



FANTASY REVIEW

Vol. I, No. 3

SIXPENCE

JUN.-JUL. 1947

Walter Gillings' FANTASIA

Noted American science fictionist Theodore Sturgeon carried off £250 prize offered by English *Argosy* in short story contest. Winning piece, presented "with pride" in May issue, praised for its "strange imaginative quality," was "Bianca's Hands," reputedly spurned by several U.S. mags. including *Unknown Worlds*, in which Sturgeon started. British fantasy authors who entered contest feeling slightly piqued . . . "Homecoming," story by Ray Bradbury originally in Street & Smith's *Mademoiselle*, selected for O. Henry Memorial Award, to be reprinted in *Avon Fantasy Reader*. His fantastic "The Meadow" also won prize in radioscrypt contest. Collection of his weird tales, "Dark Carnival," forthcoming from Arkham House . . . Recipient of Atlantic Award to encourage novel writers is C. S. Youd, editor *New Frontiers*, now suspended.

Television version of "Mr. Mergenthwirker's Lobbies," much-radioed fantasy by Nelson S. Bond (see book reviews, last issue), presented recently from London . . . Following death at 81 of M. P. Shiel, appreciation of his work, with special reference to "The Purple Cloud," given on Third Programme . . . H. F. Heard, author of "Doppelgangers" (reviewed this issue), and "The Great Fog and Other Weird Tales," is—or was—famous British science writer Gerald Heard, now living in Hollywood . . .

ANOTHER MAG. COMING

New magazine to carry original s-f, fantasy, weird and ghost story material, with Donald A. Wollheim editing, being planned by Avon Publications, New York, producers of *Fantasy Reader*. First issue due before year's end . . . Leo Margulies, *Thrilling Wonder's* editorial director, writing in *American Writer* on science fiction field, warned would-be specialists its readers were "most articulate group in the world." . . . Max J. Hertzberg, prominent U.S. educator, literary editor *Newark Evening News*, encourages reading of s-f among pupils . . . *Saturday Review of Literature* featured article by L. Sprague de Camp, "The Unwritten Classics," dealing with fictitious books invented by fantasy writers, e.g. Lovecraft's "Necronomicon" . . . Earlier issue carried letters from P. Schuyler Miller, Frederick B. Shroyer, on current s-f book boom and efforts to compile bibliography of fantasy, now proceeding in various directions . . .

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Among the Magazines

'POLICY' IS LOSING READERS

Says SAM MOSKOWITZ

Is the fetish of "editorial slant" driving fantasy magazines into a rut, discouraging new writers, alienating once enthusiastic readers? The well-known American critic of the field, in this outspoken article*, traces the prevailing preference for books to the lowered standards of magazine fiction which have been evident of recent years.

As the science fiction and fantasy magazines graduate more and more of their once inseparable readers into the placid respectability of hard-cover books, it becomes necessary to determine what is responsible for this trend.

That anthologies of weird, horror and fantasy stories have sold so well of recent years ostensibly proves there is a good audience for the macabre. But they have actually been purchased to a great extent by dyed-in-the-wool science fiction readers who, unable to obtain enough magazine fiction and saddened by its generally low quality, have taken to reading ghost books as an alternative. This is evident from the fact that both "The Best in Science Fiction" and "Adventures in Time and Space" have soared into the best-seller class and are still selling at peak tempo. A few more

science fiction anthologies of this calibre will, I think, drop the bottom out of the horror rage and leave only limited edition groups dominant in this field.

Every science fiction magazine, without exception, has a definite "policy." It is these policies, and even personal editorial prejudices, which are the principal factors in limiting their appeal. The policies have been maintained through the war years when most magazines sold well and interest in speculative scientific subjects was aroused. But editors and publishers have become convinced that their "slant" has been selling their magazine, and have narrowed down story requirements from an avenue to an alley.

The result is that the book companies are harvesting the dissatisfied customers from the pulps. The devoted scientifiictionist, who has always said he would be satisfied with one good story an issue, is finding it actually cheaper to pay three dollars for a book and be guaranteed 30 or 40 good stories in one volume; and he has always been a collector at heart.

Astounding Science-Fiction, generally accepted the best periodical in the field, has long since driven itself into the deep rut of all-encompassing "policy," with its resultant doldrums. Editor John W. Campbell has for some time been slanting his magazine towards the technicians. He has developed an ultra-conservative format, printed several quite technical articles, and insisted that his writers accept future advances as completely normal setting and write of things perfectly adapted to such a setting. A technical problem of the future is enough for a writer like George O. Smith, and the

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Editor: Walter Gillings.

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

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

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difficulties of keeping intact an intergalactic empire will carry Isaac Asimov along indefinitely.

It cannot be claimed that every story **Astounding** uses may be aptly categorised and placed in its niche; nor that even the "typed" stories are lacking in new ideas, interest and entertainment. But no matter how an author twists and turns, a certain sameness is always present, and boredom sets in as a result. The facts are that seven authors and author-teams wrote close to 70 per cent. of all the stories printed in this magazine in the three years 1944-46, most of them producing a quantity of wordage that does not permit a constant high grade of quality. That these seven should have predominated for so long a period shows that **Astounding's** policy does not attract any number of new writers, and that formula is drowning inspiration.

The new publishers of **Famous Fantastic Mysteries**, as leaders in the anti-reprint campaign, found themselves with a reprint science fiction magazine on their hands. But they managed to carry it on by hobbling it with a "reprint from books only" policy; and guided by some nebulous principle never adequately outlined, it has discarded, for one reason or another, some of the greatest book classics in the field. Soon after the inception of the new publishers a trend towards well-written, unusual adventure stories became apparent, with a whole string of prehistoric tales followed by a lost continent cycle. But more recently there has been a leaning towards horror, or an attempt to emphasise what horror is to be found in the particular story featured.

This new trend is too obvious and persistent to be coincidence, as the adventure cycle was reputed to be. Straight horror magazines, unadulterated by sex, have not been too successful in the past, and there is no reason to suppose that **Famous Fantastic's** horror policy will become permanent.

Standard Publications' **Startling Stories** and **Thrilling Wonder Stories** have the least definite "slant" of any of the fantasy pulps. Their range is comprehensive; they publish straight action "space operas," "idea" stories, "mood" stories, and are even partial to "technician's bedtime stories." Editor Sam Merwin has been singularly impressed by the fantastic advances of most of the sciences and realises that science fiction is more than adolescent

fairy tales. He has attended several major fan gatherings, and is no longer completely certain that the bulk of his audience lies in the teen-age group. This change of thinking is reflected in the definite adult trend which has lately been apparent in the readers' columns of **Wonder**; while an attempt to maintain a mature writing standard is evident in the constant use of Murray Leinster and Henry Kuttner and the acquisition of Theodore Sturgeon, L. Sprague de Camp, Fletcher Pratt and others.

Startling still carries a more juvenile appeal with the regular printing of "Captain Future" novels. But **Standard** seem reluctant to disengage any section of their readers; they print science fiction of all types, and even occasional weird tales. They cater for the fans and have enlarged their fan departments; their policy seems to be catch-as-catch-can, but both their magazines, especially **Wonder**, are in a state of flux and it will be some time before their trend can be accurately determined.

The Ziff-Davis **Amazing Stories** and **Fantastic Adventures** are edited with mass-appeal in mind. Stories that are "written down" are the norm. Once there was a semblance of differentiation in the policies of the two magazine; now science fiction, fantasies and weirds are jumbled indiscriminately in both. The editor, Raymond A. Palmer, has been impervious to criticism, depending upon low appeal and bulky appearance to keep his magazines well up in the circulation brackets.

The interplanetary story has long been the most popular type of science fiction, and **Planet Stories** has adopted an "all interplanetary" policy with great success. Its covers, which invariably portray "a girl, a guy and a goon," mirror the action to be found in its stories, but do not lead one to expect the very well-written brand of action story that is actually used. The ray-guns flash, the monsters roar, the rockets swish—but smoothly. **Planet** does not set the pace for the field and is not the type of publication we would point to with pride, but it has a large appeal and its circulation must be in the higher figures.

The pioneer work of Farnsworth Wright and the introduction of authors used in the science fiction magazines have long since brought **Weird Tales** within the inner circle of the fantasy field. Its past record is magnificent; its

lode of fine authors and great stories is immense, and has still not been exhausted by the frantic anthologising from its back issues. However, the magazine has fallen on evil times. It has literally wasted away to a shadow, and an easing of the paper situation has had little or no effect on its size.

The current trend seems to be to aim its stories at a low mental age and to cater for a reading taste generally supposed to belong to waitresses, truck drivers and department store clerks. Yet the illustrations, paradoxically, have been allowed to deteriorate in quality. No vigorous, driving editorial spirit is apparent. The attempt to bring back

old-time writers and develop new ones seems to have been given up, and the magazine pitifully clutches a few capable authors, as though trusting in their selling power to sustain it.

An all-round drop in circulation figures might be the best thing that could happen, to bring about a change or a broadening of policy in the case of those magazines where it would seem to be desired by their discontented readers. But this is not very likely in these days, and changes in ownership or new, stiff competition in the field are the only hopes the connoisseur may entertain if he is looking for an improvement in the near future.

THE SHAVER MYSTERY

By NIGEL LINDSAY

Most amazing mag. I've seen lately is June **Amazing Stories**. Called the Shaver Summation Issue, it's designed to give a complete picture of the notorious "Shaver Mystery" by using the basic "truths" of the queer business as a background for each story—and all four of them are written by the great Richard himself. The titles: "Formula from the Underworld," "Zigor Mephosto's Collection of Mentalia," "Witch's Daughter" and "The Red Legion." The leading article is also by Shaver, which makes it pretty much a one-man show. However, he doesn't creep into the art department, so that we have a nice variety of illustrations and a pleasing cover by R. G. Jones which gives just the right atmosphere.

In case you aren't familiar with the Shaver Mystery, let's have a recap. Back in '43 Editor Ray Palmer published a letter from one Richard S. Shaver, giving the key to an ancient alphabet supposed to belong to the mother of all languages. Encouraged by the number of readers who found it actually worked, Shaver purported to reveal the source of this alphabet: a race living to-day in subterranean caverns, descendants of human beings abandoned 12,000 years ago by the most ancient of all races—the Titans, who migrated into space when the Sun started to throw off radioactive rays injurious to their immortality.

Now, these troglodytes supposedly influence our present civilisation. The bad ones, called deros, emerge occasionally to torment us, while the good ones (teros) appear to be on our side. The

existence of all of them is kept a close secret, and any accidental contact between them and us surface dwellers is put down to superstition, which they encourage. All this, remember, Shaver claims to believe—and he has written around the notion all the stories which have made **Amazing** so unpopular with the genuine science fiction fan of recent years, not only because they have monopolised the magazine but have been presented as fact rather than fiction.

The author says he has gleaned his material through the "telaug (telepathic) ray," and has actually visited the caves by teleportation. All his "facts" fit the conditions of our present set-up on the surface—or the mess we're in fits in nicely with his theories, if you prefer to look at it that way. Personally, I find his ideas much less convincing than most of those which are presented as no more than honest-to-goodness science fiction. And although the Shaver "thought records" would seem to be inexhaustible—there's another in the May **Fantastic Adventures**—the indications are that the "Mystery" may soon be written off as insoluble, for which most of us will be profoundly thankful. Perhaps we should thank the teros . . . ?

If you've been keeping a careful watch on the bookstalls you may have noticed that a British reprint of **Fantastic Adventures** has duly followed the single issue of **Amazing** which appeared some time ago. Two numbers have emerged to date, price 1/-, with covers reproduced from the original American issues—not forgetting the even more

colourful back covers by Paul telling "Stories of the Stars." No. 1 featured "Cult of the Eagle," by Berkeley Livingston, "The Stygian Terror," by Stanton A. Coblenz, and one of Robert Bloch's "Lefty Peep" tales; cover story of No. 2 is "The Giant from Jupiter," by Gerald Vance and Bruce Dennis, and there are two other pieces by David Wright O'Brien and William P. McGivern.

I notice that the contents in each case are culled from at least two different American editions, some of the stories having appeared as far back as April '45. The back cover of No. 2 is also of older vintage than the front; all of which may add to their interest as collector's pieces, at least among our U.S. friends. Incidentally, the publishers still cannot assure us of regular appearance of these reprints, such is the uncertainty of the paper situation.

Printing difficulties, I understand, are also holding up **New Worlds**, third issue of which was delayed for some time after I had previewed it for this column. But the publishers hope that a fourth issue will not be so long in materialising. Meanwhile, **Fantasy** approaches its third issue in August. Here again there seems little prospect of more frequent publication for some time to come, galling though it is for all concerned. We'll just have to be patient, consoling ourselves with the best that America has to offer.

For example, the **Avon Fantasy Reader**, whose second issue is available. It brings another nice selection of reprints, including Dr. David H. Keller's now-famous "Stenographer's Hands," the memorable Pratt-Manning **Wonder Stories** piece, "City of the Living Dead," and S. Fowler Wright's "Automata." And coming up in the next issue, Editor Wollheim advises, are Merritt's "Rhythm of the Spheres," C. L. Moore's "Black Thirst," and a rare piece by H. G. Wells called "The Queer Story of Brownlow's Newspaper." No. 3 will also carry an original story by Stephen Grendon, and others by Frank Owen, Lovecraft, and John Collier.

Famous Fantastic Mysteries for June features a novel of 1920 by a British author, Edward Shanks, "The People of the Ruins"; it also reprints the familiar E. F. Benson short story, "Caterpillars." In the August issue will be another well-known English novel, "Minimum Man," by Andrew Marvell. Nice to see the Americans discovering so much of our British fantasy and giving it an

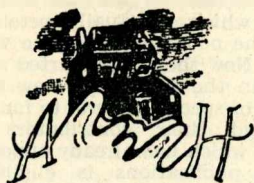
airing.

Some years ago **Thrilling Wonder Stories** introduced an amateur story contest, which eventually petered out due to the poor quality of the winning entries. Now they have started another contest in the search for new writers, which is of special interest to fan magazines and their contributors. Only material which has already appeared in amateur publications is eligible, the idea being that a story which has stood the test of a small circle of discerning readers should be worthy of a much bigger audience. Though articles and poems are also invited, the first selections to be published in the Feb. '48 issue.

This magazine seems to be increasing in popularity since the irritating space lingo of "Sergeant Saturn" was banished from the readers' department; though the acquisition of more and more of the better-class writers has had its effect. Theodore Sturgeon is the latest top-liner to appear, with "The Sky Was Full of Ships" in the June issue, which features the final Murray Leinster novel in the "Kim Rendall" trilogy, "The Boomerang Circuit." The William Fitzgerald "Bud Gregory" series continues with "The Nameless Something," to be followed in the August number by "The Deadly Dust." Also coming up in the next issue are a George O. Smith novelette, "In the Cards," and another long story by Henry Kuttner harping on his favourite theme of monster mutations resulting from World War III. Title: "Atomic."

The influx of new writing ability has been noticeable in **Astounding Science Fiction** over the past few months, though stars like van Vogt, Padgett and Sturgeon still shine as before. But while new authors' names appear, artists who were almost forgotten are coming back with every issue. The latest, Schneeman, has done the cover and interior pics for van Vogt's "Centaurus II," in the June issue, which continues the Lawrence O'Donnell serial "Fury," dealing with the undersea civilisation of Venus. Remember "Clash by Night," back in '43, in which humanity migrated from Earth when it was destroyed by atomic force? This is the sequel, better late than never.

I liked Sturgeon's "Tiny and the Monster" in the May issue—and the Cartier drawings. And Willy Ley's article on "Pseudoscience in Naziland" made Mr. Shaver's theories seem comparatively credible. Now, I wonder . . . ?



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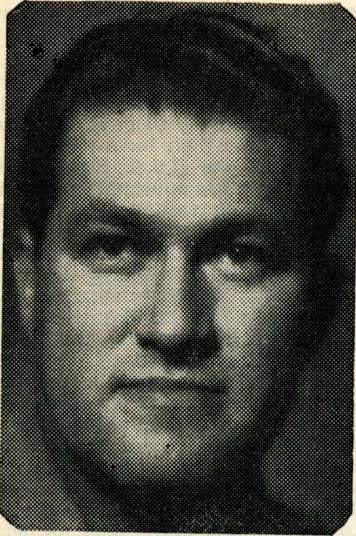
By August Derleth

Since it was first established at Sauk City, Wisconsin, nearly eight years ago, the firm of Arkham House has specialised in publishing fantasy novels and short story collections in limited editions for the connoisseur. It derives its name from the works of the late Howard Phillips Lovecraft, American master of the modern weird tale, which were directly responsible for its inception. In this article, specially written for FANTASY REVIEW, the founder-director of Arkham House, himself an expert in the fantasy medium, tells how the firm began, what it has achieved to date, and what plans it has for the future.

In a sense, I suppose that Arkham House was born out of my personal irritation. It resulted directly from the failure of Donald Wandrei and myself to persuade some existing publisher in New York to put out an omnibus volume of Lovecraft's works which we had assembled. And only two firms saw the bulky manuscript of "The Outsider and Others" before I decided, and my partner in the project concurred, that it would be better to publish it ourselves.

It was in December '39 that this first Lovecraft omnibus, which is such a treasured item among fantasy collectors to-day, came from the press in a small edition of 1,200 copies. The expenses of that initial Arkham House publication kept me personally in the red for two years. Yet, in '41, we experimented with a \$2 book, my own collection of short stories, "Someone in the Dark," in which I had so little faith that only 1,000 copies were printed. This was followed in '42 by Clark Ashton Smith's first collection, "Out of Space and Time," and in '43 by the second Lovecraft omnibus, "Beyond the Wall of Sleep."

By then I had determined to carry on Arkham House beyond its original purpose of publishing the works of the late



AUGUST DERLETH

H. P. Lovecraft, who had been a close personal friend of both Wandrei and myself for more than a decade prior to his death in '37. By that time, too, Wandrei had more or less withdrawn from the venture, for he had gone into military service early in '42. My decision involved a publishing schedule of more than one or two books a year, and '44 was, therefore, the first year in which more than one Arkham House title appeared.

We actually produced four collections that year: Wandrei's "The Eye and the Finger"; "Jumbee and Other Uncanny Tales," by the late Henry S. Whitehead; "Lost Worlds," Clark Ashton Smith's second short-story volume; and "Marginalia," by Lovecraft and others who had been associated with him, and who contributed to this collection of his miscellaneous writings. Despite larger editions, all these titles, in common with the first four Arkham House books, are now out of print.

Our programme for '45 was even more ambitious. In that year we published my own second collection, "Something Near"; the first assembly of the work of Robert Bloch, "The Opener of the Way"; "Green Tea and other Ghost Stories," by J. Sheridan Le Fanu; "Witch House," a novel by Evangeline Walton, and "The Lurker at the Threshold," an unfinished novel of Lovecraft's which I had completed. We also distributed my own book of pastiches, "In Re: Sherlock Holmes—The Adventures



We are able to supply these titles as long as supplies last:

Something Near, by August Derleth, 15/-

The Clock Strikes Twelve, by H. R. Wakefield, 15/-

Fearful Pleasures, by A. E. Coppard, 15/-

West India Lights, by Henry S. Whitehead, 15/-

The Opener of the Way, by Robert Bloch, 15/-

The House on the Borderland and other Novels, by William Hope Hodgson, 25/-

Skull Face and Others, by Robert E. Howard, 25/-

This Mortal Coil, by Lady Cynthia Asquith, 15/-

Dark of the Moon: Poems of Fantasy and the Macabre, edited by August Derleth, 15/-

The following will be available shortly:

Dark Carnival, by Ray Bradbury, 15/-

Revelations in Black, by Carl Jacobi, 15/-

Night's Black Agents, by Fritz Leiber Jnr., 15/-

We can also supply these titles issued under other imprints and distributed by Arkham House:

The Night Side: 23 Masterpieces of the Strange and Terrible, edited by August Derleth, 16/6.

The Fireside Book of Ghost Stories, edited by Dr. Edward Wagenknecht, 20/-

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of Solar Pons," which was published by the house of Mycroft and Moran, dedicated to the field of the off-trail detective story, together with various reprints of Lovecraft's works by other publishers.

Last year we led off with three titles delayed from '45: Frank Belknap Long's short story collection, "The Hounds of Tindalos"; "The Doll and One Other," by Algernon Blackwood, and "The House on the Borderland and Other Novels," by William Hope Hodgson. Our programme for '46 was increasingly ambitious, but we encountered more difficulties in the way of time and materials than during the war years, with the result that it was delayed throughout. None the less, we managed to publish five more titles before the year ended.

Our schedule for '47 embraces six new titles within the first eight months. These include "This Mortal Coil," a first collection of Lady Cynthia Asquith's spectral tales, selected by herself; "Revelations in Black," a volume of short stories by Carl Jacobi; "Dark Carnival," featuring the work of the successful young writer, Ray Bradbury; and another first collection by Fritz Leiber Jnr., including a new novel.

The first complete collection of William Hope Hodgson's tales of "Carnacki, the Ghost-Finder" will appear under the Mycroft and Moran imprint. The remaining title will be "Dark of the Moon," an anthology of poems of fantasy and macabre which I have compiled. After that, as soon as our printers can produce them, will come new collections by L. P. Hartley, Stephen Grendon, Clark Ashton Smith, Marjorie Bowen, Manly Wade Wellman, Howard Wandrei, Margery Lawrence, M. P. Shiel, and new uncanny novels by Marjorie Bowen, Donald Wandrei, Frank Belknap Long, Arthur Machen and others.

As editorial director and owner of Arkham House, I am guided by only one consideration—I want to publish the best fantasy and science fiction. To fulfil this object I am moved primarily by concern for literary excellence, and I would tend to decline to publish any exciting story, however well-liked, if it proved not to be well-written. It will, I think, be evident from my sponsoring of the work of Lovecraft, Machen, Blackwood, Shiel, Wakefield and others that my first concern is for something more than the average in literary worth in this field. I will not say I have not published some novel pieces which are

AUGUST DERLETH was born in Sauk City, Wisconsin, 38 years ago. He started writing at the age of 13, had his first piece published at 15, and is now author of over 40 books and 3,000 shorter pieces which have appeared in magazines in the U.S.A., England and elsewhere. Of his supernatural stories, more than 100 have appeared in **Weird Tales** alone, dating from its very early days. His interest in the medium manifested itself while he was a student at the University of Wisconsin, when he chose as a topic for his B.A. thesis "The Weird Tale in English since 1890." In 1938 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to enable him to continue writing his Sac Prairie saga, comprising some 50 books of all types depicting the growth and development of the Sauk Prairie country; of these, 20 have already been published. His other books include mystery novels, short story and poetry collections, and a book on fiction writing in which he tells how he acquired the writing habit sufficient to reach his tremendous output and be dubbed a "one-man fiction factory." His weird story collaborations with Mark Schorer were produced at the rate of one a day; he wrote a full-length novel in 20 days while at the same time keeping up with two other books, his correspondence, and his lectures at Wisconsin University where he is a special lecturer in American Regional Literature. As well as directing Arkham House, he has recently edited several anthologies for other publishers.

only average in this respect, but they are in the minority.

Now Arkham House is a small but, I hope, permanent establishment. It functions for the present from my own home, though its books are printed a hundred miles north of Sauk City, in the heart of the paper country. But plans are ready for a new building to stand close by my home and to be built, like my house, out of the native stone. Its present staff, apart from myself, consists of John E. Stanton, my secretary, and an occasional part-time helper—four of us at most; and for the time being a part of the business is supported out of the proceeds of my own voluminous writings. But Arkham House will soon be self-sufficient, thanks to the support of an ever-increasing number of patrons whose enthusiastic interest in its productions has been a constant encouragement in its building.

Walter Gillings' FANTASIA

Continued from Page One

Arthur J. Burks, once-prolific writer of s-f and weird tales, reported returning to the medium . . . L. Ron Hubbard, absent for years, coming back soon with new serial in *Astounding*, in which A. M. Phillips made sudden reappearance . . . U.S. radio programme "The Answer Man" revealed articles appearing in *Astounding* under name of Arthur McCann were written by Editor Campbell . . . But Geo. O. Smith scouts the idea that he's just another editorial pseudonym, says this is "base canard bitterly resented by both parties" . . . Neil R. Jones, noted for "Professor Jameson" series, is inventor of "Interplanetary," dice-and-counters game with astronomic background selling well in America . . . August Derleth now editing s-f anthology to be published next year, titled "Strange Ports of Call" or "A Corner of the Moon," to include H. P. Lovecraft's "At the Mountains of Madness" . . .

HEINLEIN HITS SLICKS

Los Angeles *Herald-Express* had interview with author Robert A. Heinlein, on strength of his "skill in lifting stories about the future from pulps to slick magazines." Reference is to "The Green Hills of Earth" and "Space Jockey," tales of space-travel with take-it-for-granted settings published lately by *Saturday Evening Post*, beautifully illustrated by Fred Ludekens. More Heinlein stories expected in SEP shortly . . . Joining British Interplanetary Society recently, Heinlein wrote: "I expect to live long enough to see Solar System explored, plan to set aside money to permit person of my habits and years to go as far as Luna when scheduled service starts." . . . *Collier's* had two-part story, "The Blast," by Stuart Cloete, depicting aftermath of atomic war occurring next October . . . *Reader's Scope* ran "Armageddon," three-issue account by Leonard Engel of war of '53, as given in radio bulletins . . . Pat Frank's "Mr. Adam" (see "About Books," last issue) presented in condensed form by *Liberty* . . .

Series of tales of Interplanetary Space Guard versus "The Black Knight," by Sydney J. Bounds, appearing in Dublin *Junior Digest* . . . *Cicognes*, French family journal, ran front-page serial strip, "Guerre a la Terre," about invaders from space . . . New picture feature, "Adventures into the Unknown," by Frederick Blakesie, to appear in *Famous Fantastic* . . . *Astounding* artist Edd Cartier now illustrating *Doc Savage* as well as *The Shadow* . . . "The Immortals," shilling thriller by Ralph Milne Farley, on sale here . . .

VAN VOGT TELLS ALL

Interview with A. E. van Vogt, "top-ranking science fiction author of the year," featured by Hollywood *Writers' Markets & Methods*, revealed he started by writing true confession stories. Interviewer was G. Gordon Dewey, fantasy fan . . . Two-page article on science fiction's prophetic value, with particular reference to *Astounding* and John W. Campbell Jnr., appeared in *This Week*, supplement to *New York Herald-Tribune*. Titled "Science on a Spree," by Leslie Lieber, piece showed Editor Campbell tinkering in his home lab., Nobel prizewinner Dr. Herman Muller reading *Astounding*, illustrations from pre-war s-f mags, which look like the real thing now . . . Reviewing Campbell's "The Atomic Story," *New York Times* critic Stephen Wheeler says: "He is positive, and positive at the top of his voice, about things he cannot possibly know . . . he substitutes rhetoric for fact wherever it will serve his purpose." . . . Former fantasy writer R. DeWitt Miller authors "Forgotten Mysteries" (Cloud, Chicago: \$2.50), dealing with supernatural phenomena, lost continents, extra-terrestrial life, etc. . . .

New and up-and-coming Buroughs films are "Tarzan and the Mermaids," "Tarzan and the Huntress." "The Frozen Continent," now being made, has to do with pre-historic animals . . . M.G.M. said to be planning sequel to "The Beginning or the End," picturing creation of atom bomb . . . June *Air Trails and Science Frontiers* has "Forty Steps to the Moon," by astronomer R. S. Richardson, illustrated by s-f artist Schneeman, just back with *Astounding* . . . Series of articles on writing of science fiction, detailing developing British market and expanding U.S. field, running in *Freelance Writer & Photographer*. The author, yours very truly . . .

Book Reviews

The Epics of Dr. Smith

THE SKYLARK OF SPACE. By Edward E. Smith, Ph.D. Buffalo, Rhode Island. \$3.00.

SPACEHOUNDS OF I.P.C. By Edward E. Smith, Ph.D. Fantasy Press, Reading, Pa. \$3.00.

Reviewed by **D. R. SMITH**

Although his name is seldom seen in the science fiction magazines of to-day, there must be few fans who have never heard of "Doc" Smith and fewer still who have not read some reference to the fabulous "Skylark of Space," even if they cannot relish the memory of its appearance in *Amazing Stories* almost 20 years ago. At that time it was hailed as the most remarkable story of space-travel ever written, and it instantly established its author in the front rank of science fiction writers, a position he has maintained ever since by dint of one novel-length story every two years, on an average. The last of these was "Second Stage Lensman," serialised in *Astounding* at the end of '41, which everybody will remember.

If Dr. Smith were asked to name the person—apart from himself—to whom he owed most for his success, he would probably choose, not Mrs. Lee Hawkins Garby, who collaborated with him in his first story, but Hugo Gernsback, the founder of magazine science fiction. For "The Skylark" was completed in 1920 and, it is said, "accumulated one of the most complete files of rejection slips ever seen" before *Amazing* accepted it in '27.

I find this quite believable; for Dr. Smith's own story reveals him as a persistent trier. During the seven years he was at the University of Idaho he held eleven different jobs—miner, stevedore, electrician and surveyor among them—in his efforts to acquire the money to pursue his studies. He graduated in '14 as a chemical engineer, held a government post as a food chemist for some time, and liked the job so much that he went back to school to learn more organic chemistry. His wife, too, worked to help him get his M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees, which have since enabled him to hold important executive positions in cereal food factories.

The theme of his life story would seem, indeed, to be that of success-through-hard-work so dear to the lesser

Victorian novelists; a plot denounced as a naive falsehood by later cynics anxious to save the working class from exploitation, and one whose rehabilitation is now the object of frenzied propaganda. The same simple morality is evident in all his stories. Absolute good struggles with absolute evil, and in the end secures absolute victory. For instance, in "The Skylark," the noble Earthmen provide the noble Kondalians with the means to completely obliterate the ignoble Mardonians, without room for the thought that some of the latter may be quite decent citizens.

This aspect of Dr. Smith's work does most to offend the sensitive reader, who may feel such ethics thoroughly barbarous. Yet this reducing of moral problems to a nursery level may be an important factor in his popularity. Especially at the present time is the mind of man driven almost frantic by the complexities of human morality, when the people of other nations seem alternatively angels and devils. The better the escape, then, into a future world of Dr. Smith's devising, where only the good are ever good and only the evil wicked.

The publication of "Skylark" in book form fulfils a demand which has persisted through two decades, notwithstanding its two sequels and the other Smith epics which have succeeded—and exceeded—it. Now that those who know it only by reputation are able to read it they may well be disappointed, because it belongs so obviously to the days when science fiction was a very different proposition from what it is to-day. It is, in fact, more of sentimental interest to those who read and enjoyed it when it was new, than of any special appeal to the fantasy reader who has been weaned on the products of a more recent period.

Its faults, now, would seem to be those of the time at which it was written; the same faults that would be apparent in a film of the '20's if it were shown to-day. It has the tall, handsome hero in Dick Seaton, too good to be true, a

sickly-sweet heroine in his fiancée, Dottie (sic), and a dark, sneering villain in DuQuesne, who is so evil that he alone seems human by contrast with the others. Its theme is local-boy-makes-good; and its love scenes give me the screaming meemies.

Yet I, for one, still find it entertaining, if only because Dr. Smith has such a wonderfully fertile imagination when it comes to depicting strange planets, alien forms of life and organised warfare on the super-scientific scale. And even in this, his first story, he makes such good use of his talents in this respect that it seems churlish to find fault with the rest.

"Spacehounds of I.P.C.", the third of his magazine stories, is likely to prove better entertainment for the present-day reader, however. Apart from its sphere of action being limited to the Solar System, it has everything that the "Lensman" stories have. Battle, murder and sudden death occur frequently, from simple tooth-and-claw to the

havoc wrought by the familiar "sheets, cones and gigantic rods of force." The life-forms inhabiting Ganymede, Callisto, Titan and Jupiter appear in various roles, friendly and otherwise, but always fascinating; and although Stevens and Nadia are Seaton and Dorothy all over again, they are not quite so irritating. Pedantically, one might say that some of the action is not strictly relevant to the plot, but it is all so interesting in itself that the untidiness is scarcely noticeable.

Of the books themselves it must be admitted that Fantasy Press have done much the better job of production. Apart from an inane dust-cover and a poor frontispiece by Schneeman, there is nothing very wrong with the "Skylark" volume. But "Spacehounds" is far superior in general layout and has several attractive pseudo-photographic illustrations, titillating sketches as chapter-headings, and a striking dust-jacket which presents an interesting biography of the author.

Super - Scientifiction

DOPPELGANGERS. By H. F. Heard. Vanguard, New York, \$2.75.

Reviewed by **John Carnell**

The title of this book may well mystify even a fantasy reader, but the dust-jacket is illuminating. It shows an enlarged reproduction of a page from a dictionary, explaining that a "doppelganger" is a person exactly like another; a double, an astral apparition, a wraith.

Even this explanation may be misleading, for the book is no "weird," but science fiction of a high order. In fact, it is likely to prove indigestible to those who have become used to assimilating the slick action and smooth writing of the pulp magazines. It is a story filled to capacity with words strung out upon a thin line of plot, but the words are deep and ponderous and full of significance; indeed, the book needs a very careful reading to comprehend fully the author's theories and suggestions concerning man's future, for his writing style is as weighty as Stapledon's.

Mr. Heard commences his story on the assumption that the reader is quite conversant with science fiction. The fundamentals of the plot are so quickly involved with a minimum of explanation that it is only the sub-title—"An Episode of the Fourth, the Psychological, Revolution, 1997"—which enables

us to fix the setting. Throughout we are left to construct our own mental scenery for practically every incident. It is noticeable, too, that the central character is almost speechless compared with the dialogue-producing hero of the usual science fiction novel; a welcome innovation.

The story deals with Alpha, benign overlord of a pleasure-satiated civilisation, and his underworld counterpart, known as The Mole, who is planning his overthrow. An agent of The Mole's undergoes a long process of master surgery until he becomes the living double of Alpha, even to the tonal vibrations of his voice. He eventually reaches Alpha—who, struck by the resemblance, uses him as his stand-in for tiresome functions and ceremonies while he, the Leader, rests. For convenience they are designated as Alpha I and Alpha II, though only a few automaton servants and the Chief of Police are aware of the dual identities.

Eventually Alpha I commits suicide, and his double steps into his shoes as The Mole had planned. But Alpha II has so completely absorbed his original's character, emotions and thoughts that to all intents and purposes he is Alpha. While he still ponders his destiny, and that of his contented, worshipping people, another agent arrives

to kill him, under the impression that he is the original Leader. Then a Higher Being, undoubtedly human but living on a mental plane above that of the rest of mankind, takes rein of all the other characters, explains that The Mole was one of the Fallen from his own sect, profoundly unravels the rest of the mysteries and departs, leaving Alpha II to carry on in the manner best suited for his kind.

The reader may place his own particular interpretation upon all this. But the book was recommended to me as "a super-Astounding novel," and my own reaction is that it is far beyond the highest level of sheer thoughtfulness that popular science fiction could ever reach. It just isn't the kind of story that any magazine editor catering for majority tastes, however elevated, would look at twice. It's **super-science-fiction**.

Monsters and Mermen

MEDUSA, by E. H. Visiak. Gollancz, London, 8/6.

Reviewed by **Alan Devereux**

This is the third in the series of novels being reprinted in the Connoisseur's Library of Strange Fiction. It is both a delightful fantasy and a stirring sea story in a 17th century setting.

The striking similarity of both the style of writing and the form of the story to the work of William Hope Hodgson is very noticeable, almost to the degree of coincidence. Possibly this is because both writers drew from the same sources, and one cannot help feeling the influence of Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" in each case. Tall ships lie becalmed in perilous, uncharted seas; there is madness from thirst and sun, with baleful occult influences, eerie things in the night, formless monsters and loathsome mermen. Added to all these is a strong streak of "Treasure Island," with a sensitive young boy as the narrator of the tale and an expirate with the perfect name of Obadiah Moon.

But the reader is advised not to look at the Preface by Denis Saurat until he has first read the story, as it not only gives away the whole plot, but its scientific explanation of various mysterious events is too heavy for the delicate fantasy of the tale.

Spectral Variants

WHO KNOCKS? Twenty Masterpieces of the Spectral for the Connoisseur. Edited with a Foreword by August Derleth. Rinehart, New York, \$2.50.

Reviewed by **Arthur F. Hillman**

Like its predecessor, "Sleep No More," this collection of grim tales is an admirable and cunning blend of vintage pieces and others of the modern school of the macabre. For Mr. Derleth (and I agree with him) considers that many of to-day's magazine stories can stand unashamedly side by side with their more pretentious progenitors. The transition from one to the other, here, is remarkably smooth.

Horror fans will recognise some of these stories instantly. The excellence of W. F. Harvey's "The Ankerdyne Pew," E. F. Benson's "Negotium Perambulans," May Sinclair's "The Intercessor" and H. R. Wakefield's "Seventeenth Hole at Duncaster" has been acknowledged by more than one anthropologist. But, not content with extracting these gems from their original settings, Mr. Derleth has struck out boldly into the rich field of the "pulp" and culled much of his collection from that amazing magazine **Weird Tales**—amazing in that, surrounded by hack-written contemporaries and the clamour of an unlearned public, it yet gave precedence to literate values.

Thus, Seabury Quinn's "The Phantom Farmhouse," Arthur J. Burks' "Ghosts of Steamboat Coulee," Edgar Lloyd Hampton's "A Reversion to Type" and Stephen Grendon's "Alannah" are lacking in none of the polish of their better-known brethren in the medium. Indeed, they show a singular freedom from the conventions that hampered earlier specimens of the genre. This broadening of the horizon of weird fiction, which once was so narrow, will, I feel, have important results in the future. The power and the glory of the weird tale is yet to come; and in this volume are brought to light many striking variants of the once simple spectral theme.

No modern horror anthology would, of course, be complete without a piece by that great master of the macabre, H. P. Lovecraft. Here, in "The Shunned House," we have one of his best—if we can make such a distinction, for all his stories have the stamp of genius. Another item I must mention is "The

Lake," by Ray Bradbury. A rare poignancy, bitter-sweet and intense, runs thread-like through this piece. Reading it is akin to scanning a childhood diary, for it stirs a nostalgia that has more than a hint of tears. If Bradbury had written only this, his advent in the weird field would be memorable, but luckily there are many fine stories of his which await general recognition.

Each item in this beautifully printed volume is prefaced by a valuable biographical note of the author, and the illustrations by Lee Brown Coye are in a strangely whimsical style which yet seems quite appropriate to their bizarre subjects. Like all things of rare value in these days, the book is disappearing rapidly, and however penurious he may have been left by the flood of anthologies from America of late, the connoisseur should be certain not to miss this one.

Van Vogt Again

THE WEAPON MAKERS. By A. E. van Vogt. Hadley, Rhode Island. \$3.00.

Reviewed by **Thomas Sheridan**

Another of the popular **Astounding Science-Fiction** writer's war-time serials, which British readers will not have had the opportunity to read unless they have garnered some rare back issues, now appears in handy book-publication form, in a limited edition of special interest to collectors.

The magazine story, which appeared early in '33, was actually preceded by a shorter piece called "The Weapon Shop" which introduced the basic idea of "The Weapon Makers" in an earlier setting, but it bears no relation to the longer story apart from that and is not included in the book. Since the first piece appeared in **Astounding's** British Edition (Feb. '43), you may, however, be familiar with the theme of the secret organisation which produces

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It's a typical van Vogt set-up, which not only takes us out to Alpha Centauri but introduces such minor themes as telepathy, immortality, human giants (graced with the name of "vibratory magnification"), super-mentality, time-travel, "freak" planets and super-intelligent spiders. I repeat, **minor** themes . . . And formidable though it must sound to the reader for whom one such concept is enough to make a story, I must say that I find the peculiar hotch-potch of ultra-imaginative conception which this writer mixes so adroitly, and with such compelling interest, as convincing as it is intriguing. Though I wonder, sometimes, if it is because I am prepared to go half-way with him for the sake of indulging in the pleasant, dreamlike extravagances in which he excels.

Not everyone, I fancy, would allow himself so willingly to come under his spell. But to the inveterate **Astounding** reader the process of submission becomes almost involuntary, and for such unprejudiced mortals this book is a sheer delight.

The Wonders of Eos

THE TIME STREAM, by John Taine.
Buffalo, Rhode Island, \$3.00.

Reviewed by **D. R. Smith**

Though John Taine is among my favourite science fiction authors, I am not sure that this is one of my favourite stories. I thought it was going to be when I had read the first instalment of the original serial version in **Wonder Stories** five or six years ago. But the story as a whole does not fulfil the promise of its first chapters, becoming increasingly complex in its development as well as its fantastic conception. A second reading, however, confirms the feeling that it is too remarkable a tale not to have read at least once; in fact, two readings would seem to be needed to appreciate it entirely.

The theme as ultimately revealed is

that of a completely stable Utopia, maintained by a rule of reason quite divorced from emotion, which is overthrown by two people marrying for love in defiance of eugenical analysis and producing offspring which reintroduces emotional motives into the racial character. It is a difficult proposition to accept in cold blood, and the author's leisurely, emotionless style does not make it any easier to believe in wholeheartedly.

But the real fascination lies in Taine's concept of time as an actual rather than metaphorical stream, into which the nine chief characters plunge their minds, to swim up into the past or down into the future. From the world of 1906 they are precipitated almost by accident, but once in the time stream they find themselves belonging to the long-dead world of Eos, actual members of its proud civilisation who are deliberately exploring the past for a way out of the danger of the forbidden marriage.

Taine is at his best as he depicts the travellers emerging from the time stream to find themselves on a mountain of bones in the midst of a vast, bone-carpeted desert. The reader is equally stirred by the first encounter with Eos, where five coloured suns shine eternally above the plain where its people live in their scientifically-attained Nirvana. But this feeling of being present in a strange, wondrous world, vivid though it is at first, is not maintained. I fancy this is due to having to return with the narrator to the prosaic atmosphere of San Francisco so that he may recount a sub-plot involving the same characters in this time-era.

This literary counterpoint can be very pleasing, but I think that here the author attempted more than he could accomplish successfully. For the events in San Francisco, after the wonders of the world of the five suns, seem dull and irrelevant, and break the spell of Eos to such an extent that one never entirely recaptures it. But Taine is none the less a competent writer whose dry, matter-of-fact style is pleasant to read and at times gives a breathtaking realism to the most bizarre imaginings. Those who value his unique contribution to the literature of fantasy should welcome this addition to the few precious volumes of his work, which would not disgrace the most dignified library. However, it should be noted that it can no longer be obtained direct from the publishers.

Something from the Soviet

A MEETING OVER TUSCARORA. By I. Efremov. Hutchinson, London, 8/6.

Reviewed by John C. Craig

This is, to the best of my knowledge, the first offering of its kind that has come to us from the U.S.S.R. It is a book of science fiction, and it is all the more welcome because it is something quite fresh. If you want super-science, or the sophisticated science fiction of **Astounding**, you will not find it here. There are no gadgets, no supersonics, no high-flown atomic theories. Though the stories are undoubtedly scientific in background, their approach is simple and direct, and having read and enjoyed them one suddenly realises that an essential of really good science fiction is simplicity of mind.

It is a book of five stories told by five men who meet in an air raid. They are an elderly sea captain (who relates the title-story), a geologist, a mining engineer, a surveyor and a Siberian explorer. There is nothing very new in this method of presentation, but it is the stories themselves which are of value. The author, himself a retired

sea captain, draws generously upon myth and experience as well as imagination, leaving one with the impression that the vast countries of the Soviet must offer thousands of possibilities for scientific romance such as he exploits so effectively here.

Yet those who require their fantastic phenomena to be fully accounted for by scientific explanation may find these stories wanting, at least in this respect; for instance, in "Allergorkhoy-Khorkhoy—The Monstrous Worm" (irresistible title!), and "The Lake of the Mountain Spirits," which concerns the discovery of a lake of mercury in the Altai Mountain. Again, "In the Steps of the Ancient Miners" presents no startlingly original theories, but if you are inclined to be claustrophobic you will emerge into the daylight with the same sense of relief as the two characters in the story.

If I were asked to draw a comparison between this Russian writer's work and any of the fantasies we keep on our shelves I would point to some of the best of Merritt's famous stories. But the book is interesting of itself, both in

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the writing and the scope of its ideas, which, incidentally, are mercifully free from propaganda. All of us who wish to extend our reading of science fiction beyond the narrow limits which convenience dictates must be grateful to the translators, M. and N. Nicholas, and to the publishers of this volume for an experience all too rare.

The Sleeper Wakes

SUMMER IN 3000, by Peter Martin. Quality Press, London, 8/6.

Reviewed by **John C. Craig**

Here is something of a rarity, a British science fiction novel which does not pretend to be anything other than science fiction, though it has a sociological slant. It transports John McCullum into the world of the future while he is on a walking holiday, by the simple expedient of letting him fall asleep and wake up in the year 3000. This device—or, rather, the lack of it—is a little too simple to be convincing. At the risk of being considered pro-

gadget, in this case I plead for the time machine!

But, having arrived, our hero falls into the arms of the lady who displays her charms on the dust-jacket, and who possesses the further advantages of intelligence and strength besides rejoicing in the name of Clarnia. The story then deals, on fairly conventional lines, with the highly cultured race to which Clarnia belongs and its strife with an America in which free enterprise has been carried to its logical conclusion.

Some of the author's theories did not impress me as very logical; I thought I could detect a trace of hysteria here and there, and some of the science is, to say the least, unconvincing. At times I found myself recalling O'Duffy's "Spacious Adventures" and Palmer's "The Hesperides"; but if the concept is not new, the story itself is not allowed to suffer from theorising, and the newcomer to science fiction is likely to find it quite enthralling. For the rest, it makes pleasant bedtime reading and is an interesting item to add to any collection of Utopias, whether penny plain or tuppence coloured.

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.)

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ABOUT BOOKS

There are, of course, good reasons why our British fantasy books, like all our publishers' offerings, are still way behind those of our American friends in quality of production. There is an acute shortage of paper, and a bottleneck in the binding trade (though most of the latest volumes would easily pass through the neck of a bottle). But surely it is not beyond the wit of our publishers to improve their dust-jackets and the interior lay-out of their books? In this respect, some of the volumes I get from America make ours look very shabby indeed.

Two of the books among the latest British bag are exceptions to the general rule. The jackets on Francis Gerard's "Sorcerer's Shaft" and Garnett Radcliffe's "The Lady from Venus," both published by Macdonald at 8/6, are excellent. If the other non-smokers in the train see you with either of these, they will be more likely to crane their necks for an envious view than glance pityingly at the tripe they suppose you are reading.

You should know Francis Gerard for his "The Black Emperor," "The Dictatorship of the Dove," and others. Though his new book is primarily a mystery, with a theme of black magic, it is one which may well be placed along with your collection of "weirds." Garnett Radcliffe is a name which should also be familiar to fantasy fans, though I have not seen it since before the war, when his "London Skies are Falling Down" was serialised in the American **Argosy**. "The Lady from Venus" is a wacky account of the adventures of a Venusian minx on the planet Urth or Mud, and may be highly recommended to those who don't take their science fiction too seriously.

There is a third offering from Macdonald: "The Peacemaker," by John Remenham, which is all about a millionaire's efforts to establish world peace by means of a device operated from the Arctic regions. "Bright Tomorrow," by Derek Neville (Crowther: 7/6), with a 1980 setting, is another variation on the theme of a dreadful force at the disposal of one man who intends to use it to prevent war. Highly moral though it may be, and appropri-

ate to these times, this sort of thing is so familiar that it is no longer very enthralling to the science fictionist.

Any variant on "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur" must, similarly, have a most original slant to get by these days. Which is why "An Airplane in the Arabian Nights," by Arthur Lee Gould (Laurie: 8/6), left me stone cold. But I thoroughly enjoyed returning to the realm of Lilliput in "Mistress Masham's Repose" (Cape: 8/6), by our old friend T. H. White of "The Sword in the Stone." This is an ingenious tale of a child who finds the descendants of the original Lilliputians living on an island near an old mansion.

From Methuen comes Vardis Fisher's "The Golden Rooms," which is the second in a trilogy of novels portraying primitive man. The third, "Adam and the Serpent" (Vanguard: \$2.75), has just appeared in America; the first was "The Darkness and the Deep," which you should find in the library if you're interested. Or perhaps you prefer "The Shadow Girl," a Ray Cummings thriller which Swan have made available at 5/-. For myself, I used to read Cummings' serials in the old **All Story** with rapt attention. Now, I wonder.

Finally, there is a new anthology, "At Close of Eve" (Jarrolds: 15/-), which presents 22 new stories by modern writers covering the field of the curious, the fantastic and the horrific. It is edited by Jeremy Scott, who produced "The Mandrake Root" collection last year. Quite an impressive list, altogether, at least as far as numbers goes. And two other new volumes, "A Meeting over Tuscarora" and "Summer in 3000," you will find mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

Of the continuous stream of American books we have space to mention only the more attractive items, notable among which is Prof. J. O. Bailey's "Pilgrims Through Space and Time" (Argus: \$5.00). This is a comprehensive historical survey of scientific fiction, ranging from the ancient Greek myths to the present-day magazine story. From Hadley comes news of the reprinting of John W. Campbell's **Astounding** novel, "The Mightiest Machine," which will be available soon in a \$3.00 volume.

The first Prime Press production, "The Mislaid Charm," by Alexander M. Phillips, is now available at \$1.75. And for those who want to keep up-to-date with astronautics, a fourth, revised edition of Willy Ley's "Rockets and Space Travel" may be had from the Viking Press at \$3.75.

A new edition of M. P. Shiel's "The Purple Cloud" has been published by the World Co. at \$1.00, while Random House have produced a highly coloured de luxe edition of Wells' "The Time Machine" at \$2.75. The firm of Didier have also reissued Verne's "From the

Earth to the Moon and Round the Moon" in a revised version by Carter Hull, at \$3.00. And Edgar Rice Burroughs fans will be interested in "Escape on Venus," the fourth of Carson Napier's adventures on that planet, which has come from Tarzana at \$2.00, and doubtless will appear in a British edition in due time.

Those who enjoy reading poetry (and most fantasy fans do) will find a rare volume in the new Arkham House anthology, "Dark of the Moon: Poems of Fantasy and the Macabre," edited by August Derleth. Other collector's pieces

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forthcoming from this source are Cynthia Asquith's collection of weird tales, "This Mortal Coil," Ray Bradbury's "Dark Carnival," and Carl Jacobi's "Revelations in Black." All may be obtained at 15/- each from Arkham House's British agents, whose advertisement appears on another page.

The latest weird anthology, comprising 23 tales by "familiar" in the field, collected and illustrated by Elinore Blaisdell, is titled "Tales of the Undead: Vampires and Visitants" (Crowell: \$3.50). There is also an interesting \$5.00 volume from Random House, "The World of Dreams," which anthologises the work of many writers touching the subject of dreams and is edited by Ralph L. Woods. "The World of Flame" (Dial: \$2.00) is, too, something of a nightmare. It's a novel by Leonard Engel and Emanuel Piller, foreseeing

the Russian-American war of 1950, with atom bombs and germs annihilating fifty million Americans.

Finally comes news of another new organisation, pledged to publish de luxe editions of rare fantasy classics, which will shortly commence operations under the name of Carcosa House. Its initial production will be a first edition of the legendary "Edison's Conquest of Mars," by Garrett P. Serviss, which countless fans have clamoured for through the years. It will be published in an illustrated, limited edition with a bibliography by A. Langley Searles. Carcosa also plans to publish a lengthy study and critical analysis of the supernatural in English and American fiction by an authority in the field. The well-known Los Angeles fantasy fan, Russ Hodgkins, is associated with this new venture.

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