

# OPERATION FANTAST

Vol. 1 (New Series) MARCH, 1951

No. 8



SIXPENCE



## Operation Fantast

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U.S.A. Rep.: Philip J. Rasch, 567 Erskine Drive, Pacific Palisades, Calif., U.S.A.  
Published quarterly. Single issues: 7d. or 15 cents. Post Free.  
Subscription rates: 6 issues, 3/- or 60 cents.  
Advertising rates quoted on application to the Editor.



### EDITORIAL

## "Acephalous"

To save you getting out the dictionary, the meaning of the word heading this editorial is much the same as "chaotic." We are disorganised, and how! Please note the change of the editorial address. Only a change of two figures, but . . .

Apart from a delay in answering mail, however, we are managing to keep things going quite well, and we feel that O.F. is still improving. In this issue you will find some more advice for the author-beginner, and we are hoping that a promised screed on these lines will arrive in time for our next issue. With the difference that it will be written from the point of view of the editor, however.

Main story in this issue is by J. T. McIntosh, who has recently appeared in the contents list of aSF, among other mags. We have another tale by him on file, which will probably appear in the September issue.

We say "main story," for we also have a short bit, but that may be "squeezed out"—Dr. Innes has promised us an article on DIANETICS, and if it arrives in time the short tale will have to be held over. If Dr. Innes' article is not in this issue, watch out for it in June.

H. J. Campbell, who reviews a couple of pocket-books in this issue, is a gentleman with an impressive string of initials behind his name; he is also a scientific journalist, and has promised us an article on "SPACE WARFARE." He will also be reviewing more books for you in the next issue.

You will doubtless remember the MASTERS OF FANTASY series which was running in SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW before that zine rose to professional status? Arthur F. Hillman has offered to continue the series in O.F.—needless to say we have accepted.

Dr. John K. Aiken will be presenting his views of the Language of the Future, possibly in the June issue. We should mention, perhaps, that this article and the one by Mr. Campbell mentioned above form part of a series, the first of which was THE SCIENCE IN SCIENCE FICTION printed in December. We are inviting various people to write on certain aspects of science-fiction, both as an aid to the younger author, and as a matter of general interest to fandom.

Very roughly, that gives you some idea of what you can expect in the future . . . how do you like it?

Fantastically yours,  
JOYCE AND KEN SLATER.

## BOOK NEWS AND REVIEWS

### NEWS

by E. J. Carnell.

Two British authors with honest-to-goodness science-fiction novels to be published in Britain is definitely NEWS. First of these to appear will probably be TO-MORROW SOMETIMES COMES, by none other than F. G. Rayer, coming from Home & Van Thal, 9/6, in April. Wrapper is by NEW WORLDS artist Clothier, and the story is a new complete novel featuring the Magnus Mensas of Rayer's recent NW8 yarn, "Deus Ex Machina."

Second book is due "shortly," from Michael Joseph, 9/6, and is John Beynon Harris' DAY OF THE TRIFIDS. This will be the complete original version, better than the forthcoming edition from Doubleday, or the version printed in Collier's, which was not the same as the Doubleday one.

A third new book on the British market is THE HUNTER OF THE DARK & Other Stories, by H. P. Lovecraft, with an introduction by August Derleth, at 9/6. This is already on sale.

Others to come are Hamilton's STAR KINGS, Bradbury's MARTIAN CHRONICLES, and DIANETICS (new edition), all of which will be published sometime this year.

In the States, the flood continues. Reprints from magazines will include vV's THE WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER, from Greenberg, 2.50; SLAN, to be reprinted by Simon & Shuster at 2.50; THE STARS, LIKE DUST, Isaac Asimov's retitled TYRANN, currently appearing in GALAXY as a serial, from Doubleday, 2.50; TIME QUARRY, from GALAXY again, by Clifford D. Simak, from Simon & Shuster 2.50, probably under the changed title of TIME AND AGAIN; Ed Hamilton's THE CITY AT WORLD'S END will be available in March, in a greatly expanded version, from Frederick Fell, at 2.75; Fritz Leiber's CONJURE WIFE will be published by Pellegrini & Cudahy at 2.75. I've not had confirmation yet, but a new anthology by Don Wollheim is due now from Fell's, titled SCIENCE FICTION FOR THE MILLIONS, at 2.95.

There also seems to be a large number of "original" novels scheduled for publication. Title changes by publishers sometimes confuse the issue, but the following are to the best of my knowledge "definite" originals: ROGUE QUEEN, by L. Sprague de Camp, from Doubleday. de Camp says of this "the story is told from the viewpoint of a female extra-terrestrial, and is all about love." (By the by, Mr. de Camp's LOST CONTINENTS is now being set up in type and should be out in March.) THE UNBEGOTTEN MAN is a new novel by Ted Sturgeon, and will be published by Greenberg in June, at 2.50. THE MAKER, science-fiction original by Jack Williamson, has now been retitled "DRAGON'S ISLAND," Simon & Shuster, should be out by the time you read this, at 2.50.

British reprints of interest are a whole series of Dennis Wheatley's "weird" and "s-f" books, from Hutchinson, at prices from 4/6 to 7/6, including SIXTY DAYS TO LIVE, BLACK AUGUST, STRANGE CONFLICT, and THE DEVIL RIDES OUT.

### TWO POCKET BOOKS

By H. J. CAMPBELL.

POPULAR LIBRARY has turned Max Ehrlich's THE BIG EYE into a pocket book, complete and unabridged. You've heard of it, of course, and you should know that it is a novel of the not-too-distant future. The publisher's banner says it's a fantastic novel of the future, but it's STF to me. Don't read the back cover blurb until you've finished the story, or the latter will be spoilt. And you—atheists and agnostics—don't throw the book down before the last chapter. Once you've read that, you won't



want to throw it down. Incidentally, if any of you want an idea for a story, look on p. 130. There you will see "men who are facing the same execution for the same reason do not hate each other." Work it up yourselves.

A striking contrast to *THE BIG EYE* is Jack Vance's *THE DYING EARTH* (Hillman, 26c.). This is a disjointed series of blackmagical episodes bearing little relation to each other and none at all to the title. Vance uses a time when the Earth is on its last legs simply, it seems, so that he can have a red Sun hanging about for atmosphere. There's no more to it than that. The whole thing might just as well have been set on an imaginary planet. There is action, of a coincidental kind. There are poetical cadences in places. There are intriguing creatures of the forest. If only it all had meaning . . .

Which is a pity. Vance has a powerful imagination and he knows his words. Maybe he'll write a book with *content* sometime, eh?

## - THE HOUSE THAT STOOD STILL

A. E. van Vogt; Greenberg; 2.50.

Reviewed by Steve Gilroy.

It is surprising that the first "original" novel to appear in hard covers from the pen of an acknowledged master of science-fiction should be such an unsatisfactory work. Is it possible that the publisher has demanded the accentuation of the love and action elements, and the "toning-down" of the science portion?

The work has all the necessary components for a tip-top epic, the "house" of the title being a marble mansion with the power of bestowing immortality upon folk residing therein. The immortal residents know the house to be at least 1,000 years old, that being roughly the period they have made use of it. But they do not know, and the book does not disclose, who built the house, or why.

The other ingredients include such things as a spaceship, some assorted idols, a robot, new elements, the threat of the atomic destruction of the USA, a murder or two, and mind reading. With all these parts to aid in the construction of the verbal edifice, the main part of the tale seems to revolve around a mortal hero, an immortal heroine, and the efforts of these two to defeat the rest of the immortals in their attempts to prevent the hero become immortal, marrying the heroine, and having children.

The ending of the tale leaves the hero and heroine, having accomplished the first two of their aims, planning on the third. Just how these are accomplished I don't quite know. I shall have to read the book a second time—and then I'm not sure if it will be clear. But the fact that the origin of the house, and its purpose, are not explained, leaves me very unsatisfied. Just why vV has not tied up all his loose ends of plots and counter-plots is also inexplicable.

## APOLOGY No. 1

L. Sprague de Camp writes:—

"Apologies to Arthur C. Clarke on the subject of differences between the magazine and book versions of *THE WHEELS OF IF*. He was right; I wrong. The differences came to pass thus: I wrote the story when young and inexperienced, and made only one carbon copy. Moreover, when I copy-read the ms and made corrections, I made them on the original only, not on the carbon. Then when book publication came along many years later I sent in the carbon copy, which I also read and corrected, but naturally the two sets of corrections weren't congruent. Now I make three copies of everything and homogenize them down to the last comma."

This letter—arrived just too late for inclusion in December O.F., but your editors included it in the duplicated circular to British fans. In turn, we received some twenty letters, pointing out an error . . . the apology is actually due to John K. Aiken. We had spotted this ourselves, as we had turned up the review from which the correspondence arose, but by

then it was too late. For the benefit of folk who wish to see what it was all about, turn up your backfiles of *SCIENCE-FANTASY REVIEW*; FR. No. 14, April-May '49, page 23, Dr. Aiken's review of Mr. de Camp's book; S-F R No. 16, Autumn, '49, page 29, Mr. de Camp's letter; S-F R No. 17, Winter, '49-50, page 33, Dr. Aiken's reply.

We are glad to be the medium by which this matter is now cleared, and we hope that our present-day young authors will note the troubles that can arise from not keeping accurate copies of their work! We recommend you to follow L. Sprague de Camp's current method.

## APOLOGY No. 2

Your editors make this one. On page 7 of Dec. O.F., in the footnote to Ian Williamson's article, we expressed the belief that Hal Clement and Arthur C. Clarke were one and the same person. Our source of information was incorrect, and we apologise to Mr. Clement and Mr. Clarke. Willy Ley, Sprague de Camp, G. R. Kay, and some ten other folks informed us of our error. Strangely enough, Mr. Clement and Mr. Clarke have remained silent . . . perhaps because they don't get O.F.

We are sorry we robbed Mr. Clement of his identity, and we are glad that he does exist as a separate individual . . . it makes another source of good s-f yarns available. Mr. Clement (who actually has another name as well, for private use) majored in astronomy at college, and teaches science some place in the Boston area, we are informed.

## BROWSING THRU

By K.F.S.

MARVEL, Feb., '50, shows little improvement on the first issue, as I have already commented in an interim circular. However, it is now announced that a complete change of policy will become effective with the May issue. Format will be digest-sized, with a general clean-up; illos will in future be by better-known s-f artists, and the cover pic will illustrate a story. The stories themselves will be of a more "mature" type. Something of an innovation will be the new feature, a controversy between well-known writers, both or all points of view being given in the same issue. The May issue discusses *DIANETICS*, with L. Ron Hubbard pro, Lester del Ray con, and Ted Sturgeon keeping the middle path. Lead novel in this issue is "The Ones," by Betsy Curtis, whose first published story, "Divine Right," appeared in F & SF, Summer, '50. William Tenn has second place, and shorts include authors Mack Reynolds, Jack Vance, and Arthur C. Clarke. There will also be a contest in each issue, prizes being original illos from that issue, and there will be NO advertising.

Mention of Arthur C. Clarke above leads me to note that he seems to be the most prolific of British authors—not including those who turn out "tripe." He also has a nice long tale in *SCIENCE-ADVENTURE BOOKS* second issue, Spring, '51, *SEEKER OF THE SPHINX*. The theme is that of the adventurer, and his pastoral opposite, depicted by the men who left earth for the wider reaches of the stars, and by those who remained. Although not so enthralling as some other of Clarke's tales, it makes entertaining reading. With it in this issue is, yet again, Ed Hamilton's *THE STAR KINGS*. In the Summer number old-time fans will be pleased to learn Nei! R. Jones returns with Durna Rangué story, *THE CITADEL IN SPACE*. Tales based on this 26th century Cult of Evil Science were popular back in the middle-thirties; I wonder how the present-day fan will like them? In the same issue will be *SWORD OF XOTA*, by James Blish. By the by, S-A BOOKS are also giving pics for best letters.

L. Sprague de Camp's *THE HAND OF ZEI* finished in the January issue of aSF, being a four-part tale, instead of three-part as I regret I termed it back in December O.F. February issue contains all complete tales, and there is no mention of serial to come. aSF has had some variety



in covers of late. November was a "symbolic" by Pattee, very choice (pardon my pun), and another symbolic cover by Rogers on the front of January issue, although well executed, does not seem to fit the caption, "Achievement," so well. December cover was story-scene by Timmins, From BINDLESTIFF, by James Blish. This tale is a sequel to "Okie" (aSF, April, '50), and continues the adventures of the hobo-city of the star ways. February's cover is a symbolical representation of "I TELL YOU THREE TIMES," the story of a "mechanical brain" which helps the Galactic Council rule—or govern—the Galaxy. Unfortunately, the "brain" goes mad . . . or does it? We gather, by the way, that Doc Methuselah had died. The autopsy revealed an acute case of Dianetitis! But in March another favourite series is back, with SPACE FEAR continuing James H. Schmitz' Vegan Confederation. In February Murray Leinster neatly solves the worries of this troubled world in an amusing tale, HISTORICAL NOTE—I only wish it would happen!

This article (?) looks rather as if it going to degenerate into a listing of titles—a fact that several of you pointed out had happened last issue—but there are so many mags on the market now that I find I'm pushed to pick out the best stories, or the worst stories, and do them justice. aSF and GSF between them have produced some very excellent material in the last three months, and the other mags have not been very far behind. Take the March STARTLING . . . lead novel by Leigh Brackett, THE STARMEN OF LLYRDIS. Usually I'm not very happy with Miss Brackett's work, but this time I quite liked it; there does seem to be some element of illogical development between the opening chapters, wherein the Bretons show an innate hatred of what we later learn are the Starmen, and the later parts of the tale, in which the reason for most of the Galaxy's dislike of the Starmen is disclosed (as the Starmen have never revealed themselves to Earth, why should Earthmen have this reason for hating them?), but, overlooking that, a fine yarn. And in the same issue Ed Hamilton uses Captain Future and crew as a background for the problem—"if it is possible to resuscitate creatures who have been "instantaneously frozen," what will be the problem of rehabilitation of space-wrecked folk who are brought back to life after long periods of time?" This problem is met to-day in a lesser way when men who have served lengthy prison sentences are released on a totally altered world. May issue of STARTLING will feature Fletcher Pratt's THE SEED FROM SPACE, by the way.

The above paragraph illustrates what I am up against in reviewing the present flood of mags. In close on 200 words I have only briefly touched on two tales in one mag, and mentioned a third story to appear in a subsequent issue. What would you like me to do? Just take one or two mags, to give some real attention to them, or continue touching briefly on all of them? Let me know in time for the next issue, and for now I'll try to wade thru the pile!

Emmett McDowell's I, THE UN-MORTAL, lived up to Sam Merwin's forecast of it, in my opinion, but it was overshadowed by OVERLORDS OF MAXUS, Vance's long yarn in the same (Feb.) issue of TWS. Slavery in a Galactic Empire is the theme of this story, and for once the anachronism is acceptable. Gallun's BROTHER WORLDS in the "emotional" vein is a good yarn, and for a change an amusing yarn that does not fall flat is MAN OF DISTINCTION, by Fredric Brown. FINAL HAVEN, by Matt Lee, has an ending that is surprising—the acceptance of "defeat" by the "hero" saves it from being run-of-the-mill.

PLANET STORIES, although bi-monthly, shows little change of policy; Leigh Brackett's BLACK AMAZON OF MARS is her good old "thud-and-blunder" action stuff, and although the shorter tales in the March issue are of a more adult standard, this may be but a flash in the pan. However, vV's THE STAR SAINT, although not a "complex" story, is worth a careful reading, and Poul Anderson's DUEL ON SYRTIS is a very good tale, the title being somewhat deceiving. This issue contains a reprint, by the way . . . THE DIVERSIFAL, by Ross Rocklynne, appeared in PLANET, Winter, 1945.

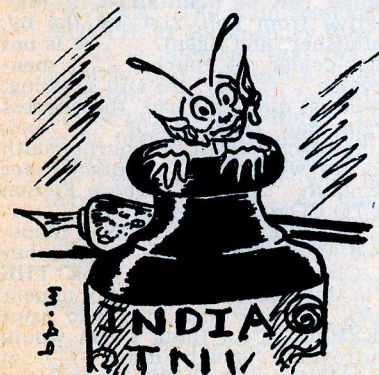
For the benefit of those folk who are still trying to get OTHER WORLDS, December 1950. I'd better mention there wasn't one. OW is six-weekly, and RAP announces that 1951 dates will be January, March, April, June, July, September, October, and December. The January issue is the latest one to hand, and includes tales by Steber, COURTESY CALL; Stan Mullen, WATER FOR MARS; Will F. Temple, G. H. Irwin, and three others. As yet I've not found time to read any of them . . . but you'll be glad to hear that Ray Palmer is back out of hospital, and almost completely recovered. Congrats, Ray, and stay out of the medico's clutches—they are very loath to let go of "interesting" patients!

FANTASTIC NOVELS, January, features Arthur Leo Zagat's DRINK WE DEEP, one of his finest fantasies, and states that the March issue will have Merritt's THE SNAKE MOTHER. This we learn is incorrect, and the recently hard-cover-published tale THE TORCH, by Jack Bechdolt, will fill the gap. In May will appear Ray Cumming's THE GIRL IN THE GOLDEN ATOM, with probably two supporting yarns; the Merrittale is put back for several issues.

GALAXY S-F NOVEL also suffered a change of programme; NEEDLE, by Hal Clement, will not now appear, as the present owners have refused to release the copyright. Arthur C. Clarke's original novel, PRELUDE TO SPACE, will replace NEEDLE. Harry Gold's editorial in GSF, Feb., shows that he "got the needle" over not getting the NEEDLE, but I think that one must look at the point of view of the publisher and sellers of the hard-covered edition, also. Dealers still have stocks of this, and how can they sell if someone else brings it out at 25c.? Isaac Asimov's serial, TYRANN, currently appearing in GSF, is apparently the same story as the book, THE STARS, LIKE DUST, which is scheduled for early publication. And a very fine tale, well up to the standard of the "FOUNDATION" stories.

Tony Boucher and J. Francis McComas keep up the good work with F & SF, and promise better things to come. A change of policy will enable them to use longer novelets, possibly up to 20,000 words, in future issues, commencing with April. In the meantime, they offer us a very nice selection in the February issue, starting off with JOHN THE REVELATOR, by Oliver La Forge, a very nice, and some awe-some, tale about a bold batch of electronic computers that "get religion"!

And now lack of space forces me to stop, about one-third of the way down the pile of accumulated mags. Future, Amazing, FFM, Fant.Ads., Weird, FSQ, and quite a few others just have to be left out—my apologies to everyone. All I can say is that they are all trying to give the readers what they (the editors) think the readers want. To find out how well they succeed, you'll just have to buy them and read them.



## GENERAL CHUNTERING

I'll open the ball with some personal news, this time . . . it would appear that I'll be staying in the Army for some time yet . . . and that



will preclude my making that visit to the USA which has been announced in one or two journals . . . the editors of those journals are not at fault . . . it was my intention . . . but, well, just look around, folks . . . the second bit of news is that Joyce and I are expecting an increase in family around late June . . . that will, I regret to say, make our visit to the London CONVENTION in May highly problematical . . . I may be able to make it myself . . . but I doubt it . . . finances, you know . . . the 'plane fare (and I'd have to fly) is pretty high . . . at least, unless I don't publish O.F. in June I shan't have the dough! . . . I commented some place on the fact that Mr. Egerton Sykes had misnamed L. Sprague de Camp in his introduction to ATLANTIS: Donnelly . . . Egerton Sykes swears it was the result of trying to correct proofs across the Atlantic . . . for some reason aSF have increased their overseas sub rate to \$10.00 per year . . . this means a British fan will be paying around 6/- or 84c. per copy if he has a sub . . . the original rumour was thought to be an error, but one agent checked, and received confirmation from the publishers . . . you may now check it yourselves at the foot of the contents page of the Feb. '51 issue . . . from an unofficial source I am informed that the publishers desire to put a stop to subscriptions from abroad . . . unless Street & Smith have developed an isolationist outlook, I can see no reason for this . . . can any USA fan throw any more light on the subject please? . . . it means we are going to be even more reliant on you folk in USA for our mags if this policy spreads . . . I take a darn dim view of this method of spreading international goodwill . . . John Wyndham's (John Beynon Harris) DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS (REVOLT OF THE T.) appeared in Collier's as a 5-part serial starting 6 Jan. '51 . . . the Gnome mag which has been still-born was to have been titled STAR SCIENCE FICTION, and would have been slanted towards the woman-reader . . . Bob Peterson has now produced a FANTASY INDEX, a monumental job of work covering, among other things, WEIRD TALES back to 1923 . . . Erik Fennel will not write any s-f during 1951 . . . he says that DIANETICS has already done so much for him that he must do something for D., and so he is concentrating on it seriously . . . he recently took a 5-week course at the Research Foundation . . . 16 hours a day . . . LYNAMIC SCIENCE STORIES will be re-issued, starting from Vol. 1, No. 3 . . . scheduled for early pb publication by AVON is Stapledon's STARMAKER . . . Ted Carnell informs me of the following possible things . . . Walt Gillings has recently been indisposed, and it may become necessary for Ted to take over the editorship of SCIENCE-FANTASY from No. 3 . . . sorry to hear that, Walt, and I'm sure all fans will join me in wishing you a speedy return to complete health . . . possibly NEW WORLDS 10 will see an increase in price to 2/-, with an equal increase in paging . . . and, provided paper supplies can be maintained, it may go bi-monthly from that issue . . . effective from Feb. 21st, by the by, Ted Carnell became a full-time editor, publisher, and agent . . . he is not discontinuing his other activity as a book-dealer, of course . . . I mentioned a new fan club in San Diego last issue . . . they are still growing, and just to save me answering those half-dozen queries I had, the address you want is Roger Nelson, 4070 Georgia, San Diego, Calif: . . . and, talking of fan clubs, there is the beginning of one down in Bournemouth . . . only three folk so far . . . but more are welcome . . . contact Peter S. Hallifax, 105 Kingswell Road, Bournemouth . . . UofC Science Fiction Club gave a showing of the film THINGS TO COME and raised \$40! . . . on this they hope to float THE JOURNAL OF SCIENCE FICTION, a planographed, 20c. bi-monthly fanzine . . . good luck to you, UofC . . . further info from Ed. Wood, 31 N. Aberdeen, Chicago 7 . . . vV's book THE HOUSE THAT STOOD STILL (reviewed in this issue) will probably appear in the Fall '51 issue of 2 Comp. S-A Books . . . they also intend to print Festus Pragnell's GREEN MAN OF GREYPEC . . . a thing I feel would be better left undone . . . some controversy "down under" . . . it appears some knowing fan informed the publishers of THRILLS that one or more of their authors was plagiarising USA material . . . and so heads fell . . . this magazine is rapidly becoming something worth while, tho . . . QUICK, USA very "digest" mag, wrote up s-f in its Jan. 1st number,

under title "HOW YOU'LL LIVE IN THE YEAR 2000" . . . it is reported that Howard Browne of AS & FA wrote it, so it is not surprising that AS & FA features very largely in the article . . . the film of Campbell's story, retitled THE THING, may be retitled again, owing to the song of that name . . . INTERAVIA, Swiss review of world aviation, devotes most of its Vol. 5, No. 10 issue to rocketry and interplanetary travel, including an article by Willy Ley, THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME, and a review of DESTINATION MOON . . . INTERAVIA is printed in four languages, including English, by the way . . . the shock of aSF'S increased sub rate aroused the S.F.S. from its lethargy and Vince Clarke pushed out a circular calling on all fans to ask S&S for an explanation . . . Haggard fans will be pleased to hear of another title in the MacDonald illoed edition, ALLAN'S WIFE, now out . . . British fans James Roebuck and Harry Loney are in the Forces . . . Harry is in the R.A.F., but I'm not certain about James . . . looks like next issue I'll be able to devote about two pages to listing folks that will then apply to . . . but that seems to be all the gossip for now, so adios. . . K.F.S.

## SMALL ADVERTS

(Advert. rates: 2d. per word (3c. Canada and U.S.A.), minimum 12 words)

**WE WANT TO BUY** fantastic and weird books and magazines. Prompt cash paid for whole collections, or your surplus books. List your items, stating condition, and **SET YOUR OWN PRICE**. Alternatively, send us your books and let us make a cash offer. If not acceptable, we will return books intact at our own expense.—Dell's, 209/211 Kirkgate Market, BRADFORD, Yorks.

**WE WILL** be pleased to exchange subscriptions with you, fanzine editors.—Write **ATLANTEAN RESEARCH**, 31 King's Road, LONDON, S.W.3.

**CLARK E. CROUCH**, 216 E. President, Tucson, Arizona, wants to contact other fans in Tucson.—Anyone with addresses please write him.

## CONVENTION NEWS

Preliminary sessions of the **FESTIVAL CONVENTION** will be held on Thursday and Friday evenings, May 10th and 11th, the main sessions during the afternoons and evenings of May 12th and 13th (Whitsun week-end). The preliminary meetings will be held in the **WHITE HORSE TAVERN**. The main sessions are at present scheduled for the **BULL AND MOUTH**, 31 Bloomsbury Way, London, W.C.1.

It is intended that the entire proceedings shall be as informal as possible, and although a banquet is to be held in the evening of May 12th (Saturday), dress will be optional . . . in the usual meaning of that term. Please put on something! Cost of the banquet will be 12/6 a head, and as at present accommodation is limited to sixty, get your bid in early. There will also be a buffet (7/6 per head) served on Sunday evening.

Two **AUCTIONS** will be held, and the committee will welcome donations for these. All the proceeds of one auction will be devoted to some "general benefit" scheme to be decided at the Convention; only a portion of the proceeds from the second will be so used, the balance going back to the donors.

Hotel accommodation will doubtless be easier at this time than in the later months of the year, but you will be well advised to book early.

Even if you are unable to attend the Convention yourself, you can assist by joining the **CONVENTION SOCIETY**, membership fee 2/6. You will receive all the Convention News, Programmes, etc., as published. Cheques and P.O.'s should be made payable to "Charles Duncombe" and should be sent to The Convention Treasurer, White Horse Tavern, Fetter Lane, LONDON, E.C.4.



# SURVIVAL

By EDWIN LESLIE.

He saw it first when it was still some distance away, glinting and flashing in the sun as it approached. He knew it for what it was immediately: a rifle in the hands of a soldier in a torn and tattered uniform. He knew also that he must kill this soldier as he must kill any potential enemy. He blamed the soldier, and all the soldier's kind, for the havoc and the destruction, for the desolation all around.

His mind went back to the days before destruction rained down from the skies; to the green hills and rolling plains, to the chirruping birds, and the small animals, and, less poignantly, to the towns and the villages. It all seemed hazy to him, thinking back; as hazy as the sky and deserted countryside were now, only in a different way. Then it had been, it seemed, because his mind could not encompass it; but since the great holocaust which had destroyed cities and hamlets, farms and cottages alike, and left great gaping craters, and the great radio-active dust clouds which hung in the sky like enormous palls of death, his perception appeared to have sharpened.

He knew he had changed as surely as his surroundings. He could understand the thoughts of other creatures at a short distance, and had made great use of this faculty in the last three months, since life had been almost entirely wiped out. He knew why he had changed, too. He had read it in the mind of one of his earlier victims. He was a mutant. Many other things he had learned, in like fashion; he knew that the dense dusty areas meant death; he knew who had brought the death. He knew that the air was clearer to the north, cleaner, sweeter, and that was why he was always hunting and ranging further that way. And he knew that between him and safety were more soldiers. Not exactly in between him and safer country, on the land, but in some way he could not quite understand, he knew that he would never be safe while they lived. This information, too, he had drawn from the thoughts of a victim.

Meanwhile, during his reverie, he had automatically sought out the best place for an ambush, a sharp corner with a high bank, a little way down the road. He ran lightly down the road, sprang onto the bank, and crouched flat. He waited for the soldier, picking up his thoughts whilst some thirty yards distant. There was nothing new to be learned from these thoughts, jumbled and incoherent as they were, but it enabled him to keep check on the soldier's movement without showing himself.

He sprang from his place of concealment as the soldier passed, dropping squarely on the ragged back, knocking him down. They rolled apart, and quickly he came to his feet and launched himself at the throat of the soldier. He listened to the soldier's screams change to a gurgle as he rent the lean flesh.

"Every dog has his day," he thought wryly, ravenously tearing and gulping the stringy meat. An observer would have found this quotation most apt, for that is precisely what he was . . . a dog, and it would now be his day for many years to come.

## CONTROVERSY CORNER

This little corner will not only be for controversy, but for bright ideas, queries, and general stuff of that nature . . . from YOU to YOU . . .

BRIGHT IDEA No. 1.—"How about getting together a volume of reprints from British fanzines—fiction, of course? In legitimate book form. I mean. Cost to be shared by authors represented therein. Who objects to paying for egoboo?"—Cedric Walker, c/o Miss Renee Lound, 46 Wansford Grove, Preston Road, HULL. (Comments to Cedric, please. We are willing to help if there is enough support.)

BRIGHT IDEA No. 2.—"How about an 'stf' diary for 1952? I'll contact one or two firms for prices and let you know."—Terry Jeeves, 58 Sharrard Grove, Sheffield. Possible purchasers contact Terry, please.)

QUERY.—"Can you say . . . if the WHISPERING GORILLA, by David

V. Reed, in the British pb is a reprint of a USA mag story?"—Ev. Winne, 109 Ashley Street, Springfield, Mass. (This one took some time, for, although we traced down a tale of the same title in FANTASTIC ADVENTURES, May 1940, written by Don Wilcox, we couldn't get our hands on a copy, and several other folks had conflicting opinions. Finally, we have decided that it is basically the same, but the pb version is much longer, has a different opening, and a totally changed ending.)

QUERY.—"Why do you give advantageous rates to N.F.F.F. members, and not to members of the British S.F.S.?"—John A. Wiseman, 41 Northcote Road, Sidcup, Kent. (John actually asks me much more than that, but I can give a straightforward answer to that one point—I don't know who the S.F.S. members are, so would have no check on who could claim any reduction.)

## FILM REVIEW

### "La Beaute du Diable"

By F. J. ROBINSON.

As this film has had a considerable amount of advance publicity, I went to see it with high hopes—I was not disappointed; if anything, it was even better than the "blurbs."

A tragi-comedy on the Faust theme, the accent is heavily on the comedy. The only serious criticism I can offer is that it is a bit too long; judicious cutting here and there would have prevented the occasional "sagging." This is, however, overshadowed by the overall excellence of the film.

Starring as Mephistopholes (who describes himself as "only a second-class demon") is that wonderful character actor Michel Simon, and although in my opinion he is the life-blood of the story, he is ably supported by Gerard Philipe as Dr. Faust.

The acting is excellent, and although I could enthuse for ages over the photography, I will leave you to enjoy it. There are just two points I would like particularly to mention; the first is the wonderful twist given to the story to bring about a surprise ending, and second, the scene where Faust, watching his future unfold before him, stands before a mirror and sees his reflection turn around and walk away.

Definitely worth going out of your way to see, if you have the opportunity.

## WRITING SCIENCE-FICTION (III)

### One Experience of Writing S.F.

By E. R. JAMES.

In the year 1945 I sold five stories, three of which were "Science Fiction." Publishers were then expecting a post-war easing of publishing difficulties, but you will realise what they are up against when I tell you that the two publishing houses which took these stories have so far only used three of them—two S.F. and one non-S.F.

Since then, leaving out other stories and articles, I have written a total of about 40 S.F. stories, of which I consider five to be now useless. The others are all accepted or on offer or have been returned with a signed letter saying that the paper shortage prevents them using further material at present or that the story has some merit and giving reasons for rejection. Of this total, 15 have been accepted and paid for and 11 printed.

This biographical note is not intended as a boast, but to show that—although I may not be an established author by any means—I have worked up some ability and have a considerable experience, and may therefore have something useful to add to the data given by our esteemed Capt. Slater.



First, then, I would like to give my idea of what a Science Fiction story is . . . as distinct from any other story. Stories of S.F. may seem to cover an astounding range of plots. Science has so many branches nowadays that almost any subject, treated in the right manner, is acceptable, but—what is the right manner?

Unlike most people, I say that there is only one basis to a science fiction story. Whereas the method of philosophy is the reasoning out of available facts and theories to a new logical theory, Science will not admit such ethereal methods. The *scientific method* is to experiment—not just to think, but to go out and try it in actual practice.

Stories of S.F. carry on from there, using the *Scientific Method*. One should take a theory or a scientific possibility or plausibility and go on where science leaves off to make your characters act out their story to a logical conclusion—that is, logical by the *Scientific Method* to them and/or the science.

Presto! There's the story formula.

It may sound simple, yet the work involved does not, at first at any rate, receive a reward compatible with the effort.

If you study the pro-mags, you will find the *Scientific Method* plot may fall into one of a few basic categories. For instance:—

A problem story—not unlike a detective story, except that, instead of whodunnit? you, the reader, are invited to try to answer whyisit?

A Space Opera or Action Story not unlike a cowboy or gangster and varying from shocker to high-class thriller.

A psychological story—for instance, the reaction of a human or a group of humans to something scientifically new, such as the atom bomb or space travel.

An account of a Scientific Experiment or effect—which has its counterpart, perhaps, in historical novels.

Most stories, however, overlap into several of these divisions, and nearly all of them, these days, stress the psychological angle.

With this knowledge—and knowledge of markets is vital—you can start to read books on science and psychology with a new purpose . . . and purpose helps to enjoyment . . . and enjoyment makes for good work.

But—before you go any further, you must get used to using the *Scientific Method* in your own imaginative thinking. When writing, you must particularly remember that the reader knows nothing of the marvels you are going to unfold, except what you tell him. You must also explain as much as possible through action, remember the Scientific Attitude? though that action need not be startling, thrilling or astounding, as long as it is interesting. Anthony Trollope, a Victorian novelist, said that it was fatal to be dull—and that is no less important to-day. Finally, you must stick to the point of your story and keep it moving towards its climax, and discard everything not part of the plot. A Russian novelist—I forget his name, I fear—said that if, in the story, a gun hung on the wall, then that gun must enter into the story in its logical use. It must be fired. And so, if you have a super weapon in your story make it have some bearing on the plot and have it go off at least once.

The plot, in fact, should be a single unit made up of its parts according to your own personality and knowledge.

Right—so you have an idea for a story. First consider which mag. it may suit. Study that mag. again and try to write something which might fit into its general plan. This is, of course, a reversible process. You may write your story and try to find a market for it afterwards; but for the beginner the first method is more likely to bring success.

What story of story is it going to be? That will help you to plot. With a problem story the end is known first and you build up your incidents towards that end. With a space opera or action story you'll need lots of ideas, and you may start anywhere, as long as you keep the biggest shocker of all for the end. The psychological story, on the other hand, will usually start with the scientific element in conflict with a human and/or humanity and build up with other different but relevant conflicts to its conclusion. Lastly, the account of a scientific experiment may begin anywhere in your mind, but the end is the most likely to fire your

imagination. You'll need lots of data and research for such a story—for S.F. readers will be only too eager to tell the Editor if you blunder. Fandom contains absolutely no dopes.

Having worked out your plot, either in your mind or on paper, it is next necessary to think up the characters who are going to act it through. These may arise simultaneously in your mind with the plot, or you may have to dig in your own experience of people to find mental and physical attributes which can be put together to your requirements.

Then you write up. Of course, all these processes are very elastic and also interchangeable. But, no matter in what order you write—even if you start writing without a plot, they all enter into the construction of a good story.

Pretty complicated? Perhaps so, but after a while most of the processes become almost automatic and the story grows in your mind, either backwards or forwards—or even both ways—from its beginning . . . until you feel mad at anyone who tries to interrupt your writing.

And so it is written and you send it out. And you wait. And if the Editor hasn't just accepted one like it, and if he is not so short of paper that he is helpless, and if he likes it, he may write and accept it, or perhaps write and ask you to make a few alterations. For he is almost certainly on the look-out for new writers of merit—they are not too numerous—and you may be one of them if you are willing to keep working. For most people only tenacity and the ability to learn from your own mistakes and other people's successes brings lasting success.

THE END.

## Manuscript Presentation For American Editors

By MAURICE D'ARNE.

The September issue of OF carried some information by Ken Slater on writing for publication. This information, as concerns wordage and type of story wants by American editors, was well presented. However, a difference in British and American editorial idiosyncrasies creates the necessity for this follow-up.

American editorial whims demand a different lay-out of title and other pages. Where the British ask for two-inch left-hand margin, it is necessary to use only one inch on all sides (left, right, bottom) for U.S. submissions. The writer's name and address must be placed in the upper left-hand corner, the approximate wordage in the upper right. Never fasten pages of a MS together with anything but a plain slip-on paper clip, unless the script be book-length, in which case clip chapters separately and place the whole in a cardboard box or protect it with pasteboard backing before wrapping.

The margins, if one inch seems inappropriate, may be as much as one-and-one-half inches, but never more.

Another must is the arrangement of title, which should be centered about six spaces below that line which contains your address. Title should be in Caps. Double-spaced and centered below title is the word By . . . the "B" in caps and the "y" small-case. Double-spaced below that is the name under which the story is to appear, whether real or pseudonym, and in small-case letters.

A book MS should have an extra title page. Copy the name, address, and wordage as on first MS page, but center title and author almost halfway down the sheet. Such a page adds something to short manuscripts, but is not a must. It will add weight for overseas mailing, which may be quite enough without extra sheets, for the paper used must be at least a 13 lb. stock. A 16 lb. weight is preferred when possible, and never more than about 20 lb. Paper should always be white and typing black. Fancy covers will detract from chances of acceptance, rather than help. MS pages, after the first, should contain page numbers . . . 2, 3, etc. . . in extreme upper right of page, out of margin. This may be accompanied by a key word or words of MS title.

Other vitals including spacing twice after periods, interrogations, exclamations; once after comma and semi-colon, once after colon where following words belong in same sentence.



# PANDORA'S BOX

By J. T. M'INTOSH.

"So you made a mistake," said the girl softly.  
"Call it that if it gives you any satisfaction," the lawyer replied equably.

"What else can I call it?"

"Over-zealousness to impart good news, perhaps."

"Good news? That my aunt was dead?"

"That you were rich."

The girl shrugged. "How exactly did it happen?" she asked.  
"Someone by the name of Maria Smith died somewhere, and the similarity in name made you think Kathrine Bradley was dead?"

"I can understand your annoyance, Miss Holmes. I am sorry. I communicated with you on the excellent authority of seeing the death notice of Kathrine Zenobia Bradley in the *Major Times*. Perhaps you think I should have attended the funeral first. The evidence seemed strong enough for me, but it now appears that the newspaper in question, produced by a staff of three, made the supremely natural mistake of substituting the reader of the lessons in church last Sunday for the woman who had died the day before, and vice versa. I am informed, by the way, that the fee for the death notice has been refunded and that it will appear corrected next week without charge. Does that satisfy you?"

Even in mild dispute, ambiguity is fair game. "As I didn't pay for it, I'm not really concerned," retorted Zenobia.

"You will have your little joke," said the lawyer, with an amiable snarl.

"I'd be grateful for my aunt's address in Major. I think I'll go and see her. Can you give me it?"

"With pleasure, Miss Holmes, and desolation that at the moment it is all I can give you."

When she had gone out through the office, to disorganise its male and female staff again, the lawyer wondered for just a moment if she had resented his irony, after all. But then he remembered that if one can shoot stinging words across a table like table-tennis balls, there is no pleasure in it unless they are returned with equal—or almost equal—venom. Without malice, he hoped Kathrine Bradley would die soon and that he would see her niece again.

Major was a small Connecticut town which was like most small towns but didn't know it. It had the usual bank, the usual library, the usual trees and the usual people looking incuriously at Zenobia, knowing her for a visitor and with no interest in her other than her business in town, her job, her age, her name, her income, whether she was married, and how long she was staying. That is, apart from mere superficial interest in her face, her figure, her white dress, her tan stockings, her white shoes, and anything else she wore or carried, visible or invisible.

Characteristically, Zenobia stopped the prickliest of the local cigarette-coughers to ask which was Mimosa Terrace. He let smoke out round his cigarette and caught it in his nostrils to breathe again while he assessed her unhurriedly.

"You're on it," he told her briefly.

"Thank you so much," said Zenobia gratefully, unable to resist playing the part she probably looked. As she passed him she wondered if it was her legs or her shoulders he was looking at, but she didn't allow herself to turn and find out.

Number forty-seven was very like numbers forty-five and forty-nine, but Zenobia identified it easily enough by the number. There was brick, stucco and glass, and there was a door. Zenobia ignored them all and found the bell with her first finger.

There were only two maids who could have answered the door—the one who was neat and pretty and wore a spotless uniform, and the one who didn't care. The one who answered was neat and pretty, and her name could only be Mary Malone.

"I'd like to see Miss Bradley, Mary," said Zenobia.

"Please come in, Miss," the maid invited in an Irish accent. "But my name is Deborah."

"Malone?" asked Zenobia hopefully.

"M'Cormick, Miss. What name shall I say?"

"Zenobia Holmes."

"Miss Bradley's niece? I'll tell her, Miss."

Zenobia stood in the little hall and looked at the pictures of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. If there were a third, presumably it would be of Grover Cleveland. It was a pity about Mary—Deborah, rather. Still, she was Irish.

"This way, Miss." It was Deborah again. Zenobia nodded to Roosevelt and Wilson and entered the lounge.

Aunt Kathrine poured out the coffee and handed the cup to Zenobia. The girl had been surprised it was coffee. It should have been tea, perhaps iced. But the game had gone on long enough, and anyway all the rules had been broken when Aunt Kathrine, whom she had never seen, turned out to be quite out of character. She had never gossiped in her life, she dressed like a town matron, and intelligence lit up the face that was old but beautiful. She was a fanatic, of course, but not a stupid one.

"Well, if it's what brought you here, I'm glad they got the names mixed," she said.

"I'd have come any time if you'd asked me," Zenobia told her, playing the frivolous but golden-hearted niece.

"Why did you never come?"

Zenobia waved her arm airily. "Why have I never been at the top of the Empire State?" she replied.

"It's like that, is it?"

You couldn't dazzle a woman like Kathrine Bradley by changing colours. Zenobia allowed herself a change.

"No, I thought they watered your feet and shook the fruit off you every spring," she admitted. "Honestly, if I knew you wore red and used some three-syllabled words I'd have come long ago."

"If they watered my feet I might still have been as glad to see you."

"Yes, that's the tragedy of it, isn't it?"

"You're an actress, aren't you?"

"What gave you that idea?"

"You have, since you came in."

"Oh, that. No, I sell a story or two now and then and between times live on what mother left me and think about selling something else."

"Are you a good writer?"

"No. I haven't the ideas."

"I'll give you an idea if you like. You can write it down and send it to a science-fiction magazine. That's the only place for it."

Zenobia knew the fanaticism was coming, the hobby, the mysticism—the one insanity of an unusually sane woman.

"I'm listening," she said with curious gentleness. But Kathrine Bradley, who noticed so much, would never know she had stopped acting.

"You have brains," said the old woman, "though it apparently amuses you to pretend you haven't. So maybe you'll understand me when I say I'm a philosopher. A lover of thought. I don't often talk about it. I just think."

"Have you any idea why there have been no women philosophers? Perhaps it's because men have the edge of us in versatility. I think, but I can't write. You write and you don't look as if you ever think. If I'd been a man I might have done both and played golf and poker and told good stories and been able to service a car. As it is, I don't do anything but weigh things up, read the lessons in church, and sit in the garden."

"It's strange how few people see things as I've gradually come to see them. They're there for everyone to see. People say the world's heading for disaster, but only as people have always said that. And anyway, they're thinking of the atom bomb and bigger and more terrible wars—and I don't think stopping them would make the slightest difference."



"Wait a minute," said Zenobia. "What can be worse than an atom war?"

"The same thing coming about more slowly in another way. An atom war now might save us, if enough people were killed."

"I'm seventy-one. I've been taking an intelligent interest in things since I was fourteen, or earlier. I've a lot to work on. I've seen the world change in fifty-seven years as it never changed in any hundred, two hundred, five hundred in history. And people ignore that. They can see how little essential change there was between the fourteenth century and the eighteenth, but they think the people then were too stupid to know any better. They don't see how fantastic the growth of science has been."

"You hear a talk on the radio about the possibility of jet planes. You go out and sit in the garden, and when you come back you hear jet planes are flying faster than sound. You read in the paper that a radio you can wear in your ear will be on the market soon—and if you get your paper late you can go out and buy one at the nearest store. High explosive is the most destructive thing we know one morning, and the next morning we read about the atom bomb, and before we've got our breath back it's the hydrogen bomb they're talking about."

"While all this is going on people walk about unconcerned. You'd think they'd see . . ."

"But they do," interrupted Zenobia. "Everybody knows this. We don't talk about it, because we can't do much about it."

"But if we don't talk about it, how can we work out what's going to happen?"

"Who could ever work out what was going to happen?"

The old woman shook her head. "It didn't matter then," she said. "It was a long way off, and anything might have happened. But now it's too late for anything to happen but disaster. We're flying faster and faster. No one makes any attempt to slow down. We all help to make the machine gather more and more speed, never admitting that sooner or later the wings must come off."

"Perhaps then we'll be going so fast we'll fly without them."

"You're young. Whatever the prospect, you'd be optimistic. But I'm not a pessimist—just a thinker without even the mental clarity to put my thoughts as you could put yours. But I can see it, Zenobia—I can see the world flying nowhere with no pilot. It can only be the end of the world if no one finds a way to stop it. And soon. I won't see it, but you will."

"The end of the world," murmured Zenobia. "But if I'm to make a science-fiction story of it, I'll need more details."

"You're humouring me," said Kathrine without heat. "Being understanding but not pandering to me. That means you don't really see it as I do. You believe that something will keep us right. And yet you're young. You don't believe in God as I do. I believe in God because there's nothing else to believe in."

"Why not believe in Man?"

"How can I? I see things and add them up. I always get the same answer—which is strange, for it's the same answer if I look at war or peace, chemistry or physics, biology, psychology, or even archaeology. My only hope is that, after all, something is guiding us, something or someone who knows where we're going and can and will see that we get there safe. No man, no group of men could do anything. It has to be something more than men."

"Is the coffee still warm?" Zenobia asked.

Kathrine sighed and poured out a cup. "Yes, you're right," she said. "The world is right, after all. If we can't do anything, it's better not to look. It's sane, it's the most reasonable thing man has done in his history—to know disaster is coming, but remember his children have to be fed and the rent paid. And here in the middle of it all I have to pretend to be a seer, when all I can claim is that I'm not blind, and throw stones into the calm pool before the lava turns it to steam. Don't write it, Zenobia. Let the pool stay calm a little longer."

"It would, anyway," said Zenobia, drinking coffee. "It's not stones

you're throwing in, but leaves that drift away on the surface. And there's thousands there already."

Back in the street she was not as happy as she had been when she amused herself by expecting an Irish maid called Mary Malone to open the door. She had had no idea of what her aunt would be like, and perhaps she should have left it like that.

People were still looking at her, but she was not seeing them now and playing her game of giving them thoughts and being right, or nearly right. When someone bumped into her and apologised, she didn't act a little part as a debutante or a film star or a shy stenographer on vacation. She ignored it and went on.

It was difficult to see whether people should be like Aunt Kathrine, keeping their eyes open to the headlong flight of the world, or like the people in the streets, certain that Major and not Boston or anywhere else was the hub of the universe, and that nothing would ever happen that Major had not sanctioned. The word "should" implied obligation—obligation to whom? To themselves, to the world, to Aunt Kathrine's last hope—God?

Aunt Kathrine was her own tragedy—a tragedy Zenobia could have given a bitter-sweet ending by telling and showing her a few things which would have brought on at once the heart-failure that would kill her in three weeks' time, but would have made her content in death.

But it was impossible. None of the seers could ever give themselves away even to people who were about to die.

Someone else bumped into Zenobia. Again it was her fault, and she who should have apologised, but his arm swung out to save himself, caught her handbag and knocked it to the ground. It was he who apologised, red with embarrassment, picking up her bag, dropping it in his haste, and pursuing her down the street with apologies almost shouted in his confusion.

And before she could prevent herself, Zenobia knew he was Harry Morgan, thirty-seven, married, with three children, and would die in a train accident with thirty-two others in six months' time, and knew as well all the things he would do in the next six months and had done in thirty-seven years. He was a good man, and she could never forget him, not if she lived to be twice as old as Aunt Kathrine.

She forgot Aunt Kathrine completely in flagellating herself for her carelessness. That wasn't her job, reading individual lives like a palmist, possibly learning something she would be better not to know. Her job was much bigger, and it had strict rules.

Aunt Kathrine was so nearly right. Mankind, after stumbling through centuries of ignorance, had at last hitched a ride on a train that was now rocking madly through the night. It was too late to drop off—if the train was heading for disaster, that was just too bad for anyone on board.

The train's name was Science. Aunt Kathrine knew that. She had seen, as not everyone had seen, that science was the master now, not man.

But what Aunt Kathrine didn't know was that up front, driving the train, was a group that could see the way ahead, a group that knew exactly what it was doing.

They were strange people, the seers. They had strange talents. So strange that they had to work in secret, known only to each other. They weren't an accident—they had always been in control of that sudden mad rush to knowledge. In fact, they had started it . . .

Deliberately, coldly, Zenobia forced herself back to the Zenobia Holmes who had walked along that street the other way. She looked at a woman who passed and thought, already with real enjoyment: She's a Pole, and she's going home to make a meal for her red-haired husband, who works on the railway and beats her on Saturday nights. To-night they'll go to the cinema.

But Zenobia, for the moment, was no seer, just an ordinary girl. The mental gifts that enabled the seers to keep humanity on the right track were switched off, deliberately. Nothing was allowed to tell her the woman was pure American, a spinster, and would spend the evening reading a thriller.

END.



# FANTASY NON-FICTION

By STEVE GILROY.

Many readers, clients, and customers of OPERATION FANTASY have shown an interest in books which are not fiction, but which have an appeal to the fantasy enthusiast, as they are "source material" for the fictional fantasy.

Your editor has requested me to "investigate this field, and dig up some dope," and this article is a result. Naturally, it is not possible to cover the entire field in one article, and so this is the first of what will be, I hope, a series. Let Ken have your comments on its worth, and he will tell me whether I continue.

The largest section of the non-fiction books available covers the supernatural, ghost and psychic field. Publishers who issue frequent works in this connection are the Psychic Press and RIDER & COMPANY, of London. The former publishers produce material which is more likely to appeal to the spiritualist than to the fantasy fan, so I'll touch on the works from the latter house.

HAUNTED BRITAIN, by Elliott O'Donnel (15/-; \$2.10) is a work which gives pretty complete coverage to ghost phenomena in Britain, and is the work of a trained investigator. Mr. O'Donnel, apart from setting forth the results of investigations in a clear fashion, also writes in an enthralling and chill-producing style. I understand that he has also written a novel based on Black Magic, shortly to be available.

GHOST PARADE (8/6; \$1.19) is a resume of the most outstanding psychic and occult events of recent years, and makes a handy reference book. Written by Stuart Martin, a journalist and novelist of some fame, its 128 pages are full of useful data for folk who wish to write ghost yarns.

THE INVISIBLE WORLD is by Hereward Carrington, Ph.D., and is, as may be supposed, a scientific approach to ghosts and psychic phenomena. This book could be perhaps placed correctly under the heading of "parapsychology," but as it deals with ghosts, and possible explanations of their occurrence, I've included it. (9/6; \$1.33).

GHOSTS WITH A PURPOSE, Elliott O'Donnell (probably 15/-; \$2.10). This forthcoming work covers those apparitions which have appeared preceding disasters; to give knowledge of some hidden crime; or in some other way have had some "reason" for showing themselves. It will contain much of interest to the psychic researcher.

MY OCCULT DIARY, Cornelius Tabori (probably 18/-; \$2.52). The author was one of the foremost Continental crime reporters, and has written over fifty books on criminology, history, and travel. For over forty years he maintained a diary in which he recorded encounters with occult or inexplicable phenomena, and in this book his son, Paul Tabori, has selected and translated part of the vast amount of material which Cornelius Tabori had collected.

THE PHENOMENA OF ASTRAL PROJECTION.—Sylvan Muldoon and Hereward Carrington, Ph.D. (probably 20/-; \$2.80). This book, again, is an "indirect" ghost book. Cases of reported ghosts may, however, be in fact astral projections, and this work covers in the first part the theoretical aspects, history and doctrine, and the approach of scientists to the phenomena. In the second part it goes into the practical side, citing actual

cases of kinds, and clarifying the possible methods of inducing the "projections."

All the above books are from the house of RIDER. The two which follow are items worthy of note, which are currently available.

THE DEAD COMPANIONS, Alan Howgrave-Graham: Psychic Press (8/6; \$1.19). By an author who is firmly convinced both of survival after death and the possibility of communion with the departed spirits, this book reports a series of sittings with mediums. Of interest, but biased.

MY LIFE WITH BORLEY RECTORY, by James Turner (Bodley Head: 10/6; \$1.47). This is not to be taken seriously. Mr Turner purchased the ill-famed Borley Rectory, and now lives there. This book is an uproarious comedy of his life among the ghosts.

It would appear that works of the late Harry Price are not at present available, but for any reader who desires a "grounding" in psychic research I can recommend no better reading than these records of the investigations made throughout his life by Mr. Price.

The next article in this series, provided you want it, will cover some of the works available on such subjects as lost civilisations, continents cities, etc.

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E. J. CARNELL

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# Time by the Tail

(A REVIEW BY P. HARDWICK)

A slim 17-page pamphlet recently received is of interest as a concise survey of the various theories of time, and how it functions. Dealing swiftly with man's early concept of time, at first pictured as a "period of duration" punctuated by factors such as hunger and noted by the change of seasons, movements of the stars, and so forth, it shows time then accepted as something fixed, and definite. It then develops the cycle theories, and in small way the application of this theory to history (Toynbee), and draws comparisons between this theory of time and that which takes time as a line of infinite duration.

The fourth part covers "Spiral" time tracks, which the author appears to accept as the most probable true theory, and then the booklet develops this theory in its various phases, touching on such subjects as prescience.

In the main, the work consists of quotations from authorities, with notes and observations by the author. Clearly and simply written, it makes fair reading, and may be of use to authors as a handy reference. It contains a list of some 70 references to longer works on the subject of TIME. (TIME FACTOR, Eugene S. Virpsha, Markham House, 2/3.)

## OPERATION FANTAST CONTACT BUREAU.

If you desire to contact other fans in your locality, send a postcard to the editor, with your home town in the top left corner, your name and address below, and a list of other towns to which you have easy access down the right-hand side.

When two or more people are recorded in the same town, we will advise you. Notification will not be sent if other fans are not recorded.

## DIANETICS.

So far, OPERATION FANTAST has warily refrained from commenting on this somewhat controversial subject. We have no opinions: the matter is outside our sphere of study. However, we have requested Dr. Innes to write an article on the subject, in the light of his present investigations. This will, we hope, appear in the June '51 issue.

We note with interest that the DIANETICS FOUNDATION has now commenced courses of instruction in several cities of the U.S.A. The advertised courses are of three types, and from the wording of the adverts it is purely a matter of choice whether you take DIANETICS, the ROSICRUCIANS, or ordinary psychiatry. Of the three, DIANETICS on the face of the advert. offers you least! That may be a point in their favour.

From a fairly authoritative source we are informed that Dr. Winters has resigned from the FOUNDATION, and Mr. Krepps, vice-president of Hermitage Press, as also tendered his resignation. This, if the information is correct, would not seem to prove that DIANETICS is such a "soothing syrup" as some folk would ask us to believe.

Against that, Erik Fennel tells us in a recent letter that in personal experimentation he finds DIANETICS works, although not to the extent of the claims made for it.

James Blish, in November PLANET STORIES, also comes out in support, and states that he has proved in his experiments, with himself and Jerome Bixby (PS' editor), that DIANETICS works successfully. But not all comments have been so favourable, and in a number of cases DIANETICS has been labelled as a "dangerous plaything." But so are most of man's tools, in the hands of inexperienced, or careless, people, and to call a thing "dangerous" does not necessarily mean it is useless. It just depends on who is handling the matter.