
- - - - - THEY HAD SOMETHING CALLED A DISCLAVE in Wheaton,
- o p o 45 - Maryland, last
- - - - - weekend, but don't you believe it, Ellers, nor you
----- few Effers who didn't attend. The real Disclaves of
happy memory had a distinct atmosphere to them that
was as different from that of the 1965 version as it could be. The
real Disclaves were traditionally held at low-rise motels where there
were no problems of elevators or stairways and where there was a
large outdoor area suitable for mass congeniality.

The attendance was usually about 40, comprising, roughly, a WSFA/PSFS/
Fanoclast axis. Friday night was party night in a "con suite," Satur-
day morning was sleepover time, Saturday afternoon was a solid stretch
of poolside conviviality, and Saturday night everybody packed off to
the A. V. Ristorante Italiano. More party afterward, and that was the
Disclave.

Well now this Wheaton thing just wasn't like that at all.
The Howard Johnson "motor lodge" is built on traditional hotel lines,
meaning that fans were scattered all up and down the place; there was
a one-room "con suite" but it was closed down early Friday night.
Saturday afternoon there was, Gawdelpus, a Program...with a Guest of
Honor, no less...but dinner was strictly on-your-own. Nine of us,
mostly old-line Disclavers, tried to revive the traditional spirit
by going off to a nearby restaurant where we occupied a big table;
nearby was another batch with (apparently) the same idea. Afterward
there was a big open official party, and some room parties, and even
one quiet house party.

All in all it was a pleasant weekend. The new
style Disclave came out just like a teeny little worldcon, and it
wasn't a bad one at that. But I missed the raining automobiles, the
Bloody Marys, and mostly the happy, relaxed feeling of the old Dis-
claves. Next year, fellas, do you think we could go back to the
other kind?

BK.WK: CAPTURED BY ZULUS, Harry Prentice, Burt, 1890, 282 pp. Pren-
tice's "Captured by Apes" is a possible
source of "Tarzan of the Apes;" this other book bears a suspicious re-
semblance to "The Tarzan Twins." Trouble is, when you work as long
and determinedly as I have for the past couple of years, you get to
the point where the least similarity jumps off the page and shouts
"Source! Source!" at you, when it is in fact only a coincidental
similarity, and a trivial one at that. I dunno.

OUT OF THE SILENCE, Erle Cox, Hamilton, 1927, 319 pp. A very fine
time-capsule novel set in Australia. Distinctly
worth reading, but if you do, skip the prologue which telegraphs the
first hundred pages or so of the plot.

THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU, H. G. Wells, Stone & Kimball, 1896, 239.
The more I read of Verne and Wells the more
I become convinced that the latter is the real daddy of modern sf.
He pioneered time travel, earth invasion, other-world exploration,
and in this story controlled mutation (although in 1896 it was by
means of surgery rather than genetics). Another of Wells's genuine
classics. [And an influence on ERB's "The Monster Men?" See above.]

THE GREAT STONE OF SARDIS, Frank R. Stockton, Harper, 1898, 230 pp. This is a double-plotted travel story, of a submarine exploration of the North Pole and a journey through the crust of the earth, to the gigantic diamond which constitutes all but the outermost detritus of our planet. Fairly well done, but with a pointlessness unfortunately characteristic of Stockton. Included in the 1900 Scribner's edition is "The Water-Devil," a beautiful tall tale that is likely one of Stockton's best works. It's almost impossible to describe it without giving away too much, and it does deserve resurrection. Hey, Assistant Editor, does F&SF still pay finder's fees for turners-up of reprintables? This one is worth looking into.

THE CARDINAL'S MISTRESS, Benito Mussolini, Boni, 1928, 232 pp. This historical novel written by the Italian dictator before he came to power has little to recommend it. It is of, podn me, historical interest only.

THE IRON HEEL, Jack London, Macmillan, 1907, 354 pp. Although cast as a novel of the future, this book is merely a tedious political diatribe, resembling George Allan England's "The Golden Blight." London preceded England, and his book is not as bad as the latter's, but it is nonetheless very bad. Anybody got a copy of London's "Before Adam" he's willing to part with?

A JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH, Jules Verne, 1864; Dodd, Mead edition 1959, 226 pp. Of all adventures-under-the-earth, this is probably the most famous and influential. I do not know why: it is neither the first nor the best. It is readable if occasionally tedious. Why the fuss?

THE MYSTERY OF ARTHUR GORDON PYM published by Associated Booksellers in 1960, consisting of "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" by Edgar Allan Poe (1837) and its sequel, "The Ice Sphinx" by Jules Verne (1897). The Poe is a chilling and powerful story of horror and wonder as survivors of an oceanic storm drift south into unexplored waters beyond the Antarctic Circle. The story is incomplete, and Verne's completion is no great shakes.

THE MIGHTIEST MACHINE, John W. Campbell, Jr., Hadley, 1947, 228 pp.
 THE INCREDIBLE PLANET, " " " " Fantasy Press, 1949, 344 pp.
 These books contain the four interdimensional exploits of Aarn Munro, Campbell's Jovian avatar. The first is pseudo-Doc Smith space opera, and very bad. The later book is more of the same, somewhat (but not much) better done. Those were the good old days?

THE JUNGLE BOOK, Rudyard Kipling, 1894, 341 pp. The adventures of Mowgli are recounted here, and aside from being the master source of T. of the A's, the Kipling book is a minor masterpiece in its own right. Good, good.

THE BREAKING OF THE SEALS, Francis Ashton, Dakers, 1946, 317 pp. This is one of the finest of the sword-and-sorcery epics, set in an extremely ancient period. I do not know why it has not been reissued in the S-and-S revival.