

FANTASY REVIEW

Vol. I, No. 2

SIXPENCE

APR.-MAY 1947

REVELATION

Much as we anticipated, **FANTASY REVIEW** has come as a complete eye-opener to hundreds who, except for a few emasculated magazines or an occasional book discovered by accident, have been all too long isolated from their favourite literature. Its news of publishing developments of which they were unaware; its reviews of books they did not suspect were forthcoming in such appetising array; its reawakening of an interest which, in many cases, had almost died of attrition, have brought unqualified approval from its subscribers. Such a publication, they generally agree, is just what they needed to enlighten and advise them.

Even those few who were already alive to the fact of fantasy fiction's increased fertility have welcomed **FANTASY REVIEW** as the only journal to cater adequately for their interest and enable them to keep pace with the rapid growth of the medium on both sides of the Atlantic. From the U.S.A. especially have come encouraging comments indicating that it has already assumed a unique position in the field which it covers. And, knowing the usual transitoriness of such publications on their side, these well-wishers earnestly beg us not to let this most promising of all journals devoted to fantasy fiction—"the best ever." they describe it—die a premature death.

But as yet we have only begun. And in spite of the special difficulties we have to contend with on this side in these days, we have no intention of suspending **FANTASY REVIEW** while there are readers to whom it is so essential to the maintenance of their hobby. Rather, we want to serve all fantasy's followers more usefully, if we can; and there are many to whom we have still to reveal the healthy state of the medium and awaken their latent interest. A matter in which you can assist us, and enable us the quicker to enlarge the scope and contents of this magazine as we plan to do eventually.

Once they have seen this journal, we have no doubt that any who are at all aware of the pleasures of science and weird fiction, and of the subjects in which it deals, will want to ensure they receive **FANTASY REVIEW** regularly. If, therefore, you know of any who might welcome a specimen copy, let us have their names and addresses so that we may introduce it to them. At the same time, let us have your further comments and suggestions, so that we may make this journal of ever-growing interest to you. We want your opinions, your criticisms—your contributions, too.

THE EDITOR.



CAN SCIENCE FICTION PROPHECY?

What is the function of science fiction—prediction or entertainment? Is it prophetic, or do some of its fantasies come true only by accident? In the Introduction and Preface to "The Best in Science Fiction," recently published in America, the editor, Groff Conklin, a distinguished literary critic, takes issue on this question with John W. Campbell Jr., editor of *Astounding Science Fiction*. Here are their arguments, for and against.*

"It Does," Says John W. Campbell

Science fiction is a broader field than the non-reader realises. Some is beautifully written, some is handled with the machine precision of logic and careful structure of engineering estimate. And some of the published material is completely bad.

But science fiction has its special followers. Because to most people it seems lurid, nonsensical trash, its fans tend to be a bit defensive in their attitude. It has, definitely, been a misunderstood type of material. In the public mind, "Buck Rogers" is the standard science fiction character. He is—to precisely the extent that "Dick Tracy" is representative of detective fiction.

Actually, Buck Rogers evolved—or devolved—out of a series of stories Phil Nowlan wrote in the old *Amazing Stories*. In the original stories Rogers

was not "Buck," and they were well and thoughtfully done. The first one had an excellent dissertation on the military advantages of bazookas, though the author did not know the name later attached to the weapon.

There are three broad divisions of science fiction. First, prophecy stories, in which the author tries to predict the effects of a new invention. Second, philosophical stories, in which he presents some philosophical question. Third, adventure science fiction, where in action and plot are the main point. Naturally, no story can be purely one or the other. The philosophical story will use an adventure-type plot to act out the problem under discussion. The science fictionist will probably include a few items of prophecy in setting up the background against which his philosophical problem is acted out. The prophecy story will necessarily involve adventure, too; some human character, reacting to the new forces, must be used to display their nature and magnitude.

Science is always in the business of prediction. The chemist "predicts" that if you combine hydrogen and oxygen you will get heat and water vapour. On the same basis, scientists in 1940 reported that if you combined uranium isotope 235 with neutrons you would get enormous energy, various unstable elements, and more neutrons. The nuclear physicists couldn't, in 1940, separate U-235 on the scale required, and no one knew just how it would be done. But it was obvious that it could and would be done.

Naturally, the science fiction writer, who need only write about the finished product, can predict what's coming. But he doesn't merely say, "In ten years we will have atomic weapons." He goes further; his primary interest is in what

*Condensed from *The Best in Science Fiction*, by permission of Crown Publishers, 419 Fourth Avenue, New York, U.S.A.

FANTASY REVIEW

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

A Journal for Readers, Writers and Collectors of Imaginative Fiction

BI-MONTHLY: SIXPENCE

Editorial, Advertising and Publishing Office: 15 Shere Road, Ilford, Essex.

Subscription rates: In Great Britain and Dominions (except Canada) 3/6 per year. Single copies, 7d., post free. In Canada and U.S.A., 75c. per year. Single copies, 15c., post free.

Vol. I, No. 2 Apr.-May, 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).

those weapons will do to political, economic and cultural structures of human society.

There are, incidentally, other ways of making accurate prophecies of things to come. Men were predicting flying machines long before any concept was formed of the difficulties involved or of the principles which might overcome them. Men wanted flying machines; eventually they got them. Men want space-ships—and men will reach the Moon. We know how, now. But it has been predicted for centuries; since men knew the Moon was another world, not a silver dish in the sky.

You can predict long-term trends: what man wants hard enough somebody will eventually figure out. You can predict short-term trends by simply discussing a laboratory phenomenon as an engineering practice. Atomic bombs, radar and radio-controlled planes were all perfectly predictable. The function of science fiction is to consider what those inventions can or could do to people.

Science fiction is **not** pseudo-science, which is what the Sunday supplements present: false, imitation science, attempting to pass itself off as the genuine article. Science fiction is no more pseudo-science than fiction is pseudo-truth. It is purely fiction, and makes no claim to be fact. But it does claim—and with provable truth—that many of its stories are extrapolations of known science into possible future

engineering. The general proposition of uranium fission was described in accurate detail in various stories published before 1941 ended.

The top authors of science fiction are, in general, professional technicians of one sort or another, who write the stories as a hobby which makes some useful pocket money. But primarily they write to place before other keen and interested minds the ideas, suggestions and problems they have themselves encountered.

Some while ago, I was trying to find out why it was that a friend who very much liked fantasy (which embraces "ghoulies and ghosties and things that go boomp i' the night"), could not abide science fiction. The reason was hard to find. He didn't lack imagination or have a stereotyped mind, or he wouldn't have enjoyed fantasy stories. Eventually, it worked out like this:

In fantasy, the author knows it isn't true, the reader knows it didn't happen, and can't ever happen, and everybody is agreed. But in science fiction, this man felt the author was trying to convince him that the story which he knew was utterly "fantastic" **could, and quite probably would, happen**. In effect, he didn't like science fiction because the author was sincere, highly competent, and had put into his story such a feeling of certainty and reality that it almost forced the reader to accept its message against his own "better judgment."

"It Shouldn't," Says Groff Conklin

In 1889 Frank R. Stockton was writing for a new magazine called **Once a Week**. One of his pot-boilers was about a future war with Great Britain. It was called "The Great War Syndicate," and in it the author worked out a couple of new weapons against which, he felt, it would be impossible to build defences. One of them was a giant pincers which disabled British battle-ships by pulling their propellers out by the roots. Another was a cannon with miraculous powers.

So hopelessly fantastic did the story seem then, and later, that it dropped into a kind of honourable obscurity. However, on August 6, 1945, it suddenly came alive again. Through the purest chance—a chance which has not blessed the efforts of many fantasy writers—the effects of Stockton's miraculous cannon were uncannily like

those of the atom bomb which eliminated Hiroshima. Much of the mechanics with which he surrounded the operation of the weapon is sheer nonsense, yet his description of its results is startlingly vivid and true.

Of course, "The Great War Syndicate" was unadulterated day-dreaming. But the fact that it was written when it was has led some of science fiction's more avid followers to stake out claims on the future. Who knows, these intrepid romanticists say, but what to-day's science fiction may not turn out to be to-morrow's technological commonplace? Less fanatic addicts claim that a good science fiction story is improbable but not impossible. Even that definition depends on your credulity. If you believe that your actions in 1906 have already happened on another "plane," you can equally well believe

that you could learn what those actions will be by means of a time machine, a space warp, or some other unpatented gadget.

But the simple fact is that science fiction, despite its treading on the toes of nuclear physics, has no business claiming the robes of the prophet. That professional S-F writers (as they are familiarly known in the pulp magazine trade) were able to write with some knowledgeability of atomic fission as far back as 1940 does not prove they had second sight. It only proves that they read the right science journals, in which the coldly scientific possibilities of the atom were described with accurate detail for them to pick up and embroider.

It is in its embroideries that the largest merit of science fiction resides. I think any brand of writing, no matter how incredible, which explores regions of man's imagination heretofore virgin to his interest, is worth reading. One purpose of literature is to transport the reader. Science fiction does that. And ideas and dreams which man has never before thought or imagined give such tales a certain permanence.

Far be it from one who has grown up with the age of electricity to doubt the old saw that that which can be imagined can be. The world of 1946, even without the atom, would seem as impossible to the world of 1846 as the wildest science fiction stories seem to us to-day. But don't let that fool you. They were writing of men on the Moon as far back as 1835, and they were not joking about it either. People wanted to believe the incredible, and believe it they did, until they were reluctantly disabused of their error.

Yet it would have been simpler in 1835 to imagine the existence of men on the Moon than it would to conceive of music coming out of a flat piece of rubber, or light from a tiny strand of wire, or of flight by air at speeds near that of sound. It is, therefore, foolhardy for us realistic moderns to sneer too omnisciently at the vagaries of the S-F boys.

Indeed, much science fiction is definitely possible. Consider how little we know about the world we live on, and in, and under. Moreover, no scientist to-day dare say there cannot be life on the planets, or even on the Moon. We have never been on the Moon; and where we have not been we cannot

know, no matter how enormous the magnification of our telescopes, or our microscopes either.

The best science fiction is that which describes adventures in realms where man has not yet ventured. Just as early descriptions of voyages, with their sea monsters and other impossible fauna and flora, remained true until disproved, so, for the free mind, many of the adventures described in science fiction may as well be thought possible until proved otherwise. It is much more fun that way! For fun, after all, is the primary import of science fiction which, like the detective story and the fairy tale, has one purpose, clear and simple: the purpose of entertaining you.

Where the science fiction writer will go now that nuclear fission is fact instead of fancy is very simple to answer. He will go on writing science fiction, safe in the knowledge that there are still quite a few things to write about which are in advance of current scientific developments.

INFORMATION PLEASE!

Your fantasy fiction Want Lists, and lists of magazines for sale or exchange, are requested by us. Fantasy's best prices and service are given by

FANTASY SERVICE

17 Burwash Road, Plumstead,
London, S.E. 18

Ready May 1st:

THE LEGION OF SPACE

by Jack Williamson

A limited, illustrated, cloth-bound edition of this classic of Science Fiction, priced at \$3.25, postpaid (\$3.00 in the U.S.A. and Canada).

FANTASY PRESS

Reading, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Walter Gillings'

FANTASIA

Condemning rigid editorial policies of science fiction magazines, Sam Moskowitz, prominent U.S. fan, revealed that seven writers or writer-teams produced 70 per cent of stories used by **Astounding Science-Fiction** in past three years. In the circle were man-and-wife A. E. van Vogt and E. Mayne Hull; also Henry Kuttner and wife C. L. Moore, writing as Lewis Padgett and Lawrence O'Donnell. Other stand-by's: George O. Smith, with pseudonym Wesley Long; Isaac Asimov, Murray Leinster, Raymond P. Jones, the late Malcolm Jameson. That there's so little scope for new writers, says Moskowitz, shows "formula is drowning inspiration" . . . Meanwhile, Associate Editor L. Jerome Stanton reports "heavy snowfall of MSS." following tempting invitation to all comers in recent issue. Editorial told of "beaming smiles and great joy when a new, unknown author shows up with a bell-ringer. You do not have to be an old-time author to sell stories . . ."

American fan mag. **Vampire** held poll of best-liked stories and writers of '46. Results: best writing performance by Henry Kuttner (under one name or another—see above); runner-up, A. E. van Vogt, followed by Murray Leinster, George O. Smith, Ray Bradbury. Favourite tales: Padgett's "Fairy Chessmen," Smith's "Pattern for Conquest," O'Donnell's "Vintage Season," Eric Frank Russell's "Metamorphosite." All **Astounding** pieces . . .

BEST-SELLERS IN S-F

Much-sought-after anthologies "The Best in Science Fiction" and "Adventures in Time and Space" reported to have reached best-selling figures . . . Groff Conklin, editor of Crown collection, planning another one, concentrating on "good old days" type story . . . Dr. Edward E. Smith just completed "Lensman" novel, "Children of the Lens," action of which lies between "Triplanetary" and "Galactic Patrol" eras . . . Paul D. O'Connor, New Collector's Group publisher, reputed to have in store hitherto unpublished sequel to A. Merritt's famous "Moon Pool" . . . Veteran fantasy writer Dr. David H. Keller, now 66 and retired Lieut.-Colonel, visited Eastern S-F Society in New Jersey, which auctioned MSS., drawings, rare magazines featuring his work . . . Prof. J. O. Bailey, author of "Pilgrims Through Space and Time," recording development of science-fantasy, guest at convention of East Coast fans . . . Alexander M. Phillips, another old-timer, appointed Historian of Philcon Society, organised in connection with 5th World S-F Convention, to be held in Philadelphia end of August. Convention's own organ, **Philcon News**, now appearing . . .

Literary editor of **Amazing Stories** when it was "The Aristocrat of Science Fiction," C. A. Brandt contemplates come-back with new magazine . . . Revival of **Unknown Worlds'** U.S. edition is definite project depending only on paper situation, John W. Campbell Jnr. assured inquirers. Collector's index guide, just received, lists 39 issues before it suspended. Last was Oct. '43; as from Dec. '40 it appeared only bi-monthly . . . Sign of the times: with March issue, **Doc Savage Magazine** changed to **Doc Savage, Scientific Detective** . . .

FLAGG, BREUER DEAD

Comes belated news of death of two favourites of the '30's: George Henry Weiss, otherwise Francis Flagg, and Dr. Miles J. Breuer . . . Remember Lilith Lorraine? She's founder-director of Avalon, poets' retreat in Arkansas, edits poetry magazine **Different**. Of her own 300-page book of poetical works, "Let the Patterns Break," Clark Ashton Smith writes: "She adds a new dimension to fantasy, a nuance of ultra-violet to the spectrum of poetry" . . . Stanton A. Coblenz, author of "When the Birds Fly South" (Wings Press: \$2.50), won 3rd prize in poetry contest with quatrain titled "Atomic Bomb" . . . Reviewing "The Doll and One Other," by Algernon Blackwood (Arkham House: \$1.50). **Time** revealed: "The stories were written in Devonshire during the war, stuck in a hamper and almost forgotten. Blackwood dug them out when Arkham House wrote to ask whether he had anything on hand." . . .

Bob Tucker's "The Chinese Doll" (see this column, last issue) will be published in England by Cassell. His second novel, "Who Owns You?" now being considered

by Rinehart . . . William F. Temple's **Amazing** story, "The Four-Sided Triangle," will see **British** publication in novel-length version, sooner or later . . . W. P. Cockcroft, **New Worlds** contributor, author of twopenny thriller, "They Came from Mars," now with BAOR in Germany . . . L. V. Heald, coming up again in **Fantasy**, also producing text-books for writers, including "Encyclopedia of Article Ideas" (Matson: 10/6) . . .

SHAVER'S OWN

Scientist-scientifictionist Thomas S. Gardner, bitterest critic of **Amazing** "Shaver Mystery" tales, handed bouquet to Chester S. Geier for story in March issue of companion mag, **Fantastic Adventures**, "Forever is Too Long." Rub is that Geier is president of new Shaver Mystery Club, to consolidate interest in Lemurian "thought records" of people who dwell in caves awaiting day they'll emerge. Club mag, is edited by Richard S. Shaver, writer of pieces which, panned by fandom, got **Amazing** brand-new readership . . . Vanguard Records is new enterprise by Robert W. Lowndes and James Blish, well-known in U.S. fantasy field, specialising in off-trail discs. One, "Song of Worlds Unseen," composed by Chan Davis, **Astounding** writer; another is Albert Galpin's "Lament for H. P. Lovecraft," published in Arkham House's "Marginalia" . . . Pierre Benoit's "Atlantide" to be made into film starring Maria Montez. "The Ghost & Mrs. Muir," by R. A. Dick (Harrap: 7/6) also to be filmed.

Who is science fiction's most prolific writer? No, not John Russell Fearn. Check-up of all mags, published since '26, by Oregon enthusiast Donald B. Day, showed old-timer Ray Cummings had most tales printed—upwards of 100 in 18 different U.S. publications. Next was "Captain Future" originator Edmond Hamilton, followed by Eando (brothers Earl and Otto) Binder, Harl Vincent, Frank B. Long. Fearn came 24th on list; but Day took no account of pseudonyms . . . After eight years' activity in other directions, George Gordon Clark, member No. 1 of old Science Fiction League, has returned to fandom. Seems there's no escape . . .

MAURICE HUGI PASSES

Maurice G. Hugi, British science fiction writer, recently died at his home in Kensal Rise, London, at the age of 43.

Suddenly though it came, his death was not wholly unexpected. To a close friend he revealed, some time ago, that his doctor had warned him he had only a year to live. But he accepted this verdict with typical aplomb, and did not relax his constant efforts to achieve fame as a writer which he began 20 years ago.

Yet it was only in the last few years that Hugi, known to his intimates as "Tubby" (he weighed 17 stone), enjoyed the degree of success which his perseverance finally brought him. For a long time he suffered disappointments which would have spelled failure to a lesser enthusiast; but occasional encouragements were enough to maintain his dogged persistence and good humour, until at length he reaped the rewards he deserved.

Of French descent, unmarried, and a popular member of Britain's fantasy circle, Hugi made his first appearance

13 years ago in the juvenile science fiction weekly, **Scoops**, which featured two of his stories, "Temple of Doom" and "The Mines of Haldar." Possessing a rare fund of ideas and facility for storytelling, he was always a prolific writer. But he did not see print again until the advent of **Tales of Wonder**, whose first issue featured his "Invaders from the Atom," followed by "Super-Senses," (Spring '38) and "Creature of Eternity" (Summer '39).

His only appearance in America was with "The Mechanical Mice" (**Astounding**, Jan. '41), which was written in collaboration with Eric Frank Russell and was reprinted in the recent anthology, "Adventures in Time and Space." A few of his pieces of non-fantastic theme appeared in **London Life**.

During the war, when he served as an A.R.P. ambulance driver in one of London's most-blitzed districts, he started writing detective stories for boys, and of recent years he produced a great deal of this material for eventual publication in a juvenile series. As yet none has appeared, but his success in this field was such that he was able to devote himself to writing as a full-time occupation, and with his return to science fiction in **New Worlds** he was looking forward to concentrating his future efforts in his favourite medium.

Champion of Space-Flight

Success as a science fiction writer, even after years of rejections, won't deter **ARTHUR G. CLARKE** from the more important business of astronautics. Or so **THOMAS SHERIDAN** gathers from an interview with the **BIS** Councillor.



Picture a 12-year old high schoolboy, shock-headed, bespectacled, poring over **Astounding Stories of Super-Science** (as it was in the beginning), building telescopes out of old meccano parts, or peering at the craters of the Moon when he should have been sound asleep in the dorm. That, seventeen years ago, was Arthur Charles Clarke, known to his fellows of those days as "Professor"; to those of more recent days as "Ego" or "Rockets" Clarke, "Ego" because—well, somehow the nickname just grew. "Rockets" because for the past decade he's been one of the most enthusiastic workers in Britain's astronautics movement.

Added to which, now, he's one of the brightest pupils in our new school of science fiction writers. But his success in this sphere, pleasing though it is, isn't as important to him as his propagandist activities on behalf of the British Interplanetary Society and the science of astronautics in general. In this fast-developing field, in which he has already made a name for himself, he cherishes great ambitions, the eventual realisation of which may have tremendous effects on the future of this—and other—worlds.

Ten years ago, when the **BIS** was regarded as a collection of cranks with a mad plan to shoot a rocket to the Moon, Arthur Clarke was one of those few who could bring the sceptics as near as possible to the conviction that space-travel wasn't entirely fantasy. To the cynic who asked, "And will you go on the first trip?" he would reply unhesitatingly, "Yes—if I get the chance." And Fleet-street columnists, wisecracking about "empty petrol cans floating in space" (a reference to the jettisoning of cellular sections of the Moonship designed by **BIS** in '38), failed to deflate

Clarke's ego. His sense of humour is as irrepressible as his energetic zeal for his cause.

At that time the ex-Taunton schoolboy, having come to the big city in '36 to place his mathematical genius at the disposal of H.M. Exchequer, shared with author William F. Temple and fantasy fan Maurice Hanson the now-famous flat in Grays Inn Road which was the centre of **BIS** and **SFA** doings. He'd joined **BIS** some years before, and when its headquarters was transferred from Liverpool to the metropolis he became its treasurer and worked on its Technical Committee.

RADAR MAN

During the war, which reduced **BIS** activities to desultory correspondence on the possibilities of **V2** between its erstwhile leaders, Clarke was in the **RAF** juggling with the intricacies of top-secret radar. He was in charge of the first experimental **GCA** unit shipped here from U.S., with the scientists who had designed and built it. For months he was occupied teaching others to operate it and tending its 400 valves. But he still found time to keep the scattered remnants of **BIS** together, to publish his first technical paper on time-base circuits in **Wireless Engineer**, and to seek relaxation in science fiction.

After rising from radio-mech., via instructor, to Flight-Lieutenant, he did much important work in Service electronics for two years prior to demobilisation. But astronautics was still in the blood. He carried off first prize in an **RAF Quarterly** competition with a remarkable essay on "The Rocket and the Future of Warfare" which, depicting in cold, horrifying terms the final results of atomic war, caused quite a

flutter in high quarters. And almost before the V2's had stopped falling he had set the wheels in motion for the reorganising of the BIS in amalgamation with the Combined British Astronautical Societies, resulting in the establishment of a new and more vigorous body early in '46.

As a member of the new Council and, later, its assistant secretary, he has since done much crusading, organising and lecturing for the reconstituted BIS. His own paper to the Society, "The Challenge of the Spaceship," published in its *Journal* (Dec. '46) is perhaps the most penetrating analysis of the full implications of astronautical development ever attempted; a century hence it may well have become a unique historical document.

Among several other technical papers and more popular pieces on his pet subject which have recently appeared under his name, Clarke regards "The Principles of Rocket Flight," in *The Aeroplane*, as most important. His two feature articles in *The Star* on the first trip to the Moon attracted wide attention, resulting in a radio interview by the American Broadcasting Co. and a BBC talk for South America. Another of his recent accomplishments was adding to the BIS membership roll, lengthened enormously of late, the name of George Bernard Shaw.

ROLE OF SYNTHESISER

To-day, though, "Rockets" Clarke finds it comparatively easy to make converts; he dismisses the few who still won't admit the **certainty** of space-travel as beyond all hope of persuasion—until they see it for themselves before they die. He will readily admit that materialisation of the dreams he has nurtured so long has so far exceeded expectations, to date, as to leave even him a bit bewildered.

"Space-travel will be here much earlier than any of us thought," he promised me solemnly, but with his usual air of tense excitement. "Our most optimistic pre-war forecasts look very conservative now. Progress has been incomparably more swift than I dared hope for. I didn't expect to see jet propulsion so soon, and certainly not atomic energy. Things that looked as if they'd take a generation to develop are not only here, but obsolete already.

"Before the war, it seemed fanciful to expect to see £1,000 being allocated

for astronautical research; whereas now perhaps a thousand million has been spent, all over the world, on such important schemes as the Galcitt project in America—and the results so far are breathtakingly significant. I'm probably still being too pessimistic in putting the date of the first Moon trip at round about 1970.

"However, I'm not so much interested in that, now, as in the influencing and directing of world opinion with regard to astronautics. I want to work to ensure that it realises all the effects which space-travel may have when it comes, as well as to accelerate the actual achievement. I can even imagine conditions under which I might work to retard it—for a few years, at least.

"Atomic power, of course, will make space-flight not only practical but imperative. And I'm anxious that the world shall be psychologically prepared for interplanetary communication, as it was not prepared for atomic power. My own aim in that respect, you might say, is to be a synthesiser. Remember Heinlein's 'Beyond This Horizon'—the people who had to have a comprehensive view of things, instead of being specialised technicians?"

That brought us back to science fiction. This, he thought, was a vital force in preparing the world for space-travel. Provided always that it was good science fiction: the bawdy, "Flash Gordon" type of stuff tended to give people the idea that astronautics couldn't be taken any more seriously. He himself had read miles of the better stuff—and found it stimulating as well as recreational to his more studious pursuits. He had no particular favourite writer, though he admired Dunsany, Stapledon, Stuart and Padgett. And since his boyhood days in Somerset, when "the mad scientist" had written fantastic pieces for the school magazine, he'd derived as much enjoyment from his own efforts in this direction—if nothing more substantial until three years ago.

"FANTASY'S" TOP-LINER

His first real success was with *Tales of Wonder*, which featured two articles of his on astronomy and astronautics. Other effusions appeared in various places—poems, essays, short stories—yet the latter never seemed to meet the demands of editors with "policies," however well they were written. It wasn't until Walter Gillings started recruiting contributors to *Fantasy* that he really

got started as a storyteller—"as much to my surprise as the editor's," he averred.

"I was still in uniform then, and found writing a pleasant way to spend off-duty hours. I sold a couple of stories, one of them a novelette with a Lunar setting, for eventual publication in **Fantasy**. The editor asked for more, so I kept on writing—and he kept on buying. But the magazine couldn't get started, and at length I took the hint and started to divert the stream of MSS. elsewhere. As a result, I actually made my debut as an author on the other side, in **Astounding**."

This was with a short story, "Loop-hole" (Apr. '46), which was followed in the next issue by "Rescue Party," a novelette which **Fantasy** had declined as beyond its future requirements. But Gillings took more of his work before the British magazine was eventually launched and his "Technical Error" appeared in the first issue, to be voted its best story, not excepting a Weinbaum reprint. Some of his other stories which will appear as **Fantasy** continues may be under a pseudonym—"not that I'm ashamed of them, but I want only

my choicest pieces to appear under my own name."

Coming up in **New Worlds**, too, is "Inheritance," which he believes is one of the best short stories he's done. Yet a full-length novel in which he takes great pride, "Against the Fall of Night," was rejected by **Astounding** as deficient in story-interest. It may yet appear elsewhere. But his statement that he will probably write no more science fiction is, we fancy, hardly to be taken as his last word on the subject; he has too many ideas to let them go to waste.

His other relaxations are, he says, "all violent." He's passionately fond of music, particularly Sibelius, and he wields a wicked bat at table tennis—much to the consternation of his opponents at King's College, London, where he's been a student since October. At the age of 29, he's decided it's high time he learned something other than what most people don't know. Rather, as he put it: "I feel the lack of a full academic education and want to take my B.Sc. before I go any further. I shall be there for the next two years—unless I get sent down. What then? Well, that's a leading question. But I expect there'll be plenty to do."

DOUBT is not for hard-faced men full of business ability and bisurated magnesia . . . *DOUBT* is not for blustering bishops, complaining canons or any other holy varmint . . . *DOUBT* is not for Fleet street-walkers who sell their souls for a ribald song . . . *DOUBT* is not for the cost-plus fortune-makers of World Fraud II . . . nor the gravy-snatchers of World Fraud III, if any . . . *DOUBT* is not for penicillin-squirters or streptomycin-mongers or fingerprinters or manufacturers of bolonium-bombs . . . *DOUBT* is not for high-ranking brass-hats, their sons, daughters or favourite barmen . . . *DOUBT* is not for anyone but . . .

Little children willing to bear the excruciating agony of thought!

DOUBT

Magazine of the Fortean Society

1/- post free from: **THE FORTEAN SOCIETY, 44 Orrell Road, Orrell, Liverpool, 20**

Book Reviews

The Van Vogt Masterpiece

SLAN! By A. E. Van Vogt, Arkham House, Sauk City, \$2.50.

Reviewed by **John Carnell**

It is noticeable that the most outstanding science fiction stories of today are being written almost entirely by newcomers to the field. Van Vogt's swift success must be as unique as it is well-deserved. His first magazine story appeared in the middle of '39, and within little more than a year he had produced three more and "Slan," all of which were published in **Astounding Science-Fiction**. And with this truly remarkable tale, which earned the first "nova" designation of that magazine, he established himself firmly among the new school of writers whose names, unknown before the war, are now household words among fantasy's followers.

As a magazine serial "Slan" was overwhelmingly popular, being acclaimed in U.S.A. as the best of all the science fiction stories published there in 1940. The issues containing it have been in great demand ever since, not only on this side where they were practically unobtainable, but in the land whence all our precious back number 'originals' proceed; for it is a story which **must** be read by every science fiction fan who prides himself on his familiarity with the field.

To those who have not kept pace with recent trends, the scope of "Slan" may prove a little breath-taking. The first quarter of the book leaves Stapledon's "Odd John" far behind; and be it to his credit or not, it must be said that the author has introduced yet another new word into the American language. The term "slan" is now recognised as meaning "the man after man." For it is upon this conception of a new race of human beings of vastly superior mentality, whose only outward difference is the thought-reading tendrils in their hair, that Van Vogt builds his fascinating tale of Jommy Cross and his struggles on behalf of his persecuted people.

Discovery always means death to the slans, for they are accused of using mutation machines upon ordinary human mothers, whose children are born monsters. Jommy's father has left

for him to unearth, in due time, the secret of a terrible weapon, the controlled use of atomic power; and all his earlier adventures rely on his bid for survival against the humans and the "tendrillless slans" (another type of mutation), so that he may develop the weapon for the benefit of the true slans.

There may be some who will find the story, though intriguing thus far, running a bit off the rails when Jommy escapes to Mars and uncovers a vast plot by the tendrillless slans, involving him with a formidable female, Joanna Hillory, who keeps cropping up at odd intervals. But the real heroine is Kathleen, the slan girl whose fate rests with Keir Gray, head of Earth's dictator government, and the rascally secret police chief who opposes him.

One cannot escape the feeling, as the story moves on, that one is reading an **Astounding** serial, with all the twists and turns and texture of material that implies. But for me the book was none the less enjoyable for that, and those who relish a story of the future that is as swiftly moving as it is thought-provoking should find it equally satisfying.

Initial Offering

PUZZLE BOX, by Anthony More. Trover Hall, San Francisco, \$1.75.

Reviewed by **J. O. Newman**

This first publication of a new American house which is to specialise in original fantasy is a very much smaller volume than one has come to expect of our monster-book-producing cousins. It has only 111 pages; but in them it presents six stories which are nicely varied in theme and treatment and all extremely well-written.

The tale from which the book derives its title is a whimsically bizarre piece with something of a Fortean flavour; it portrays vividly and amusingly the dilemma of an ordinary fellow who finds himself the experimental subject of unknown super-entities. "Footsteps" and "Nightmare" are less pleasant in their approach, with a real sense of spine-tingling macabre. "The Last Message" is a curious little piece, not exactly

shuddery, but disconcerting.

More blatantly weird, reminiscent of Merritt and Lovecraft, is "Seven Sapphires," which concerns an age-old malignancy, a thing of evil incarnate which has enslaved an Indian tribe. In striking contrast with it, and perhaps the best of them all, is "Five Strands of Yellow Hair," a beautifully executed story whose poignant tragedy must impress even the most casual reader.

Of Mr. More we know nothing, except that this first collection of his tales shows him to be a versatile, intelligent writer. We look forward to extending our acquaintance with him and to the further productions of Trover Hall, after this very promising start.

Atomic Whodunit

THE MURDER OF THE U.S.A. By Will F. Jenkins. Crown Publishers, New York, \$2.00.

Reviewed by **Arthur C. Clarke**

This is a "whodunit" on the largest possible scale. It opens with the initial murder of seventy million Americans in a surprise attack by atomic rockets. The detective element comes in in the attempt by the survivors to discover and destroy the nation responsible. It is, therefore, not entirely incongruous that the book should be included in a murder mystery series.

The author, better known in science fiction circles as Murray Leinster, has given us a dramatically written, technically brilliant and horribly plausible story by producing present military thinking a little—and only a little—way into the future. Since there is no effective defence against atomic bombs, he argues that every country will set up secret launching sites so that any aggressor's victory would be short-lived. In atomic warfare, the certainty of a terrible revenge is the only possible defence.

So we find Sam Burton and his colleagues of Burrow 89, one of the deeply hidden Rocket Missile Launching Bases of the Atomic Counter-Attack Force of the United States, trying to seek out the guilty nation, which has naturally taken every possible measure to cloak its identity. The manner of its final unmasking is both ingenious and exciting, and the search itself will keep you thoroughly enthralled.

This book may do a lot of good if it is read in the right circles.

Lost: 2 Lobbies

MR. MERGENTHWIRKER'S LOBBIES and Other Fantastic Tales, by Nelson S. Bond. Coward-McCann, New York, \$2.75.

Reviewed by **Fred C. Brown**

What is a lobby? Most Americans would be able to tell you, since the title story of this book of fantasies has been reprinted in several U.S. collections and a radio play version has been broadcast at least three dozen times. To most of us, at least the author's name is familiar; and Mr. Mergenthwirker is almost as famous in the States as his creator, who writes for many different publications.

Mr. Mergenthwirker is a small, meek man who calls at a newspaper office and warns them that a murder is to be committed later in the day. Pressed for the source of his information, he points to two invisible companions whom he calls his "lobbies." When the murder actually occurs as he predicts, and is followed by further events of which he airs his foreknowledge, Mr. Mergenthwirker and his lobbies make the front page with a vengeance.

It transpires that the unseen prophets have some curious habits. They change colour like chameleons, drink beer by the pint, and get up to all sorts of tricks. Unfortunately, we are left in complete ignorance of their whereabouts with the death of Mr. Mergenthwirker, who is silenced for ever in trying to protect one of his invisible presences from an oncoming truck.

This all-too-short story leaves me with the feeling that there should have been more accounts of their exploits, for they are too delightful to have been left to stray away into complete intangibility. Presumably we have to wait for another Mr. Mergenthwirker to become aware of them. But, meanwhile, Mr. Bond diverts us with a whole gamut of bewildering phenomena, throughout the rest of this book. Talking horses, clocks that run backwards with disastrous effects, fourth-dimensional baseball pitchers, a labour leader in Hell, men who walk through walls, a frightening fountain of youth, a miraculous bookshop—all these and more of his peculiarly fascinating creations, originally fashioned for **Unknown Worlds, Blue Book** and other magazines, make this a volume to be relished by the reader of really fantastic fiction.

Book Reviews

Witches and Werewolves

PRINCE OF DARKNESS: A Witchcraft Anthology, edited by Gerald Verner. Westhouse, London, 8/6.

Reviewed by **Sydney J. Bounds**

Fact and fiction, with a third element which is neither one nor the other but a combination of the two, are brought together to make up this interesting volume. It is divided into four sections, to which are given the titles: Witchcult, Satanism, Sorcery and Lycanthropy. Each commences with a factual piece, and this is followed by one or more stories which develop the theme fictionally. The one exception is the first section, which contains no fiction.

An ingenious idea. But I did not find the book as satisfying as it might have been, due, I think, to the editor's inability to clarify his own attitude. My idea of an anthology is that it should present all its material from one viewpoint, and this does not happen here.

In the first section, Mr. Verner gives his opinion that the disciples of witchcraft are possessed of no supernatural powers but are merely a clique who wallow in obscene orgies, and the extracts from Montague Summers' "The Black Mass" support this contention. It seems incongruous to me, therefore, that the rest of the book should wholeheartedly support a belief in the supernatural.

The extracts from Cotton Mather's "The Wonders of the Invisible World," giving detailed accounts of two witch trials held in Salem in 1692, I found tedious and boring, perhaps because of the retention of the archaic style in which they were related. "The Birth of Sorcery," by Sax Rohmer, puzzled me considerably. I could find no point to the list of rites and invocations presented here; but this may have been due to the process of extraction from the original book, "The Romance of Sorcery."

Now Available in Book Form — The Much-Discussed
"Astounding Science-Fiction" Serial

THE WEAPON MAKERS

By **A. E. van Vogt**

The story of a titanic struggle, waged in the far future, when Man is reaching out for the stars . . . A struggle between a unique organisation of supermen, outlawed but powerful, determined to wrest from the tyrant Empress of Earth the one secret which eludes them—the invention of the interstellar drive—and Captain Hedrock, who pits his strength against the system-wide empire of the Isher Dynasty and the rebellious Weapon Makers, confident of succeeding in his own mysterious aims, supremely powerful because of his possession of the greatest secret of all—the secret of immortality!

Published in a limited edition at \$3.00 in the United States and Canada and available to British readers at \$3.25, postpaid. Order now from:

THE HADLEY PUBLISHING CO.

271 Doyle Avenue, Providence 6, Rhode Island, U.S.A.

The fiction is of a uniformly high standard, yet even here Mr. Verner does not make his viewpoint clear. Algernon Blackwood's "Ancient Sorceries," included in the section on Satanism, and "The Cyprian Cat," by Dorothy L. Sayers, placed in the Sorcery section, are both lycanthropic in theme; and the only story in the Lycanthropy section, F. G. Loring's "The Tomb of Sarah," has to do with vampirism—incidentally, the only mention this subject receives in the whole volume: surely a strange omission?

The tale I most enjoyed was Saki's "The Peace of Mowsle Barton," a story of two old witches casting spells at each other which is a sheer delight. Other fictional items included are "The Earlier Service," by Margaret Irwin, and "The Witch Wood," by John Buchan, with extracts from "The Werewolf," by Montague Summers. The illustrations, taken from an engraving, "The Temptation of St. Anthony," by the 16th century French engraver, James Callot, are both amusing and provocative.

The Moon That Was

THE BREAKING OF THE SEALS, by Francis Ashton. Dakers, 9/6.

Reviewed by Alan Devereux

This is, on the whole, quite a readable science-fantasy, based on Bellamy's theory of a former satellite which broke up and fell upon Earth, causing vast cataclysms from which only a few survived. Readers of "Moons, Myths and Man" will be familiar with the hypothesis.

The hero, in a trance, returns to an existence in ages past and re-lives his experiences at the time of the Moon's destruction. These adventures, told in a style reminiscent of Rider Haggard, are exciting enough; but the author's recital of events in the present is not so convincing, and his modern characters are stilted and unreal.

His so-called Time theory did not impress me as even worthy of being called such; it is, rather, merely an elaboration of the theory of reincarnation, and it is altogether too vague and incoherent to give him cause to criticise Dunne. As for the Bellamy theory, it provides a very good background for a story such as this, but it is difficult to imagine a geologist or astronomer taking it very seriously.

To Lemuria via West India

WEST INDIA LIGHTS, by Henry S. Whitehead. Arkham House, Sauk City, \$3.00.

Reviewed by John C. Craig

A first dip into this second Arkham House collection of the late Dr. Whitehead's work, comprising sixteen uncanny tales, may lead the reader who does not know him to the impression that here we have the American counterpart of M. R. James. The content of the stories is, however, very different from those of that master of the academic uncanny, though the form is somewhat similar.

For the most part Dr. Whitehead, who at one time was a popular contributor to *Weird Tales* and *Strange Tales*, prefers to obtain his effect from the quieter methods of building up to a disturbing climax. Indeed, taken from their context between the covers of these publications, as most of them are, his tales entirely lose the association of sensationalism which always haunts the story inhabiting a pulp magazine however well-written it may be. All the better, then, for this modern tendency to publish such stories in book form. Can it be that the literature is growing up?

That Dr. Whitehead was a clergyman as well as a writer may explain why a theme of religion versus the so-called "primitive" influence of evil runs consistently through these stories, which have an authentic background of native folklore gathered by the author during an extensive sojourn in the islands of the West Indies. His reminiscence serves him well. Readers of his earlier collection, "Jumbee," will recognise further stories of Gerald Canevin of Santa Cruz, including "The Great Circle"; and there is one piece, "Williamson," which every editor to whom it was submitted is supposed to have shied at, but which now receives the printing it deserves.

But what is this? Towards the end of the book (there are 367 pages), we find ourselves slap in the centre of good old Lemuria. "Scar Tissue" and its fellow-tale, "Bothon," originally appeared in the Ziff-Davis *Amazing Stories*; and at this point Dr. Whitehead parts company with M. R. James and delivers

some writing of the blood-and-tooth variety. Moreover, his theme material is not exactly spring-like in its freshness. Here is the well-known dream association with past happenings, together with the physical survival of to-day in the form of a scar or other manifestation. We are all too familiar with it, and those who know "The Ship of Ishtar" will feel that they have been there before. It is only fair to add, perhaps, that both these pieces are extremely readable.

Did Mr. Baker Lose His Way?

BEFORE I GO HENCE by Frank Baker.
Dakers, London, 9/6.

Reviewed by John Beynon.

It is at first a temptation to consider Mr. Baker's latest book, subtitled "Fantasia on a Novel," as a web spun between the past and the present with its strands pulling on both ends, so that past not only restrains future but future puts tension upon past. Unfortunately, though, it is a metaphor which does not hold: a web, for all its slenderness, is a sound engineering proposition.

The theme is that of an elderly clergyman who died in 1930 attempting to sustain his influence upon his house afterwards, and of the novelist who is the recipient of that influence in '43 exploring it outside time, thereby affecting the clergyman himself. This is the stuff of fantasy. But it appears that Mr. Baker, whose style is accomplished and polished and whose other fantasies have been so well received, was in this case over-concerned to avoid the vulgarity of a "ghost story."

If this was indeed his aim, he has succeeded. Eeriness is suppressed almost to vanishing point, allied influences are so detached as to become merely coincidences, and he supports the whole upon two quite unprepossessing groups of persons. Yet the theme was not one to be ashamed of, nor one so slight that it required to be upheld by the "gloomy farm" school of novel upon one side, contrasted with the tedious introversions of intellectuals on the other; and it is disappointing that the idea was not allowed to hold the central position in a better integrated whole which it deserves.



The first Arkham House collection of the late Henry S. Whitehead's uncanny tales was acclaimed alike by our patrons and the critics. Thus a *New York Times* reviewer: "With a deceptive gentleness and clerical decorum Dr. Whitehead wrote of voodoo spells, fiendish manikins and other terrors . . . So quietly did he edge up on his horrors that his stories seem quite like the truthful reminiscences they purport to be."

JUMBEE & OTHER UNCANNY TALES is now out of print. The second and final collection of this leading *Weird Tales* contributor's works is proving equally popular. Containing two long novelettes and a variety of short stories, some of which have never been published before, it is one of the most noteworthy of Arkham House productions.

WEST INDIA LIGHTS

Henry S. Whitehead

Jacket by Ronald Clyne.
367pp. 15/-

ORDER NOW WHILE OUR
SUPPLY LASTS . . . from

G. KEN CHAPMAN,
British Sales Representative,
Arkham House: Publishers,
23 Farnley Road, South Nor-
wood, London, S.E.25

Among the Magazines

By NIGEL LINDSAY

First new post-war fantasy magazine to appear in U.S. is the **Avon Fantasy Reader**, of which No. 1 issue, priced at 35c., is to hand. It comes from Avon Publications, New York, who have lately reprinted several of Merritt's masterpieces in their "Murder Mystery Monthly" series, and have also produced an "Avon Ghost Reader" in their pocket-book library. Described as "a periodic anthology," it is more of a pocket-book than a magazine, with a glossy cellophane cover, and a nice, dignified look internally.

The **Fantasy Reader** will appear bi-monthly under the editorship of Donald A. Wollheim, formerly editor of the wartime s.f.-cum-fantasy mag., **Stirring Science Stories**. It is entirely made up of reprints; both science and weird fiction are featured, and the stories come from various sources. First issue contains Murray Leinster's "The Power Planet," Merritt's "Woman of the Wood," Hope Hodgson's "Voice in the Night," August Derleth's "The Shuttered House," Clark Ashton Smith's "Vaults of Yoh-Vombis," H. R. Wakefield's "The Central Figure," Dunsany's "Three Infernal Jokes," and Wells' "Truth About Pyecraft."

Enough "names" there! In the second issue will be Robert E. Howard, David H. Keller, Fletcher Pratt, Merritt and others. As the magazine continues new material may be used here and there, but the reprint policy will be adhered to. There will be no illustrations in the first few issues, but we understand they will be introduced if there is a demand for them. And the editor wants suggestions.

There's now at least one magazine you can read on the bus without casting furtive glances to see who's looking. Street & Smith's **Science Fiction** (the "Astounding" has almost vanished) is now served up on smoother paper, wrapped in slick but subdued covers. The page-area is slightly increased, but it's still pocket-size and the mag. is much slimmer, though there's no reduction in the number of pages.

The change came with the February issue. Cover pic. was by new artist Sniffen, visualising an atomic power

plant for an article by Editor Campbell himself. Old favourite Hubert Rogers, back after a long absence, has done the cover of the March issue, which features the first post-war yarn of ex-weather man Jack Williamson, who still retains his touch in "The Equaliser."

There is already a noticeable improvement in the interior art-work, following the introduction of different techniques and the better reproduction which the semi-slick paper permits. Though his whimsy work is better suited to **Unknown Worlds**, Cartier is a useful acquisition, and Orban and Swenson are doing their best. But I don't think they're the best illustrators in the field: our own Bruce Gaffron, for instance, is better.

With the April issue, **Thrilling Wonder Stories** introduces a new author with a new series. The writer is William Fitzgerald; his first story, "The Gregory Circle," concerns the strangely effective tinkering of a hillbilly mechanic. The feature novel is "Way of the Gods," another Kuttner fantasy about atom-fission mutants, which seems to be his (or his other identity Padgett's) favourite line these days. George O. Smith is also in again with "Quest to Centaurus," and there's another Sprague de Camp piece, "The Reluctant Shaman."

Latest (April) **Famous Fantastic Mysteries** features Rider Haggard's "Allan and the Ice Gods," another dead loss for many subscribers. But Finlay's impressionistic covers are almost worth the price of the mag.

Planet Stories continues to present blood-and-thunder epics which, coming but quarterly, don't get too monotonous when you read them in between more frequent publications. Spring '47 issue sports a luscious redhead wielding a flame-thrower and features such titles as "Princess of Chaos," "Sword of the Seven Suns" and "Beyond the Yellow Fog." If you're partial to this sort of thing, it's well done here.

The Canadian-printed editions of **Planet**, **Startling** and **Wonder** have, I regret to report, been brought under an import ban. But don't despair. For those who don't care to take out sub-

scriptions to all the American magazines, there's a borrowing scheme which will keep you supplied with regular issues, and of which I'll be glad to supply details to anyone interested.

Both our home-produced magazines are forthcoming this month. The new *Fantasy* has, I gather, been received with general satisfaction; even its re-print material has been lauded to the skies. All the stories in the second (April) issue are new; and I fancy Eric Frank Russell's novelette, "Relic," will prove popular with the fans as much as with the new readers the magazine must be making. It's a beautiful debunking of the old invaders-from-Mars idea.

Charles Willis makes his debut with a short story, "Castaway," which will probably compete strongly for the honours of the issue, in which a readers' letters feature is introduced. Norman Lazenby's Time-exploring tale, "Survival," is intriguing if unoriginal, and E. R. James' "Prefabrication," dealing with synthetic beings, promises some interesting material from this new writer. P. E. Cleator appears again with a simple interplanetary piece, and

Editor Gillings augments his own article on the history of astronautics with a puff for the BIS in "Matters of Fact." Illustrations are nicely varied, but the cover design only mystifies me.

Third issue of *New Worlds* presents John K. Aiken's "Dragon's Teeth," which I'm told is the first of a possible trilogy. It deals with a particular planet in Earth's galactic empire which defeats a new ruling caste by passive resistance methods. "Fantasia Dementia," by Maurice G. Hugi, depicts the other-world transitions of a criminal on the operating table. John Brody reappears with a space-travel story, "The Inexorable Laws"; F. G. Rayer makes his bow with "From Beyond the Dawn," and Arthur C. Clarke is also present with "Inheritance."

The issue reprints "The Terrible Morning," by Nick Brodie Williams, from a recent *Collier's*. Cover is done by Slack instead of Cæsari, as previously announced. Interior art-work shows great improvement, and the whole magazine looks like going places fast—power cuts and other factors permitting.

SUPERNATURAL HORROR IN LITERATURE. By Howard P. Lovecraft. Introduction by August Derleth. A study of the Horror, Gothic, Spectral and Weird Tales.—12/6 (\$2.50 in U.S.A.)

H. P. LOVECRAFT: A MEMOIR. By August Derleth. A Study of the Man and His Work. Together with an Appendix and Bibliography.—12/6 (\$2.50 in U.S.A.)

THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO. By Charles G. Finney. Illustrated by Boris Artzybasheff. A Satirical, Whimsical Fantasy.—25/- (\$5.00 in U.S.A.)

PILGRIMS THROUGH SPACE AND TIME. By J. O. Bailey. A History embracing the entire field of Science and Fantasy Fiction. A comprehensive study.—25/- (\$5.00 in U.S.A.)

ARGUS BOOKS, Inc. 3 WEST 46th STREET
NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

Remittances from outside the U.S.A. should be made by International Money Order.

J. Michael Rosenblum writes

ABOUT BOOKS

ALL FOR US

There is so much to tell of new and coming fantasy books that I must leave my promised review of recent British anthologies to a later date. I was, however, going to refer to the revival last autumn of David Lindsay's "A Voyage to Arcturus," which had long been a rare collector's item. When it was first published in 1920, only a few score copies were sold; yet it is such an unusual work that Mr. Gollancz felt it deserved to be rescued from oblivion, a conclusion with which we heartily concur. Better still, the book was reissued as the first of a series of reprints labelled "The Connoisseur's Library of Strange Fiction." That sounds like us.

The second and third in this series are now forthcoming: another novel of Lindsay's, "The Haunted Woman," and "Medusa," by E. H. Visiak. The former is new to me, but it turns out to be a moderately good weird fantasy. An ancient house provides a non-real staircase leading to now-vanished rooms in a previous time-era for people with a psychic affinity, and on that basis a romance is built up, rather dated as to style but quite effectively out-of-this-world. "Medusa," too, is strong in what the blurb-writers call "brooding horror." But when I read it some years ago it proved something of a let-down, for though the climax is horrible enough it is scarcely worth the long, elaborate build-up.

Two more books listed in the series are "The Confessions of a Justified Sinner," by James Hogg, of which I admit ignorance, and "The Place of the Lion," by Charles Williams, which I unhesitatingly recommend. Like Lindsay, Williams is a writer who deserves to be read more widely, and I am glad to see his work being given a new series of printings by Faber. The first volume, "War in Heaven," is now available at 7/6, to be followed by "All Hallows' Eve," and "Many Dimensions" which have lately been the subject of appreciation by our U.S. friends. If you like thought-provoking, unknown-ish stories, look for his "The Greater Trumps," "Descent into Hell" and "Shadows of Ecstasy" in your local library meanwhile.

WATCH FOR THESE

Books by two English weird tale writers who are being introduced to American readers by Mr. Derleth are worthy of your attention: "The Sixth Heaven," by L. P. Hartley (Putnam: 8/6), and "Dark Eyed Lady," comprising 14 tales by A. E. Coppard (Methuen: 9/6). There is also a nice collection of E. F. Benson's ghost stories, "Visible and Invisible" (Hutchinson: 6/-), and a modern edition of the work of a Victorian novelist, Mrs. J. H. Riddell, titled "Weird Stories" (Home and Van Thal: 8/6). "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir," by R. A. Dick (Harrap: 7/6) is yet another you may want to track down.

But you needn't go out of your way for "The Maniac's Dream," by F. Horace Rose (Duckworth: 8/6), which is a mad-scientist piece inspired by the atom bomb. Nor is Pat Frank's "Mr. Adam," which "all America is reading" (vide Press), and is to be published here by Gollancz, anything to get excited about. In essence, it is George Weston's "Comet Z" all over again, except that the universal sterility which leaves only one man potent is caused by an atomic blow-up instead of a cosmic catastrophe.

Talking of blow-ups, I see Karel Capek's "Krankatit," about the explosive which only blew up on Wednesdays, is to see a new edition from Allen & Unwin. And harking back to August Derleth, I hear that the Lovecraft-Derleth collaboration, "The Lurker at the Threshold," recently published by Arkham House, is to be issued here by Museum Press, who will also publish an English edition of Frank Belknap Long's collection, "The Hounds of Tindalos." Finally, to complete the picture of things to come on this side, our own John Russell Fearn's **Amazing Stories** serial, "Liners of Time," is due shortly in novel form from World's Work.

U.S. BOOM; LATEST

To deal really adequately with books in the making on the other side of the Pond would take several of these pages, but as an indication of the thriving state of the field I need only mention the formation of two new fantasy book-producing companies, Pegasus Publications and the Prime Press. I gather

that the first-named actually launched a Fantasy Book Club to supply specially selected volumes to members at reduced prices, but met with some opposition from New York booksellers which is holding up the project. Meanwhile they have produced "I Found Cleopatra," by Thomas P. Kelley, a **Weird Tales** serial reprint, and plan to do likewise with that great Hall-Flint classic, "The Blind Spot."

Due in May from Prime Press is its first volume, "The Mislaid Charm," by Alexander M. Phillips; this comes from **Unknown Worlds**. Among others they have on the stocks is a collection of the "Venus Equilateral" stories of George O. Smith, who is writing a new one to appear with those to be reprinted from **Astounding**. Connected with the firm, by the way, is fantasy fan Oswald Train, of Philadelphia, whose name may be familiar.

For the benefit of those who have inquired about "The Time Stream" and "The Skylark of Space," I regret to report that both these books, published in limited editions of 2,000 copies by Hadley, of Rhode Island, are entirely sold out; however, it is likely that the E. E. Smith epic will be reprinted. Hard on the heels of "Spacehounds of IPC," which is now available, Fantasy Press is issuing a rewritten version of Jack Williamson's popular **Astounding** serial, "The Legion of Space." After this will come a new novel by John Taine, "The Forbidden Garden," of which there are keen anticipations. Also promised by this house is a reprint of the Weinbaum novel, "The Black Flame," together with the shorter "Dawn of Flame," the Memorial Volume piece, in its original uncut version. "The Book of Ptath," A. E. Van Vogt's **Unknown** novel, which will be lengthened for the occasion, and a reprint of Dr. Smith's "Triplanetary" from **Amazing**, complete the impressive list of coming "classic" titles which director Lloyd Arthur Eshbach has arranged so far. Enough to leave us with somewhat bated breath.

The second volume coming from Trover Hall, which is specialising in original material, is "Voyage in the Dark," a tale of to-morrow's colonial empire, by Edwin M. Clinton Jnr.

MORE ANTHOLOGIES

The output of big, bulky anthologies designed to appeal to the weird story fan continues. "And the Darkness Falls" (World: \$2.75), with which Arkham House has supplied me, is a beautiful collection of supernatural tales

and poems edited by that master of filmic horror, Boris Karloff. It has over 600 pages and features such names as Somerset Maugham, John Buchan, Dorothy Sayers, Ambrose Bierce, John Collier, Algernon Blackwood and—invariably—H. P. Lovecraft. Some of its contents will not be new to the connoisseur, but it is a nice tome to have handy.

So, too, is "Strange and Fantastic Stories" (Whittlesey House: \$3.75), comprising 50 familiar tales selected by Joseph A. Margolies, a New York bookseller who has made the medium his hobby and drawn on the work of many writers, from Defoe to Dunsany, to assemble this volume of 760 pages. But if you're interested in rarer specimens of the genus you should acquire "Strange to Tell: Stories of the Marvelous and Mysterious" (Messner: \$3.75). This is edited by Marjorie Fischer and Rolphe Humphries, whose earlier volume, "Pause to Wonder," published by the same house three years ago, presented a diversity of pieces ranging from Lucian to Orson Welles and has given me much good reading. This time they have collected the work of 59 European writers, much of which has been translated for the first time and none of which you will discover very easily elsewhere.

Coming from Bobbs-Merrill is another big collection, "The Fireside Book of Ghost Stories," for which Dr. Edward Wagenknecht has made an equally rare selection of the work of practically everybody from Pliny to himself. You can get this through Arkham for \$3.60. And due this month from Rinehart, who did those splendid Derleth-edited anthologies, "Sleep No More" and "Who Knocks?" is "The Night Side: 23 Masterpieces of the Strange and Terrible," which has also been prepared by Derleth. This includes the now-famous Kuttner **Astounding** story, "Mimsy Were the Borogoves," and other pieces by popular magazine writers like Bloch, Bond, Bradbury and Howard Wandrei, as well as such as Coppard, Wakefield, Machen and Dunsany. Arkham are also distributing this book, which at \$3.10 will be a good buy.

Among Arkham's own productions in the next few months will be collections of short stories by Lady Cynthia Asquith, Carl Jacobi, Ray Bradbury and Friz Leiber, Jr., and a complete reprinting of William Hope Hodgson's tales of "Carnacki, the Ghost-Finder."

SMALL ADVERTS

Special Rate to Collectors: 2d. per word (5c. Canada and U.S.A.); minimum 12 words. To Traders and others: 3d. per word (7c. in Canada and U.S.A.). All advertisements in this section must be prepaid. Box numbers 6d. (15c.) extra.

BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS! Your favourite authors of Science-Fiction, Fantasy, Mystery, and Adventure are no further away than your mail box! Write for free list of new and old titles. Some titles are limited in quantity. Bargain buys regularly! Our special free services from "Your Book Store by Mail" will appeal to you. Over 12 years in business at this address. Start receiving our lists now and be eligible for our bargain buys as we stock them. Write now to: Cheney's Book Service, 119 E. San Fernando Street, San Jose 21, California, U.S.A.

WANTED, contact with anyone who can supply U.S.A. s-f magazines published during the war. British reprints not required. Also "Moon Pool" by A. Merritt and "World Below" by Fowler Wright.—Slater, Riverside, South Brink, Wisbech, Cambs.

COLLECTORS! Fill up those gaps the easy way. Get your Want List on the records of **Fantasy Service**. We specialise in fair buying and selling prices and will make reasonable exchanges if you want to swap your duplicates.—17 Burwash Road, Plumstead, London, S.E.18.

SCIENTIFUNCTION, The British Fantasy Review. A few copies of Nos. 3-7 still available to collectors at 1/6 (35c.) per copy, post free. — Box 101, **Fantasy Review**.

CURRENT ISSUES of American s-f magazines. You can read them regularly by subscription to a magazine chain. Particulars from: N. Lindsay, 311 Babacombe Road, Torquay, Devon.

WANTED URGENTLY: good condition, covered copies **Tales of Wonder** Nos. 7 to 16; first three issues **Newnes' Fantasy**; **American Weird Tales**, any issues before '36; **Astounding** '30 to '36; **Amazing** '26 to '30 and all Quarterlies; early issues **Wonder**, **Air Wonder**, **Science Wonder** and all Quarterlies; any science fiction magazines '40-'46; all issues **American Unknown Worlds**. Highest prices offered. Best exchange terms to American clients. —Fantasy Service, 17 Burwash Road, Plumstead, London, S.E.18.

FOR SALE — **Scientific Detective Monthly** and **Amazing Detective Tales**, Jan.-Oct. '30, ten issues, good condition; also **Air Wonder Stories**, Jul. '29 - May '30, 11 issues, with dust jackets. What offers?—Box 104, **Fantasy Review**.

FANTASY SERVICE operates exclusively on filling clients' Want Lists. If there are any specific magazine issues you require send your list to: 17 Burwash Rd., Plumstead, London, S.E.18.

MAGAZINES & BOOKS of Science Fiction, the Weird and Unknown. Sample packet, 10/-; catalogue free. Sell or exchange your collection of science fiction. —S-F Publications (Dept. FR2), 16 Rockville Road, Liverpool, 14.

PLEASE NOTE that we don't handle new U.S. publications. But we do deal in second-hand fantasy books, both buying and selling. Send your want lists and details of books for disposal to: E. C. Williams, 11 Clowders Road, Catford, London, S.E.6.

THE ATLANTIS BOOKSHOP

(M. HOUGHTON)

49a MUSEUM STREET,

LONDON, W.C.1

We are specialists in books on Occultism and kindred subjects such as Astrology, Magic, Rosicrucianism, Yoga, Alchemy, etc., etc. We shall be pleased to advise you on any of these subjects. We buy books on the above. Catalogue on application.
Phone: **HOLBORN 2120**.

THE WORLD OF TO-MORROW

Thrilling Tales of Super-
Science—

The Weird and The Occult

Send 10/- for Sample Magazines. Catalogue FREE.

SCIENCE-FANTASY

PUBLICATIONS

(Dept. FR)

16 Rockville Road,

Liverpool, 14

WINIFRED GRAHAM

The Most Prolific Authoress Living

PRESENTS HER 87th BOOK

OBSERVATIONS

Casual and Intimate

"... I will give her the green light in my review every time"

—Sydney Carroll, *Daily Sketch*.

Unlike "That Reminds Me," Winifred Graham's last book, these OBSERVATIONS relate interesting and entertaining accounts of psychic experiences and ghost stories, in addition to sensational reminiscences.

AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT AND ORDER NOW

FROM ALL BOOKSELLERS

OR DIRECT

SKEFFINGTON & SON LIMITED

47 PRINCES GATE, S.W.7

NOW ON SALE

APRIL ISSUE

ASTOUNDING SCIENCE-FICTION

(BRITISH EDITION)

As Sole Distributors of "PHAROS BOOKS" we announce

A New Fantasy by Alfred Gordon Bennett

"WHOM THE GODS DESTROY"

Vivid writing and uncanny situations characterise this new novel by an author whom the critics have aptly described as "out-Wellsing Wells, out-doing Jules Verne and putting Rider Haggard to shame."

2/-

With Pictorial Jacket

2/3 post free

If you have any difficulty in obtaining your copies please communicate with:

ATLAS PUBLISHING & DISTRIBUTING CO. LTD.

18 Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4