor of rules and slogans. But why should these alternatives—leaving out fantastic dictatorships—be the only ones to regard as Utopias?

Surely, in a true Utopia, mankind would be released from the stultifying influence of heavy toil, semi-poverty, superstition, ignorance. He would be set free to dominate and subordinate, not his fellow men, but his environment, both terrestrial and universal. Such were some of the civilisations in Olaf Stapledon's "Last and First Men." Much has been said on this subject, and much more could be said!—Richard J. Hooton, Chesterfield.

## HOW GOOD CAN WE GET ?

How sorry I am that your wonderful magazine had to change to quarterly publication. I was impatient at the delays of two months, before; now it is even worse. I must say, however, that there has been a distinct improvement in the quarterly issues. But as I look back over my copies of your publication, I can see there has been an improvement with each issue. If this keeps up, how good can it get?

I enjoy your book reviews very much; they are the most intelligent and impartial that I have encountered. Here,

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almost all the fanzines and prozines alike join in praising any fantasy publication, no matter what the contents. Being quite new to the field myself, I find your reviews an invaluable guide in selecting the books I want to buy. And I especially enjoyed your articles on the history of prozines. Put me down as hoping that the histories of other magazines are published, particularly those of the smaller ones that lasted only a few issues.

On the question of fiction in **S-FR**—please don't include it. If fiction is wanted, there are any number of publications in the field to supply the need. Your articles and book reviews have no peer. Please don't change.—Roy E. Young, San Angelo, Texas.

[The number, according to correspondent Forrest J. Ackerman, will have reached 25 by the end of this year.—Ed.]

### PRESENTING THE EDITOR

"The Palmer Hoax" is, I think, the most interesting and informative article you have yet published—which inspires me to ask a couple of questions:

(1) How about the life stories of editors as well as authors? e.g., John W. Campbell, Jr.

(2) In view of the increasing trend towards the production of films with a fantasy background, would it be possible for **S-FR** to review such pictures when they appear?—Cyril A. Harper, Brookfields, Birmingham.

[(1) See this issue. (2) It would, and we shall.—Ed.]

### AUSTRALIAISON

Your publication, while it must be very handy for British and American fans, is absolutely invaluable to us fans in Aus-

tralia. As you are probably aware, we "down under" feel isolated and far away from the centres of fandom in England and U.S.; and **S-FR** breaks down this isolation, keeping us up-to-date on the latest activities and publications in the field.—Ralph H. Harding, Maylands, W. Australia.

## THE QUERY BOX

### IMMORTAL PROFESSOR

Please give a list of all the Professor Jameson stories by Neil R. Jones that have appeared in **Amazing Stories**.—Cyril A. Harper, Birmingham.

[“The Jameson Satellite,” Jul. '31; “Planet of the Double Sun,” Feb. '32; “The Return of the Tripeds,” May '32; “Into the Hydrosphere,” Oct. '33; “Time’s Mausoleum,” Dec. '33; “The Sunless World,” Dec. '34; “Zora of the Zoromes,” Mar. '35; “Space War,” Jul. '35; “Labyrinth,” Apr. '36; “Twin Worlds,” Apr. '37; “On the Planet Fragment,” Oct. '37; “The Music Monsters,” Apr. '38. The following also appeared in **Astonishing Stories**: “The Cat-Men of Aemt.,” Aug. '40; “Cosmic Derelict,” Feb. '41; “Slaves of the Unknown,” Mar. '42; “Doomsday on Ajiat,” Oct. '42. The series was resumed recently in the revived **Super Science Stories**, with: “The Metal Moon” (Sep. '49), “Parasite Planet” (Nov. '49), and “World Without Darkness” (Mar. '50).

### CONAN’S EXPLOITS

Please list all the “Conan” stories by Robert E. Howard featured in **Weird Tales**, in their actual sequence as distinct from their order of publication.—Thomas G. L. Cockcroft, Wellington, N.Z.

[The sequence is as follows: “The Tower of the Elephant,” Mar. '33\*; “Rogues in the House,” Jan. '34\*; “Queen of the Black Coast,” May '34†; “Black Colossus,” Jun. '33; “Shadows in the Moonlight,” Apr. '34; “A Witch Shall be Born,” Dec. '34†; “Shadows in Zamboula,” Nov. '35\*; “The Devil in Iron,” Aug. '34; “The People of the Black Circle,” Sep.-Nov. '34; “The Slithering Shadow,” Sep. '33; “The Pool of the Black One,” Oct. '33; “Red Nails,” Jul.-Oct. '36; “Jewels of Gwalhur,” Mar. '35; “Beyond the Black River,” May-Jun. '35; “The Phoenix on the Sword,” Dec. '32\*; “The Scarlet Citadel,” Jan. '33\*; “The House of the Dragon,” Dec. '35-Apr. '36. The stories marked \* were reprinted in “Skull-Face and Others” (Arkham, '46); those marked † have been reprinted by **Avon Fantasy Reader**. Others will be included in “Conan the Conqueror,” the first of five volumes of Conan stories to be published by Gnome Press.—Ed.]

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**WANTED:** "The Invasion from Mars" (Hadley Cantril: pub. Princeton Univ., '40).—Box 131 *Science-Fantasy Review*.

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