



FANTASY REVIEW

Vol. I, No. 1

SIXPENCE

FEB.-MAR. 1947

REVIVAL

If your experience of science-fantasy goes back to the days when a magazine devoted to it was a rare discovery, you will probably remember **Scientifiction—The British Fantasy Review**. That there were in these islands at that time enough fantasy readers to justify a journal catering for their interests was a significant factor in the developments which followed. It was not long before the first British science fiction magazine, **Tales of Wonder**, appeared. Hard on its heels came **Fantasy**; and had it not been for the war, which separated most British readers from the American magazines as well, there is little doubt that the medium would by now have established itself firmly in the field of popular literature.

But the war did not stop the continued evolution of fantasy fiction in America, whence to a fortunate few have come evidences of a change for the better in the method of its presentation—not so much in magazines as in the more permanent form of books. This elevation of fantasy to a more distinguished sphere has brought an intense activity in the reading and collecting of volumes of both science and weird fiction, a trend which has had repercussions among well-informed readers on this side of the Atlantic.

With the return to peace and the effects of war-time influences on reading tastes, there is ample indication of a desire on the part of publishers on both sides to meet the increasing demand for fantasy. New magazines; new books; new publishing concerns specialising in the medium. The fantasy fan has no cause for complaint, now—except, perhaps, that there is nothing to keep him up to date with all the information he needs to pursue his fascinating hobby.

Hence **FANTASY REVIEW**, which has been revived under its new title to cover the entire field of fantasy fiction and its allied interests, to reflect its growing popularity here and abroad, and to serve the discriminating reader and collector. To fulfil this function, we have recruited experts in every branch of the medium to serve its readers, and we shall keep its columns open to all who wish to express their views on any aspect of the literature in which they delight. It is the journal of the fantasy reader—produced by fantasy readers. As such it should make a valuable contribution to the further development of the medium; and as a source of reliable information and guidance, it should be indispensable to all who are interested in any of its ramifications.

THE EDITOR.

SPATE OF NEW MAGS.

Publishers' Plans for Science Fiction

Whereas before the war British publishers were chary of science fiction, they are now showing an increasing interest in the development of this field. In spite of the paper shortage, which has held up one project, two regular magazines have recently been launched. Other occasional publications, including a British edition of an American magazine, have also appeared.

'Fantasy' Makes Long-Delayed Start

After a long hold-up, due to paper restrictions, first issue of **Fantasy: The Magazine of Science Fiction** appeared in December, under the imprint of the Temple Bar Publishing Co., London. Comprising 96 pages, pocket-size, and priced 1/-, it represents the most ambitious project ever embarked on by a British publishing firm in the science-fiction field.

The new magazine has no connection with the pre-war **Fantasy**, published by Newnes, which saw only three issues. Editor is Walter Gillings, founder-editor of Britain's pioneer quarterly science-fiction magazine, **Tales of Wonder**, which ran for four years until its suspension in 1942.

When it was first mooted, three years ago, it was hoped the new **Fantasy**

would be a monthly publication, available to at least 30,000 readers. For at least 12 months its sponsors have been waiting for paper supply conditions to improve, but continued restrictions on new periodicals have prevented a start being made.

An editorial dealing with these difficulties says: "We believe that such a magazine is urgently needed now, if British science-fiction is to be adequately represented in a field which will see increasing development in the future. **Fantasy** has, therefore, been launched as a regular publication which will appear at more frequent intervals with the improvement of paper supplies."

It is understood that publication will be on a four-monthly basis for the present, though monthly appearance is still the final objective. Copies are strictly limited, and can only be obtained through recognised distributing channels, no subscription being available.

NEW WRITERS

In the course of his protracted preparations for the new magazine, Editor Gillings has recruited a roster of contributors many of whom are quite new to the field. The intention is to present a selection of science fiction which, though it can be appreciated by the uninitiated reader, will appeal irresistibly to the greatly enlarged circle of British fantasy followers. Though much of the contents of early issues will be elementary in theme and treatment, the imaginative scope of the magazine will be widened as rapidly as possible, since the potential reader is now more receptive to advanced concepts than when **Tales of Wonder** followed a policy of comparatively simple science fiction.

Reprints will be rarely used, and then only as an indication of what has been done by American writers in the field. For instance, the Van Manderpootz stories of the late Stanley G. Wein-

FANTASY REVIEW

(Incorporating SCIENTIFUNCTION and TO-MORROW—Magazine of the Future)

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Vol. 1, No. 1 Feb.-Mar. 1947

Editor: Walter Gillings.

Associate Editors: John Carnell, J. Michael Rosenblum, D. R. Smith, Arthur F. Hillman, Fred C. Brown, Nigel Lindsay, R. George Medhurst.

American Correspondents: David Kishi (New York), Forrest J. Ackerman (Los Angeles).

baum will be printed for the first time in England. The first, "Worlds of If," appears in the current issue, which features a novelette, "Last Conflict," by John Russell Fearn, and other short stories by Arthur C. Clarke, P. E. Cleator, L. V. Heald, and newcomer Norman Lazenby. There are also articles by Walter Gillings, Thomas Sheridan and Geoffrey Giles.

For the next issue, "Relic," a novelette by Eric Frank Russell is promised, with other stories by Cleator, E. R. James and J. Austin Jackson. All this material, and almost all stories in hand for later issues, have been specially written to requirements first circulated to authors late in '33. Many are the work of new writers interested in the medium, whose treatment of ideas has

been encouraged along the lines of the magazine's gradual development towards a maturer type of science fiction. Principal requirement has been—and still is—story-value and human interest, rather than mere "thrills" or ideas which only strain credulity.

Among other newcomers who will be featured in due course are Norman C. Pallant, F. G. Rayer, Charles Willis and J. W. Groves. Stanton A. Coblentz, Lloyd Arthur Eshbach and Ross Rocklynne will be other American writers used.

Though credit-lines are not given, illustrations in the first issue have been done in varying styles by staff artist Back (who is also responsible for the cover design), Bruce Gaffron and E. F. Powell.

'New Worlds'

Advent of Britain's first post-war science-fiction magazine, **New Worlds**, now in its third quarterly issue, came as a complete surprise to fantasy fans on this side, although it had been heralded in America.

The successful revival of a pre-war project for a monthly magazine with the same title, which had then to be abandoned, led to its launching by Pendulum Publications, London, under the editorship of John Carnell, science-fiction enthusiast and organiser of fan activity in past years. Aiding and abetting in the project was fantasy author Frank Edward Arnold, who also inaugurated a "Space-Time Series" of science-fiction booklets for the firm.

In view of several expected developments in the field on this side, no time was wasted in producing the initial issue, which had been announced only in the U.S. when it appeared on sale here in July. Owing to distribution difficulties, it was some time even then before British fans encountered it.

Described as "A Fiction Magazine of the Future," and priced at 2/-, it comprised 64 quarto pages, featured novelettes by Maurice G. Hugl and William F. Temple, with short stories by John Russell Fearn, Thornton Ayre and others. Artwork was by Bob Wilkin, whose cover, symbolic of the dawning Atom Age, was particularly criticised for its inadequate expression of a nicely appropriate idea.

Cover of the second (October) issue showed striking improvement, and reflected the ambitious editorial policy in

Surprise Debut

respect of imaginative scope. It depicted two space-ships, was based on a story by new writer Patrick S. Selby; the artist was Victor Cæsari, also new to science fiction. Interior illustrations were again by Bob Wilkin.

"ADVANCED" POLICY

Other contents included novelettes by John Beynon and Thornton Ayre; short stories by Polton Cross, W. P. Cockroft, newcomers John Brody and Alden Lorraine. Two articles by Forrest J. Ackerman, well-known American fantasy fan, and L. J. Johnson, dealt respectively with the fourth annual U.S. science-fiction convention (Pacifcon), and the origins of magazine science fiction.

Results of readers' ratings of the first issue were given, and an editorial stated that reactions showed general approval of **New Worlds'** "reasonably advanced" policy.

Third issue, out this month, features a novel-length interstellar story, "Dragon's Teeth," which marks the debut of John K. Aiken, former president of the Teddington Cosmos Club, as science-fiction writer; another piece by Maurice G. Hugl, "Fantasia Dementia," and short stories by several more newcomers to the field.

Cover is again by Cæsari, and two promising new artists, Dennis and Slack, have done the interiors. Another find, Reynolds, and old **Tales of Wonder** artist Turner, will illustrate No. 4. With the current issue, price of the magazine is reduced to 1/6.

British Reprint for 'Amazing'

A British edition of *Amazing Stories*, the American fantasy magazine, appeared on sale at 2/- in November, published by the London firm of Ziff-Davis Ltd.

With front and back covers reproduced from the original U.S. edition of February, '39, it included in its 64 pages two novelettes from that issue: "Wanted: Seven Fearless Engineers," by Warner Van Lorne, and "Valley of Lost Souls," by Eando Binder, with two other stories from war-time issues: "The Mutants," by Rog Phillips, and Peter Horn's "Giants out of the Sun."

An article on the "Future Ocean Liner," depicted on the back cover by Julian S. Krupa, completed the issue. Several of the original illustrations to the stories were also reproduced.

The magazine was undated, and **FANTASY REVIEW** understands that although the publishers hope to establish a regular British edition in due course, appearance of further issues must depend on the paper situation.

Space-Travel Thrillers

Two selections of science fiction, titled *Strange Adventures* and *Futuristic Stories*, were published in November by Hamilton and Co. (Stafford) Ltd. Both were priced 2/-, comprised 48 quarto pages, and contained three stories by British writers hitherto unknown in the field.

Strange Adventures, with highly-coloured cover dominated by a monstrous reptile, featured two interplanetary thrillers: "Fugitive on Venus," by Leslie Halward; and "Space Hobo's Diary," by Rice Ackman. There was also a humorous piece by N. Wesley Firth, prolific writer of Western stories, who also does other types of popular fiction under several pseudonyms.

Cover of *Futuristic Adventures* illustrated "The Lords of Zorm," robot story set on an unknown planet in another system, authored by Firth. Rice Ackman appeared again with "The Timeless Dimension," and "Laughter of the Gods" was by-lined Earl Ellison.

Both covers were by H. W. Perl, and each magazine contained a single, un-

Britain's First Post-War Science Fiction Magazine . . .

NEW WORLDS

has in two issues found universal reader approval for its advanced editorial policy. The third issue (due early in 1947) will see that policy more mature.

Owing to publishing and distributing difficulties, **NEW WORLDS** is not readily available at every bookstall. In that event you can avoid disappointment by subscribing direct. For every six-issue subscription received (12/-) we will present a free copy of Professor A. M. Low's "Six Scientific Years." This offer applies only to **Fantasy Review** subscribers, by special arrangement with the publishers.

NEW WORLDS

Fiction Of The Future

Copies of Nos. 1 and 2 are still available, price 2/- post free. No. 1 is now a collector's item—the very first post-war British science fiction magazine to be printed.

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signed story illustration in woodcut style. The contents were generally imitative of the more juvenile type of science fiction published in America. It is understood that no decision can yet be made as to the continuance of the series.

'Outlands' Fosters Unusual Ideas

With the editorial avowal to "do more than provide amusing reading," and to foster ideas ignored by orthodox science, **Outlands: A Magazine for Adventurous Minds**, was launched in October by Outlands Publications, Liverpool.

A preliminary announcement described the magazine as "for all who seek wider fields of thought and imagination, and who aren't afraid to face facts that run counter to accepted beliefs." Offering scope for writers with original ideas, it disclaimed any set formula, promising to feature whatever they wanted to write as long as it was "unique and significant."

Demy-octavo size, with cover in blue with reversed lettering, the first issue comprised 40 pages of fiction, articles and readers' departments. Among these were "The Curious Club," for which readers were invited to submit reports and articles dealing with unusual events and bizarre ideas, as a basis for general discussion.

An editorial explained: "We aim to interest you with stories and articles which will have a slant towards the future. Yet we don't like to say we are publishing any particular type of material. You may label our stories 'science fiction,' 'weird fiction' or 'fantasy'; call them what you will . . ."

Contents included science-fiction pieces by John Russell Fearn and George C. Wallis, and fantasies by Charnock Walsby, Sydney J. Bounds and John Gabriel. Articles were "Psychic Scents," by A. Hastwa, dealing with spiritualism; and "Mystery Power," by Leslie V. Heald, citing inexplicable phenomena of the Fortean order. Other features dealt with the work of H. G. Wells, the American fantasy fan convention and recent British science-fiction publications.

The magazine was first launched on a basis of private subscription only, but later appeared on the bookstalls priced at 1/6. As yet no second issue has appeared.

'New Frontiers' Covers Occult

Featuring articles on telepathy, Atlantis and Mu, Time theories, and other subjects of interest to fantasy readers, **New Frontiers** appeared in December with an issue dated January, '47.

A striking cover in red and black, designed in modernist style, proclaims the magazine as presenting "latest opinions and experiments in psychical research, occultism, spiritism, astrology." An editorial lays down a policy of open-minded approach towards the results of investigation in these fields from a scientific standpoint, and seeks to provide "a means of expression for enquirers into the unknown."

Principal feature is an article by Dr. S. G. Soal, noted psychical researcher, on "The Present Status of Experimental Telepathy," dealing with the E.S.P. experiments of Rhine and Carington. An article on "Paranormal Cognition," by H. Heighton, also deals with the theories of Rhine and Soal in connection with "glimpses into the future" such as the famous Versailles case.

C. S. Keller writes on "Vanished Continents" and the Wegener hypothesis; J. V. Jones considers "The Mystery of the Druids"; and F. G. Rayer, new science-fiction writer, explains the Time concept of "The Spreading Present." Other contributions include "The Nature of Spiritualism," by Ronald Lane, and "Experiences of Thought Communication with Animals," by Capt. Q. C. A. Craufurd, president of the Fairy Research Society.

New Frontiers has been launched by Utopian Publications, London, whose output has included many science and weird fiction booklets and whose head is Benson Herbert, M.Sc., well-known science-fiction author. Editorially associated with the new journal are Joyce Fairbairn and C. S. Youd, editor of former fantasy fan magazine **Fantast**.

Several science fictionists will appear in future issues, which will present fiction and articles dealing with such subjects as folklore, pre-history, psychology, astronomy and supernatural phenomena. Among these will be William F. Temple, Maurice K. Hanson and John F. Burke. In No. 2, to be published shortly, Eric Frank Russell will write on the peculiar genius of Charles Fort, in an article "Port the Colossus."

OTIS A. KLINE DEAD

News of the death of Otis Adelbert Kline, well-known fantasy writer and authors' agent, of New York, came as a shock to his clients and friends in England. He was 55, and had been in ailing health of recent years.

Born in Chicago, of Dutch ancestry, Kline was a song writer and music publisher before he took to writing film scenarios and popular fiction in the early 20's. His stories were of all types, and appeared in as many different magazines outside the fantasy field.

He was among the earliest contributors to *Weird Tales* and its one-time companion *Oriental Stories*. He did several adventure and science-fiction novels for *Argosy*, as well as contributing to *Amazing* and *Thrilling Wonder* over a period of years. His "Jan of the Jungle" and "Planet of Peril" stories for *Argosy* were among several which appeared in book form. The most successful of his novels, "The Savage," was

made into a film in which Dorothy Lamour first wore her famous sarong.

Some of his most popular fantasies were "Buccaneers of Venus," in *Weird Tales*; "The Swordsman of Mars," in *Argosy*; "Race Around the Moon" (*Thrilling Wonder*, August '39), and the "Dragoman" series in *Oriental Stories*. He did many of his weird tales in collaboration with E. Hoffman Price.

RUSSELL'S TRIBUTE

As a leading literary agent with world-wide connections, Kline handled the work of many noted authors, including H. G. Wells. Eric Frank Russell, who stayed with him when he visited New York in '39, writes of him:

"A more likeable individual it would be hard to find. Plump, jovial, generous, he seemed to have hundreds of friends and no enemies. He and his beautiful wife, Ellen, who helped him run his agency, were companions in the proper sense of the term.

"The passing of one of the old guard of fantasy leaves a gap which none can fill in quite the same way. He will be mourned by many, especially by those who knew him and enjoyed his open friendship."

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He Wrote 'The Rats Tale'

A. BERTRAM CHANDLER, Master Mariner and Science Fiction Author, tells how he launched himself into print, in an interview with THOMAS SHERIDAN.



For a new British writer to take third place in a "Best Stories of the Year" poll by American science fiction readers, and to rate seventh among the most popular magazine authors of 1945, is enough to give A. Bertram Chandler a fair claim to fame in the sphere of fantasy fiction. At least, he'll admit it's a good start.

Author of what has become known to **Astounding Science-Fiction** followers as "the rats tale" — more accurately, "Giant Killer"—Chandler made his debut in that magazine less than two years ago, as a result of making a personal call on Editor John W. Campbell. His first MS. was, in fact, delivered by hand, at the end of one of his frequent transatlantic trips as a Merchant Navy officer during the war. And most of his stories have been written on the high seas; perhaps that is why they have that salty flavour.

Raised in Beccles, Suffolk, Chandler left school to start his education as apprentice to a tramp steamer line, which gave him a glimpse of most of the seven seas and some of the world's most colourful ports. By the time he had risen to Second Mate he had had his fill of tramps, and worked a spell ashore until he joined Shaw Savill Lines as Fourth Officer in '37, to collect more local colour on regular voyages to and from Australasia.

War came, and with it the task of keeping Britain's larder stocked with provender from New Zealand and U.S.A. More often than not, his ship was west-bound—which meant that New York became the second home of Second Officer Chandler, whose off-watch hours were divided between studying his beloved navigation and reading and writing science fiction.

He had always had a yen to write as well as to roam, and had done some light verse and humorous pieces for **Nautical Magazine**. And an appetite for fantasy, instilled in childhood by reading of Verne, Wells and Lester Bidston, re-awakened by odd encounters with the Gernsback magazines,

and finally satisfied by Street and Smith's **Astounding**, naturally led to the urge to write science fiction.

FORT-INSPIRED

But when, in 1942, the slim, trim-uniformed British officer was admitted to the editorial sanctum of John W. Campbell, it was simply with the idea of seeing the helmsman of his favourite magazine in the flesh. As he himself put it:

"Having been a faithful reader for years, I thought I might qualify for the experience, and that the uniform would stand me in good stead. It did. Campbell was charming, and when he heard I had ideas of writing, suggested I try my hand at a short story or two. Not yet being the proud possessor of my Master's ticket, and having plenty of swotting to do, I thought the notion fantastic, though the prospect intrigued me.

"Six months later, when I had become a Master Mariner—at least, on paper—and was again in New York, I bought 'The Books of Charles Fort' for light reading on our outward passage. That gave me an idea for a story, which I slowly and painfully pecked out on the way to New Zealand."

Homeward bound and calling at New York, he sallied ashore to lay his offering on Campbell's desk. Said he: "I thought you might like to see this. I suppose I had better leave a stamped envelope?" Said Campbell, with a smile: "Don't worry. I'll send it back."

But the editor didn't have any regrets. Awaiting Chandler on his return home was a letter accepting "This Means War," which duly appeared in May '44 **Astounding**. He followed it up

with an article on the magnetic compass ("The Perfect Machine," January, '45); since when he has placed ten more stories with the same magazine, has also appeared as George Whitley (name of one of his **Astounding** characters) in **Thrilling Wonder Stories** and the **American Short Stories**.

SPACE-SEADOGS

"In the latter case," he explained, "they weren't fantasy, but sea stories—though my readers may say the same about most of my science fiction, which admittedly has a seagoing set-up and is built on my belief that space navigation will, when it comes, be much the same as sea navigation to-day. I feel that the astronaut will be more like the present-day seaman than the aviator, and that long voyages by men cooped up in great metal prisons will have the same end results whether they be ocean ships or space ships."

Hence "Golden Journey" (June, '45), "Special Knowledge" (February, '46), "Stability" (July, '46), and other **Astounding** pieces; not forgetting "Giant Killer" (October, '45), his biggest and best to date—and his own favourite creation.

"It was written three times before it was accepted. I got the idea on a voyage when we seemed to carry more rats than cargo. They got in my hair, and I fell to thinking what might happen on a rat-infested spaceship given a spot of mutation. First I wrote the story from the viewpoint of the crew of another spaceship which ran into a derelict in a cock-eyed orbit around the Sun. I gave it a trick ending; didn't mention rats until the last sentence.

"Editor Campbell didn't care for the ending, and asked me to re-write it from the viewpoint of the crew of the derelict on which the rats had mutated. I made it a Russian rocket, stressed the irony of the Comrades atop the mess of mutinous mutants, and called it 'The Rejected.' There was some strong love interest, too.

"It lived up to its title. I learned that **Astounding** was neither 'Fantastic Romances' nor the 'Daily Worker,' and would I please do it once more—this time from the angle of the rats themselves. I did—and it made the grade. The other two versions may yet see print; at least, the original story has been accepted for a British magazine."

AMBASSADOR OF FANTASY

Chandler's sly humour, and the

dogged persistence with which he has mastered the writing business, are reflected in the challenging titles of some of his tales. "The Rejected" is still unsold, but "One Came Back" (**Thrilling Wonder**, Fall, '45) and "Boomerang" both stayed put; the latter will appear in **Famous Fantastic Mysteries**. "Traveller's Tale" will be his next in **Wonder**, and others are due in **New Worlds**, **Outlands** and **Fantasy**. He has also been featured in the **Australian Man**, under the pseudonym, Andrew Dunstan.

Ashore at Napier, N.Z., last June, he addressed the local Rotarians on the possibilities of atomic power, told them all about science fiction and Robert Heinlein's prophetic tales of atomic warfare. On his visits to New York, he made friends with several writers as well as editors, meeting Sprague de Camp, George O. Smith, Theodore Sturgeon and Murray Leinster.

But his greatest encouragement to more and better story-telling is the helpful criticism of his wife Joan, who "likes fantasy, but isn't half so impressed with the work of Bertram Chandler as Bertram Chandler is."

(Next issue — An interview with Arthur C. Clarke.)

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Walter Gillings'

FANTASIA

Science fiction makes news in USA these days. **Harper's Magazine** had six-page article by W. S. Baring-Gould, "Little Superman, What Now?" telling story of fantasy fandom, its Conventions, organisations, agitations. Dealt particularly with fans' condemnation of so-called "racial memory" stories featured by **Amazing**, as against approbation of editorial policy pursued by **Astounding Science-Fiction** . . . **Pathfinder** news magazine had illustrated write-up on change of **Astounding's** title to more dignified **Science Fiction** by gradually discarding superlative and hyphen. **ASF** said to "sell like hot cakes at scientist-haunts . . . Its readers crave it like dope. Consistently, they also try not to be seen buying it. Its trouble is its title . . . **ASF's** competitor-mags are stocked by professional pulp-writers with plots about lush, semi-clad damsels, greenish monsters with nasty notions, stalwart heroes with zap-guns. In contrast, **ASF's** average writers are technical men with a yen to be literary . . ."

John W. Campbell, editor **Astounding**—sorry!—**Science Fiction**, has written "The Atomic Story," published by Holt, New York . . . Now busy editing **Air Trails Pictorial**, big Street and Smith mag covering hobby flying, which will feature science articles henceforth. November issue had long piece on astronautics, "Outward Bound!" by Willy Ley, with luscious diagram-pics by Frank Tinsley, Ley's life story . . . L. Jerome Stanton, **SF's** new associate editor, giving increasing attention to contributors and would-be's, nurses hopes for revival of **Unknown** . . .

PRODIGALS RETURN

Festus Pragnell, old-time British science fiction writer, reappeared with "The Terror from Timorkal," adventure novel with fantastic slant in Bear pocket-book series . . . Maurice G. Hugi, brought back to fantasy by **New Worlds**, hitherto busily engaged with detective stories for publication by Swan . . . Mystery novel series featuring schoolmaam sleuth done by old friend John Russell Fearn under pseudonym John Slate. Latest, "One Remained Seated" (Rich & Cowan, 9/6), radio-reviewed in **The Armchair Detective**. Besides serialising his "Golden Amazon" stories, **Toronto Star Weekly** runs murder mysteries by Fearn, who yet finds time to appear in **Wonder** and **Startling** . . . Norman Lazenby, new **Fantasy** writer, author of shilling shocker, "Swarthyface," also contributes to **Boys' Adventure Library** under own name and pseudonym J. Austin Jackson . . .

Modern Knowledge, one of new series of Lantern Publications appearing bi-monthly, calls itself "The Magazine of Popular Science," has articles on space-travel, sun power, atomics and other subjects with futurist appeal. Regular contributor on aviation developments is Kenneth Gatland, BIS Council member, also writing on rockets for **Practical Mechanics** . . . One-time **Planet Stories** artist, Leydenfrost illustrated **Collier's** article on astronautics by G. Edward Pendray, president American Rocket Society, alias Gawain Edwards of **Science Wonder** days . . . After eleven years absence, **Buck Rogers** of 25th Century has returned to US airwaves to regale listeners with his interplanetary exploits . . .

MIMO-MAG. BOOM

Unlike most astronautics journals, **Rockets**, organ of U.S. Rocket Society, has sympathetic interest in science fiction, is considering featuring it. Fan magazines get reviews in its columns; it even deals in rumours for which fandom is notorious. Suggests that Raymond A. Palmer, **Amazing Stories** editor, writes the Richard Shaver "Lemurian Hoax" tales aforementioned; that Editor Campbell, too, does the pieces in **Astounding** under name of George O. Smith. Comments: "It may explain monotonous sameness of the science fiction diet. Thank Heaven for van Vogt!" . . . Said fan magazines, heroically produced with typewriter and mimo-machine, reappearing in scores Over There. One with biggest circulation, composed almost entirely of ads, reflects wave of buying, selling and swapping among keen collectors. Titles of others are intriguing: **Vampire**, **Psycho**, **Star Rover**, **Le Zombie**, **Phanteur**, **Time-Binder**, **Sun Spots**, **Centauri**, **Tellus**, and—yes!—**Lunacy** . . .

[Continued on Page 18]

Book Reviews

Slave to the Fantastic

THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND and Other Novels, by William Hope Hodgson. Arkham House, Sauk City, \$5.00.

Reviewed by **John Beynon**

The first of the four stories in this massive book is "The Boats of the Glen Carrig," an account of the Sargasso Weed and the nightmares that inhabit it; a traveller's fearsome tale, told by a seaman who knows ships. Following that is the title story, a tale of terrors lying both within the mind and beyond the earth; an extravaganza of time and space and of a haunting by elemental things hovering round the edges of reason.

"The Ghost Pirates" is, as its title indicates, cast in more conventional shape—and a good ghost story it is, too. Finally, and more in the borderland vein again, is the long *Odyssey* where the last millions of the dying world live in "The Night Land."

Much of the significance of Hodgson lies in the fact that these tales were written between 1907 and 1912. To give weight to that is to realise that he was, in much of his work, an initiator and not a follower. That is not to say that he was uninfluenced; all are affected by the mental climate of their time. Yet whatever and whoever helped to fertilise his imagination, Hodgson's treatment of his themes is distinctively his own.

Wells could conceivably have set the scene for "The Night Land." He didn't, but if he had he would have peopled it with creatures logically evolved, and dotted it with relics logically decayed. That was not the way Hodgson's mind worked.

He fills it with his own kind of monsters: obscure, hyper-developed, primitive, Hodgson-generated monsters. A hotch-potch of them which, with that gift which is so distinctively his own, he keeps hovering half-seen, half-comprehended. It is this superb ability to hint and suggest which is his signature.

Mr. H. C. Koenig, in an excellent introduction to the book, suggests that the greater part of the motifs of subse-

quent weird fiction may be found in Hodgson's writings, and it is scarcely to be doubted that many authors have made direct use of that discovery. But one might go further and say that the inspiration of many who do not know his name might be traced at third or fourth hand to his influence.

The natural response to such a statement is: If he is responsible to that extent, why wasn't he better known? And in justice to the remarkable fertility of his imagination, which deserves wider recognition than it has had, one attempts an answer.

When Mr. Koenig refers to Hodgson as "one of the great masters of the fantastic," our ways part. I contend that the fantastic was nearer to mastering Hodgson. He could not, or usually did not, compel it; more often it was all but running away with him. His narratives are not infrequently tied together with thread, where they should be bolted; his light scaffolding of plot sags under the weight his imagination piles upon it.

Occasionally the reason for neglect is more obvious. There are times, for instance, when he indulges in the use of a pseudo-archaic language presumably of his own invention. Why he chose to create this stumbling block for himself, his publishers and his readers is hard to comprehend. In "Glen Carrig" its use was understandable if not advisable; in "The Night Land," unnecessary and regrettable, and it is saddening to reflect upon the number of potential readers who must have deprived themselves of a unique excursion into the fantastic after a glance at a page of it. That he had no need to employ such a period piece of verbal scenery and that he gains nothing by it, is clear from the success with which he builds up his atmosphere in normal language in the other two tales.

But these and other shortcomings of style are no more than incidental. The power and scope of his imagination are unexcelled in their field, and to miss him would be to miss a great deal of what is most eerie, variegated and ambitious among the fantastic.

Science Fiction's Finest

ADVENTURES IN TIME AND SPACE.

Edited by Raymond J. Healy and J. Francis McComas, Random House, New York, \$2.95.

THE BEST OF SCIENCE FICTION.

Edited by Groff Conklin. Crown Publishers, New York, \$3.00.

Reviewed by **D. R. Smith**

The appearance of these two capacious anthologies of modern science-fiction stories gives ample evidence of the respect in which the medium is held by American publishers in these days. To any reader of the pulp magazines in which they were first presented, such an event would have seemed, years ago, a dream that could never happen. Yet here they are, two handsome volumes, comprising a total of 75 stories and some 1,700 pages, which must need take pride of place on our shelves and compel us to throw out quite a few of our shabby, dog-eared issues of **Amazing**, **Wonder** and **Astounding**.

Particularly of **Astounding**, though we shall do it reluctantly, even reverently; for the majority of the material which makes up the two books has been derived from Mr. Campbell's magazine. Indeed, in the case of the larger volume coming from Random House, of the 33 stories and two articles it contains within its 1,000-odd pages, only three of the stories come from other sources.

But it is to the Crown anthology, which appeared just before the other, that **Astounding's** capable editor contributes a preface "Concerning Science Fiction." And in his witty, informative introduction to the volume, Mr. Conklin remarks regarding Mr. Fuller, editor of Crown Publishers: "I often had to beat him off with a broomstick in order to keep it from being entirely composed of stories by Don Stuart, Anson MacDonald, Robert Heinlein and Lewis Padgett." (Referring, I should add for the benefit of those who may not make a study of pseudonyms, to Campbell himself and two of his leading contributors.)

The one complaint a devotee might have about this collection is that perhaps Mr. Conklin succeeded too well. He states his object as making "an adequate cross-section of the whole field, historically as well as contextually." But this is not necessarily compatible with

the title. In particular, "The Great War Syndicate," by Frank R. Stockton, mercifully abbreviated from the original of 1889, may have a certain historical interest, but is childishly naive by modern standards.

This, however, is only one out of 40 stories by 36 different writers (overlooking the pseudonyms); and such as Padgett's "The Piper's Son," Theodore Sturgeon's "Killdozer," Van Vogt's "The Search," Heinlein's "Universe," and "The Jackdaw," by Ross Rocklynne, have a depth of conception and adequacy of style to satisfy the most exacting fan. There is, too, much pleasant reading among the less "advanced" stories, which the newcomer to science fiction might enjoy better than some of the more esoteric items.

For Mr. Conklin intends his anthology as "a primer for those still untutored in the gentle art of scientific dreaming," and one trusts that it will indeed serve to attract fresh converts to the field, a purpose for which it is well designed. Though I still feel the book might have been given a title which would have been more modest as well as appropriate in this respect.

There is certainly nothing of the primer about the Random House volume, the bulk of whose contents is very strong meat indeed. Stuart's "Forgetfulness," that splendid vision of man's far future, and "Who Goes There?" which must at the least be his second best story. "Nerves," by Lester del Ray, the most realistic tale ever written (before the Smyth Report) of events in an atomic power plant. Schuyler Miller's "As Never Was" and Heinlein's "By His Bootstraps"—fascinating tales made out of the paradoxes of time-travel conveniently ignored by earlier writers. Three pieces by Van Vogt, two of Padgett's best.

But how can one compass them all? With the exception of Henry Hasse's "He Who Shrank," every story is delightful entertainment for science-fiction lovers. In thanking the editors and publishers for such a marvellous book, which can surely come only once in a fan's lifetime, we pray that they may continue their good works. For there are still many fine stories which deserve to be rescued from the pulp ephemera and preserved for posterity between durable covers.

Book Reviews

A Howard Anthology

SKULL FACE AND OTHERS, by Robert E. Howard. Arkham House, Sauk City, \$5.00.

Reviewed by **Arthur F. Hillman**

Among the many stories contained in this long-awaited and much-heralded volume are some of the gems from the brilliant crown of the late Robert Elvin Howard, who needs no introduction to readers of weird fantasy. Such tales as "The Scarlet Citadel," "Worms of the Earth" and "The Shadow Kingdom" have the inspirational spark that breathed life and fire into the puppets and panoramas of the gifted Texan. In these, and others, his splendid vigour of expression are self-evident.

The addition to this collection of powerful stories of the "The Hyborian Age" (the imaginary historical framework around which many of his tales were set), and of "A Man-eating Jeopard," that delightful character

study of his own locale and upbringing, was also a happy choice. But what strikes a true Howard follower with something of a jarring note is the scarcity of "Conan" tales; those swash-buckling exploits of the Cimmerian adventurer whose savage resource and ruthless energy are a secret delight to our atavistic instincts.

Out of the 14 stories which appeared originally in *Weird Tales*, only five have been selected for this anthology by the productive Mr. Derleth. But he, probably conscious of the number of admirers of Conan the Barbarian, seems to have prepared his defence in advance of this criticism. His argument is that too many of Conan's exploits, taken together, would sicken the reader with the total butchery and carnage involved.

To me this is sheer sophistry; the same excuse for a similar neglect might be applied equally to some of his other

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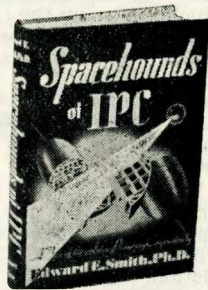
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excellent volumes. One might as well say that too many of Lovecraft's tales, taken together, would make his horrors small beer; that too much of Clark Ashton's Smith's exotic outpourings would bring on literary indigestion. But one does not drink a whole bottle of brandy without pause, and fantasy of a particular type should never be read in large quantities at one sitting. Such tales, delicate pieces of craftsmanship as they are, should be sampled sparingly, at a time and place specially suitable. This is only right and proper, as a reciprocal arrangement with the author who has lavished such care and attention on his work for your benefit.

Thus, with true discrimination, a reader could enjoy a whole bookful of Conan tales; and the present volume must be considered woefully inadequate

in this respect. The two long stories, "Red Nails" and "The People of the Black Circle," which are among the finest in the series, are both missing; instead we have "Skull Face," which is very Sax Rhomerish and inferior to these two. For Howard's imagination was soaring on stronger pinions as the years passed, and his earlier tales do not, in my opinion, compare with the promising epics he produced before his untimely death cut short his career.

Nonetheless, all true followers of Howard should get this book. But they should also insist that Mr. Derleth make expiation for his sins of omission and produce a second volume of stories of this natural-born writer, whose untamed genius puts to shame many of the stars in the literary firmament of to-day.

The Spirit of Man

DEATH INTO LIFE, by Olaf Stapledon. Methuen, London, 7/6.

Reviewed by **A. Bertram Chandler**

In Stapledon's last book, "The Darkness and the Light," we were given a picture of two warring principles. In his own nature—if I may be permitted to conjecture—there has been a similar struggle, a conflict between the novelist and the philosopher. In this book the philosopher has won.

Those of us who like our pills sugar-coated need not be discouraged. The pill, undoubtedly, is stronger than of old. The sugar coating has diminished in quantity, but the quality has not deteriorated.

There is a hero in this book. It is not the moth (beautiful symbolism!) trapped in the big, doomed bomber over Germany. It is neither pilot nor rear-gunner, nor any of the crew of seven. It is not any of their individual spirits, nor is it the group spirit into which they merge after the destruction of their ship.

It is the Spirit of Man. And the Spirit of Man is the moth, trapped at the finish and destroyed, when ages hence the Sun, flaring into a nova, engulfs and annihilates all the Man-colonised planets of the Solar System.

As a piece of philosophy, comforting to the agnostics to whom the conventional heaven and hell of the positively pious and the eternal blackout of the negatively pious are equally distasteful,

I can recommend this book. As fine writing that is a pleasure to read I can also recommend it. But as fantasy it fails to make the grade.

I have wondered many a time why Mr. Stapledon persists, with the Moon already at our back doorstep, in postponing for so long in his future histories the first interplanetary flights. And I wonder why his future men, faced in this book as in others, with the not-too-immediate peril of an exploding Sun, make no attempt to bridge the gulf between the stars. To him, and to his characters, Far Centaurus is not even a dream, let alone a possibility.

The Neptunians of "Last and First Men" did, to their eternal credit, attempt the Dissemination when the End was upon them. But there was not over-much enthusiasm. And "Odd John" went all philosophical on us and demonstrated the lack of survival value in that particular mutation by refusing to put up a fight. Only "Sirius"—and he was a dog—of all Mr. Stapledon's characters demonstrates that savage will to live that is, that must be, an essential part of the Spirit of Man.

Mr. Stapledon's Spirit of Man is a fair substitute for personal immortality—provided that it itself is immortal. But it is not. It is symbolised by the trapped moth. It is lost in an ecstasy of adoration and resignation when the not inevitable end looms over its horizon.

It is all very beautiful. But I'd prefer something with more guts.

Book Reviews

Astronautics for the Million

MOON ROCKET, by Arthur Wilcox.
Nelson, London, 7/6.

DAWN OF THE SPACE AGE, by Harry
Harper. Sampson Low, London, 8/6.

Reviewed by **Arthur C. Clarke**

These two books are the first of what may well become quite an avalanche now that press and public alike have realised, with rather a shock, that there is something in this rocket business after all. Both are addressed to the same reader, the intelligent layman who wants to know what astronautics is all about, and they assume no prior scientific or technical knowledge. In some ways, perhaps they make too little allowance for the reader's intelligence.

Mr. Harper's book was "vetted" by the British Interplanetary Society before publication and, though it contains some technical infelicities, is on the whole free from error. So, with one or two exceptions, is Mr. Wilcox's book. Both of them inevitably cover very similar ground, and devote a good deal of attention to the BIS lunar spaceship design. "Moon Rocket" reproduces the original drawings from the Society's *Journal*, while Mr. Harper's book contains some excellent illustrations by Bruce Gaffron showing the ship on the Moon and at various other stages of its voyage. This book also has a considerably wider scope than the other, which concentrates on the lunar voyage alone. Mr. Harper spends some time discussing the other planets and the conditions upon them, whereas Mr. Wilcox goes no further afield than the Moon.

Although it was published some time earlier, "The Space Age" is much more up-to-date in treatment, printing delays having held up "Moon Rocket" for some years, so that the references to atomic power read somewhat naively now. Mr. Harper also delves into the history of rocketry, drawing considerably on the previous literature of the subject, with due acknowledgments to Willy Ley and our own Philip Cleator. To the uninitiated, this makes his book the more informatively fascinating, though the other is rather better written and has, if anything, a slightly more technical appeal.

Things to Come in

FANTASY REVIEW

ARKHAM HOUSE

by August W. Derleth.

Concerning Science Fiction

by John W. Campbell, Jr.

The Birth of 'New Worlds'

by John Carnell.

The Dear, Dead Days

PEOPLE OF THE TWILIGHT, by H.
Kaner. Kaner, Llandudno, 8/6.

THE SUN QUEEN, by H. Kaner.
Kaner, 8/6.

Reviewed by **Thomas Sheridan**

Both these adventure stories should appeal to an audience which is not too difficult to please with a few airy fancies and a spot of romantic interest, presented in a style that makes for easy reading. But to the inveterate science fiction fan they only bring back memories of the "good old days" when for every really competent story in the American magazines there were too many which relied on the hackneyed formula of Professor, young man and sweetheart involved in hairbreadth escapes with villainous aliens and unpleasant monsters in some planetary or dimensional realm into which they had been precipitated by the scientist's marvellous devices.

At the time, of course, we enjoyed them, even when they were written by the veriest amateur. At least, they helped to fill up the spaces between the more original epics of Verrill, Williamson, Keller and Co. But after twenty years, we find it difficult to get interested in the love affair of a handsome young adventurer upon a molecular world, or the efforts of a misguided scientist to educate its inhabitants in the follies of humankind. And when we find them plagued by Giant Ants, we must confess to being terribly, terribly bored.

Even the thrills of a journey to the Sun with the clever inventor of a machine that could travel at light-speed, and his inevitable sweetie, didn't shake us out of the drowsy conviction that Cummings or somebody had done it all much better—or worse—long ago.

Among the Magazines

By NIGEL LINDSAY

With two new British publications to augment those coming from America, it looks as if there may soon be more Fantasy magazines than any one fan can read, much less afford. I hope we do not reach the position they did in the U.S. in the early days of the war, when there were about 20 different mags. vying for the enthusiast's attention. Anyway, in these surveys I shall try to help the bewildered reader take his choice from the welter of available material and obtain the maximum reading pleasure with a modicum of expenditure.

Among the Americans, **Astounding Science-Fiction** is far and away the best in appearance and the quality of its contents. Except for two or three bleak years, when many of its best writers were drafted, it has kept up a monthly supply of consistently good, sophisticated reading throughout the war. Those who have been unable to secure the original, pocket-size magazine must be thankful to the Atlas organisation for maintaining the British reprint edition, however limited in size and frequency by paper restrictions. Since '42 it has appeared six times a year, and I am told it is hoped to revert to monthly publication before long.

The U.S. edition carries a photographure section featuring a science article, and since the Big Bang there has been plenty of information on aspects of atomic energy, both in this section and the excellent Campbell editorials. The latest (December) issue to hand features a Campbell article on the Bikini test, and a novelette by our own Eric Frank Russell, "Metamorphosite," which is one of the best for some time. Other pieces are by Van Vogt, Padgett and George O. Smith.

Cover is by a new artist, Alejandro, an improvement on Timmins. Swenson is still doing all the interiors—and do I miss Dold!

After starting out to reprint all those famous **Argosy** stories for which fans had been clamouring for years, **Famous Fantastic Mysteries** switched to new stories for a while, and now is reprinting fantasy novels, which are sometimes a little too familiar. However, I prefer my science-fiction in magazines rather

than books, so I've no complaint. Of late we have had Herbert Best's "25th Hour" and Wells' "Dr. Moreau." Latest (December) issue brings "Unthinkable," by Francis Sibson, with short tales by E. F. Benson and George Whitley.

Finlay is back on the cover, and shares the rest of the artwork with Lawrence. Next (February) issue will reprint Jack London's "The Star Rover" and "The Angry Street," by Chesterton.

Weird Tales may have declined a bit in comparison with '36-8 issues, but is still going strong every other month, with one or two really good stories in each number. Recent covers have been all but atrocious, and interiors no more than amusing, except for an occasional pic by that marvellous weird artist Boris Dolgov. But the January, '47, issue has a pleasing cover by Tilburne illustrating William Hope Hodgson's "The Hog," an absorbing tale of the Outer World monstrosities.

Each of these three magazines is in a class of its own. The rest of the field serves up a mixture of science-fiction and fantasy of the blood-and-thunder type, a monotonous diet, enlivened only occasionally by an outstanding story, which pops up where and when you least expect it.

Fairly representative are **Planet Stories** and the Standard companions **Thrilling Wonder** and **Startling Stories**. The two latter are decidedly on the upgrade, with pieces by such favourites as Henry Kuttner, Murray Leinster, Sprague de Camp, Ross Rocklynne and the ubiquitous John Russell Fearn. But since both lately saw British editions, re-printed in their entirety in Canada, you're probably familiar with the set-up. If not, watch out for an Earle Bergey cover showing a redhead in a yellow sweater-girl spacesuit, doing a jet-propelled Sonja Henie act. That'll be the December **Wonder**, featuring a Kuttner novelette, "I am Eden."

Talking of British editions, the Winter **Unknown Worlds** brings "Land of Unreason," a De Camp-Fletcher Pratt whimsy that shouldn't be missed. Again, praise be to Atlas for keeping up this reprint, if only three times a year. There's another one due soon.

J. Michael Rosenblum writes

ABOUT BOOKS

ANY QUESTIONS?

In this column I am going to write about books which come within the orbit of Fantasy—books new and old, British and American; science or weird fiction, or just plain fantasy. But I hope that at least some will do more than just read my ramblings and introduce suitable topics for discussion. If you have any particularly rare books on your shelves, write and tell us about them. If you want any information about books you haven't got, or have any queries we may be able to answer, let us have your problem and we'll do our best to settle it. If we don't know the answer, there'll be somebody who does . . .

THE BOOK BOOM IN U.S.

Back in '39, when most of us on this side of the Atlantic lost touch with the American scene, fantasy enthusiasts over there seemed mostly to confine their interests to the specialised science and weird fiction magazines. Now, what a change has occurred! It is books, books, and more books. Books to buy, books to sell, books to exchange for more books. Books to collect, to fill shelves to overflowing—even to read!

What has happened to cause this changeover in taste, which has had an increasing effect on the production of fantasy books to meet the demand? I trace the origin of the booky trend back to the formation of Arkham House by August Derleth and Donald Wandrei, round about the time the war started. At first they intended merely to perpetuate the memory of the late H. P. Lovecraft by issuing two or three volumes collating the best works of their literary master. But the idea developed into the production of anthologies of the work of other old-time **Weird Tales** giants; and so followed limited editions of volumes by Clark Ashton Smith, Henry S. Whitehead and Wandrei and Derleth themselves.

Those first volumes, especially Lovecraft's "The Outsider and Others" and "Beyond the Wall of Sleep," are now worth many times their original published price, and those collectors who have them are possessed of treasures indeed. In due course Arkham House was producing in earnest: volumes of

short stories by such well-known modern writers as Robert Bloch and Frank Belknap Long have been interspersed with the work of such familiar oldsters as Le Fanu and Hodgson, all in handsome format and bindings which give grace to the most artistic bookcase.

THE DERLETH TOUCH

In '42, Wandrei disappeared into the maw of the U.S. armed forces; but Derleth's work for Arkham House soon attracted attention in publishing circles, with the result that several other firms engaged him to edit similar anthologies. Farrar and Rinehart's "Sleep No More!" and "Who Knocks?" provided two fine selections of weird and horror tales which will shortly be supplemented by a third volume, "The Night Side," from the same house. Tower's "Best Supernatural Stories of H. P. Lovecraft," prepared by Derleth, gave those who had missed the original Arkham volumes an opportunity to acquire the cream of them at a very reasonable price; and the two Bart House pocket-book editions of "The Weird Shadow over Innsmouth" and "The Dunwich Horror," at 25c. each, completed the process of bringing H.P.L.'s masterpieces well within the reach of everybody. But not the process of satisfying the ordinary reader's appetite for stories of the supernatural.

According to those who should know, there is a tendency in times of crisis and war for the average reader to turn to what they call "escapist literature." And that, of course, was what the reviewers said when a veritable stream of fantasy collections and ghostly omnibuses poured from American publishers' presses. Whatever the source of the inspiration, which was happy enough for our connoisseur cousins, it is evident from my own bulging shelves that the back issues of the fantasy magazines provided much of the best material for these volumes.

Though realising that most of my readers will know little or nothing of them, much less have them at their elbows as I have (in which respect I have been industrious as well as fortunate in maintaining my contacts with American friends throughout the war), I cannot hope to enumerate all these books here. However, we may be able

to pay proper attention to some of them in due course. Such is one of the purposes of this column: to bring you up-to-date with all that you may have missed during the war hiatus, as well as to help keep you posted on current book productions on both sides.

SCIENCE FICTION'S TURN

Science fiction has not been entirely neglected in this gamut of anthologising. The first outbreak was "The Other Worlds: 25 Modern Stories of Mystery and Imagination" (Garden City: \$1.00), which appeared in '42. Edited by Phil Stong, the book critic, it contained a varied and rather peculiar selection of tales, both weird and scientific, dedicated to the maxim that a good fantasy should not be even remotely possible. Fandom was surprised and not overpleased at this outside opinion of its literature (the selection was culled mostly from the time-honoured magazines); but it was considerably bucked when the prominent fan-turned-professional, Donald A. Wollheim, entered the lists in '43 with his "Pocket-book of Science Fiction," containing a very fine picking of magazine fantasy. Two years later, in the "Portable" series of the Viking Press, came the Wollheim-edited "Novels of Science," comprising Wells' "First Men in the Moon," Taine's "Before the Dawn," Lovecraft's "Shadow Out of Time" and Stapledon's "Odd John."

But it is only recently that science fiction has really come into its own in the shape of the two Crown and Random House anthologies reviewed elsewhere in this issue, and the "classic" novel reprints which are appearing from other houses newly organised for the specific purpose of publishing fantasy books for the collector. Among these is the Buffalo-Hadley company, of Rhode Island, with an ambitious programme for reprinting some dozen old-time favourites on which it is already launched.

First was John Taine's **Wonder Stories** serial. "The Time Stream," followed by the famous "Skylark of Space" of Dr. Edward E. Smith, to which will be added "Skylark Three" and "Skylark of Valeron," to complete the trilogy started by **Amazing** in '31. Meanwhile, the new Fantasy Press, with which well-known science fiction writer Lloyd Arthur Eshbach is associated, is publishing "Spacehounds of IPC," another interstellar epic of the days when

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Amazing was making history in the field.

Coming from the Hadley Publishing Co. shortly is "The Weapon Makers" of A. E. van Vogt, one of **Astounding's** most popular war-time novels. And just arrived from Arkham House is the same author's "Slan!" reprinted from the same magazine and regarded by every fantasy fan as being dedicated to his breed. All these books are "musts" for you—if you can contrive to get hold of them in spite of limited editions and currency exchange problems.

BOK ENDS MERRITTS

Another new company is the New Collector's Group, which plans to publish at least two stories which A Merritt failed to complete before he died. "The Fox Woman" and "The Black Wheel." The first has appeared already, after some delay, the MS. having been finished by Hannes Bok. **Weird Tales** artist-writer, who is connected with the Group and has also illustrated the book in his own inimitable style. Yet an-

other is the Trover Hall organisation, which promises to publish original material only, commencing with "Puzzle Box," a book of six fantasies by Anthony More.

On this side, too, we have Pharos Books, of Colwyn Bay, which the author Alfred Gordon Bennett has launched and which will include several fantasies in its list, some of them from his own versatile pen. His "Whom the Gods Destroy," already published in a neat paper-cover edition at 2/-, is a new tale of Oriental mystery with something of a Shangri-La atmosphere. It will be followed by "The Coil and Other Strange Stories," also of his own telling, which looks like proving very much to our particular taste.

In the next issue I shall deal with various British anthologies of the weird and supernatural that have appeared of recent months, and which are proving as popular with our transatlantic friends, in many cases, as their own bulkier but not always superior books are with us.

Walter Gillings' FANTASIA—Continued

Which reminds me . . . Remember John C. Craig, who crashed U.S. mushroom mags. of '40-'42 which few British fans ever saw? He's guilty of piece in current (Feb.) issue of classy Kark mag. **Courier**, guying whole field of "Scientifiction," depicting fans as earnest followers of "leering Lunarians, villainous Venusians" portrayed by luridly illustrated pulps. **New Worlds** and **Fantasy** get mentioned, but . . . January **Argosy** reprinted Theodore Sturgeon's "If" from **Unknown** . . . "New Adam," play by A. G. Thornton set in 2156, when human race is dying of old age, presented in London. Critic's verdict: "No future in it" . . . Of all places, article on astronautics by Arthur C. Clarke appeared in January **Everywoman** . . .

TOP TEN

Best-loved writer of fantasy is the late A. Merritt of "Moon Pool" fame, with H. P. Lovecraft second, according to poll run by American fan mag **Beowulf**. Following in order of popularity are A. E. van Vogt, Henry Kuttner, Robert Heinlein, Stanley G. Weinbaum, E. E. Smith, Don A. Stuart (John W. Campbell), Sprague de Camp, John Taine. Most popular artist is Virgil Finlay, followed by Lawrence, Paul, Hannes Bok . . . August Derleth, **Weird Tales** veteran, builder of Arkham House, is author of "Writing Fiction" (Writer, Boston: \$2.50), including chapters on imaginative and science fiction . . . To get his M.A. in Literature at Southern California University, Paul W. Skeeters is writing thesis on "The Supernatural and Weird in 20th Century English and American Fiction," which will be published as a book . . .

Detective novel, "The Chinese Doll," by Wilson Tucker (Rinehart, New York: \$2.50), otherwise Bob Tucker, noted Illinois fantasy fan, has fellow devotees as characters with background of science fiction activity . . . Los Angeles fans, headed by Forrest J. Ackerman, established a Fantasy Foundation to preserve collection of fantastic fiction for posterity. Original typescripts, drawings and other relics-to-be are being donated or earmarked as bequests to this World Museum of Fantasy . . . U.S. enthusiasts also planning exhibition of paintings and programme of music (all their own work) for 5th World Science Fiction Convention, to be held in Philadelphia this year . . . Norman C. Pallant, up-and-coming **Fantasy** writer, old student of the field, gave lecture on it to Hornsey Literary Society . . . Is science fiction juvenile? The question repeats itself through the decades. Well, what price "Bimbo Goes to the Moon! A Comic, Painting and Tracing Book in One"? Actually, ninepence . . .

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