GOLDEN ATOM

SCIENCE FICTION AND GENERAL INTEREST (*Illustrated*)

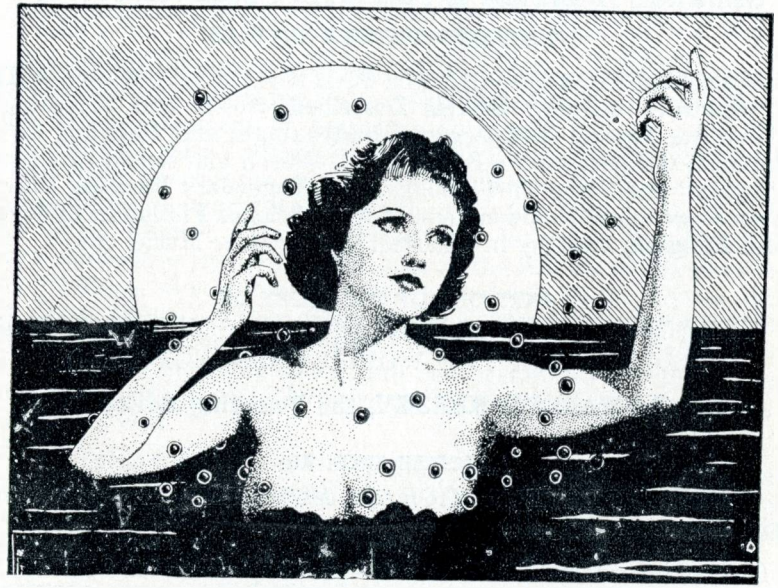
(Our Top Rochester Model Displaying the Very First of Them All)

Beginning the Story of the First Science-Fantasy Magazine in the World
By the Founding Editor Himself, HAROLD HERSEY (1st of Two Parts)*

Also: MY ATTRACTION TO SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY—AND WHY,
A True Love Story, First Love, Photo Features, Etc.

*For the First Time Anywhere

HERE IS YOUR DATE WITH LYLDA*



FOR TIMELY AND TIMELESS ENJOYMENT:

THE WONDER OF LIFE

(Even in the Smallest Things!)**

* GOLDEN ATOM

(Illustrated)

"A Jewel For The Atomic Age"

Established 1939

Next issue will be of more general interest. We already have scheduled an "Amazon" etching by the famous artist, Ralph Fabri, and a seasonal fantasy scene with Dawn Oney, the Miss Universe favorite.

**P. S. The atom can also be harnessed for good. Only, let us try to put as much poetry and goodness into life as we have of science.

GOLDEN ATOM

GENERAL INTEREST INTRODUCING SCIENCE FICTION

FEATURING ARTICLES SUCH AS

MY ATTRACTION TO SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY—and **WHY**
(Subtitles include: **Stories Described,** Books and Magazines, "The Big Three," **Definitions, Disadvantages and Delights,** Love Interest, Golden Atom's Background, Edison and Science Fiction, "Lylda" and "The Thrill Book," **The Legendary Rarities,** Plays, even Rogers and Hammerstein, Movies, **Science Fiction in Colleges and Religion,** Fantasy in Classical and Popular Music, etc.)

PART ONE OF THE STORY OF
THE (fabulous!) FIRST FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE IN THE WORLD (1919—NOT 1926!)

By HAROLD HERSEY, the Founding Editor

STORIES SUCH AS:

THE FIRST LOVE, by MICHAEL MONAHAN, (The springtime girl he never forgot!)

(A true love story that forms a trilogy of interest with STEPHEN VINCENT BENET'S "TOO EARLY SPRING," and AUGUST DERLETH'S "EVENING IN SPRING"!)

POETRY SUCH AS:

WIZARD'S LOVE, by Clark Ashton Smith

LOVE IN CONTRAST

PICTORIAL FEATURES SUCH AS:

PERSONALITY PORTRAITS (A Photo Feature).

OUR PIN-UP DOLL

DEPARTMENTS SUCH AS:

DOWN TO EARTH FOODS AND RECIPES.

PICS AND KICS (the most enthusiastic comments you've ever read, and revealing information on the first non-commercial science-fantasy magazine, 1927 — NOT 1930!) and (we hope!) a little humor.

THE GOLDEN ATOM GIRL CONTEST

THE COSMIC VIEWPOINT

We're born, we move around a little bit, and then we're under earth;
No wonder we should live for beauty, wisdom, friendliness and mirth!

GOLDEN ATOM

FEATURE CONTENTS

Presenting an intimate study of the exciting field of science-fiction everyone is waking up to, with regard to it as a manifestation and development of America's optimistic pioneer spirit.

Featuring a classic article, "LOOKING BACKWARD INTO THE FUTURE," wherein the story of the first fantasy and science-fiction magazine in the world is told for the very first time by the founding editor himself. Harold Hersey was later to edit or publish more magazines than any other man in the history of the publishing business, almost two hundred periodicals in all, (titles such as "True Story," "True Experiences," "True Romances," "The Open Road," "The Hit Parader," the Red and Blue Band Magazines, the Hersey Magazines, and the current H-K Publications, such as "Boat Sport," "Motorsport," "Flying Models," "Mirth," "Smiles," etc).

But "The Thrill Book," his first, that delightful American phenomenon which preceded by over seven years the next such venture, Gernsback's "Amazing Stories," has always been close to his heart.

He also gives a brief glimpse of his early associates, friends, and famous people he has known, such as Fulton Oursler, Joyce Kilmer, William Clayton, Frank Harris, Theodore Dreiser, Bernarr Macfadden, H. G. Wells, "Bob" Davis and Billy Rose, mostly in connection with science-fiction.

Besides the now fabulously rare "Thrill Book," (1919), Harold Hersey also tells of his "Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories," (1931), and the never before-told story of how he urged William Clayton into the publishing of "Astounding Stories," (1930).

Be sure to read the conclusion of this article in our next issue when there will also be an addenda by F. Orlin Tremaine, who did so much to make a success of "Astounding Stories," now known as "Astounding Science Fiction," and long-time leader in the field under Street and Smith Publications.

My Attraction to Science Fiction, Fantasy—and Why, (And What Led Us Back to "Golden Atom")

An over-all description of the field for everyone, from personal and intimate experience, telling of the original attraction, and many of the highlights, from books and magazines, to plays and motion pictures. Definitions of fantasy and science-fiction, pages 6, 14 and 25.

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OUR GOLDEN ATOM COVER GIRL

This is an alternate picture of our pretty model, for Harold Hersey's article. We may use it as the cover for the next issue, unless we hear from a Virgil Finlay or a Hannes Bok in the meantime, (although we do have a page sketch by one of them!). Our cover girl has recently been chosen Miss Red Wing by the Rochester Red Wings.

A new ray will annihilate gravity. So will a ray of sunshine. AHG CO. 1953.

My Attraction to Science Fiction, Fantasy—and Why,

(And WHAT LED US BACK TO "GOLDEN ATOM")

This is really a man-sized task we have here: the job of introducing ourselves, a preface to our feature article, and an intimate over-all picture of the science-fiction and fantasy field for everyone—although how dull this sounds when the very name of "Lylda," ("Golden Atom"), means a lost love, a heart-throb, or an old flame to so many of you!

Dear Fortunate Reader:

You may as well know the whole truth. This is easily the Nth time I've started to write a description of the entire subject, (a simple plan, originally, in order to introduce Harold Hersey's article to a larger audience). But each time it has wound up into book length. You should see the uncounted pages omitted! It would be a comparatively simple matter to write for the veterans in the field. The interesting problem, however, ("We can do almost what we will, if we do it gaily." — William Butler Yeats, 1907), is to explain the subject in an ideal way, to those of you who are reading about science-fiction for the very first time.

But at the same time I want to describe many of the highlights in the field, and to tell the truth about science-fiction as a hobby, telling not only of its best, but of its bad points as well, from intimate experience gained over many years. There are so many things I want to say, each one an article in itself. (After all, one cannot condense the events of ten years into a few paragraphs.) The only solution I can see is to try to select the "most alive" of the pages. Let's see if they are the right ones! Here they are!

THE ORIGINAL ATTRACTION OF SCIENCE-FICTION

My interest in the subject dates back to school days when early favorites, besides Keats, Poe, and Shelley, were such poetry books as those by Sara Teasdale and Nathalia Crane. (Sample: "Years go, dreams go, too. The world's heart breaks beneath its wars. All things are changed, save in the east, The faithful beauty of the stars."—Sara Teasdale, in "Flame and Shadow.") Imagination was also just as intrigued by such books as Sir James Jeans' "The Universe Around Us," Dr. Harlow Shapley's "Flights from Chaos," and Sir Arthur Eddington's "The Expanding Universe." (A sample from "Flights from Chaos"; "The galaxy-hunting astronomer....does not greatly delude himself. He is also a world of

(P. S. This article was written and set up before we decided to make "Golden Atom" illustrated, which will explain why there are more pictures toward the end in this issue.)

littleness. . . Stars and atoms must be taken together, light waves and light years, electron motions and drifts of galaxies")

These were favorites, recalled from a period when an early ambition had been, "to read every book in the library." Luckily, this had been in reference to a room above the gymnasium at the Lewis Street Center, across the street from our home. But then, there had been the almost simultaneous discovery of a branch of the university library beyond the trees, (and an observatory), of the girls' campus across from our school.

Through interested teachers, I was led to meeting or listening to some of the above authors or scientists, such as Dr. Harlow Shapley, on their occasional visits to the University of Rochester or vicinity, Professor Floyd C. Fairbanks of the University and Astronomy Club, and poets such as Edwin Markham, Robert P. Tristram Coffin and Robert Frost, when guests of the Rochester Poetry Society.

Besides this, there was also a background of folktales and romantic stories my father loved to tell. My chance discovery of science-fiction at this time made it seem the most fascinating thing in the world, since it seemed to be a perfect blend of the poetry and scientific books I had been reading.

Actually, discovery of the field through the libraries, (which have always carried science-fiction, although not as a department until recently), was almost simultaneous with my discovery of it in magazine form. The magazines had also reprinted from books. (For example, "Amazing Stories" had started out in 1926 with reprints of Poe, Wells and Verne). In turn, countless stories from them have been reprinted in book form.*

I also discovered other readers and collectors in Rochester, either through the magazine stores or the readers' columns of the magazines, all of whom became our very good friends. In fact, we came close to starting a "Kodak City Science Fiction Club," which did exist, in name only, members of which were Elmer E. Weinman, Francis J. Litz, Rosanna Barson, Bernard A. Seufert

*Before going on any further, I would like to dispel any idea that the discovery of books and science-fiction, writing, etc., were the only highlights of my boyhood. Just as fascinating were music, park bands by the river or the beach, picnic excursions on the old Coburg boat to Canada, (still missed by everyone for miles around here.)

There were days in the country at my Grandad's, (when it was still country), sand dunes, lookout hills, streams, woods (and a dog to explore them with), pear and cherry trees to climb, stars and crickets at night, etc. (And I may mention my three maiden aunts who used to take us to parties. Those were especially happy days. But it just so happens that, for now, I have the privilege of describing the effect of science-fiction in those early days of discovery!)

and Fred A. Senour, most of them collectors at the time, besides being in other fields, postman, artist, teacher and chemists. Most of our impromptu meetings were held at Elmer Weinman's home.

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

("THE BIG THREE")

Among the earliest discoveries was that of H. G. Wells' "The "War of the Worlds," as an old "Amazing Stories" reprint, while knowing that it was also available as a book in the library. What made it unforgettable was the surprising idea that the Martian invaders would be caught unawares by the earth's normal disease bacteria, to which man has acquired a natural immunity through the years.

Another surprise was the discovery that one of our favorite authors, W. H. Hudson, (author of "Green Mansions," etc.), had also written a book called "A Crystal Age," about the far future when man is living in a whimsical pastoral Utopia, when overexertion at the expense of health is considered a crime, men and women living past a century in the bloom of youth, marred, however, by the fact that physical love is an unknown emotion, marriage being reserved only for the few chosen to carry on the family. (How many authors today, or science-fiction writers for that matter, have such poetic awareness and appreciation as was expressed by naturalist W. H. Hudson in his "A Traveller in Little Things": "She lifted a rosy face to mine with her sweetest smile and eyes aglow with ineffable happiness. Mab's peculiar exquisite charm could hardly have lasted beyond the age of six. . . It is true that when little girls become self-conscious they lose their charm, or the best part of it; they are at their best as a rule from five to seven, after which begins a slow decline (or evolution, if you like)."

There was also the surprising discovery of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, ("Sherlock Holmes"), as the author of a series of science-fiction books, ("The Professor Challenger" stories), such as "The Maracot Deep," and "The Lost World," the latter which we had seen as a film in a school assembly.

Magazine science-fiction, however, seemed more up to date, and expressive of ideas. **It was a smaller field at that time** and we knew it so intimately that the name of every author and artist was like a friend. It was a cause for celebration when a favorite author made the cover of an issue. Almost every story could be read at leisure, digested, contemplated, discussed with others and —strange as it might seem nowadays—appreciated. The magazines were fewer and as a consequence the stories were actually more enjoyable. "The Big Three" were, the original Gernsback, (and later) Dr. Sloane "Amazing Stories," (est. 1926), the orig-

inal Gernsback "Wonder Stories," (originally "Science Wonder Stories," est. 1929), and the F. Orlin Tremaine (Street & Smith) "Astounding Stories," (originally the Clayton "Astounding Stories of Superscience," (est. 1930), now known as "Astounding Science Fiction," and edited by old-time author ("Don A. Stuart"), John W. Campbell, Jr.*

The mere idea of another science-fiction magazine was the biggest possible news. Nowadays, however, quantity seems to defeat its own purpose, and though stories may be more smoothly written, mostly by professional writers instead of, as at one time, part-time writers from other fields, who may really have had something special to say, most of them seem to lack a certain genuineness of heart or idea. You will still find them, however, and a good starting point would still be "Astounding Science Fiction," although you will not find the poetic type of story which it also featured in the days of Tremaine. Meaning, of course, stories by a wide variety of professionals, rather than scientists only.

Magazine Novels

There were novels such as Stanton A. Coblentz's "The Blue Barbarians," about a blue-skinned race on the planet Venus, which was actually a Dean Swift-like satire on the foibles of the human race. For example, they had a "taste-magnifier" to aid this sense, which, "in common with all the other senses, had become so blunted by an artificial environment that it had to be aided scientifically." They literally worshipped "gulgul–O rare Green Glass!...," their form of money, and in their eagerness to obtain it, ("Time lost is money lost"), they had "turned their cities into race horses," with elevated tiers of platforms for the protection of the ordinary pedestrian.

There was "The Moon Pool," absolutely one of the most challenging and difficult pseudo-scientific stories to describe, by A. Merritt, who was later to become editor of Hearst's "The American Weekly." We later found the serial of this, in "Amazing Stories," to be a reprint version of "The Moon Pool" novelette, (together with its sequel, "The Conquest of the Moon Pool"), which originally appeared in the Munsey "All-Story Weekly," in June 1918, and February and March 1919, respectively, later reprinted in book form, (Putnam, 1919, other editions), in pocketbook, and in the Munsey reprint magazines, "Fantastic Novels,"

*"Astounding" has been the long-time leader in the field. Motion picture, "The Thing," was taken from a story by the editor, John W. Campbell, Jr. Incidentally, it was the only magazine in the country to have official army permission to continue publishing stories about atomic energy during the war. "The Day the Earth Stood Still" was taken from a story by Harry Bates, a previous editor of "Astounding."

and "Famous Fantastic Mysteries." (Would you care to have our synopsis?)

Dr. David A. Keller's "Life Everlasting" was a beautiful two-part serial, (also later in book form), of "a people granted immortality and everlasting youth," (to quote from Sam Moskowitz), but at the price of not ever having any children.

Dr. Edward Elmer Smith's "The Skylark of Space" started out innocently enough with the discovery of Revolon, an anti-gravity element, with hardly a hint of the super-cosmic and interstellar conflicts to come in the later sequels of this, probably the very first of the "space operas," if we except an earlier one by Professor Garrett Putnam Serviss.

SHORTER STORIES DESCRIBED

Of the novelettes, "Colossus," by Donald Wandrei, was probably the most vivid and ambitious in treatment of concept. In this story, our super-spaceship "The White Bird," ("drawing on intra-spacial emanations and radiations") enlarges, (on Einstein's theory of extension in direction of flight), and bursts through the "superatom" of our cosmos into the realm beyond—wherein our entire creation is but an atom making up the slide of a microscope in that superuniverse. There is, of course, the enchantment of a girl, two, in fact, one who had perished from an explosion on war-torn earth, his Anne ("All goes on and on, and so will you and I"), and the other, of a planet in that supra-universe, ("He thought that she looked like Anne . . . . In the forest glade she seemed lovelier than a naiad out of legend.")

Dr. Keller's "The Revolt of Pedestrians" showed how automobiles could be at the expense of man's feet and general health, while his "The Threat of the Robot" advised that "the robot must be the servant and not the master."

Rev. Louis Tucker's "The Cubic City" attempted to find a solution to traffic problems in a city where "nothing (was) more than two miles from anything else. . . Roof and floor were translucent so that we could see other levels under and above us."

Jack Williamson's "The Moon Era" told of a distant past when the moon was a young colorful land with air, water and life; on the other hand, Don A. Stuart's "Twilight" took us to a far future when cities and giant machines, built to repair themselves and carry on automatically, continued to function, although man had long since forgotten how to operate them.

Clark Ashton's Smith's "The City of Singing Flame" took us to another dimension co-existent with ours in his inimitable poetic style. ("And the music? I have utterly failed to describe that, also. . . Even with my purposely deafened ears, I was wooed by the shrill and starry sweetness of its singing; and I felt the voluptuous lure and the high, vertiginous exaltation.")

"The Man Beast of Toree," by Ralph T. Jones, made us feel more grateful for our thumbs, the lack of which explained the failure of a human race on another planet to develop into intelligent beings, that plus the fact that a race needs a period of youth in which to play and learn, otherwise it cannot advance mentally and, on Toree, the young reached maturity in only a year's time.

In Clare Winger Harris' "The Miracle of the Lily," we learned of troubles on other worlds, finally discovering by means of interplanetary television that the ragged figures of human beings we could hardly make out were the pests, the large beetle creatures of Venus had been telling us about!

Stanley G. Weinbaum's "A Martian Odyssey" was one of the first real evidences of humor in science-fiction, wherein we found funny animals and creatures on other worlds, such as this story of "Tweel," a most lively ostrich-like creature, though neither bird nor animal, who not only amused, but could communicate with Captain Harrison's visiting party of Jarvis and Leroy with his humorous twittering and trilling ways.

Wallace West's "The Retreat from Utopia" found it to be an unendurable monotony, ("Life was never secure and never will be. Life is dangerous, an adventure, a challenge and its prizes go to those who take them."—Angelo Patri.) While such stories as "Elaine's Tomb," by G. Peyton Wertenbaker, and Clare Winger Harris' "The Fifth Dimension," conceived of time as cyclic, though in the latter case, there was an improvement over the usual idea, in this instance, each cycle to be not just a repetition of the one before, but an improvement on it.

As you may have already noted, this was the chief attraction of science-fiction, ideas galore, such as could nowhere else be found and often a poetic beauty to match. It was a canvass of background , and expression, broader than could be found in the usual "mundane" fiction.

LOVE INTEREST

I sometimes wonder, though, if an equal subconscious attraction of the time might not have also been in the "love interest" which was beginning to be manifest in the stories? They were mainly idea stories, even in such adventure epics as Charles Cloukey's serial, "The Swordsman of Sarvon," where a rocketship from Venus plans to destroy the ozone of our atmosphere (the same which makes possible radio around the curvature of the earth), so as to leave earth unprotected from the sun's deadly actinic rays. But we begin to see a less purely mental attraction in such lines as, "Very gently. . . Lee Chilton took her in his arms. . . He was startled a little at the fervor with which she returned the kiss."

In the Clayton "Astounding," particularly, there was more adventure than science, and here we find a few with very little pretense, such as Charles Willard Diffin's "Dark Moon." In this we have a "lost world," breathing of a land that was young, that mysteriously approaches from outer space to become a new dark-dense satellite of the earth. That's about all as far as the "scientific" idea goes. The rest is adventure, battles with strange life forms and a central interest that could be summed up in the lines, "Walter Harkness held the soft body close; bent nearer to catch the words. And he answered them with his own lips in an ecstasy of emotion that made nothing of the thrills to be found in that other conquest—of a Dark Moon."

CURRENT MAGAZINES AND FLASHBACK

Top magazines in today's market, (See also footnote for "Definitions, Disadvantages, and Delights"), include the old-timers, Street and Smith's "Astounding Science Fiction," edited by ex-author, John W. Campbell, Jr., alias "Don A. Stuart," (still the most widely read by professionals in every field; it was the first to develop the H. G. Wells sociological type of science-fiction into something more), and "Amazing Stories," (the oldest of those still being published, in trimmed "slick" format, after a rather hectic career of changing hands, changing sizes and type of contents, once among the best, then slanted for a younger audience under the early Ziff-Davis management, although a great seller at that level, and now with an emphasis on a sophisticated kind of entertainment; Howard Browne, editor). "Galaxy Science Fiction," (taking quite a few tips from "Astounding;" edited by ex-writer, H. L. Gold), and "The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction," (edited by writer, Anthony Boucher), are still the leaders among the comparative newcomers. All have New York addresses, including "Amazing," since Ziff-Davis moved from Chicago.

Gernsback's "Wonder Stories," one of the original "Big Three," which began in June 1929, as "Science Wonder Stories," followed much the same career as "Amazing," changing sizes, and became "Thrilling Wonder Stories" with its August, 1936 issue, under new management, a name frowned upon by almost all of its old-time fans, not that it did any good. It saw quite a bit of improvement, however, although its companion magazine, "Startling Stories," which was less juvenile from the beginning, January 1939, (one of the two oldest of the "newer magazines" over a decade old), became more of a favorite with the older readers because of its policy of one longer novelette per issue, stories such as Arthur C. Clarke's "Against the Fall of Night," which has since been reprinted in book form. They also have New York addresses, Samuel Mines, editor.

Two others, over a decade old, have been "Planet Stories," of Stamford, Conn., edited by Malcolm Reiss, featuring adventure, science-fiction, which began in Winter 1939, and "Future Science Fiction," (Nov., 1939), edited by Robert W. Lowndes, old-time New York fan. "Science Fiction Quarterly," "Dynamic Science Fiction," and "Science Fiction Stories," have been newer Columbia titles.

Up until 1954 "Planet" and "Future," as well as "Startling," were the only titles which survived from the 2nd great upsurge in popularity which occurred around 1939 and which continued until the World War II paper shortage came along. Others from that period, which carried on for over a decade, were "Fantastic Adventures," (the companion to the Z-D "Amazing"), "Famous Fantastic Mysteries," and its sister-magazine, "Fantastic Novels"; "Marvel Science Stories," the first to feature stories with an out-and-out girl interest, that is, in its early issues; and "Super-Science Stories," which, along with others that didn't last as long, was edited by another New York fan, or "Futurians," as they were then known. Of the most recent attempts, those edited by author Lester del Rey met a snag, when he decided that editing while a title by ex-fan and author, Damon Knight, "Worlds Beyond," seemed to lack the right fanfare.

Just a few years older than the newer crop are "Science Stories," a brand new title to be sure, but actually a continuation of "Other Worlds Science Stories," which began in 1949, edited by ex-fan Raymond A. Palmer of Chicago, (who also edited the Z-D "Amazing") and "Imagination," Evanston, Illinois, (edited by ex-fan William L. Hamling), which began in 1950, both of which are, (along with the Lowndes magazines), especially close to the heart of fans, the former because of its "Personals" column, and the latter because of its fan magazine review column, "Fandora's Box," conducted by Mari Wolf, reviewing the amateur or semi-professional magazines in the field.

Newer magazines have included "Orbit Science Fiction," "Vortex Science Fiction," "Cosmos Science Fiction," and "Science Fiction Digest," (which used to be a famous fan magazine title), all of New York City. There has been "Universe Science Fiction" and "Fantastic Universe," both of Chicago, the latter edited by Sam Merwin, Jr., who used to be editor for the "Thrilling" group; and "Tops in Science Fiction," Stamford, Connecticut, edited by Malcolm Reiss, who was also managing editor of "Planet Stories." There is also promise in a Los Angeles magazine, "Spaceway: a half dozen titles a month wasn't exactly his idea of an ideal job, Stories of the Future," edited by former fan William L. Crawford.

Of these newer groups the oldest is "If, Worlds of Science Fiction," James L. Quinn, editor, published in nearby Buffalo. (They're getting mighty close to Rochester these days!)

These have been the result of a third great upsurge of interest, stronger than the 1st in '29-'30, and the 2nd in '39-'40. Practically all of the magazines, especially the newest, consist of short stories, with hardly any being of the novel idea or poetic type we used to look forward to. Good book-length novels, (except for reprints), such as in the old days of the giant-size quarterlies, are especially scarce. If a good story of any length appears, it is usually talked about for years. Such a novel was A. E. VanVogt's "Slan!" a serial in "Astounding" of over ten years ago, about "mutants," the idea of children born with superior organs or attributes, such as "mind-reading."

The only U. S. reprint magazine (outside of "pocketbooks," of course, or "Galaxy Novels"), has been "Fantastic Story Quarterly," which enjoyed a surprisingly high circulation for a reprint magazine; Mary Gnaedinger's "Famous Fantastic Mysteries" went completely out of the picture, (wonder what they did with "Summer Star," another poem of mine they bought?); its best days were as a Munsey reprint magazine, but then, with its change of hands, it was restricted to reprinting almost entirely from books.

England seems to be coming a long way from her original start, when magazines consisted wholly of reprints from the U. S., (i.e., the days of "Tales of Wonder," The Windmill Press, Surrey, '37-'42, edited by ex-fan Walter H. Gillings), even though many of these were stories by English writers developed in the U. S. market. (There was also a juvenile weekly called "Scoops" in 1934, which also had some higher class material, such as a reprint of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Poison Belt.") The best seller is still the U. S. reprint edition of "Astounding," but she is now also doing all right with "Authentic Science Fiction," of Goldhawk Road, London, and John Carnell's "New Worlds Science Fiction," of Nova Publications, Ltd., London, which IS older than most of the new and comparatively new U. S. magazines.

Scotland is present with an ambitious newcomer, "Nebula," of Glasgow, edited by Peter Hamilton, Jr. Australia's Blue Diamond Publishing Company, (Sydney), is developing two little magazines of her own, "Popular" and "Future Science Fiction." The magazines in Mexico and other countries are still almost wholly reprint, even to the illustrations. Even Italy has had an occasional publication, usually reprints, translated from "Astounding Science Fiction," but notable for new artwork.

SUGGESTED CAREER

I never could explain a whole new subject, years in the learning, in just a few words. So it's no wonder that our good friend, Professor Floyd C. Fairbanks, teacher of Astronomy at the U. of R., could not understand how an interest in writing, imaginative literature, poetry, and a dozen other subjects as well, kept me from a career of astronomy, (considering some talks I had given to the Rochester Astronomy Club, to classes, etc., an interest once highlighted by the publicity given the discovery of the planet Pluto). He is now retired and a professorship in astronomy is waiting for a teacher.

Besides, how would one describe the pleasure derived in hearing someone tell a good story, accounts such as my Dad had loved to tell, either at home or at my Grandad's, in the country, which helped make youth so memorable?

DEFINITIONS AND GOOD POINTS

The Webster English Dictionary, (John C. Winston Company), describes science fiction as: "fantastic stories based on science," and fantasy as: "a work of the imagination or fanciful concept." Actually, both can be grouped under the heading of imaginative literature, science-fiction being a newer branch of fantasy which was born with the more or less successful triumph of science over superstition.

Obviously, as with anything else, imagination can be precious or dangerous, and even when its endeavors are under the most critical attacks, such a "the work of visionaries," it can prove to be the answer to important advances, (i.e., free public education, the eight-hour work day!), ("What are things like liberty, tolerance and freedom, but dreams someone had?"—Gabriel Heatter), or inventions, (i.e., the airplane, even though in this respect, it had to wait for the impetus of wars for improvements). Maybe, what we need now are the ideas of another "visionary" to save us from the dangers suddenly presented to us through the magic of atomic energy, for so many years a fantastic subject for science fiction, until brought into reality through the interest of Franklin D. Roosevelt and, without any Tom, Dick or Harry knowing of it, their tax money.

It is also well to realize that science-fiction can be found at all levels of interest, from that of scientists, ("Astounding Science-Fiction"), and philosophers, (See British philosopher George Orwell's "1984," a book also dramatized on "Studio One," with Eddie Albert, telling of a possible world of the future where life is based on perpetually manufactured wars, where even thought is policed, and the powers-that-be even have a make-believe underground to trap those who wish for a better way of life. There is

two-way television in every room and yet, even under these conditions, a couple seeks to nourish an honest, non-politically directed brand of love), to that of teen-agers, (the best in this line are a series of books by the John C. Winston Company). Also, the very best of science-fiction or fantasy is usually the work of great men, whether recognized as such or not. I say usually, because many writers have to type out stories for a living and general quality may seldom warrant book form. However, I like to give everyone the benefit of the doubt, so why not also judge a writer by his best work? The very best will have the quality of great literature which enables us to see beneath the surface glitter of life; but, in addition, it may have an over-all cosmic awareness, showing things in their truer perspectives, its most unique quality.

Fantasy itself, of course, is often derided as an ability to look at the world "through rose-colored glasses." (I am not referring to weird fantasy right now). Yet, I sometimes wonder if anyone has ever considered that this more optimistic view of life has often been the only repayment for all the heartbreaking, as well as ridiculed, work of "visionaries," who started mankind on the road to progress, as well as being a spur to do what they could, to better the world in the direction of their outlook? (I am not even referring to fantasy stories). True enough, sometimes the achievement was no more than a book or a song, but sometimes it takes little more than that to bring happiness to someone.

HIGHLIGHT FOR A FUTURE ISSUE

There are all conceivable modes of expression in the imaginative field. It is not merely a case of books and magazines. One will find fantasy or science-fiction in **Radio, Television, Motion Pictures, Music,** (including **Popular, Semi-Classical, and Classical), Opera, Paintings, Sculpture, and as part of Progress and Happiness in General.** We had intended to have such an article, briefly covering all of these fields, in this issue, as a fitting background to Harold Hersey's article. We would never have compiled it otherwise. But due to lack of space it will have to appear another time.

GOLDEN ATOM'S BACKGROUND

Our direct history goes back to the first issue of "Golden Atom," published in October, 1939, the same month which saw the first issue of "Famous Fantastic Mysteries," the long-awaited Munsey reprint magazine, which led off with Ray Cummings' "The Girl in the Golden Atom." This was also the same year of the First World Science Fiction Convention, (in conjunction with the New York World's Fair), wherein Rochester was also represented with the second issue of our collectors' journal, the (original) "Fantastic." Our "glamour history," however, goes back to the first printing of Ray's story,—**of a journey in size, on goose's wings**

of pseudo-science, (a drug with magical properties, in this story), to an imaginary world in the atom of a ring, where our "modern Gulliver," a chemist, finds various races in unrest and a most captivating girl, Lylda–in the March 15, 1919, issue of Munsey's "All-Story Weekly," widely read magazine of the day. This story, with its fanciful idea of likening atoms to miniature solar systems, caused a mild sensation when it first appeared, the magazine having to devote complete readers' "Heart to Heart Talks" to such comments, such as, "other stories. . have made a strong impression on me, but none of them, not even "Tarzan" (as strong as that story was) affected me as has Cummings' 'Girl in the Golden Atom.' When I tell you this is my first attempt to break into your 'charmed circle' you will realize the 'pull' exerted on me by that story." It was a cover story, Ray's first, and appeared later, with its sequel, in book form, Harper's, 1923.

EDISON AND SCIENCE-FICTION

Mr. Cummings was an assistant to Thomas Alva Edison at that time, which brings to mind the fact that Mr. Edison was more directly related to our field than one would expect, without even making reference to some of his own imaginative theories. Edison's daughter married a son of the venerable Dr. T. O'Connor Sloane, (A.B., A.M., LL.D., E.M., Ph.D.), lecturer, author, chemist, inventor, and one of the most distinguished men to be associated with science-fiction. Dr. Sloane became editor of "Amazing Stories" in his eighties, although he had been Managing Editor from the very first issue of this magazine, which is often referred to as the first such magazine by those who do not know about Street and Smith's "Thrill Book" of seven years previous. There was also an Edison Science Correspondence Club formed through the "Discussions" columns of "Amazing Stories."

(Incidentally, Edison was also a factor in the very beginning of our Eastman Kodak Company, of Rochester, New York. To quote his own words: "Without George Eastman I don't know what the result would have been in the history of the motion picture. The months that followed were a series of discouragements for all of us. While he was busy with the problem of chemicals, we were busy with the problem of mechanics." This mention is especially appropriate since 1954 has been the Centennial year of Eastman's birth, founder of the Eastman School of Music, etc.)

"LYLDA" AND THE THRILL BOOK

Coincidentally enough, (and strikingly so!), it was in the same month as the first printing of "The Girl in the Golden Atom," March 1919, thirty-six years ago, that "The Thrill Book," that delightful American phenomenon, the first science-fiction and fantasy magazine this world has ever known, first appeared. So you

can say that we are celebrating a double (or a triple!) anniversary.

That America should have been the land where the first such magazine appeared seems logical enough when one considers what Harriet Martineau, an English writer, once noted after a visit, that "the Americans appear to me an eminently imaginative people," and that, being originally a nation of pioneers and optimists, ("To become a pioneer, one must first be an optimist," Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, in "The Saturday Evening Post," September 15, 1945), what is more natural than that it should pioneer further along the lines suggested by such men as H. G. Wells, of England, or, to name some early writers in our own country, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe and Fitz-James O'Brien? Actually, science-fiction can be considered as a manifestation and development of the same American optimistic pioneer spirit.

As for "Golden Atom," which first appeared in October 1939, sixteen years ago, and the same month as the first issue of Munsey's "Famous Fantastic Mysteries," which started off with a reprint of Ray's much-clamored-for story, the nickname, "Lylda," was first given by Forrest J Ackerman, of Hollywood, California, the "number one" fan of those early years, and one of our original contributors. It was also the first of a dozen other suggestions, such as "Nat," "Goldie," "Denny," "Tom," "Ga," and "Atomaid," (4sJ again!) Enthusiasm was at such a high pitch that some closed with the words, "Yours Atomically," "Yours Golden Atomically," and even "Fantascientomically yours"!

JOURNEY AWAY FROM SCIENCE-FICTION

As many of you know, our suspension, with the last, the Winter 1943, issue, (mailed out during a furlough), was due to the war, namely, the draft. This came along, to take me away from a job in New York City, and to give me others, such as basic training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, service as company clerk for various field and HQ (quartermaster, anti-aircraft, engineer and Radar) units from Florida to California, and finally ending up as a stenographer for the Adjutant General in San Francisco.

One war-time item was "Star-Bound," a "Golden Atom" publication, printed in Jacksonville, Fla., after having been transferred to New York City again, upon volunteering for a Machine Records Unit scheduled for overseas. I may also mention that this was a period of idealizing of the prettiest girls I met, in poetry, (This should explain how closely poetry can relate to life!) an outlook which kept this youth from pursuing opportunities others would surely have followed, (to hear the stories they told!). For example I can still remember the setting of a night in Florida, in an empty

theatre, (after a concert by Ezio Pinza, before the "discovery" of him in "South Pacific"), with a vivacious professor's daughter, at a piano, who played "Claire de Lune" and many of her own love ballads for my especial benefit, while I deliberately kept everything on a platonic, poetic basis!

But sometimes this poetic susceptibility, (pity us who are extroverts with only the smallest possible audience), could be impossible at times, such as the vain hope aroused by the sixteen-year-old star of Victor Herbert's "The Only Girl," *road show at San Francisco's Geary Theatre at the time, who said she'd write from the other cities the show would play in. (Does any fellow really expect to hear from the prettiest "stars"?). But imagine taking all such courtesies literally!

Incidentally, I was also editing and writing for various company papers from Governors Island, New York, to the "Lost River" country of Zane Grey.

Regardless of this, I sometimes wonder as to what would have happened anyway, since "Golden Atom" was beginning to be a full-time job, and **work of this nature is not necessarily the same as "getting ahead in the world."** In fact, this enthusiasm was completely forsaken from the middle of those "G.I." days of '44 and '45, following a period of readjustment back to "civies," a temporary obsession for automobiles, (three in one year!), and until about two years after my marriage, to a southern belle, in 1949.

However, even at best, we could not completely forget science-fiction. Reminders came in the way of friends. We had even received a wedding present from Baroness Greye La Spina, writer of the first story in the first issue of "The Thrill Book," although at that time I had supposedly shut myself away from the entire world of science-fiction. I might even mention that while enroute for the wedding in Birmingham in 1949, I stopped with my mother and sisters at the Hotel Metropole, in Cincinnati, where, coincidentally enough, the Seventh World Science Fiction Convention, (the "Cinvention"), was in progress, and met many of my oldtime friends from the New York area, such as Hannes Bok, Sam Moskowitz, etc.

Yet, it was forsaken. For the first two years afterwards, I did not even refer to this apparently vanished interest which, besides "Lylda," had consisted of evaluating and collecting the various rarities and stories and writing for many of the "fan magazines," such as Denver's "Galaxy," Hagerstown, Maryland's "Spaceways," Lakeport, California's "Science Fiction Critic," Newark, New Jersey's "Helios," (edited by Sam Moskowitz, who had so encouraged me to write), Minneapolis' "The Fantasite," Chicago's "Ad Astra," and Los Angeles' "Imagination!", publication of such fans of the time as Forrest J and Ray Bradbury.

*Gale Sherwood.

COMPLETE DISINTEREST

In fact, we were renting at the time and, if the thought of my collection, still at my mother's, occurred to me, it wavered between the hazy notion of being given away to some library, in the same way that Edwin Hadley Smith's United Amateur Press Association papers later became a department of the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, or, believe it or not, being thrown away. It was already a vast collection which included the original printings of H. G. Wells' "The War of the World" and "The First Men in the Moon," from 1897 and 1900 "Cosmopolitans," complete early years of "The Black Cat Magazine," dating back to 1895, which had discovered Jack London, O. Henry, and many others, hundreds of Munsey and "out-of-the-way" excerpts, complete files of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, which had begun in 1937 and in which I had also been active, the original "Science Fiction Digest," "Fantasy Magazine," "The Fantasy Fan," "The Recluse," and "The Thrill Book."

"WEIRD TALES"

Even before this, and subsequently, a Rochester collector, Elmer Weinman, had quoted me a price of only $50.00 for his complete set of "Weird Tales," back to the first issue, in 1923, and the same price for a German f2.9 camera. "Weird Tales" was a periodical which had started with an occasional pseudo-science story, in addition to its supernatural and spirit-tapping yarns of the time. Later on, however, it became referred to as the most literary of the pulps, many of its stories being reprinted in book form and listed in the O. Henry yearbooks of best short stories. Many of the authors it discovered or developed, such as Donald Wandei, Edmond Hamilton, C. L. Moore, H. P. Lovecraft, Frank Belknap Long, Jr., and Clark Ashton Smith, later also wrote for the science-fiction magazines.

In fact, Elmer begged me, as a friend, to buy the latter, "if only for its speculative value as a rarity." However, as you may have guessed, I chose the camera, a choice which has given me many hours of enjoyment; at least, I would not have bought the set from the viewpoint of a dealer, nor would I have had storage room at the time. (An almost complete set, minus one issue, was quoted at over $300.00, in May of this year.) But even if I had been interested, it's major value would have been in the way of prestige, certainly a superficial value, considering the fact that I already had my own individually bound excerpts of favorites anyway, including some original manuscripts and illustrations, besides a personal detailed index, with a summary of each story from the start, which we started to run in our fifth issue. (This was "The Fan-

tasy Record," a department which began in the first issue of "Golden Atom," with a similarly annotated index of the entire first year of Hugo Gernsback's "Amazing Stories," 1926, and his lone "Amazing Stories Annual," 1927, which featured Edgar Rice Burroughs' "The Master Mind of Mars.")

These favorites from "Weird Tales" included such stories as Junius B. Smith's "The Man Who Dared to Know," (about his ancestors!), Dr. David H. Keller's "No Other Man," a **never-before printed sequel to which we have already scheduled for our next issue**, Frank Owen's delicate Chinese fantasy, "The Wind that Tramps the World," (later in a book by the same name), C. L. Moore's story of "Shambleau," (later also likewise reprinted), an alluring girl creature of Mars, whose ecstatic embrace was a mask for a draining of vitality and life itself through a Medusa-like net of hair.

There was the inescapable influence of the poet-writer, H. P. Lovecraft, with his stories of weird cosmic horror, (later anthologized by Dashiell Hammett, August Derleth and others). They centered about an eerie mythology of incredibly ancient "Elder Beings," (alien forces still slumbering in depths of the earth, or in far wastes), which he had developed in such stories as "The Dunwich Horror," in "Weird Tales," (and "The Shadow Out of Time," in a Tremaine-edited "Astounding.") Originally there had been suggestions of this background in such books as Robert W. Chambers' "The King in Yellow;" and, after his untimely death, many writers of "the Lovecraft circle," such as Derleth and C. A. Smith, carried on the myth. But our particular favorites had always been his earlier brief crystal-like fantasies, such as "The White Ship" and "The Silver Key," so reminiscent of that famous line about "magic casements opening out on fairy isles in perilous seas forlorn." (Does any reader have the complete quotation?)

Other favorites were W. Elwyn Backus' melodramatic "The Waning of a World," and A. Merritt's colorful "The Woman of the Wood":

(" . . . When the winds blew and the crests of the trees bent under them, it was as if dainty demoiselles picked up fluttering, leafy skirts, bent leafy hoods and danced while the knights of the firs drew closer round them, locked arms, and danced with them to the roaring horns of the winds. At such times he almost heard sweet laughter from the birches, shoutings from the firs.")

(U. of R. student, Jim Goldfrank, tells me that Merritt Parkway in Connecticut is named after A. Merritt; I doubt if Cummings Street in Rochester has a similar science-fictional history!)

* * *

"When we are out of sympathy with the young, then I think our work in this world is over."—G. MacDonald.

GIFTS THAT LED US BACK

Then, after the purchase of our home, a strange thing happened. Almost immediately afterwards, I was given the complete collections of my oldtime friends, Francis J. Litz, who was moving to Inglewood, California, Bernard A. Seufert, **mint files** of everything back to 1926, including a library of books, complete with dust jackets, being given as an act of pure friendship, "to one who will appreciate them," and later on, the complete files of the Literature, Science and Hobbies Club of Decker, Indiana, (Vincent Manning), for just the price of postage!

Soon afterwards, (who knows how the word got around?), there were more windfalls, from Graham B. Stone, of Australia, (parcels which have been arriving now, regularly, for over two years), Colonel David H. Keller, the first writer in magazine science-fiction to be concerned with people as such, (sets of the best fanzines), and our amazing "discovery," veteran publisher and editor, Harold B. Hersey. One of his gift books, "Night," 1923 and 1943, with full-page illustrations by Elliott Dold, the famed science-fiction artist, has been selling at $40.00 a copy, on latest word from that "Dean of Science Fiction," and original "Thrill Book" contributor, "Murray Leinster"! (Incidentally, the title, "Night," was given to Harold by Billy Rose.)

How can I ever repay them all? **No wonder it has reached the point where "Golden Atom" just has to be published again, whether or not I have the time to spend on what so easily develops into an overly demanding pursuit.**

A snapshot taken at Francis J. Litz's, faded, but still the only one of yours truly from those "good old days"; and also, a wedding picture. We never did get around to sending any to the newspapers, so this is also a first.

In the meantime we even heard of a three-page article of nostalgic reminiscences about the "Golden Atom days," published in a St. Louis magazine in 1952. (See letter by Harry Warner, Jr. in our PICS and KICS.)

In addition, with the gifts of these entire collections, adding to the original files, untouched through the war years, much of the original attraction has come back to include an interest in collecting almost everything of this nature, and the establishment of a "Fantasy and Science Fiction Reference File."

But lack of time still keeps me from much of this activity and, in my fondest hopes, it is still no more than any other hobby of mine, such as photography, reading non-fiction, writing poetry and song lyrics or, let's say, going to see a play, enjoying a dance, or spending a day at the beach, on a picnic, during our brief summers.

THE DANGER OF HOBBIES

Let me also hope that it will not put an end to an unusually happy domestic life, considering the complete disinterest of some, close to heart, in anything of a literary or studious nature. So now you know the possible danger that can arise, even from a bit of pretty fiction, unless it pays off with more than interest,* though, let me not deceive you. It's not really because of science-fiction; it's our nature to be interested in almost everything related to life.

Actually, the field of imagination is to be found as an integral part of every phase of life, as a source of all advances, as a springboard for every human emotion, with science-fiction being only one of its many manifestations, since science took the lead over superstition, (a fight not completely won, incidentally!)

In fact, our favorite periodicals are not necessarily science-fiction at all, but such titles as "The Saturday Review of Literature," (published by J. R. Cominsky, 1920 University of Rochester graduate, as I just chanced to find out), (although a recent issue had "Mr. Imaginaion," a noteworthy article on Jules Verne), "Wings," an outstanding poetry quarterly, published by author, Stanton A. Coblentz, of Mill Valley, California, (heart of the redwoods, by the way), "The Science News Letter," of Washington,

*Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could sell a tenth as many copies of "Golden Atom" as are being sold of Mickey Spillane! If you could only make it as vivid on the public consciousness! Certainly, if the books of Mickey Spillane are a synonym of contempt for humanity, as pointed out by Philip Wylie in a recent "Good Housekeeping," "Golden Atom," with its theme of the wonder of life, (even in the smallest things!), would be a direct opposite. In fact, the picture of "Lylda," to our minds, is one having a special Sunday appeal, one of friendliness and gayety, which is exactly the same feeling we want to transmit to the reader.

The far dream, of course, is to make "Golden Atom" a fascinating, ever-in-demand, collectors' item.

D. C., a most informative little paper. (This is a step in the right direction for a service badly needed in the world of science today, so that a specialist in any field need not completely lose track of advances in the other fields, which often have a bearing on his very own study), "The American Scholar," a regular quarterly published by Phi Beta Kappa, New York City, (which has such articles as "Liberty and the Ladies," by Philip Wylie, "A Tonic of Southern Folklore"), "Prevention," of Emmaus, Pennsylvania, ("The greatest doctor in any community is not the doctor who cures disease, but the doctor who prevents disease."), and of course, various features in popular magazines and periodicals, such as "This Week" magazine section in the Sunday papers, i.e., "What Would You Like the Most Out of Life?," or "Mysteries of Mars," by R. S. Richardson of Mt. Wilson and Palomar Observatories, also astronomy writer for "Astounding Science Fiction." (Remember the popular science articles in Hearst's old "American Weekly"? Wonder if A. Merritt picked them out?)

Any marked interest in subjects such as is represented by these means, of course, to be "different," or "studious." Whether the field is science-fiction or not, is not the real question. It's a matter of the time spent, whether it helps or hinders one's social life and, especially, whether or not it may contribute as an added source of livelihood, financially. If it doesn't, then one will hear on every hand, "why bother with it?," "what good is it doing you?", etc. (But maybe I could give more than a hint through this issue of 'Golden Atom"!)

Real Interest—The Fundamentals of Life

When you come right down to it, what would be one's real interests? Actually, it's life itself, and books always as a ready source of knowledge or wisdom, (let alone entertainment), which may have taken others an untold number of years to discover,—but always as related to life.

And I, for one, have always been attracted to the fundamentals, **(science-fiction, incidentally, having seemed such a direct reflection of, or incentive to, progress.)** These fundamentals go right down to beginnings, in analysis of the most common deceptions of this age.

A book could be written in this vein, (you should see the number of pages that I wish could be included here!), but I'll only briefly mention two or three examples.

For example, think of all the eyebrows raised when one speaks of fresh salads and other "rabbit food" as essential to a man's health as his "meat and fried potatoes." So many still cannot conceive that fresh greens are just as important!

Think of that popular misconception that slenderness of build is synonymous to lack of vitality and health. This could also be

applied to a popular attitude on babies, that their health is supposed to be proportionate to their size. Actually, babies who are active, who are of a comparatively slender build, who are nursed to begin with, who are not forever stuffed with canned goods, and who take a longer time to reach maturity, will outlive and have more natural resistance to disease than those who seem to have all the earmarks of health through a rolly-polly build.

I am glad to see a rediscovery of the values of nursing over the finest of the bottle-fed, values in future health, in addition to emotional gratification for both mother and baby, and an indescribable joy to her who thought she could never nurse, to begin with. Besides, babies are tiny for such a short time!

When science-fiction gives due consideration to such fundamental truths as these, instead of idolizing "test-tube" babies, as it is wont to do, it will then be more wholly accepted as a part of life. It will then gain greater recognition as a worthwhile part of man's clearest forward vision.

Problems of a Large Collection

Incidentally, the merits of a large collection seem to cancel themselves directly with its size. There's the problem of filing, keeping it up to date, the large correspondence involved, and particularly the space required for safe, dry storage. Besides, after going through the summer months, (beach and picnic times!), without having a chance to look at it, one might be asked, "What good are all those books and magazines? You never look at them!"

On the other hand, if I should start using them for reference, for a project such as this particular issue of "Golden Atom," I might be criticized for spending all my time with them! You can't win; so who am I to advise anyone to follow the call of such a hobby? Better that you know the truth now!

Definitions, Disadvantages and Delights

Yet science-fiction is coming into its own. It's a reflection or example of, and often an incentive to progress. It has its good and bad points, like TV or the automobile. You can't say the automobile was a help to the country's morals, but at the same time, you can't ignore its good points.

"SF" has indeed come a long way in the past decade, and yet the field is not exactly the same as our once more newly awakened "Lylda" would like. To be sure, it has gained in popularity as not hoped for in those early years, possibly because of a subconscious impulse on the part of many to find in it a solution to, or an escape from, the problems posed in the threat of atomic wars, originally visualized in the pages of **science-fiction, the rising underdog of our generation.**

It has also gained a respect, which in actuality, may mean no more than a respect for this same new found popularity. At the same time there are disadvantages which we never had to contend with in the beginning.

No longer is it possible to read all the stories being published; and allied to this is the great error of publishers who insist that sales, (and Mickey Spillane), should be the only judge as to the "literary" merits of stories. (Not that they can be blamed if one has to consider the field as a source of livelihood, which shows the advantages of a non-professional magazine in this respect.) **For that reason, Lylda, as always, is content to dwell over lanes and byways of her own choosing, even tho the securing of an article such as the one by Harold Hersey does seem like a main highway!**

It often amuses me to think of people who laugh at the idea of fantasy or imaginative literature, until they go to be entertained in a big way. Then, one only has to make a list of all the big hits in every field and note the elements of fantasy therein, not that most "science-fiction" isn't really fantasy. The fact that these two terms are almost synonymous in meaning can be partly blamed on publishers who, discovering that a label of science-fiction will mean more sales,* label almost everything as science-fiction; while, on the other hand, much of the supposedly "down-to-earth science-fiction" would still be termed pseudo-science if this more realistic and honest term were still in use, outside of library reference books. Personally, I like a rather humorous definition by Editor Sam Merwin, Jr., who once said, "Science-fiction is fantasy wearing a tight girdle." Only, usually, it's not very tight!

I am also amused by those who seem to think that there is something inherently wrong with imaginative literature. My long considered view is that it's all in what you look for: **effects are usually secondary to what one has looked for in the first place.** There are also values following in the wake of what affect one as personal discoveries, such as trends of thought or of feelings awakened, like a sense of wonder which brings a greater awareness of those infinitudes which are also reality, just as real as one's own senses of perception. (Our so-called five senses can actually take in a very small portion of reality, and unaided could never be aware of the true nature of the sun and stars, the fields of microscopic minute-

*Up until very recent years, (See "Beyond," Galaxy Publishing Corp., and "Fantastic," Ziff-Davis), purely weird fantasy magazines, such as the Clayton "Strange Tales," and Better Publications' "Strange Stories," one of the "Thrilling" group, etc., only lasted a handful of issues each. Street & Smith's "Unknown," and "Unknown Worlds," were somewhat more successful because of their policy of using humorous or sophisticated fairy tales, in a belief "that fantasy was intended for fun," oftentimes presenting a wish-fulfillment yarn with an unexpected denouement.

ness, or of the incredible variety of invisible radiations of which visible light is such a small part.)

Like anything else, the cumulative effect can be for good or bad. A comparison could be made with television, which becomes as a drug to many, who must have it nightly, while others turn to it for a comparatively few programs they have been looking forward to. In its most refined form, it's like a dessert of life; but, in the same way, one cannot live on dessert alone. **At the other extreme, of course, is the same unimaginative individual whom I doubt can derive as much enjoyment from his cynical opinion as the other from his dreams.**

VALUES IN SCIENCE-FICTION

There are definite worthwhile values, many of which are not necessarily in current magazines, where the emphasis is on action, a smooth "accepted" style, an attempt at characterization, (always successful, if one is to believe the editors), or on a "twist" ending. It was not too long ago when the field was associated with the mental stimulation derived from novel concepts.

At the moment I can't help but recall a story by P. Schuyler Miller, in the April, 1937, issue of "Astounding Science Fiction," "The Sands of Time," which was based on the theory that time advances in spirals, and it is possible to jump from the one you're on to the one before or after! Only, nowadays, with the wider circulation of magazines, stories with a more general appeal are wanted.

But science-fiction **can** appeal, as no other fiction, with its blend of science and poetic style, not necessarily qualities which will insure the continuance of a newsstand magazine today; and there could be more achievements in the way of satire or humor. There could also be something superior to those books which are generally the most respected in the field, as represented in the pessimistic outlook of an Aldous Huxley, the artificial gayety of a Thorne Smith, or that Don Juan, James Branch Cabell, seeking vainly for happiness in a goddess. More important, however, science-fiction or fantasy **can be** as uplifting as any other type of literature, and it does not have to be completely divorced from philosophy, as is the usual policy with editors today.

In its own unique way, it can restate and re-emphasize such truths as the not-often-enough repeated one that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,"—eternal vigilance even against those who would take away freedom to criticize, the very necessary ingredient for progress.

There can also be a practical aspect, as was so often championed by Hugo Gernsback, as in his October, 1926, editorial: "An author, in one of his fantastic scientifiction (his own coined word, now obsolete, If) stories, may start someone thinking along the suggested

lines which the author had in mind, whereas the inventor in the end will finish up with something totally different. . . But the fact remains that the author provided the stimulus in the first place. . ." (Let's not applaud too loudly, though: I remember one millionaire saying that there are a hundred idea men for every man of action.)

I do know of one specific illustration, however, a two-ounce vest pocket radio without tubes or batteries, which was developed by the Indianapolis Scientific Products Company, as a result of seeing the H. C. Wells motion picture, "Things to Come," in 1935. I wonder how many other inventions have come about in the same way and just how responsible science-fiction has been in securing **and maintaining interest** in such fields as electronics, rocketry, atomic research, television, radar, etc.? (I wonder if we could get a word from Arthur C. Clarke on this?)

Science, of course, can be depicted as a bogey or a menace, (super weapons, and scientists, etc.), as well as an asset, (higher standard of living, medicine, discoveries to aid all, etc.) But even in the former there can be the greatest worth in pointing out the danger from misuse of inventions, becoming too dependent (and commercially independent) on methods of expediency to gain rosy-seeming developments, while giving scant thought to detrimental long range effects, and also in pointing out other values of life that can be so easily overlooked in a "practical" machine age.

I like the thought once expressed by Clarence Randall: "To produce more and more with less and less effort is merely treading water, unless we thereby release time and energy for the cultivation of the spirit," and yet, even today, how often we hear an admission of inner defeat, in such confidings as, "If I didn't work, I wouldn't know what to do with myself!"—No wonder there's fodder for Statism!

There should be classes on relaxation as well as intelligent or creative use of leisure time. There can be science in the most human accomplishments, (Science is not necessarily machinery; in some countries, girls are even taught how to laugh and giggle!), and upon final analysis, science is just as human as man himself from whom it originates, reflecting the worst as well as the best of his nature. Science is not only figures and equations. It can also be a synonym for intelligence combined with human-ness, which is the only ideal approach to social problems.

NAMES IN THE BOOK FIELD

The subject is becoming manifest as a new department in libraries throughout the country, and though the fact was never hidden, it comes as a surprise to many that almost every author of note has at one time or another written such books or stories. The list includes a galaxy of names one would hardly expect, be-

sides those generally associated in the field, such as Lord Dunsany, Walter de la Mare, etc., in the field of fantasy, Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, S. Fowler Wright, Olaf Stapledon and "John Taine" in the field of science-fiction, or, to name those in a more popular sense, Edgar Rice Burroughs and "Marie Corelli."

The latter authoress was one of the most widely read several decades ago, with such books as "The Young Diana: An Experiment of the Future," Grosset & Dunlap, 1918. ("What would you say if you could win back youth?—not only the youth of your best days, but a youth tansfigured to a fairness and beauty far exceeding any that you have ever known?")

The Utopia stories by Edward Bellamy, Samuel Butler, Lord Lytton, William Morris, etc., form a separate class in themselves, dating back to Sir Thomas More's "Utopia," published in Latin in 1516, from which the word, (meaning the conception of an ideal state), originated, and beyond that, to Plato's "Republic," of about 400 B. C.

Plato was also the first to tell of Atlantis, a mythical continent that sank in the Atlantic ocean, (written about in Sir Arhur Conan Doyle's "The Maracot Deep," and Stanton A. Coblentz's "The Sunken World.")

Here are some of the names, most of whom are seldom if ever associated with the field of imaginative literature, ("good-down-to-earth authors you should read," to hear some talk): Alexandre Dumas, Honore de Balzac, Henry Fielding, Herman Melville, John Ruskin, O. Henry, (See his "Roads of Destiny"), Thomas Hardy, Bret Harte, John Galsworthy, Christopher Morley, Daphne DuMaurier, (of "Rebecca" fame, who recently wrote a collection, "Kiss Me Again, Stranger," with some fantasy stories. She is the granddaughter of George DuMaurier, author of "Trilby," and "The Martian"), Jeffrey Farnol, Guy de Maupassant, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Jan Struther, (also of "Mrs. Miniver" fame), Evelyn Waugh, Michael Arlen, Sinclair Lewis, G. K. Chesterton, C. S. Lewis, C. S Forester, Ayn Rand, (noted for "The Fountainhead"), John Steinbeck, W. Somerset Maugham, Elizabeth Goudge, Wilbur Daniel Steele, Lord Mountbatten and D. H. Lawrence.

In fact, of the first fifteen authors given in Black's list of "The Giants of Literature," Kipling, Hugo, Tolstoi, Poe, Ibsen, Doyle, Emerson, Wilde, R. Browning, Stevenson, Hawthorne, Shakespeare, Dickens, Swift and H. Rider Haggard, only one of them—as far as I know yet—has not written fantasy or science-fiction.

Even the "Prince of Scoffers," Voltaire, (1695-1778), ("Candide," "Irene"), startled us with his "Micromegas," 1735, one of the very earliest accounts of visitors from another planet.

Many names from other fields, having been attracted by the growing popularity of this subject, have become anthologists, (or editors). This includes writers, such as Dashiell Hammett, ("The Thin Man"), Carl Carmer, ("Stars Fell on Alabama"), Phil Stong, ("State Fair"), Clifton Fadiman, (of "Information Please"), and Anthony Boucher, (famed writer from the detective story field.)

Others, however, have used fantasy or science-fiction as stepping stones, a list which would include such names as James Hilton, Irvin S. Cobb, H. G. Wells, A. Merritt, Orson Welles, T. S. Stribling, (Pulitzer Prize Winner), William Faulkner, (his very earliest were fantasies), Philip Wylie and Mort Weisinger, (up from the fan magazine, "Science Fiction Digest"!)

This would be counterbalanced by others who have discovered its merits later, or, to whom it has been an end in itself, such philosophers as George Orwell, Olaf Stapledon, Andre Maurois, Bertrand Russell, Aldous Huxley, statesman Pierrepont B. Noyes, author-playwright, Stephen Vincent Benet, ("John Brown's Body"), millionaire John Jacob Astor, (later one of the voyagers on the ill-fated Titanic), and E. M. Forster, (recently honored by Queen Elizabeth with the Order of Companions of Honor). Among E. M. Forster's many books can be found such stories as "The Machine Stops," a thought-provocative story set in the far future when man has become so entirely dependent upon "the machine" that he has completely forgotten there ever was an outside world of nature.

However, the great bulk of new science-fiction books are by writers developed by the magazines, with most of the stories being reprints from these same magazines.

Da Vinci as an Inventor of Science-Fiction

I have made such a study through our Rundel Memorial and University of Rochester libraries, the result of which is too detailed for these pages. However, I should tell of the most amazing discovery of all, the fact that one of the greatest minds of all time, Leonardo da Vinci, the Edison of the Middle Ages, (1452-1519), sculptor, inventor, scientist, scholar extraordinary, architect, philosopher and painter, (the "Mona Lisa"), not only designed an air conditioner, a parachute, a working model of the airplane, and an aerial screw, envisioning the helicopter, five hundred years ahead of his time, but he had also looked forward to **the inventing of a new field of literature**. What this was could only have been science-fiction considering his written statement,

"I will construct a fiction
Which shall express great things,"

bearing in mind the fact that words to him were thoughts to be

translated into action, and the fact that he also outlined and started to write such a sory, "The Deluge." Think of the wonder of it, if he had only lived long enough to write the books he had in mind!

"The Black Cat" and the Dime Novel Weeklies

Fantasy and pseudo-science have, of course, appeared in every conceivable type of publication through the years.

We have already referred to "The Black Cat Magazine," (1895-1920), popular short story magazine of those years, said to have taken its name from Edgar Allan Poe's story of the same name, and soon known as "The Cat that Captured the Country." It was the first to recognize Jack London, who told how his success was due to "The Black Cat," and who referred to it as "The White Mouse" in "Martin Eden."

It was the first to discover or encourage the work of such writers as Rupert Hughes, Ellis Parker Butler, ("Pigs Is Pigs"), Frank R. Adams, Edwin Baird, (later to edit "Weird Tales"), Harry Stephen Keeler, whose "John Jones' Dollar" was later reprinted by "Amazing Stories," Albert Bigelow Paine, Frederick Van Rensselaer Dey, (of Nick Carter), Don Mark Lemon, Clark Ashton Smith, and David Bruce Fitzgerald, (Dad of our reader, William Fitzgerald).

It was the first to feature innumerable stories of science-fantasy, with such titles as "The Invisible City," "The Man Who Found Zero," "A Bachelor Girl's Husband," (by Florence Smith Auston, November, 1901, which showed what advantages a woman may possess through an automaton perfected to social excellence), and "The Mansion of Forgetfulness," (by Don Mark Lemon, April, 1907). In this a man who believes his sweetheart had died, discovers a ray which can destroy certain cells of memory and erects a Mansion of Forgetfulness to which all who would free their minds of a hopeless passion could go for erasure of the memory. He has yet to use it on himself, until, one day he recognizes a woman, who appears from the room of the Purple Ray, as she whom he thought dead. But there is no light of recognition in her eyes. He groans in anguish, then, at her thoughtful suggestion, goes to kill the painful memory of their pledge of eternal love.

Earlier still were the paper-bounds, predecessors of the "pocket-books" of today, and the Dime Novel weeklies, juveniles usually written by one man, such as the Frank Reade stories of Lu Senarens, the first of which was "Frank Reade and His Steam Man of the Plains; or the Terror of the West," in 1883, for which information we wish to thank the Dime Novel Club of Brooklyn.

OTHER "OUT-OF-THE-WAY" MAGAZINES

The variety of magazines includes such a diversity as "Today's Woman," "Western Story Magazine," ("The Survivors," etc.), Gernsback's "Science and Invention," (which had a "Scientific Fiction" number in 1923, featuring G. Peyton Wertenbaker's "The Man from the Atom," later reprinted in the first issue of "Amazing Stories." In this a man enlarges into the super-universe to which our solar system is a swiftly moving atom, hundreds of years here being equal to seconds up there. He find himself swimming in the ocean of that world, which is somehow reminiscent of the earth, and eventually reaches the land where he finds an advanced race, "with curious customs," who treat him as they would a savage.),

"Mystery Adventures," (another Hersey magazine), "Physical Culture," (Harold Hersey was Supervisory Editor in its better years; it had a twelve part serial, "The Weird and Wonderful Story of Another World," by Tyman Currio, in 1906, about a race of physical perfection on the planet Jupiter, an impossibility, of course, in the light of today's knowledge of that planet, and another, by Milo Hastings, about future war, in 1911), "The (London) Argosy,"

"Pictorial Review," ("Conquerors from the Stars," by John T. McIntyre, in 1934, about cities on our ocean floor, built by amphibious people coming from the planet Venus),

"McClure's," ("With the Night Mail," by Rudyard Kipling, etc.), "Cosmopolitan," ("Omega," by France's Camille Flammarion, 1894, telling of cities of the future, glass-enclosed to ward off a waterless end, with outdated science, of course.)

"Blue Book," in particular, almost always profusely illustrated, has always featured many peudo-science stories. (I would like to describe them very soon).

Besides "Blue Book," this "out-of-the-way" includes "Everybody's Magazine," ("The Messiah of the Cylinder," a serial by Victor Rousseau, comparable to H. G. Wells' "When the Sleeper Wakes"), the old "St. Nicholas Magazine," "Harper's", "The New Yorker," "Playboy," (with a satire about the censorship of books in the future, "Fahrenheit 451," when firemen in a fireproof world would have had no employment if they did not have books to burn, "all books," since they "caused unhappiness. . . raised questions that couldn't be answered"; this was by Ray Bradbury, another fan of our original "Golden Atom days"),

"Tales of Magic and Mystery," a monthly magazine of five issues, beginning in December, 1927, with such yarns as "The Soul that Could Leave Its Body," but also a few poetic tales such as "The Magic Cart," by Archie Binns, (about a business man who is homesick for the days of his youth in the country and is trans-

ported there through means of "the magic cart," meeting again, joyously, his mother and father who have been gone a long time), "Mademoiselle," "Collier's," "Esquire," (quite a few, including some of a humorous nature, such as "The Courting Machine," by Joseph Shallitt: "A satire of the future wherein courting is done by machines to save time"),

"The Saturday Evening Post," (There was a beauty by Stephen Vincent Benet, entitled "The Place of the Gods," later reprinted in book form as "By the Waters of Babylon," wherein the descendants of a future war comprehend that the gigantic ancient ruins are not those of "gods," but of their own ancestors; and more recently, "The April Witch," a fantasy by Ray Bradbury, about a girl of an enchanted family who can see life through the eyes of any living creature, and, grasping the impact of love through the eyes of an ordinary girl, follows the call of her heart even if it means losing her magical powers. Unholy competition for the man, I'd say!*).

Honestly, I'd love to describe the hundreds of titles that come to mind. But supposing we refer particularly to just one of the earliest of these "out-of-the-way" titles for this issue?

Earliest Hints of the Golden Atom Theme

Probably the first story with more than a hint of the "Golden Atom" theme was "The Diamond Lens," by Fitz-James O'Brien, (later a Civil War casualty). A much reprinted story, it also appeared in the (large size) December, 1926, and in the (small size) October, 1933, issues of "Amazing Stories," as well as in "Weird Tales" and in the January, 1934, "Golden Book Magazine," (an early favorite mag., available at the main library of any major city.) **A super-microscope, with powers going into a field of minuteness beyond that of bacteria, reveals a wondrous realm in a drop of water, abode of an exquisitely beautiful girl with whom the observer falls in love; but with the evaporation of this globule, he is heartbroken, as he beholds the end of his radiant "Animula."** This story originally appeared in the very first issue of

*To think that the stories by Ray Bradbury, later so highly praised by such critics as Christopher Isherwood, ("Voice of the Turtle," "I Remember Mama," "I Am A Camera," etc.), used to be rejected by "Astounding," under Campbell, for being too poetic! The real reason, of course, is that "Astounding" comes closer to true science-fiction than any other magazine on the market, and Bradbury's stories, bringing out the human interest, just didn't have much science. His Mars could just as well have been another part of the earth's surface, air and all, a new frontier waiting for the woman-folk to follow their men. Under the previous Street and Smith editor, Orlin F. Tremaine, "Astounding," in addition to the "idea" stories, had encouraged many that came close to poetry in awareness, such as those by C. L. Moore, Donald Wandrei, Campbell himself, as "Don A. Stuart," Frank Belknap Long, Jr., and even H. P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith.

"The Atlantic Monthly," Volume 1, Number 1, January, 1858.

Still an earlier trace of the "golden atom" idea appeared as far back as 1801-3, when the poet William Blake wrote the following lines in his "Augeries of Innocence":

"To see a World in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm off your hand,
And Eternity in an hour."

That is really a perfect distilled essence of the "golden atom" theme we have always had in mind—like a voiceless cry of being, comparable to the countless thoughts in a river of humanity, lost forever, until someone, like Ray Cummings, comes along and establishes a reference point with just the right words.

The Legendary Rarities of Fantasy and Science-Fiction (BOOKS)

In future issues we will also have a reference to collectors' items, the specially illustrated books and those extreme rarities known as the poetry books of fantasy, (those on the order of Poe and Baudelaire, who were among the earliest in this field). Most of them have been limited editions, rarely to be found in any library, and so scarce in fact that there is no one who has all of them. We mean all the volumes of Clark Ashton Smith, Donald Wandrei, Samuel Loveman, Frank Belknap Long, Jr., George Sterling, Nora May French and Harold Hersey.

Altogether, with your interest, we hope to review and evaluate all the rarities in the book field, such as Colonel David H. Keller's "The Sign of the Burning Hart," printed in English in France in an edition of only 100 copies, 1938. (One chapter of this, the only bit of writing Colonel Keller ever submitted to a "slick" magazine, was accepted by "Harper's," but returned after the Good Doctor refused to dissect or explain its beautiful heart—comparable only to tearing off the petals of a rose for a scientific thesis!)

Besides the more publicized rarities, such as the "Worm Ouroboros," we also want to tell of such items as "The Book of Jade," "A Voyage to Arcturus," and James Whitcomb Riley's "The Flying Islands of the Night," the large-size 1913 edition, with full-cover plates by Franklin Booth, our prize discovery of last year.

We also want to sort of "unmask" such books as Ben Hecht's "Fantazius Mallare," and sequel, (1922, edition of 2025), with their grotesque imaginings, going beyond those of that early German silent movie, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," (reshown at Rochester's Eastman or Dryden Theatre last year.)

Strangely enough, the out-of-this-world, Freudian, but sterile phatasms created in the mind of Mallare, a companioned recluse, (a worshipping gypsy girl), reminded me of Jack London's "When God Laughs," where a married couple try to live in the springtime of highest bliss by never going beyond the platonic state of anticipation. But Jack Londan presented the idea in a clear and honest fashion, without Ben Hecht's madly irreverent style. It hardly seemed the same Ben Hecht, movie script writer, who wrote so pleasingly about the last days of his friend, of the theatre, Lionel Barrymore.

Articles About Science-Fantasy

Another facet of this interest in imaginative literature is a special collection of articles **about** science-fiction or fantasy, from periodicals such as "The Saturday Review of Literature," "Scientific Monthly," "Writer's Digest," "Theatre Arts," "American Scholar," "Photography," "Nation's Business," etc., also in college, literary and foreign publications. There have also been books on the subject, such as Professor J. O. Bailey's "Pilgrims Through Space and Time," (Argus, 1947), Reginald Bretnor's Symposium, "Modern Science-Fiction," (Coward-McCann, 1953), books dissecting the Utopian novels as well as prefaces about science-fiction in most of the anthologies.

The Fan Magazines

There is also the forbidding* field of **thousands** of non-professional, amateur, and semi-professional magazines, usually referred to as fan magazines or "fanzines," which have been published in every conceivable way, from carbon-copy or hectograph to lithographed or printed form, an indication of interest and enthusiasm seldom found anywhere else. In order of activity, the United States leads by far, followed by Great Britain, Australia and Canada, respectively.

*I say "forbidding" because no one could hope to have a complete collection of all the fan magazines that have been published, (a few being no more than carbon-copied pages). It is even difficult to secure all of those being currently issued because of the high "activity requirements" of at least one amateur press association, the "subscription by invitation only" so-called exclusiveness of some "fanzine" editors, (something we never had to contend with in the beginning; "Golden Atom," you may be sure, will always welcome all orders and subscriptions), and the complete obscurity of others.

Some fans even have their own individual ideas about what is meant by "fanning," to which they would have all conform, putting everyone in a niche, so to speak, which often doesn't consist of much more than being "in the know" about such terms as fen, (the plural), femme, (girl fans), neofan, (a novice), Slan, (term, "mutant," as applied to a fan), Slen, (plural), ayjay (the amateur press), BRE, (British reprint edition of any magazine), con, (convention), and, Oh yes, Lylda, too!

With the encroachment of a rather metallic sophistication, there are a decreasing number of newsstand magazines which either review the fan magazines or at least give a helpful notice of them. Those which still have a heart in this respect, and to which interested readers should give thanks, are "Other Worlds Science Stories," "Imagination, Stories of Science and Fantasy," "Future Science Fiction," "Science Fiction Quarterly," "Amazing Stories," "Startling Stories," and "Dynamic Science Fiction." There is also an occasional reference to them in P. Schuyler Miller's "The Reference Library" department in "Astounding Science Fiction."

Most fan magazines are published by individuals, many by clubs, and there would also be two major sub-divisions, first, for the amateur press association in the field, the first of which, the FAPA, began in 1937, (as an original idea of New York fans, such as Donald A. Wollheim, who, along with "Doc" Lowndes, Frederick Pohl and other "Futurians," as they were known at the time, were to become editors of many new magazines in the professional field), and secondly for the various conventions, both here and abroad, one of the very first of which was The First National Science Fiction Convention in Newark, 1938, whose chairman was Sam Moskowitz. The famous character, "Superman," originated in a 1932 fan magazine, called "Science Fiction," mimeographed by Jerry Siegal and Joe Schuster, of Cleveland.

Three excellent photo-lithographed "Fanzines" which have been around long enough to show signs of continuing are the bimonthly "Fantasy Advertiser," of Glendale, California, the quarterly "Fantastic Worlds," of Stockton, California, and "Destiny," of Portland, Oregon, the latter edited jointly by Jim Bradley, of Portland, and Earl Kemp, of Chicago.

One of the most promising of all, which only lasted four issues, due to the great expense, (Almost all fanzines are personally financed), was "The Journal of Science-Fiction," by Charles Freudenthal and Edward Wood, of Chicago. Third and fourth issues featured a 1951 and 1952 Magazine Index, respectively; in addition, the fourth had photographs taken at the Tenth Anniversary World Science Fiction Convention held in Chicago in August and September, 1952. (The 1953 Index has been published by "Destiny"; the Thirteenth World Convention is being held in Cleveland this year.) One sentence in "The Journal's" last editorial is especially worthy of attention: "The cynical transformation of science fiction from a literature of ideas into a literature of style is just about complete"; however, it ended on a note of faith for science fiction as "more than a sub-literature" and as "an art form of the highest importance."

Also photo-lithographed are Graham B. Stone's "Science Fiction News," of Sydney, Australia, and every so often, James V. Taurasi's "Fantasy Times," of Flushing, N. Y.

The titles of many of today's professional newsstand magazines were originally fan magazine titles, names such as "Imagination," "Fantastic," "Galaxy," etc., (originally, Los Angeles, Rochester and Denver). Even "Spaceway" may be a title suggested by Harry Warner's original "Spaceways," of Hagerstown, Maryland. There should be at least credit given!

First of the Non-Professionals

General opinion has it that the first of these fan or non-professional magazines appeared in 1930, although someone points out to a leaflet of 1929, which consisted of no more than a list of science correspondence club members! The earliest were actually that, publications of science correspondence clubs, which had been suggested in the readers' departments of the Gernsback magazines. But from all evidence available, the very first fantasy and science-fiction fan magazines of this time were a direct result of the upsurge in interest caused by the first issue of "Astounding Stories of Super-Science," on the newsstands in the latter part of 1929. (Refer to the letters of Allen Glasser, who was to edit the very earliest of these.) But actually, it was several years before this when the very first non-commercial magazine of this nature first appeared, W. Paul Cook's superb "The Recluse," of 1927, described elsewhere in this issue of "Golden Atom," a fact which has nowhere at all been referred to as such!

"The Recluse" was actually the first fulfillment of the original "Lovecraft Circle" and its writing activities, which was later on to be a hobby within the hobby of "fandom." It is actually, to the world of fandom what "The Thrill Book" is to the entire field. Earliest beginnings of the Lovecraft circle, which included Clark Ashton Smith, Frank Belknap Long, Jr., Benjamin DeCasseres, Samuel Loveman and others, (at one time associated in the Kalen Club of New York), can be traced back to tid bits in the old "Overland Monthly" magazine, United Amateur Press publications, "Argosy" letter sections, stories in "The Black Cat Magazine," items in the "Home Brew," (before its change of name to "High Life," in 1923, a professional magazine started by a United Press member), (early amateur press members included Charles Scribner, and Cyrus H. K. Curtis, founder of "The Saturday Evening Post"), and as far back at Michael Monahan's "The Papyrus," of 1903-14, one of the most widely circulated little magazines of that time.

Donald B. Day's "INDEX"

Probably the most worthwhile item to originate in fandom was the "Index to the Science-Fiction Magazines," 1952, a one-man project, compiled and arranged by Donald B. Day, of Portland, Oregon, an item of inestimable benefit to readers, reviewers, anthologists and collectors, especially since so many recent books consist of reprints from the magazines. But alas, it also sustained the error of a great majority of collectors, who emphasize what they do have, (as should be human!), and began its list with the date of the first issue of "Amazing Stories," April, 1926, so often referred to as the first such magazine. However, considering the extreme rarity of **any** copies of "The Thrill Book," perhaps Don Day should be forgiven for what he did not have available for reference, although there was an index to the poetry in "The Thrill Book" as far back as our tenth issue, which was to precede an ambitious project wherein each story was to rate a detailed synopsis. But in the meantime, a brief summary of this nature appeared in A. Langley Searles' "The Fantasy Commentator," of New York City, glossed over, however, by the outlook of a would-be collector going through the files at the Library of Congress, and so trying to make the least possible of an unattainable!

CONTENTS OF "THE THRILL BOOK"

Many of "The Thrill Book" poems were also in the volumes by Harold Hersey, (notably in "The Singing Flame," another extreme rarity, published when he was a Lieutenant at Fort Hancock, and dedicated to H. L. Mencken), and by Clark Ashton Smith, in his "Ebony and Crystal."

In addition, there has been a reprint of Greye La Spina's "The Wax Doll," in an "Avon Fantasy Reader." This was a poignant child fantasy wherein a little girl is found frozen outside the woodshed where her strict Puritanical parents had put away her doll, "Beloved," frowning on such "sinful levity," but who had apparently come back to play with her cherished possession, denied to her in life.

There was also a reprint of "The Heads of Cerberus," by "Francis Stevens," in book form, (Polaris Press, 1952, established by old-time science-fiction writer, L. A. Eshbach), which has been getting reviews in all the newspapers. This was a social-satire of Philadelphia as "a world of might-be" in the year 2118, by a writer who, to quote from our good friend, Damon Knight, "wrote in the only way good writing is ever done: with joy."

Among the other writers who contributed were Tod Robbins, most notably with "The Bibulous Baby," a fantasy about a man born old who lives his life backwards, a theme later used by F. Scott Fitzgerald, ("The Great Gatsby," "Tender is the Night,"

"This Side of Paradise," etc.), in his "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," ("Tales of the Jazz Age," Scribner's 1922); Charles Fulton Oursler, who later was to turn to more profitable fields with such well-known books as "The Greatest Story Ever Told," recently bought by Twentieth Century-Fox, for two million dollars, the highest price ever paid for a book; Seabury Quinn, with the first of his Jules de Grandin stories, to be so popular in "Weird Tales"; Don Mark Lemon, who had already made history in "The Black Cat" magazine, with his unusual short stories; William Wallace Cook, Frank L. Packard, H. Bedford-Jones, Rupert Hughes, and "Murray Leinster," who was later to write for "The Saturday Evening Post," under his real name of Will F. Jenkins.

Just a mere youth of seventeen, "Leinster" must have been the original heart of science-fiction that has evolved to its present state. "Boy-genius" is the only word I can think of. He must have felt as if he held the world in the palm of his hand at the time, already listened to with respect by old-timers, and following up his initial success, "A Runaway Skyscraper," for Bob Davis' "All-Story Weekly," (written on a bet that he couldn't write a story that would begin with the words, "The whole thing started when the clock on the Metropolitan Tower began to run backwards"!), with such science-fiction as "A Thousand Degrees Below Zero," and "The Silver Menace," for "The Thrill Book."

The Fantasy of Life Itself

(Known Reality as only a Facet of a Clear Awareness That Would Seem Fantasy)

But let us go back to a more general espect of the field, especially for the benefit of you who have, no doubt, considered fantasy as something apart from life.

Actually, is there any fiction which is not fantasy or make-believe? You can be as much of a "realist" as a Joseph Conrad, (even though he did write "The Shadow Line"), and observe that, "Liberty of imagination should be the most precious possession of a novelist." You can gaze at reality to your heart's content, and yet with the clearest observaion you will still see that **life itself is a miracle. Did you ever consider the odds against you yourself ever being born?** Your best plays and movies often seem to be most real and close to one's heart when there is a touch of fantasy, although in practice it is so easy to overdo, unless one is gifted with a trained imagination.

Einstein and Fantasy in Plays and Stories

Think of the great playwrights and what they have written in this genre: Shakespeare's "Hamlet," the most famous play in the world, Shaw's "Back to Methuselah," Ibsen's "Peer Gynt," (for which was composed the immortal "Anitra's Dance")—fantasies, every one of them. Think of the classic children's stories, all of them imbued with a sense of wonder and beginning to hint of that intellectual curiosity or passion for comprehension which Einstein calls "one of the most beautiful things we can experience," "rather common in children, but (which) gets lost in most people later on."

There have been such classics as Frank Baum's "The Wizard of Oz," Carlo Collodi's "Pinocchio," J. M. Barrie's "Peter Pan," Victor Herbert's "Babes In Toyland" and, on a more adult sophisticated level, that fashionable study, "Lady in the Dark."

Your most successful entertainment has this thread of fantasy, (and what of plays and stories whose **effect** is one of fantasy, like the lingering memory of the play, "The Glass Menagerie"?) The big hits are almost always a bit of fantasy, such as at the moment "Damn Yankees," the Faust theme with a baseball setting, (with songs, "You Gotta Have Heart," "Whatever Lola Wants"). There was "The Golden Apple," award winner as the season's best musical, which "Time" described as "a front-porch-and-parlor-version of Homer," and "Ondine," in which the errant water nymph, (Audrey Hepburn), falls in love with a mortal; not to mention a science-fiction play, "The Burning Glass," where the discoverer of the secret of unlimited power for destruction believes that the world is better off "ignorant or innocent," nor the Billy Rose musical, "Orpheus in the Underworld," based on the music of Offenbach, with book by Ben Hecht.

There is also "Kismet," a musical Arabian Nights, and winner of eleven Critics' Awards, ("Stranger in Paradise").

Think of a whole parade of hits: "Brigadoon," (Remember, "Almost Like Being in Love"?), "Finian's Rainbow," a pixy fantasy ("How Are Things in Glocca Morra?"), "The Red Mill," haunted by the ghost of a young bride, ("In Old New York"), Jerome Kern's "The Girl from Utah," epitomized by its "Alice in Wonderland" scene, Cole Porter's musical, "Can-Can," typical of so many others with its "Venus" and "Garden of Eden" ballet numbers, "Peter Pan," "Harvey," "The Green Pastures," (Pulitzer drama winner of 1930, a dramatization of Roark Bradford's "Ol' Man Adam and His Chillun"), the complete version of George Bernard Shaw's "Man and Superman," first to bring the word "superman" into popularity; "R. U. R.," by Karel Capek, which Douglas Mayer's "British Science Fiction Bibliography" of 1937, summed up so nicely: "Factory makes human-like robots—without souls." It was the first to introduce the word robot into the language.

Incidentally, while Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" popularized Puck, (also known in English folklore as Robin Goodfellow), I believe he was the first to introduce Titania, (already used as the title of a fan magazine), Queen of the Fairies and wife of Oberon. The name, Cupid, however, you won't find very often

in fantasy, since, for some strange reason, fantasy hates to be considered as fanciful, although it's all right to use gorgons, or medusas, and beings such as Mercury and Venus, even though they were the parents of Cupid, in Roman mythology!

More Plays, Even Rodgers and Hammerstein

There was "A Connecticut Yankee," from the book, "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," by "Mark Twain," 1889, which Arch Merrill, of our Rochester "Democrat & Chronicle" explains was inspired by a book of the legends of the Round Table which Samuel Clemens picked up in Rochester, while on a lecture tour. I still like to think of the version with Will Rogers. Remember those Rodgers and Hart songs, "Thou Swell," and "My Heart Stood Still," from this musical?

Other plays or musicals were Paul Osborn's dramatization of Lawrence Watkins' "On Borrowed Time," J. B. Priestley's "I Have Been Here Before," Sinclair Lewis' "It Can't Happen Here," John Balderston's "Berkeley Square," inspired by Henry James' unfinished "The Sense of the Past," "Outward Bound," (with Katherine Cornell), Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit," Eugene O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones," Thornton Wilder's zany, "The Skin of Our Teeth," Stephen Vincent Benet's "The Devil and Daniel Webster," (later filmed as "All That Money Can Buy"), and Maxwell Anderson's "The Star-Wagon," (with Burgess Meredith and Lillian Gish), each and every one of them a fantasy.

In addition, one cannot ignore the Rodgers-and-Hammerstein musicals, not when their "reality" is often no more existent, nor less real, than the world of emotions. There was "Carousel," with its youth dreaming of his love and wondering as to its significance in the light of reality and those infinitudes of starry space to which we are the merest of specks. There was "South Pacific," with its weird "Bali Hai" and "Happy Time" numbers, built up into fantasies. There was the initial, tremendous success of "Oklahoma," with it fantastic ballet sequences, which, together with the musical "One Touch of Venus," of that time, (Greek goddess of beauty comes to life), with Mary Martin and Dennis Day, introduced ballet into popular prominence and popularity. (Remember the song from the latter, "Speak Low," with lyrics by Ogden Nash?)

A Brief on Movies

Just the world of motion pictures, (that land of let's pretend!), would provide substance for a book. However, let's try to condense it into a paragraph or so:

Last year we read where Disney appropriated a budget of five million dollars, the largest so far, for his movie, Jules Verne's "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," originally written in 1869; and it was in a "Quick" magazine for December, 1952, where we read that "Dream fantasies have become a must

since **An American in Paris,** a recent Oscar Award winner. Surely it must have occurred to so many of you, that almost every climax of a musical production is a fantasy. (Other more recent examples, "Lilli," and "Daddy Long Legs.") Our tastes also run to such memorable panoramas as "Lost Horizon," 1937, (with Jane Wyatt and Ronald Colman, from the book by James Hilton which introduced the word Shangri-La), and "Things to Come," that still-talked-about British film, from the book by H. G. Wells, or for sheer melodrama (we're not dead yet!), the ever resurrected "King Kong," 1935, (with Fay Wray), and its sequel "The Son of Kong," adventure reminiscent of the stories in the original (Clayton) "Astounding Stories."

There was "Spellbound," with dream sequences by Dali.

Then, of course, we have comedies and such heartwarming stories as "It's a Wonderful Life," in which James Stewart was granted the wish of seeing how his town would have been if he had never been born!

The average "monster" or "Thing from Space" flickers are usually made to appeal to the younger set only, and even they often find them almost as comical as a Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis show. Such a "science-fact" picture as "Destination Moon," however, from all accounts, does much to redeem the name of science-fiction, while even a ("deep blue"!) space melodrama, such as "This Island Earth," can be expertly contrived.

But for sheer entertainment values, recall the reactions evoked by such comedies as J. Arthur Rank's "Genevieve" and (our all-time hilarious favorite), "Theodora Goes Wild"; and then compare them with the ultimate recollections of such ghostly fare as the film version of "Topper" or "Harvey." We suspect, however, that the best along the comedy line in fantasy could be represented by such a theme as the youth formula discovered in Howard Hawks' "Monkey Business," which also had an effervescence by the name of Marilyn Monroe.

But actually, with a wide awareness, almost every downtown hit is seen to be connected with the fantasy world in some way. For example, "The Glenn Miller Story" reminded us of the popularity of dance bands when our "Golden Atom" was first being published. "The Last Time I Saw Paris" was to us a sample of F. Scott Fitzgerald's non-fantasies; likewise with Stephen Vincent Benet and his story filmed as "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." Then there was a Sunday's entertainment, "Living It Up," with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis, from a script by Ben Hecht; and we connect show people variously: Eleanor Holm, (Billy Rose), Buff Cobb, daughter of Irvin S. Cobb who also wrote starring vehicles for Will Rogers, etc.

Science-Fiction in Colleges and Religion

Another indication of the tremendous new popularity of science-fiction is in its appearance in periodicals where one would not expect to find it, such as religious magazines: "Extension," (with "Crisis in the Cosmos"), "St. Anthony's Messenger," (with "The Unrecorded One"), and "The Christian Advocate," (with "One Hundred Years From Now," wherein bishops of that era try to spread the belief on Mars).

It is even being recognized in universities, aside from College Readers containing such stories as E. M. Forster's "The Machine Stops," Karel Capek's "R. U. R.," and chapters from Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World." In at least two instances, it has been used to obtain a degree: J. O. Bailey, University of North Carolina, Ph.D.; and Paul Skeeters, University of Southern California, Master's Degree.

Our old-time friend, Sam Moskowitz, "Golden Atom" contributor of over a decade ago, and Robert Frazier, science editor of "Parade," are teaching a course in science-fiction writing at City College, New York City.

Writers under various pseudonyms, include Professor Eric Temple Bell, ("John Taine"), of the Cal. Inst. of Tech., R. S. Richardson, ("Philip Latham"), of Mt. Wilson Observatory, and our own Professor Hyman Plotzik, ("Anaximander Powell"), of the University of Rochester, who was recently awarded a fellowship by Ford Foundation for a year's study at Yale, which he will devote to the influence of science on the language of literature and poetry.

Carl Carmer, author of "Stars Fell on Alabama," and former professor at the University of Rochester, is now in the field, as editor of an admirable series of science-fiction books, of high school level for the Winston Company of Phiadelphia. (We are also proud to say that he has promised to write for "Golden Atom" soon.)

Recognition by Popular Celebrities

We even find celebrities in the entertainment world, such as Eva Gabor, Gladys Swarthout, Guy Lombardo and Jane Pickens, getting enthusiastic about science-fiction and lending their names to advertisements where they speak of it as "mature adventure," "wonderful education," or "magnificent escape from . . . all inner tensions." This latter seems to be a recent development with the coming of the slick-looking "Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction" into the picture, although John Payne, (who has also written under a pseudonym), has long had a large collection dating back to 1926, and Cecil B. DeMille's son has written science-fiction for "Astounding."

Up until recently, fans used to point to the high I. Q. of readers of "Astounding Science Fiction."—engineers, chemists, analysts, statesmen, astronomers, educators—the highest of any segment of the magazine reading public. But then, just two decades ago, fans were just as proud of the fact that every editor of "The Big Three" of the time, (Editors Sloane, Tremaine, and Gernsback) was important enough to be in "Who's Who," on his own right.

Local Events in Science-Fiction

However, we better end our "getting up to date" reminiscences, although we still feel that we have hardly begun! I haven't even started to mention the great amount of science-fiction activity in Rochester in the last 2 years, which even included science-fiction musicals at both the womens' and mens' campuses, a pre-Broadway tryout of our Arena Theatre's first musical, "Solomon Grundy," a fantasy, if you haven't already guessed, "Youth Week" celebration with an outdoor performance of "Brigadoon," at Genesee Valley Park, old science-fiction movies at the Eastman House, or Dryden Theatre, events at the nearby Sampson Air Base, etc. We might even mention the Rochester Futurama and the Da Vinci display, even if not strictly within the subject! There have been really big years for fantasy and science-fiction in Rochester, though **nowhere at all** commented upon!, and I would like to bring you up to date on this phase of interest in our next issue.

WHAT'S COOKING

Future issues will also have much that could not be included in the first part of this article, due to its very length. I hope you will agree that a description of the field from this personal viewpoint is the best way to transmit an idea of the original attraction of science-fiction to one reading about it for the first time.

As it is, we have had to leave out a chapter about a tremendous treasure trove in Buffalo, which Elmer Weinman and I could never forget, in connection with those early days. We also had to leave out a review of the Munsey magazines, their "Differents," as chosen by "Bob" Davis, the "Blue Book" stories, (such as "When Worlds Collide," later made into a movie), and the legendary rarities in the book field. There were chapters about science-fiction and fantasy in radio, television, music, operas, paintings, sculpture and as a part of life in general.

There was also a chapter on fallacies in science-fiction, sex in the guise of science fiction, especially as presented in the writings of Philip Jose Farmer. There was more by Colonel David H. Keller in discussing the psychological values and possibilities in science-fiction, such as "the scientific approach to infancy."

But my main hope for future issues will be to write much less of the material and, if possible, to merely "edit" "Golden Atom." This time we had to show our hopes and plans, so to speak.

You may be sure that we will look forward to reading any story or article which those of you who write would consider suitable or attractive in these pages. Our agreement will be your acceptance. We also pay modest rates for accepted material, (even though in "Golden Atom's" original existence, when there was no payment, except a copy of the issue, we consistently received twice as much material as could possibly be used.) Except for orders, of course, please give me an extra week or two to reply, since this entire project is being launched without any outside help, (outside of your enthusiasm and well wishes!).

Material need not be restricted to science-fiction or fantasy; interest and human appeal is our primary consideration. (See such items as "Personality Portraits," "Our Pin-Up Model," and our reprint, "First Love," in this issue, as an example.) We have our eye on some truly outstanding artwork for future issues, but in addition, humor and cartoons are also welcome.

The Real Reason for "Lylda"

But let us not delay any longer in presenting an article which the science-fiction world will refer to for years to come, (something fabulous as "fandom" goes!), Harold Hersey's memorable, masterful, "Looking Backward Into the Future," which has been the real reason for our continuation. We may have had all those wonderful enthusiastic letters, such as appear in our "Pics and Kies" department. We may have had all those gifts of entire collections, easily going into market value at a thousand dollars. But it was Harold Hersey's article which was the spur and the big incentive to us.

It is an item which appears so important—**(to think that I used to look at the New York City skyline when working for Scribner's in 1942, wondering where Harold Hersey could be, then discovered his whereabouts all unexpectedly ten years afterwards, when a letter of mine complaining about the non-appearance of a magazine called "Melodyland" was answered by a communication signed by none other than him!)** —that it seems payment enough for the time I've spent in trying to trace all science-fiction back to its source!

LOOKING BACKWARD INTO THE FUTURE

By **HAROLD HERSEY**

(With an addenda by F. Orlin Tremaine)

Harold Hersey was the first editor of the first science-fiction magazine ever to be published anywhere in the world: "The Thrill Book." And here, except for what he had to say briefly in "Pulpwood Editor," (Stokes, 1937), is the first complete, detailed account he has written about this Street & Smith Magazine, 1919, as well as the part he played in laying the groundwork for Clayton's "Astounding Stories," 1930, and the publishing of "Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories," 1931.

First issues of "The Thrill Book," (1919), and "Amazing Stories," (1926), cradled by a wealth of other firsts, including England's "Scoops," (1934), "Tales of Wonder," (1937), "New Worlds," (1946), and Australia's "Thrills," (1950). Bottom line on "Startling Stories," (1939), tells of an article about Einstein. Fourth line on "Famous Fantasic Mysteries" reads, "Cummings . . . The Girl in the Golden Atom." This was the long awaited Munsey reprint magazine which, coincidentally, appeared at the same time as the first issue of our own prewar "Golden Atom" in 1939.)

Let's start off by dealing with first things first—at least, insofar as I am concerned.

If it hadn't been for the sympathetic yet nonetheless persistent efforts of my friends, Larry and Lou Farsace, I might never have reached that "point of no return" where my conscience now forces me to transpose or, if you prefer, to translate into words, my early magazine activities in the field of science fantasy fiction.

What held me back for so long from writing about my experiences as the editor of the original science-fiction and fantasy magazine, "The Thrill Book," (four years ahead of "Weird Tales," 1923, seven years before "Amazing Stories," 1926), as part-originator of "Astounding Stories," (with William Clayton), and as publisher of "Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories," was the fact that I feared there would be too many "holes" in it... Curiously enough, one needs facts even in the realms of fantasy, when it comes to telling the inside story of those far-off and bygone days. I, unfortunately, had not kept many notes. Nor, for that matter, had I held on to copies of "The Thrill Book" and the other two science-fiction magazines with which I had been associated.

In addition, I was uncertain, until Larry convinced me to the contrary, that what I had to say would be of interest to present-day readers, or provide worthwhile information that would be of service in the future to students of what has come to be recognized as a significant phase of our literature. In the place of the unknown, impossible-to-determine number of enthusiasts that William Ralston, then Circulation Manager of Street & Smith, had to gamble on in launching "The Thrill Book" back in 1919, we now have millions of readers of science fiction magazines and books and, heaven only knows, how vast an audience of similar radio and television programs. H. H. Holmes, editor of "Fantasy and Science Fiction," when he reviewed "The Exploration of Space," by Arthur C. Clarke, for the book section of the "New York Herald Tribune," on July 13, 1952, speaks of "the widening popularity of science fiction, once the possession of an intense but small group which was not surprised by the atom bomb, now the entertainment of millions of readers who will not be too surprised to look up and see a space station in the sky."*

*Though in his early thirties, Arthur C. Clarke is chairman of the British Interplanetary Society and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. His popular science articles have appeared in such magazines as "Holiday." However, many "Golden Atom" readers will recall him as one of the most promising of the English fans, who wrote such articles as "Science Fiction for Beginners," for the January, 1938 issue of "The British Scientifiction Fantasy Review," when he was on a one-man campaign to popularize science-fiction! He was later to write one of our favorite "science-fantasies," "Against the Fall of Night," later reprinted in book form.

Without the letter from Larry, first suggesting and then egging me on to reminisce about my past editorial experiences with science-fiction magazines and, in particular, the accurate outline of past events, listing of contributors, dates, etc., that he so painstakingly prepared for my use, I would never have attempted to do this article. I had forgotten so many incidents and individuals I'd once known but, alas, for so short a time! With Larry's outline beside me as I began making notations of my own, and aided by the well-known association of ideas, I turned my mind into a spotlight back on the past. Slowly but surely, there emerged from the shadows many a face, many an episode that might never have occurred to me.

One can so easily become trapped into making the same mistakes that typify even the classic perfectionists in the art of autobiography. To have neglected or ignored the right people in the right places and times might lend a superficial aspect to what must be fundamentally accurate.

Another thing I wanted to avoid was the self-conscious overwriting of my part in the drama of bygone days. Too often, the autobiographer tends to glorify himself. He may have had only a line or two to speak, but to hear him tell it you'd think his was a leading role. The spear carriers are legion who, in their anecdotage, when given the privilege of the printed page, have made stars of themselves. I felt I must reset the stage as it actually was, not as seen through the mists of one's unsubstantiated memory. Above all, I must not fail in giving credit to those who worked with me and inspired me.

Without Larry's knowledge of the history of science-fiction—greater than that of any man I know—and without the constant realization that he would go over my manuscript before it was published, I most certainly would have hesitated before committing anything to paper.

And yet, in so many ways, we know as little about the past as we do about the future. Only the present is clear to us, and then only to the extent to which we are able to objectify ourselves. No general inferences can be drawn that will guarantee the trustworthiness of the observer. The two proverbial witnesses can see the same accident at the same time and each of them come away from it with a different idea of what happened.

Sentiment, self-pity, faith (or the lack of it), fear and the other complex emotional elements in human character distort and obscure both the past and the present. And as for the future, except for a few writers of science fantasy fiction, no one has projected himself into the future with any degree of accuracy. The so-called "soothsayers" have talked out of both sides of their mouths so that their predictions can be interpreted in different ways to suit

different generations. Even the weatherman's guess as to what will happen tomorrow is no better than yours or mine.

I once asked my friend, Eugene Higgins, the painter, what he remembered from the eleven obscure years he spent in Paris. This was in 1916, long before his paintings and etchings were bought by dealers, collectors and such museums as the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Said he: "All that I recall are the good meals I had once in a while."

Unlike Eugene, I remember some of the bad meals as well as the good. I would not choose to relive one single day out of the past as did Cabell's "Jurgen." I have lived a full life. The world owes me nothing. But I am a bit uncertain as to whether or not I owe something to the world. It was Larry, for instance, who convinced me that I owe something to one of the magazine worlds that I've lived in and out of! Others, especially of late, have urged me to record some of my memories of editing and publishing almost 200 magazines, and those I have contributed to through the years. But, alas! I don't know any Larrys who will look over my shoulder as I write about this varied assortment of periodicals.

It has been 51 years since my first effort appeared in "The Manila Gossip, I was eleven then. It has been 46 years from my first magazine to the one I am now editing; 43 years since the first of my 18 published books were issued; 25 years since I came to New York. Part of my story has already been told, my experiences with the "pulps" as told in "Pulpwood Editor," (Stokes, 1937). With or without a Larry I suppose I'll gather up my courage in due course and put down my memories of the "slicks" I've edited or published; the excitement of being the managing editor of "The Birth Control Review," (1922), and working with Margaret Sanger in the pioneering days of 1916 to 1921; the fun I got out of launching the first of the Greenwich Village magazines, "The Quill," with Arthur Moss, the business manager, back in 1917; recording in greater detail the period when I took over Charles Fulton Oursler's job as Supervising Editor of all the Macfadden Publications in 1926; the years when I had my own string of periodicals, the Hersey Magazines, as they were called; the depression when I edited and wrote entire issues of such magazines as "The Forgotten Man," "The American Autopsy," etc., and having to walk back and forth to the printer after selling my Pierce Arrow car and giving up my New York penthouse apartment. God willing, I'll get around to writing these and many another chapter in what has truly been an exciting and vari-colored life of one ink-stained wretch who never knew any better and never wanted it in any other way.

I deem myself most fortunate in having had a father who encouraged a natural interest in literature by telling me the stories

written by the immortals some time before the average lad between eight and thirteen years of age reads them on his own initiative. He also made up stories from the whole cloth of his rich imagination that was always equally graced by a keen sense of humor. Some of them were told in serial form as I trudged along, clinging to his hand, while we took long walks through the streets of New Orleans, Mexico City, San Francisco, Honolulu, Manila, Shanghai and New York. These are but a few of the places we visited. I was often left to my own resources, while he covered an assignment as a roving newspaper correspondent. Once, to my acute embarrassment, he left me in Canton, where, not being able to speak the language, I was unable to ask the way to the bathroom.

My father had left Maine and gone to Montana (where I was born), back in the Seventies. He had been a reporter for "The Anaconda Standard;" he also published a weekly newspaper and worked in the Press Gallery of the House of Representatives in Washington. He died in 1907.

Among the stories my father told me were those of Jules Verne. Even at this late date I recall with vivid intensity the thrill I got from listening to the tales written by this amazing man. Another memory of this period, 1905, was seeing that early classic of the screen, "A Trip to the Moon," in Manila. It wasn't until later that I read H. G. Wells and still later met him on one of his visits to the United States. Poe, Fitz-James O'Brien, and others gifted with towering imaginations and the rare ability for putting their fancies into words, were as well known to me in my childhood as are the comics to the youngsters of today. That first story of mine published in the Orient; the first story I sold to a national periodical, ("Young's Magazine"), and also much of my early verse which appeared in the old "Smart Set," etc., were practically all written after the manner—but by no means the literary style—of the masters of fantasy and horror. And during my days in the Library of Congress, I avidly read the translations (never having been a linguist) from the French and German writers who had been influenced by Poe and Jules Verne. I was a devoted reader of "The Black Cat," a magazine that published the unusual, the off-the-beaten-track kind of story.

In 1919, in collaboration with Milo Hastings, who used the pseudonym of "Dan Spain," I tried out my inexperienced hand in the field of what was then called a "futuristic" novel. This was my first and last venture in writing a novel of this type. It was titled, "The Book of Gud." It appeared in "Main Street Magazine," complete, in the July, 1929, issue. It dealt with the adventures of a god in whom nobody believed and started on the day

after eternity ended. I was living on West 11th Street in Greenwich Village. Milo had rented the two back rooms of my apartment and was working with Billy Rose on some sort of stock market deal which, I might add, didn't end successfully. It was from this get-rich-quick effort that the then William Rosenberg turned to Tin Pan Alley, changed his name to Billy Rose and wrote the first of many popular songs. As a result of this accidental meeting of 3 quite different minds, the story sounded much better when Billy Rose sat in some of the conferences that Milo and I held preparatory to the writing of each chapter. Billy Rose was right when he said, "You fellows have an idea that's too big for your talents."* He was right. Although this novel contains some excellent material, it was, I am sorry to say, a failure.

It should be noted here that fantasy and horror were two of many topics that I wrote about in my literary salad days. In fact, some of my published work in prose or verse, and my editorial interests, have been along other lines. One of my ten volumes of verse, "Night," which attained the dignity of a second edition twenty years after the first, and issued by the same publisher, was illustrated by forty-four full page drawings by Elliott Dold. This truly inspired and highly imaginative artist contributed some of his finest work to my magazine, "Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories." And the work he did for other periodicals in this field of fiction was always of the highest order. He and his brother, Douglas Dold, the writer, were true pioneers in science fiction. Along with Murray Leinster, Victor Rousseau, Bob Olsen, L. A. Eshbach, (Now publisher, "Polaris Press," Ed.), J. C. Kofoed, Tod Robbins and many others, they deserve the undying gratitude of every science fiction reader for their daring experiments in the days when there was only a limited public and the rates for magazine material were much, much smaller and more uncertain than they are today.

*Of course, most everyone has heard of Billy Rose, well-known columnist, showman and lyricist, ("That Old Gang of Mine," 1923, "Me and My Shadow," 1927), who brought to the vocabulary such terms as his "long-stemmed American Beauties," his "Diamond Horseshoe," and whose Music Hall of the '30s helped in the rise of such bands as Benny Goodman, and whom so very few people know wrote the first singing commercial.

Some day we may give his interesting comments on science-fiction, a rather humorous episode, when his (now ex-) wife, Eleanor (Holm) was spring cleaning and tossing out everything, including his science-fiction magazines; and his review of J. O. Bailey's "Pilgrims Through Space and Time," a book referred to in our introductory article. One of his little stories also appeared in a leading fantasy magazine.

(The very number of songs for which he wrote the lyrics is surprising. They also include "Barney Google," "Rainbow Round My Shoulder," "I Found a Million Dollar Baby," "You've Got to See Mama Every Night," "It's Only a Paper Moon," "I Wanna Be Loved," "The Night is Young and You're So Beautiful," and Vincent Youman's "More Than You Know," "Without a Song" and "Great Day.")

Milo Hastings was actually the one who set my mind on fire back in 1919 with the possibilities of the science fiction theme in literature. Milo's enthusiasm for what he called "pseudo-science" or "futuristic" fiction was irresistable. Believe it or not, a novel of his about the Germany of the future, was published serially in the first issues of "True Story," 1919. ("The City of Endless Night," reprinted as a book by Dodd, Mead, 1920. Ed.)

It was the quality and quantity of thought along incredible but believable lines of these science-fiction writers that fascinated me so when I edited "The Thrill Book," etc. The wide horizons of their fancy; their power to invoke a sense of reality from the seemingly impossible; their ingenuity; the smooth way they handled their subject matter. . . it all aroused a respect in me for their ability that has never diminished.

I have known many talented writers, even a few men of genius. As I said in "Pulpwood Editor," "Genius usually comes from the middle stratum of society, but it is always a traitor to its class; talent may come from any class—it is always true to its class." If I were to list the writers I've met who displayed the earmarks of genius upon occasion, or the men of talent, ditto, it would only lead to endless controversy. Anyway I have no desire to hurt anyone by failing to include them in such a tentative listing. Just as I have steadfastly refused to name the many writers I've "discovered" or encouraged in their early days, so do I feel it to be unnecessary for me to assume a God-like superiority as a critic. What I can say, however, with an easy conscience, is that I've met at least more than one man of genius in the world of science-fiction and more talented writers in this than in most of the other worlds of fiction that I've lived in—editorially speaking— during my forty-seven years of being connected with the printed page.

THE THRILL BOOK

It was Christmas night, 1918. I had come back to New York with some personally valuable precious documents in my duffel bag: One was a bit of paper that stated in clear, unmistakable terms that I had just been Honorably Discharged as a First Lieutenant at Jackson Barracks in New Orleans; the other was a scrapbook containing the verse I had written since Roderic C. Penfield published "The Singing Flame," dedicated to H. L. Mencken. Most of these verses had already been printed while I was in service early in 1917. Within a few months they were to appear in book form over the imprint of the Britton Publishing Co., under the title, "Gestures in Ivory."

My last three months in the Army had not been unpleasant. I had welcomed my transfer to the city where I had spent the year 1903 with my father. We had left there in 1904 to go to the Orient, via Atlanta and the St. Louis World's Fair. In New Orleans, I had heard the first of the great jazzmen, without any idea, of course, that they were making musical history. Years later, when I was co-editor with Art Hodes of "The Jazz Record," it was my good privilege to get to know "Pops" Foster and other oldtimers I had listened to as a foot-loose boy of ten, when I hung around places where we youngsters weren't supposed to go and accompanied my father on many a riverboat excursion.

But, by and large, I hadn't enjoyed military life either as a volunteer in the ranks or as an officer. The train bringing me back to Patchin Place in Greenwich Village seemed to move at a snail's pace. I was restless, eager to see the little blind alley of Tenth Street where I hoped that Mrs. Wedesweiler, the self-styled "concierge," would let me have an apartment again. As it turned out, she did have a vacancy, and told me I could move in within a few days.

It is unfortunate how publicity can often obscure facts. "The Thrill Book" appeared on the newsstands in 1919, created a world of wonder, and vanished. . . "Amazing Stories" came along in 1926, and remained, a fact insuring reference to itself as the first such magazine. But truth will out eventually, although it might take a golden atom to do it!

As Harold wrote recently: Heard on 'Author Meets the Critics' TV program, last night, (with Clark, the writer, Al Capp and Professor), the same solid line: that science-fiction magazines had their original start in 1925. Rather imagine that when 'Golden Atom' appears, this should set at rest a persistently stubborn idea."

We can only give out with the light as we see it!

Events moved swiftly once I was in New York. I only stayed in Patchin a few months, moving over to West 11th Street. Harry Kemp and a succession of other poets, writers, artists and musicians have made their home in Patchin Place. Richard ("Dick") Wright, for so many, many years the editor of "House and Garden," called us the Patchinese. When Mrs. Wedesweiler died, her funeral was attended by many a well-known who has won fame, or fortune, or both, since the days when they found it difficult to even pay her the rent of $11.00 per month.

On that Christmas night of 1918, I also carried some letters in my luggage from Theodore Dreiser, a close friend of those days.* He had visited me when I was stationed at Fort Hancock, N. J. We had talked over plans to organize a militant league of writers, painters, composers and others in the world of the Seven Arts. Having worked with H. L. Mencken in 1916, to circulate a petition against the suppression of Dreiser's "The Genius," signed by practically all of the famous creative minds here and abroad, and having been associated with Margaret Sanger's Birth Control movement, I was all for starting a crusade against the moralists.,

And there were more letters from Bohemian friends who had contributed to "The Quill," the first of the Greenwich Village magazines launched by Arthur Moss and myself in 1917. As the saying goes, I had countless irons in the fire. The one thing I had not counted on was the element of chance, especially the old quirk of fortune that was to find me editing the original science fantasy magazine, "The Thrill Book," three months after my return to New York!

The ambitious idea of forming a militant league came to nothing. Dreiser and I held various meetings in his apartment on West 10th; Frank Harris, famous author of many books, kept us up late at his place at No. 3 Washington Square North, while he paced the floor and delivered his eternal monologies**; Robert Henri, George Bellows, George Luks and Kenneth Miller, representing the artists' contingent, did much to help, as did Nina Wilcox Putnam and a host of others, but the militant league idea soon petered out. Although I wrote an account of it for a magazine and felt disappointed at the time, I soon declared that The Authors League of America, (where I had served as assistant to the Secretary, Eric Schuler, early in 1916), was and still is doing the job of representing the creative mind much better than any wild-eyed society such as Dreiser and I had tried to organize. When it comes to

*I have also found several references to Theodore Dreiser, famous for his "An American Tragedy," (filmed recently as "A Place in the Sun"), award-winning movie of 1951, as an author of fantastic fiction. His brother, Paul Dresser, (Dreiser was a later name), wrote such songs as "My Gal Sal," and "On the Banks of the Wabash."

**Just as "Bob" Davis discovered "Murray Leinster," Austin Hall, A. Merritt and Ray Cummings for the Munsey Company, so too, in an earlier day, Frank Harris discovered such authors as H. G. Wells, a fact seemingly unknown in science-fiction circles, when he first made a name for himself in England, with his "Saturday Review" and the earlier "Fortnightly Review," years before he came to America, to make something outstanding out of "Pearson's Magazine," becoming, under his editorship, probably the most literary newsstand magazine ever published, with articles and stories by or about such authors as Shaw, Kipling, Hardy, Wilde, Swinburne, (Joaquin) Miller, Conrad, Riley, Dowson, Verlaine, (W. H.) Hudson and Jack London.

writing my story in full, I shall be proud to tell how the Authors League once helped me at a time of great emergency.

I have long since given up wondering about the element of chance that has governed so much of my editorial career. It was Lewis Gannett who remarked during his review of my book, "Pulpwood Editor," in the New York Herald-Tribune," that I was "one of the formative minds of my age, or else had a remarkable talent for picking up new jobs rapidly when old ones failed." This came about because of the many and varied magazines I have edited; to date, almost 200 in all!

That Christmas night of 1918 is one of my most poignant memories. Its very hour, until I went to bed at the Brevoort Hotel, had been filled with meeting old friends and acquaintances, visiting favorite eating places and wandering the streets of Greenwich Village, then a very important place in my youthful imagination.

One disappointment marred this long-looked-for occasion. The lady who had written me so often and at such fulsome length, telling me how she lived only for the day of my return, answered my knock at her door by opening it just wide enough to see who it was, and screaming as she hastily closed it again. That I felt extremely sorry for myself, knowing she was not alone, goes without saying.

In the cold, gray dawns of many a morning thereafter—although I had a lot of fun accomplishing precisely nothing in respect to the militant organization Dreiser and I had hoped to form— I found myself facing the age-old problem of how to earn a living. Mr. Gallup was as hospitable as ever. I had worked at his restaurant on Greenwich Avenue back in 1916, typing menus to pay for meals. There I had met Fred Booth, (author of the famous story, "Supers"), Harry Kemp, the poet, Achmed Abdullah, the writer,* Arthur Wilson, (now a painter with a studio in Carnegie Hall), James Waldo Fawcett, John Reed, William Sanger, (Margaret's first husband), and countless others, most of them forgotten now. Bu I didn't feel as though I wanted to follow the same hit-or-miss career, even though the Britton Publishing Company had accepted my book of verse, "Gestures in Ivory," and I was selling verse and

*Achmed Abdullah, a prolific writer, also wrote many fantasy adventure tales for the early Munsey magazines; he was later to have plays produced on Broadway by David Belasco, Al Woods and the Shuberts, and to achieve fame in Hollywood with "The Thief of Bagdad" and "Lives of a Bengal Lancer." But I'm sure very few people would know that Achmed, (Beloved) Abdullah, (slave of Allah), was the son of a Grand Duke, second cousin of Czar Nicholas II of Russia, and the Princess Nurmahal, daughter of the Amir of Afghanistan, or that he died a convert, having been married again at the age of 59 to a Cleveland girl who had told him, (American Weekly, August 12, 1945), "a month with you is better than a lifetime with any other man."

stories to various magazines edited by Courtland Young, Robert ("Bob") Davis, etc. Something had happened to all of us. Bohemia had lost much of its charm. As Emerson has said, "He who seeks the wealth of the Indies must carry the wealth of the Indies with him." And Bohemia exists only in our minds, in what we bring to it. Two years were to pass before I became Managing Editor of Margaret Sanger's "Birth Control Review." All I could do in early 1919 was serve her and the cause on a volunteer basis. This I did, of course, but here as elsewhere—regardless of the financial return—I came face to face with changes deep within me that had occurred during the War. Eventually, I would return to much that I then thrust aside in one of those restless, ruthless moods of youth. In the meanwhile, I wanted just a plain job with a regular weekly salary, on a magazine, preferably, but if such was not to be, any job would do.

I hadn't an idea the day I met Walter Adolph Roberts, then editing "Ainslee's Magazine," over at Margaret Sanger's home on West 14th Street, of the sort of magazine for which I'd like to work. Certainly, I didn't envision myself as the editor in charge of a national publication of any sort. The job of assistant, or reader, was about all I could expect, and even this possibility seemed more like a dream than a reality. I would be 26 years old in a few weeks. Everyone, that Saturday afternoon, appeared so confident, so sure of themselves. Fresh out of the Army, with no feeling of security in this after-the-war period, and so many men much better equipped than I was, getting out of uniform day by day, I remember smiling somewhat foolishly when Margaret introduced me to Roberts, saying that she felt sure I would make a good editor if I had an opportunity to prove it.

"Ainslee's," to my way of thinking, was an exception to the general run of magazines. Roberts was publishing the early work of Edna St. Vincent Millay and other poets, as well as the work of many excellent short story writers. Under his guidance, "Ainslee's" had become a much talked about periodical. Nor—being human—did I think any the less of it when Roberts bought some of my own verse. I told him that I wanted to get out another "little" magazine, somewhat like my original publication down in Washington that I had issued after office hours, or like "The Minaret," edited by Herbert Bruncken, on whose first few numbers I had worked with the poet, Shaemus O'Shiel, or like "The Quill."

Roberts surprised me by saying that over at his shop, Street & Smith, were seriously considering the launching of something really new in the way of magazines. The title hadn't been decided upon, nor had they hired an editor as yet. He suggested that before I got embroiled with another "little" magazine I drop by the

following Monday for a further chat. He might be able to introduce me to the General Manager, William Ralston, provided, of course, that we both agreed beforehand that I could handle the job.

I had heard of Ralston; indeed, few there were or are in the world of magazines who haven't heard about this gifted man who had risen from office boy to power at Street & Smith and who had guided this great firm during its days of pulp magazines and later when it branched out with successful slick periodicals and moved from its famous old building on Lower Seventh Avenue uptown to the Chanin Building on East 42nd Street.

When I turned up at Street & Smith that Monday morning, Roberts and I discussed the matter of whether I could or should undertake the editing of a pulp. I had contributed many verses and stories to the pulps, but as for editing one . . . well, I was to find out, this was, indeed, a horse of a different color. With some doubt, perhaps in his mind no less than in mine at this stage of my life, he picked up the telephone. As luck would have it, Ralston was free at the moment. Instead of waiting for me to come to his office he surprised me by telling Roberts that he'd drop by to meet me. Knowing him as I have since 1919, I can understand how he has always gone straight to the point, whether to meet someone or to deal with some problem. I know of no other man who has influenced me more in the manner of doing one's work without pompous ceremony or white collar, middle class smugness; getting down to cases, as it were, and looking at any situation with a sense of reality. A man of vision, too—as events were to prove in the years to come—but who didn't wear his dreams on his sleeve.

As the saying goes, we "hit it off" from the moment we met.

Neither at that time, nor at our third conference when he gave me the job of editing what was to be known as "The Thrill Book," did I try to give him any false impressions of my ability and previous experience. Not that it would have done me any good if I had. Ralston could see through one at a glance. He took me on, I think, more because of my energy and enthusiasm and my love for the printed page in any form, than for what I'd learned as editor of a Government publication and of such "little" magazines as "The Quill." He questioned me closely, however, concerning my feelings about such authors as Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, Fitz-James O'Brien, Poe, etc. When he found that I'd read them all, this seemed to clinch the proposition.

"Can you start work tomorrow?" was the way he put it.

I gulped, nodded my head, and left his office like one walking on air. Curiously enough, he hadn't yet told me the title of the new magazine or what its exact editorial policy was to be. All he said was that I'd be given the needed information once I was

assigned a desk and instructed in the routine daily work at Street & Smith.

Some idea of how limited and untried was the field of science-fiction in those days can be seen clearly by the fact that among all the guesses I made as to what kind of a magazine I was to edit, not one of them was correct. Though Ralston had questioned me about my interest in futuristic, fanciful writers, I thought he only meant to deal with adventure. Ralston was himself looking into the future, although neither he nor I, who was to try and carry out his plans, had the slightest conception that we were pioneers about to embark upon a journey to magazine frontiers of fiction hitherto undreamed of by anyone in the entire world. It was indeed a daring experiment in innovations to launch "The Thrill Book."

Except for Bob Davis, who edited the Munsey Magazines for so long and so successfully, and who (bless his heart) encouraged many of us in our Bohemian days by buying our verse and short stories, and a nickel weekly issued by the Tousey firm on 23rd and 7th Avenue for which Lu Senarens wrote many wild tales of an inventor, no one seemed to be paying any definite attention to science-fiction. Bob Davis called these stories "Differents," having noticed their striking individuality. He played them up from time to time in "Argosy" and "The All-Story."

As pointed out by Larry, Ray Cummings' first story, "The Girl in the Golden Atom," appeared in the "All-Story Magazine" in March, 1919, the same month as the first issue of "The Thrill Book." Among the few who were writing science-fiction were Julian Hawthorne, (son of the famous Nathaniel Hawthorne*), who wrote "The Cosmic Courtship" for "All-Story-Argosy" in 1917; Hugo Gernsback, author of "Ralph 124C41 Plus," which appeared in 1911 in "Modern Electrics," (later in book form. Ed); Ellis Parker Butler, "The Last Man," in "Blue Book," 1914; Irvin S. Cobb, "Fishhead," in "Cavalier," 1913; George Allan England, who had already made a name for himself before he wrote (the) "Darkness and Dawn" (trilogy); Garrett P. Serviss, author of fantasy yarns and who was an astronomer, (his sequel to H. G. Wells' "The War of the Worlds," entitled "Edison's Conquest of Mars," originally published in the New York Evening Journal, in 1898, files of which were destroyed in a fire, was probably the very first "space opera" ever written where warfare was carried to another world, with Edison in the hero's role—Ed.); Rudyard Kipling, who wrote "With the Night Mail" in Ma-

*Nathaniel Hawthorne also wrote such stories as "The Marble Faun," and "Rappaccini's Daughter," "A Curious Blend of Science and Fantasy," as "Golden Book," so appropriately sub-titled the latter. (Ed.)

Clure's Magazine"; Sir A. Conan Doyle, "The Poison Belt," in "Strand Magazine," 1913; A. Merritt, "The Moon Pool," and other yarns; George Griffiths, "A Honeymoon in Space," 1900.

I had read some of these stories. Bill Ralston seemed to have read everything.

No one, anywhere, had come up with the notion that this kind of story was leading in a definite direction, except Bill Ralston, insofar as I can recall. Milo Hastings and others like myself were keenly interested in futuristic stories, but none of us visualized a magazine given over to it entirely. In days to follow, I was to create, on my own, many new types of magazines, but this was my first experience, and it is, in consequence, a much more clearly defined memory than many of the other periodicals I have created, many of which are still on the newsstands.

Ralston gave me all of one day to get oriented to the routine of Street & Smith. I met Charles Agnew McLean, editor of "Popular"; Eugene Clancy, then editing "People's," etc. I was introduced to one of the two Smiths who owned the firm, I forget which, and to Mr. Hines, the rugged individualist who ran the Art Department. On the second day, Ralston appeared bright and early in my cubicle of an office and told me just what he had in mind.

THE EDITORS MAGNIFY

We now come to one of the saddest predicaments of our lives. We did mention one of the big advantages of "a work of love" in our introductory article. However, there are disadvantages, such as not being able to have everything hoped for in the maiden issue of such a magazine. Havnig no "angel"—at least in the material sense!—the only solution we could see was to reduce the type size on the rest of "The Thrill Book" section of this article. It makes me wonder how many of our readers have a good magnifying glass, no doubt manufactured by the Bausch & Lomb Optical Company of Rochester, or if any publication is worth so much concentration! But a little patience and good nature should bring extra pleasure from the added effort. So let us hope that our enthusiasm has already been "catching"! After all, one of our favorite books, (i. e., "The World Almanac"), is set in even smaller type than the rest of this article which, due to factors beyond our control, is the last item to be given to our printer. Besides, a little anticipation is a great help in life and, perhaps, you are already sharing it with us!

After steeping myself in science-fiction and discussing it with the amazing few writers capable of or interested in writing for "The Thrill Book," it was decided that we would have to use some reprint material. Unlike Hugo Gernsback, when he launched "Amazing Stories" seven years later, we decided against the classical stories, even though many of the copyrights had run out and they were in the public domain. Let me say here and now, however, that Gernsback was much wiser than I was. My only alibi is that in 1919 the field of science-fiction was much narrower than it was in 1926 and that Bill Ralston's and my effort to produce a newsstand product compelled us to go all out for so-called "thrills," rather than confine editorial policy to the work of well-known authors. My timidity, if you choose to call it that, was based on the ancient desire that every editor has to do everything within his power to make his magazine succeed. Thus it was that I trimmed my sails to what I thought were the prevailing winds of public opinion. I could so easily have reprinted Poe's "The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym," even some of Balzac's and Hoffman's tales. These were already in print—the sales of these great writers is steady, year in and year out—there were no copyright difficulties. I suggested to Bill Ralston that we dig into the files of Street and Smith publications for available material while I continued looking for writers who might contribute what we eventually wanted to fill the magazine with, to the exclusion of all borderline material.

As I recall it, Gernsback was also able to use stories by A. Merritt, Harry Stephen Keeler, A. Hyatt Verrill, T. S. Stribling, Austin Hall, J. U. Giesy, Edgar Rice Burroughs and many others who—altho the work involved had already appeared in print—were beyond the scope of my budget. But everything that had appeared over the imprint of Street & Smith, where all rights had been purchased, was available to me. I could draw on such writers as my good friend, Perley Poore Sheehan, on H. Bedford-Jones, Rupert Hughes, Murray Leinster, Frank L. Packard, Edward Lucas White, J. C. Kofoed, etc. This I proceeded to do, using the novels, novelettes and short stories of these fine writers who had been contributing to Street & Smith periodicals for varying periods.

Everything connected with publishing has a way of "getting into the air," so to speak. Before the first number of "The Thrill Book," scheduled to be issued on a semi-monthly schedule, had appeared on the newsstands, I had gotten in touch with Robert W. Sneddon, (to my mind one of the best short story writers I've ever met), Tod Robbins, (another gifted spinner of unusual yarns), and a few more who were to write directly for me in a short while.*

The sub-title of "The Thrill Book" was a compromise. We conferred about it again and again. Our final choice shows, indeed, how timidly we approached the great subject of science fiction. "A Delightful Number of a New Type of Magazine" was the way it read on Vol. 1, No. 1, dated March 1, 1919. This compromise was what destroyed the project in a short time. I blame no one but myself. I feel sure that had I been more daring, more certain of myself as an editor, and had I been better equipped with a wide knowledge of science fiction, I could have convinced Bill Ralston and the others in the "front office" of the need for a magazine almost 100 per cent devoted to this subject from the very start. I was not forced to bring out the first issue so quickly. I know I would have been allowed plenty of time in which to get in contact with the writers I needed, as well as develop others along the lines I had in mind. As has been so often the case with me, I rushed into print without stopping to consider every angle.

That I was well aware, however, of what I wanted to accomplish is amply proven by an editorial I wrote for the first issue. In part, it read as follows:

"Did you (I asked my readers) ever stop to consider that the weird, fantastic story is essentially fundamental in truth and plausibility? In every issue of the large newspapers you strike incidents, experiences, that outrival the wildest fancies of Jules Verne. If

*And please, let's not forget "Francis Stevens," (pseudonym for Gertrude Barrows), whose "The Heads of Cerberus" was reprinted by Polaris Press, Reading, Penn., in 1952.

this were not true, why is it that Poe plays such an important part in world literature? . . . unseen things are every bit as interesting as the seen. . . We are supplying (with 'The Thrill Book') a long felt need—our magazine will publish the kind of story that other magazines have relegated to the scrap head because of their fantastic, weird and thrilling nature. The success of our venture depends upon our 'honorary editors': the readers. . . (here- at last we will be able to read the sort of tale which all our lives we have been longing to read. Haven't you noticed the lack of weird and unusual stories in the average periodical? We have. 'The Thrill Book' is the result of our feeling so strongly about the matter that we couldn't contain ourselves any longer. It semed strange to us that after Edgar Allan Poe, De Maupassant, Ambrose Bierce, O. Henry, Frank Norris and Rudyard Kipling made their reputations by the out-of-the-way stories, that no magazine came along and made the idea a fact."

On the back cover of the first issue, I said:

"Little by little we became convinced that there were whole cargoes of good things being jettisoned because editors and publishers lacked the courage to publish the unusual. In "The Thrill Book", therefore, you will find interesting stories of every kind, stories of queer, psychological phenomena, of mystic demonstrations, weird adventures in the air, on the earth and sea, and under the sea—in that vast domain of Fourth Dimension—and things that men feel but cannot explain."

Yes, it is quite obvious that *what I had in mind* and *what I actually did* were the proverbial horses of different colors. I learned a lesson from "The Thrill Book," the value of which whenever I have ignored it, has killed off more magazines of the 200-odd periodicals I have edited or published than I care to remember. The lesson was this: either do what those "honorary editors," the readers, have been led to expect from cover and text of a first issue, or repent all too soon, and with heavy financial loss, of your attempt to carry water on both shoulders. "The Thrill Book" was, indeed, the first of the science fiction magazines, but, in spite of my promises to the readers and to myself, it did not live long or up to expectations except in a few instances. These exceptions, however, were so startling that in looking backward on my many mistakes, I find some consolation in the fact that I did have the courage and vision to publish them!

There were many dramatic moments for me at the Street and Smith office. When Tod Robbins strolled in and left the manuscript of "The Bibulous Baby," along with other tales of his, I knew I had met a true master of the fantastic and the macabre. Although Fulton Oursler, then Charles Fulton Oursler, didn't do much for me—having dropped by for a visit only a short while before my days with "The Thrill Book" were over and thus being too late to become a regular contributor—I will never forget the man. We became good friends, as did Tod Robbins. In 1926 I took over Oursler's job as Supervising Editor of all the Macfadden Publications, and back in 1939 he wrote a preface to a selection of my published verse

For the life of me I can't remember what I did buy from Oursler. He said in his preface to one of my books, that I bought his first short story. He ought to have known.* He had just come up from Baltimore, was serving as Managing Editor of "Musical America" and we saw much of one another from then on through the years. Charley Oursler, thin,

*There was a story by Charles Fulton Oursler, called "The Thing that Wept," a weird short story, in the April 15th (the 4th) issue of "The Thrill Book."

stoop-shouldered, nervously alert, gifted with an incredibly fertile mind, ruthlessly energetic, was unknown to fame in 1919. I hadn't seen him for quite a while before he died, but we often talked to one another on the phone and exchanged letters. A most remarkable individual, one of the most remarkable friends I have ever had. What a glutton for work. What an imagination he possessed. When I took over his job as Supervising Editor of all the Macfadden Publications, (his play, "The Spider," then starting its long successful Broadway run), I remember the shock I received at finding myself in a position requiring the efforts, time and experience of a dozen men. Five telephones on my desk; two secretaries; hundreds of people in my department. Responsibility for titanic circulations. And Bernarr Macfadden, himself, next door, another remarkable man, another good friend, to this day .Oursler did all the things it was necessary to do, around the clock, with such ease. I followed his career as editor of "Liberty," then as Senior Editor of "Reader's Digest," and as a writer, with the fascination of one who has spent a lifetime editing and writing, and who knows what it means to carry water on both shoulders without spilling any of it, too often!

Without meaning to belittle any of the other work I bought for "The Thrill Book," I'd say that Tod Robbins' story, "The Bibulous Baby," was by far the most extraordinary bit of fantastic humor published in this magazine; perhaps, in its way, one of the most extraordinary tales ever to be published in the United States. I blurbed it as follows in the eighth issue:

"Even in a magazine that deals almost entirely with the unusual, the adventurous, the mysterious, there will appear now and again a tale that is even more extraordinary than all the rest. To our minds, 'The Bibulous Baby' by Tod Robbins is, without doubt, the most curiously humorous story that we have read in a long while."

(This was before F. Scott Fitzgerald's famed story on a similar theme, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," anthologized in "Tales of the Jazz Age," Scribners, 1922. Socially prominent Southern family in Baltimore has an odd child, born old, whose life is a "retrogression," back through enviable manhood, college, grammar school and babyhood again. Well told. Editor).

I don't know what has happened to Tod. I haven't seen or heard of him since early in 1931. Many people will recall his novel, "The Unholy Three,"* later made into a movie directed by Tod Browning. The book

*Digging into our Science Fiction and Fantasy Reference File, we came up with the following: "The Unholy Three" was originally a four-part story in Munsey's "All-Story Weekly," beginning July 14, 1917, entitled "The Terrible Three," (and originally refused by many magazines). It wasn't fantasy in theme, but was, however, the very first of the "Different" serials, hailed by Editor Bob Davis "with a shout of joy" and, after seeing the (1925) first filmed version of the story, (MGM), at the Dryden Theatre of the Eastman House, this June, we can see why.

Three circus characters, Tweedledee, a midget, Echo, the ventriloquist, (Lon Chaney), and Hercules, (Victor McLaglen), their eyes gleaming with weird anticipation, form an "unholy" alliance to make "millions." Their center of operations is a bird shop through which they sell "talking" parrots. While visiting in a wealthy home and disguised as a lady wheeling a baby, Echo and Tweedledee observe a millionaire admiring the jewels. This is the beginning of a silent movie which convinced us that, although the new films are superior in technical ways, the old ones could live up to the fact that a good story, convincingly portrayed, is timeless.

Other interest is supplied by Dorothy (Mae Busch), and her love for Hector, the clerk, who is to be "the fall guy" for a terrible crime, of which Echo, however, and she, are innocent. But later, in the cabin hideout of the Three, the latter two conceive a plan to save Hector, while Echo comes through with a beautiful gesture at the end.

is out of print, I believe, but the motion picture version of what I consider a classic of its kind is not out of circulation, being re-shown from time to time, proving that it still holds a weird fascination for lovers of unusual stories. Tod's book, "Silent, White and Beautiful," published by Liveright, is one of the most precious autographed volumes in my library, along with "The Unholy Three." If "The Thrill Book" had accomplished nothing else in the way of offering truly imaginative fiction than the publication of "The Bibulous Baby," it would have been well worth the effort. I look to the day when Tod Robbins' books will be issued again and he will come into his own as one of the masters of the macabre in American literature.

(Believe it or not, the famous Jules de Grandin stories of Seabury Quinn can be traced back to "Seabury Grandin Quinn's" "The Stone Image," published in the May 1st, 1919, issue of "The Thrill Book," before "Weird Tales" was even thought of.—Ed.)

H. Bedford Jones was among those whose reprints I published in "The Thrill Book," and who later wrote for me when, as Head Editor of Bill Clayton's string of magazines, I launched "Ace High," "Cowboy Stories," "Ranch Romances," "Clues," "The Danger Trail," etc. One of my most verdant memories is a visit I paid to Bedford-Jones in 1926 when he was living just outside Paris. I haven't met him in years but, of course, I've often seen his name in many different periodicals. Over in that house of his in Paris he was writing on two typewriters simultaneously, one a Western, the other an Oriental yarn. He was utterly indifferent to his surroundings when he sat at his machine. An extraordinary fellow, an amazing writer.

Rupert Hughes' story, "The Gift Wife"—which also came out in book form—was another first rate "Thrill Book" reprint from a Street and Smith publication. In a note to Larry, Mr. Hughes said, "I have no copy of the book. It turns up occasionally in second hand book stores but its hard to find."

As incredible and as gifted as any of the writers who contributed to "The Thrill Book" was Will Jenkins who has made his pen name, Murray Leinster, famous throughout the world. He reminds me in a recent letter that I ran a notice in the writers' magazines asking for material and that he dropped by to see me with the first of a number of tales that I bought from him. These included "The Silver Menace," "Ju-Ju," and "A Thousand Degrees Below Zero."

As a result of the notices in the writers' magazines, I received a thousand manuscripts but was able to buy only ten! I sought out the professionals and turned to Murray Leinster because of his stories that I had read in "Argosy." I had also read his work in the old "Smart Set" and, though the work he did for this historic periodical was of a pseudo-sophisticated nature, generally, much of it glittered with the bright light of the man's undoubted genius. It was impossible to read him without realizing what a young Titan among writers he was,* and still is! I had heard much of him from my friend, H. L. Mencken, then one of the editors of the "Smart Set." Having him with me from the beginning was one of the finest feathers in my editorial hat.

Murray Leinster—to continue calling him by the name he made so famous—must have been around twenty-one at the time. And think of it, he had already been writing for the "Smart Set" since he was seventeen!

As he tells me: " 'The Thrill Book' seemed a brave and brand new world of which previous generations had no inkling. But I didn't really

*How well I remember his Argosy serial, "The Earth-Shaker"! and more recently, his "Journey to Barkut," originally published in "Startling Stories."—Ed.

believe in previous generations, at that. It seemed to me that everybody more than a couple of years my senior was verging upon senility, and anybody as much as two years younger was callow and very, very young, indeed. I wonder now my elders stood me. But there were folk who treated me with an ironic tolerance which I mistook for charmed attention. I wish I could be as decent as some people were to me. Wyndham Martyn was one of thes most helpful editors I've ever met."

Note: Wyndham was a friend of mine, too. He published many of my stories and verses in the magazines he edited in 1916 and 1917 It was Wyndham who introduced me to the Colonel of New York's 9th Regiment and which ended in my enlisting as a buck private for the duration, early in 1917.

Murray Leinster goes on to speak warmly, nostalgically, of Tommy Springer and Bob Sneddon. Tommy wrote for me when I became Head Editor of the Clayton Magazines; Robert ("Bob") W. Sneddon contributed quite a few items to "The Thrill Book." Sneddon, like Oursler, became one of my closest and dearest friends. I agree with Murray Leinster when he says that Sneddon "could put human beings down on paper better than anybody else I knew." How right you are, Murray Leinster. And if one could say that a perfect gentleman in the finest sense of the word ever walked this earth, Bob Sneddon was that man. Up to the day of his death I had never heard a single person ever speak ill of him or he speak ill of anyone. Some of his stories of the Parisian boulevards that appeared in "Snappy Stories" and "Telling Tales," the latter being the first of many magazines that I worked on when I joined Clayton in 1920, and yarns of his in "Pictorial Review" and other so-called "slicks" should be collected and issued by some enterprising publisher.

Murray Leinster calls my attention to a little-known fact that should be important news for all the science fiction fans: "I just found an item in my library," he informed me in his letter of Sept. 4, 1952, "which might be interesting if you're writing about science fiction. The book is 'His Level Best, by Edward Everett Hale, author of 'The Man Without A Country.' My copy was printed in 1872 and formerly belonged to the late Jefferson Davis, of the Confederate States of America. The point is that the second yarn in the book is titled 'The Brick Moon' and is about an artificial satellite made of brick and launched into an orbit around the earth to provide sailors with the correct longitude. The writing is very, very bad—almost as bad as the forgotten writings of Poe—but I think it's the first artificial satellite yarn in history."

Larry Farsace tells me that he has long been familiar with "The Brick Moon." But then, he would. I doubt if there is a single bit of Science Fiction ever written that he doesn't know about! (This story was originally in the October, 1869, issue of the "Atlantic Monthly."—Ed.)

Larry says that Murray Leinster is much too modest when he denies in his letter to me that he's written science fiction longer than Ray Cummings. Ray's first story, "The Girl In The Golden Atom" was printed the very same month that "The Thrill Book" first appeared, while Murray Leinster had already been writing for "Argosy," as above noted by your truly. On a recent visit to the office of "Amazing Stories," the editor called Murray Leinster, "Mr. Science Fiction Himself." Yes, I ought to know that Murray Leinster has been writing science fiction for more than thirty years. I bought the stories, already noted herein, from him as far back as 1919 and he was even then contributing to other magazines.

Murray Leinster's closing remarks in his letter of August 14, 1952, should be quoted before I pass on to other writers for "The Thrill Book."

"It's queer," he says, "how science science fiction has come up in the world. It's always been a sort of step-child of fiction. Most science fiction writers have never written anything else, and most other writers have only very, very occasionally written in the genre. I'm not sure, but I *think* that my Who's Who write-up is the only one in the book which mentions science fiction as among the biographee's writings. And the way one's treated generally . . . My phone rang one day up in New York. Somebody asked if I was the Jenkins who wrote science fiction and I said yes and the voice asked how long I'd been doing it. I made a guess, wrong as it happened when I checked up. Then I said, 'What's all this about?' The voice said, 'This is Time Magazine and we're doing something about science fiction. You're the dean of science fiction and we're going to say so.' I said, 'Hold on. I think Ray Cummings has been writing the stuff longer than I have.' Then there was a considerable pregnant pause. Then the voice said, 'Mr. Jenkins, we prefer to accept our own authorities!' And it sternly rang off."

As herinbefore noted, Murray Leinster was wrong. He is not only the youngest to have started in the field of science fiction but the oldest in the field. Indeed, he does deserve being called, "Mr. Science Fiction Himself." My battered editorial hat is off to you, Will. You were a genius, just as William Clayton once said you were and, to repeat: you still are. A credit to science fiction, a credit to literature, and a credit to all that is synonymous with those ideals than an ancient editor of 62 still feels can be adhered to even though a man does write for a living. Some of your late stories are as good as your early ones. All of your stories were, are and, I know, always will be written on the highest level of literary endeavor.

In another letter well worth quoting, Will Jenkins reminds me of the fact that he stopped off at my place in Highland while on his honeymoon.

> "We'd been married about a week," he goes on to say, "Bob and Jean Shannon were along. I got a sting from a yellow jacket which left a still discernible scar, and I remember the innocent glee with which Mary (my wife) picked up a dead snake on a stick and the hysterical horror with which Jean regarded it. . . If Ray Cummings' story, 'The Girl In The Golden Atom' was published the same month the first issue of 'The Thrill Book' came out, then I do antedate him in science fiction. You called on me as a result of having read some science fiction of mine in the 'Argosy.' So some of my science fiction had been in print long enough for you to read it before the first copy of 'The Thrill Book' came out.* . . . At the moment I'm turning out the second of a series of science fiction books. I've got some rather interesting stuff in prospect, by the way, which is science fiction in real life. . . a gadget as preposterous as any device I ever designed for a story. But this one seems to work. I'd rather not talk about it unless a contract for its use is actually signed, but it could be an amusing paragraph if it were in use before your article is finished."

Greye La Spina, another contributor to "The Thrill Book," was amazed to hear that I had forgotten those "early days." If my letter to her gave this impression—especially concerning the fine work she did for me—I herewith offer a public apology to her and to any others who might have escaped my memory. So many years, so many good people, so many magazines. . . alas! it is impossible to keep in mind all the "whens, the wheres and the whyfors." The truth is, of course, that I did remember her and her work. My questions were merely asked by way of checking up on the past.

*"Leinster's" first story, "The Runaway Skyscraper," appeared in Argosy for February 22, 1919, just a month before Ray's!—Ed.

"Even if I am a sprightly seventy-two," she writes, "they stand up for me, highlighted by my prolific and successful fiction writing. My first piece of fiction was written because I felt it was time for me to start, if ever. I sent it to Street & Smith because they seemed a big concern." (Yes, Mrs. La Spina, they were and are. One thing I never will forget is that vast top floor of the old building on lower 7th Avenue where we editors held forth in little cubicles, and the floors beneath filled with linotype machines, printing presses and those always fascinating snake-like binding machines.) She continues: "June, 1918. Eugene Clancy (Popular Magazine) bought it and (later on) told me about the new magazine he contemplated, adding that they would buy practically everything I wrote along those lines. The first issue of "The Thrill Book" came out with my story as leader and was featured on the cover. Mr. Hersey, don't tell me you've forgotten what you wrote on the inside cover of that March 1, 1919, issue. 'Our principal contributor in this number has far and away the best story in this issue.' Signed, Harold Hersey. Man, man, I'm amazed at your letting this highly important item slip away! The pseudonyms used in 'The Thrill Book' were Baroness de Savuto (my husband's title in Italy) and Isra Putnam. However, most of my fantasy tales were signed by own name, Greye La Spina. I hope that the above recollections will help to clear 1919 and bring it back more vividly to you. To me it meant my first year writing fiction."

The gifted Greye La Spina did my cover-featured story for the first issue of "The Thrill Book," entitled "Wolf of The Steppes," and other tales. This was followed in later issues with "The Wax Doll," under the pseudonym of "Isra Putnam," etc., for later issues and under various pseuds. She was, indeed, one of my valued and well-liked contributors.

The first eight issues of "The Thrill Book" were published in a larger format than the usual pulp magazine; the last eight issues, however, were reduced to pulp size after I left and Ronald Oliphant, a fine editor, took over what was to prove a losing game.

Oliphant had contributed a series of most amusing stories to the magazine about a character he called "The Thrill Hound." The despondency over the way things were going which led me to step out and seek other editorial work, did not affect him. I believe he would have succeeded had "The Thrill Book" not already been set in a pattern of compromise. It was too late to rectify an error that the brilliant Hugo Gernsback was not to commit when he launched "Amazing Stories" seven years later. Gernsback had the courage and the vision to set a pattern from the very start that was bound to lead to success. I've always been convinced that had Ronald Oliphant been the original editor of "The Thrill Book," it might have lasted through the period when the general public was not sufficiently interested in science fiction to support such a venture and would have come into its own far ahead of "Amazing Stories." But we must never forget that even when Gernsback carried on the pioneering efforts that I, followed by Oliphant, made in those dark days when the fans of science fiction were few and far between, he ,too, had to face general indifference before he (1) was able to attract attention; (2) educate a public sufficiently to appreciate his efforts and (3) widen public interest sufficiently to back him up. People nowadays can have little or no realization of how lonely one felt in those years of what seems so long ago, editing any kind of would-be popular magazine that didn't meet with instant favor. Seven long years had to pass between the death of "The Thrill Book" and the birth of "Amazing Stories" and after that, at least two years had to pass before Gernsback began to reap the harvest of awakening enthusiasm for science fiction.

This business of always wanting to whitewash one's self in the past irritates me no end. I failed miserably with this magazine, in a world

where success must and ever will be measured in terms of newsstand sales. No matter how one seeks to pat one's self on the back for having edited the first of the magazines that sought to mine the rich ore of science fiction that had been written and would inevitably be written once there was a public for it, I cannot gloss over the fact that we all compromised instead of going out for what we had planned to publish. We had the "vision." Ours was an ideal, in spite of the necessary commercial aspects of such a magazine venture (and being a professional, I have no objection to said commercial aspects, knowing they are a vital part of any publishing program). We did dream of publishing what is now known as science fiction. But about all we did was dream.

One of the most pleasant memories that linger with me was getting to know not only the work of those pioneering writers but also the people who turned it out for "The Thrill Book" and other periodicals.

There are, however, two innovations that I must not forget. For instance, I established a department in "The Thrill Book" that went over very well. It was entitled "Around The World" and it had to do with curious ideas and events here and there, told briefly. I encouraged readers to send in such items as "Finds Four Skeletons In A Cave"—"Halted By Ghosts on Way to Work"—"Mathematical Cop Says Earth Is On Wane," etc. I thought so well of this department that when Bill Clayton, the publisher, and I, as his Head Editor, were discussing the possibility of issuing a science fiction magazine in 1927 (just before I left him to become Supervising Editor of all the Macfadden Publications), which later appeared under title of "Astounding Stories," I suggested that we use such a section. And it appeared therein, though with a different title when "Astounding Stories" (though, when under Street & Smith—Ed.), published Charles Fort's "Lo!" in serial form. It, too, consisted of odd, inexplicable ideas and events clipped from newspapers all over the world.

The other innovation in a magazine of this sort—for pulps usually fight shy of anything except prose mostly written to order by professionals who can be depended upon to produce what is needed and on time—was the poetry I featured in "The Thrill Book." Having already discovered Clark Ashton Smith's first little book, hereinbefore noted, I naturally went on a hunt for him. Finally, just before I severed my connections with the periodical, I located him out in California and was able to include his poem "Dissonance" in the 14th issue (Sept. 15th.) Had I remained, I would, of course, have published other things of his. I regarded him as one of the most promising poets of the day.* I felt that he belonged, by the very nature of his work, in such a magazine.

That I was right has been proven by the fact that he went on to become one of the best of the science fiction writers. My one regret is that he didn't continue writing his inspiring, imaginative poetry. I still have a copy of his first book.

My interest in poetry was a fundamental one. At the time I was busily engaged, and had been since early youth, in expressing my ideas in metrical form. Ten books, seven of which were gotten out by publishers with more foolhardy courage than common sense and three by myself, were to be the result. My work was appearing in many magazines. My friends were mostly poets or painters. I was an active member of the Poetry Society of America, having been introduced to membership by my good friend, Joyce Kilmer.

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*Clark Ashton Smith is the only author to have the distinction of having had material in both the first commercial science-fantasy magazine, "The Thrill Book," and the first non-commercial such venture, "The Recluse." (1927). Ed.

Every editor has to face the problem of filling space at the ends of stories. What better way, I thought, to do this than by using poetry. However, I was limited in expenditures because of the eternal budget that holds an editor down on what he can spend. The result: whereas I wanted to use (and did) the poetry written by such friends as Harry Kemp, Mary Carolyn Davies, Nina Wilcox Putnam and others, I depended largely upon my own efforts. These were published under pseudonyms except in two instances, where I used my own name. For the record, here is the list of my verses, with either my name or a pseudonym, that appeared in "The Thrill Book":

Marsa by "Carl Buxton"
Romance by "Roy LeMoyne"
Freedom by "Arnold Tyson"
The Twisted Tapers, from the Russian of "Larrovitch"
Lilith by "Roy LeMoyne"
Miladi by "Charles Kiproy"
My Lovely by "Albert Owens"
Captain Georges Guynemar by H.H.
Flowerlight by "Philip Kennedy"
The Death of Columbine by "Roy Le Moyne"
The King by "Vail Vernon"
The Dummy and the Ventriloquist by H. H.
The Battle by "Arnold Tyson"
Life by "Arnold Tyson"
After by "Charles Kiproy"
Out of Our Hands Reach by "Roy Le Moyne
The Old Loves by "Albert Owens"
Aglaia by "Arnold Tyson"
Shafts of Light by "Roy LeMoyne"
The Dance by "Charles Kiproy"
Hidden Pathways by "Albert Owens"

You also had:

A Ballade by the Sea by "Roy LeMoyne" (2 pages)
To Spend With Ease by "Charles Kiproy"
This Love That Stirs Me So by "Carl Buxton"
Love's Silence by "Arnold Tyson"
Such Beauty by "Roy Le Moyne"
A Thousand Miles by "Charles Kiproy"
The Heart's Horizon by "Philip Kennedy"
Life's Last Song by "Arnold Tyson"
Gifts by "Roy Le Moyne"
Among the Stars by "Albert Owens"
Living Memories by "Carl Buxton"
Dim Unknown by "Carl Buxton"
These Gray Streets by "Philip Kennedy"
Simple Flowers by "Charles Kiproy"
Beyond a Single Day by Philip Kennedy"

Also, there were two others which sound like yours:

One Like Yourself, by Alphonse de la Ferte
The Distant Stars, by Francois de Vallient

Were these, too, by you? (Ed.)

My readers must have been astonished at the overloading of our magazine with so much verse. Indeed, I've often thought in my blind poetical fury of those days, I helped to kill off "The Thrill Book." Only a few of them were fantasy poems and these were by Clark Ashton Smith, Harry Kemp, etc. Only one of my poetical contributions, by any stretch of my young editorial imagination at the time, belonged in the book. This was "The Dummy and the Ventriloquist," a bit of verse that has been reprinted more than once, and like another popular thing of mine, "The Lavender Cowboy," often without credit.

(There you go berating yourself again, Harold. Actually, your poems were among the most attractive items in "The Thrill Book" and may we reprint some?—Ed.)

I have been frequently asked how many copies of "The Thrill Book" were sold. As was the case with all the editors at Street & Smith, I was never told what the circulation figures were. All one knew was that if one's magazine continued, the sales must be good; if not, you were told that the magazine was going to fold up and you were either transferred to another periodical, or fired. I wasn't fired, but I should have been. My use of verse to such excess, instead of writing prose filler material

that fitted the policy, and there was plenty of it available as was proven by the "Around the World" department; and the fatal compromise we followed, rather than going after stories, reprints or new, that should have been used, these and many other causes led to the end. I saw the "handwriting on the wall" ahead of time. I asked to be relieved of my duties . . and my request was promptly accepted!

I do recall, however, that the magazine was not distributed on a national scale. As I remember it, "The Thrill Book" was given a sort of "block" distribution, that is, put on sale in selected States. The idea was that if it sold well in limited numbers and in carefully chosen areas, then the print order could be increased and the distribution widened to include more and more territory until the whole country was covered. I may be wrong, but this seems to have been the Street and Smith method in those days with all their new publications.

There were sixteen issues in all. I've been told that they brought out one issue of "The Thrill Book Quarterly" but I've never found out whether or not this really happened. (This has always been one of the major unsolved mysteries in collecting! Ed).

There was a printers' strike in late 1919 that lasted over into 1920. This did not affect "The Thrill Book," as this magazine was already dead and buried. I remember the strike vividly, however, because I had already gone to work for William Clayton as a part-time editor of the first of what were to be a big string of periodicals, and we had to go to Albauy that winter to get it printed.

One thing I regret is not having kept copies of "The Thrill Book." Larry tells me that collectors have paid as high as $25.00 for the first issue and $15.00 for the first issue of "Astounding Stories." "Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories" first issues have brought $10.00.

Alas! Unless it's a daily newspaper, there is nothing so transient, so perishable as the average magazine, especially a pulp. For years I kept a file of Volume Ones, Number Ones of the much more than 200 different magazines I've edited to date, (almost equally divided between pulps and slicks, I might add), but as it's part of the penalty for being of a restless independent nature not to be able to preserve things from the past, I've lost them along the way. (Referring to collectors and copies of "The Thrill Book" today, Editor John W. Campbell, Jr., commenting on one of our letters, wrote: "Maybe they would like something easier to find—say geological samples from Tycho Crater, or rose quartz from the Martian hills.")

"The Thrill Book" not only seems to be a collector's item, but it is forgotten by science fiction fans as well—at least a good many of them. When Don Day submitted his "Index" to Larry for his list of corrections, he had started the record of science fiction magazines with "Amazing Stories" in 1926! Far be it from me to seek to take any of the credit for Gernsback's courageous and inspiring pioneer work in the field, but I do object—and I think with some justification—to any fact pertaining to the subject being left out of what is supposed to be an authoritative volume.

The evidence, in the case of "The Thrill Book" vs. indifference and inaccuracy, is closed so far as I'm concerned. That it was the first of the science fiction magazines by seven years has been attested to by all who have studied the matter and by many who contributed to it and knew of what we had in mind, albeit we failed in doing the job as it should have been done.

(In the concluding installment, Harold Hersey tells the story of another of his favorites, "Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories," and the part he played in laying the groundwork for "Astounding Stories." There is also an addenda of interesting comments by a later Street and Smith editor, F. Orlin Tremaine. Ed.)

ATOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

(Hollywood Reporter, 1946)

On a beautiful starlit night, Einstein was strolling the Princeton Promenade. . He looked up at the sky and said, with a weary sigh: "Anyway, THAT the atom cannot destroy!"

(On the other hand, there could also be "glamour" in an "Atom"! Editor).

PICS AND KICS

FROM THE IMAGI-NATION!

(OUR PHOTOGRAPHICAL READERS' DEPARTMENT)

This department has had a most unusual history. Letters commenting on the ninth issue appeared as part of an adv. for Lylda in three 1941 issues of "Spaceways," a fan magazine published by Harry Warner, Jr., of Maryland, (an early "Golden Atom" contributor, and professional since). In return, our tenth issue had the letters commenting on "Spaceways' " last issue.

Just to give you an idea of what kept "Golden Atom" going, although almost every issue had been planned to be a last!, due to the amount of work involved and the slight financial returns a mimeographed magazine can hope for, we quote from a letter by John Wasso, Jr., in one of the 1941 issues of "Spaceways":

"Golden Atom is still the best. Truly the most glamorous of the fan magazines, due largely to the Lylda tradition behind it. I'm glad that Charles Hickox gave us a cover dedicated to the old master Lovecraft. It's beautiful. No crude angles to his work. Hickox is the best of the amateurs and better than many professionals.

"The Lovecraft-Daniels letters are gems of rare value. The Golden Atom Tales Bibliography makes me hungry for more of the same. The review itself is both interesting and informative.

"Before concluding this letter, I decided to check back through my Golden Atom file and found myself rereading every issue from cover to cover! This is something that has never happened to me before, in either the fan or professional magazine field!"

What can a poor editor do, after receiving letters like that?, or, for that matter, after noting the purchase of an advertisement by Forry Ackerman of Hollywood in a Cleveland magazine, in order to say that "Golden Atom" is "worth its weight in wedding rings!"

(But correction please. I don't think we mentioned this before, but Charles Hickox was really a professional, who supervised the

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Wonder Stories Through the Years

No. 1 PANTALETTA, 1882 (Women's Rights as a Fantasy!)

"Through the courtesy of the American News Company of New York City, we have upon our table a copy of 'Pantaletta,' a fictitious work giving description of life in 'Petticotia,' or 'Shehe-land.' At first glance through its 250 pages it appeared almost silly. A slight reading shows there is enough to it to have a good laugh over, and as one continues to read, this finally ends in a roar of mirth and laughter, which collects the whole household to see what is the matter. Of course, one is enough interested in it to read it through. The interest in it increases so that one can hardly leave it to eat or sleep until it is completed, and afterwards one must read portions of it over and over and over again. First it touches off some of the absurdities of the day, but these are only little side streets leading toward the broad avenue describing the things in an imaginary land, where 'woman's rights,' as now popularly understood, are fully realized, and the consequences (we fully believe) truthfully pictured.

"Although the results portrayed so faithfully are just what any thinking mind might expect, putting them in this form will bring them where the folly of the movement can be read by him who runs. In view of the present tendency of public opinion, this little work of fiction is worth its weight in gold, although it makes one blush to be obliged to own that our people may need a view of this satirical picture to show them whence they are drifting. Every man or woman who thinks should read it. It will do no harm, but will do nine out of ten much good—and they will also enjoy it."—From "The Fairport Herald," August 18, 1882, Fairport, New York.

Prevue of Our Pin-Up Doll

Our baby Marilyn is happy,
So delighted that she throws her head back laughing;
Not quite nine months old,
Still, she can stand up,
Holding herself on the fence that is her playpen,
Showing off by "doing her eyes,"
And throwing back her head,
Laughing, with merriment,
Overjoyed with life!

OUR PIN-UP DOLL

A DOOR TO MEMORY

Comments on Larry's Poems; an advertisement for "Star-Bound," another "Golden Atom" publication.

From Muriel K., of Brooklyn, New York: "I'm terribly anxious to know how 'Star-Bound' is making out."

"I feel a bit concerned about this particular brochure of yours, inasmuch as you spoke of it so often and discussed it with me before it was ever printed—before it came into its final form."

"I'm glad to hear that 'Star-Bound' is still holding its own—and that you are getting such favorable comments on your work from the limited number of people who have had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with it."

From Robert P. Tristram Coffin, nationally famous poet, of Wells College, New York: "I have enjoyed reading your poems very much." In singling out one for specific mention, he added: "It makes me feel good. I know this isn't the only test for a poem, but it is one very good one."

From John R. Peterson, of the University of California: "Star Bound brings to mind a point in contradiction to the often and obvious criticism that there is a great need for more sanity in our poetry, that there is a much greater need for poetry in our sanity."

From Marguerite Reed, Dean of the University of Rochester: "Let me say that I envy you a certain lyric touch. It is something to hold on to and so easy to lose in this regimented and somewhat self-conscious age."

From Doris Ann Hosley, of Columbia University: "You have the gifts of verse and melody and the something more one cannot define. My only regret with reference to your poems is that they are too few in number.

"We are always encountering little forevers. Perhaps this is one."

From Jean Diana Horowitz, of Cornell University: "How glad I am that I responded to the advertisement of **Star-Bound.** You certainly did a good job of producing beautiful emotion with beautiful expression.

"You are at your best when you write about the laughing, light side of life—the looking upward—the sheer beauty. I admire your ability to find these things, to pierce the crust of ugliness, find shining, golden beauty, express your found treasure.

"I get a large charge out of the ethereal beauty of some of your best in **Star Bound.** You really have the spark to flare up into another P. B. Shelley ,for which Jehovah be praised."

From Edrey Schendel, of Pacific University: "You have a perfect way of expressing feelings."

From Jean McAndrew, of Rochester, New York: "When you write, you sort of put a person into a spell of everything that means happiness."

From Al Sigl, of the "Rochester Times-Union": "I believe you have a real gift."

From Dorothy Howry, of Klamath Falls, Oregon: "I have heard some of the tunes Ellen wrote for 'Star-Bound' and they are very good."

From a New York showgirl: "Through a friend of mine I was introduced to your lovely book . . . I should not have said 'lovely'—it is too insipid a word, I feel, to describe the passionate, sensitive feelings you are able to express."

From Helen Robinson, of Geneseo State Teachers' College: "You astonish me. I have read 'Star-Bound' three times now, and each time reveals deeper treasures than before."

Fom Sgt. Josephine Pagliai, of Fort Des Moines: "To say I was astounded would be putting it mildly. I was thrilled to read your poems."

From Staff Sgt. Roger Biron, in the Aleutians: "There is so much joy in beautiful reminiscing and your writing has captured just that."

From Sgt. Marion Hargrove, later famed for his best seller, "See Here, Pvt. Hargrove": "I am passing the book on to the Yank library."

From Hannes Bok, artist-writer, of New York: "I think the binding of Starbound is swell—the paper, and the ink, and type, and everything. The writeups in Michigan Daily, Lee Traveler and Cornell Bulletin, etc., sound Good!"

Also, A Sample from the Bobby-Soxers

From Irene T., of Tacoma, Washington: "Words aren't available. They are wonderful! Marvelous! Superb! Impressive!

"I'm sure proud of it. The poems are all my favorites and I

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PICS AND KICS (Continued from Page 69)

artwork for a chain of theatres in vaudeville days and who received many newspaper writeups for his work for cathedrals, and the Texas Centennial Exposition. . Each one of his covers for "Golden Atom" was a sketch done in a matter of minutes, since it couldn't be too detailed for reproduction on a stencil. Our original introduction was through our good friend, Bernie Seufert. Charlie is now retired, and living near Chautauqua, the "Carmel, Calif.," of New York State).

Miss Mary Gnaedinger, editor of "Famous Fantastic Mysteries," even went so far as to say: "I shall keep this copy for desk reference. An editor with reams of green proof and make-up pages confronting him (or her) has usually time only to run through periodicals that come in. But 'Golden Atom is a temptation to which I succumb."

We now continue with the comments on our tenth issue, which had been mailed out during a furlough in 1943, (Unger, in his "Fantasy Fiction Field," Brooklyn, N. Y.: "Hurry up, Larry, will you?"), and also distributed through the 25th mailing of the Fantasy Amateur Press Assocation. The great height of interest with which our little magazine was received should explain a bit of the motive power which led to the production of each issue. (Really, we shouldn't be so influenced!)

From Franklin Lee Baldwin, writer, of Grangeville, Idaho: "Finally received GOLDEN ATOM—first I've ever seen and it surely makes me wish I'd come in sooner. Your tale of the quest of those old and rare THRILL BOOKs; Ah, man, that really is fine reading stuff. Wish more fans could get their experiences down like that. Your visit with La Spina must have been something. I know how hunting for items year in and year out can be; thrill and all. Sometimes I believe the search is more fun than the actual possession."

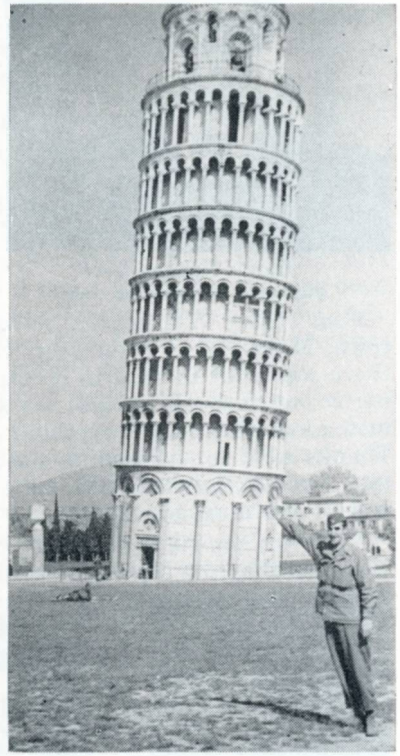
From Raymond Washington, poet, of Live Oak, Florida: "I've received only one copy of GOLDEN ATOM from you (the magnificent special poetry edition) and I've been meaning to write to you about it. There are several poetic images I thought wrought very well, especially the one by Paul at the age of eight, that goes something like this: 'The Quiet plays behind the stars. . . Clouds shape and stain themselves with unnamed colors, shifting before the wonderment of worlds, (something or other) . . . And there is no exhausting, no tiring, no faint farewell of lute—In the untroubled music behind the stars.' Do you recall the opus? I thought it positively wonderful for a child of eight. I am slightly skeptical as to his real age when he wrote it, however. The verse haunts me, really it does! How can such beauty and imagination originate in an eight-year-old brain? (You should read what Hannes Bok had to say about this! Ed.) The closest my eleven-year-old (last month) sister has come to true poetic beauty is a little fragment she quoted spontaneously when we were at the beach last summer: "In the crawling, crawling deep,

Lies a million drownded soldiers,

Fast asleep.

"The grammar . . . of course, but that 'crawling, crawling deep' is distinctly Tennyson, although Mary Helen's read nothing but Poe's 'Annabelle Lee,' Kipling's 'Gunga Din,' and R. W. Service's 'On the Wire' and 'Rhyme of the Restless Ones.'"

From Bernard A. Seufert, of Rochester, New York, at that time a Lieutenant at Camp Pickett, Virginia, now with Eastman Kodak: "Yes, I got Golden Atom and as it arrived just hours before I left for two weeks training in the mountains of West Virginia, I took it along. Well, I was up in the mountains ten days before I had time to even look at it again. It was the best issue I have seen, I am sure, of any fan mag. The poetry selections were excellent—the odyssey of your trip was very excellent. I can't say when I've enjoyed a fan magazine more than I did that time. As I say I'm busy—even nite school here and don't get a chance to read very often. So it was muchly appreciated."



Here's Bernie, Holding up the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the edifice which ushered in the very beginning of the scientific age with Galileo's experiment concerning the speed of falling bodies.

From Elizabeth Starr Cummings, daughter of our famed couple, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Cummings, of New York City: "Thanks for sending along the latest 'Atom.' It was a grand issue, with the notable exception of my schoolgirl poetry. Those things were right off the cob!

(Wish we had a picture of Betty to put in this place. Maybe next number, Betty? We're sure that she is prettier than may be indicated by the fact that the elevator boy thought she was my

sister when I lived at the same hotel in 1942,—this said without any reference whatsoever to my **real** sisters!*

Betty, a poetess, used to be an actress with the "Pepper Young" radio program and, before that, sold a story to "Liberty Magazine" at the age of thirteen! Editor).

Here's Hannes Bok, gay and chipper as ever

From Hannes Bok, artist, writer, of New York City, we had a most intriguing letter of satiric comment in verse form. But I'm afraid it would be too long for this issue, though such superb barbs! However, he did specifically mention as liking the poems by Virgil Finlay, Stanley G. Weinbaum and Donald Wandrei, the Ruminations of a Martian Astronomer, the Lovecraft story notes, and ended up by saying, "I really liked it more than you'd think!"

Fom Harry Warner, Jr., newspaperman and writer, of Hagerstown, Maryland: "I am very, very glad to see Golden Atom, for there was a lot to read in it this time, and I sort of enjoy stretching it out over a fortnight, or more, reading it in spare moments instead of dropping everything else to go through it immediately. Thanks a lot for publishing the Spaceways letters—they're a little late, but nevertheless give me a feeling of having tied up a loose end of the magazine, filled out an incomplete job, that is.

"I'll not comment at length on everything in the issue, but will mention that the Nora French poetry was a very pleasant surprise

*Here they are, Larry's "three little sisters," Nan, Ann and Jo, who helped out in stapling and mailing out Lylda in prewar years, and taking care of orders when we were in the service; pictures show them as bobby-soxer, bridesmaid and bride.

to me, for I can't remember having seen any of her work before, and most of that which you used in GA is excellent. (You must hear about her life sometime, especially in connection with George Sterling, Upton Sinclair, etc. Ed.)

Then your article on the wanderings of a fantasy collector was both interesting and, if you'll pardon my saying so, very amusing. I know such experiences aren't funny to one who's going through them, but you probably have to smile at them yourself, from this distance. (But it was fun, too, and knowing myself as I do, I'd probably get lost in the wilds of Pennsy all over again, for the sake of GA! Ed.) Of course, the near-perfect mimeoing is a real pleasure, and the whole issue vastly enjoyed. May there be many more after the present spot of bother!"

That which you have just read was Harry's letter of twelve years ago. Later on, we were overwhelmed upon our discovery of an article by him, entitled "All Our Yesterdays," for a St. Louis magazine of 1952, consisting of nothing but three pages of nostalgic reminiscences of our "Golden Atom" of ten years before! As he wrote later, on May 1, 1952: "When I wrote that article for Keasler's magazine, I never gave a thought to the possibility that some day you might run across it. I don't think there's ever been another fanzine like Golden Atom, maybe there never will be." As if this wasn't enough, last year, after he heard of our plan to continue "Golden Atom," we were treated to the following:

" I hope that your idea of reviving Golden Atom turns out to be something more than a dream. There are so few fanzines that have come back after suspension, and it would be a dramatic reappearance for one of the very best. There certainly isn't any publisher in the field today that even attempts to do what Golden Atom used to do, as far as I can judge. Golden Atom and other fanzines may not have had better material or more intelligent editing than the best of today's fanzines. But they had an individuality that gave you a pleasant sense of anticipation when you saw a new copy slide through your doorslot, and followed through with a feeling of gratified expectations when you had finished reading the new issue."

From Darrell C. Richardson, noted collector of Covington, Kentucky, and author of "Max Brand: the Man and His Works." "I have No. 1 through 8 and have advertised for years for Nos. 9, 10, 11, 12, not even knowing whether or not such issues appeared. . . as I consider your Golden Atom one of the best fan-zines of all time." (Next issue will be the 12th. Ed).

From Bill Evans, of Salem, Oregon: "Sorry to see Golden Atom leave, it was and still is, tops. It's one mag I can read over and over; never vulgar, never silly, always calm and dignified. Covers good, especially that on No. 9.

"Enjoy your 'ads' in Spaceways; something really interesting in the way of an ad. Really, it's one of the best features of the mag—Spaceways, I mean.

"There isn't much more to add . . . Looking over the file, I notice that it started well and kept improving steadily, not so much in material—most of this was **always** good—but in format and make-up. . . I liked especially the articles and reviews and, of course, the checklist.

"By the ninth issue, Lylda was about perfect—grown up, matured; not too much fiction, good meaty articles, and some of the **best covers I've ever seen.**

"Ave, Lylda, atque vale." (But she bids, Goodmorning! Editor)

MORE EXCERPTS IN BRIEF

From H. C. Koenig, of the Electrical Testing Laboratories, New York City: "Who is this chap, D. Muller? His selection of Lovecraft, Merritt and Owen as 'the only ones I have any faith in—' certainly echoes my own sentiments. Each of them 'tops' in their respective fields of fantasy."

From Mildred Ferland, of Norwood, Mass., our Gregg shorthand correspondent of the time, later in the Air Corps: "I'm not a science fiction fan, but I did enjoy the 'Golden Atom.' It told me more about you than you could have if you had written me your life's story. I did enjoy it and here's to its continuance after the war. How come you never mentioned it before?

"You have mentioned a magazine you published 'for the fun of it'! but you never went into detail. The nearest I've come to it is Editor-in-Chief of the School magazine and that seems nothing in comparison.

"You also mentioned the fact that you collected poetry, but never that you wrote it." (Let's say that I'm trying to make up for it now! Editor).

"Well, guess I've covered GA to the best of my ability and — Dear Ed — with apologies."

We also received letters from Bob Madle, whom we still associate with Philadelphia, although now living in Charlotte, North Carolina, who has been writing a department of reminiscences called "Inside Science Fiction," for **three** newsstand magazines; and from our English correspondent, Harry Turner, who tickled us with the comment: "I think Golden Atom was almost a legend when I started publishing." (Come, now, we're not that old; I just managed to get in on the thirties! Ed.) We also heard from J. Michael Rosenblum, of Leeds, England, to whom we still feel indebted for innumerable issues of his "Futurian War Digest," which he so generously sent to our home address, all through my three years, three months, and three days in the service; from

Douglas Webster, who also edited one of the better English fanzines; and from our Australian correspondent, Graham B. Stone, of Sydney, who now edits the (Australian) "Science Fiction News," with letters which we **just can't find** at the moment!

The late W. Paul Cook, of Montpelier, Vermont, also came through with some well wishes: "The indeed monumental **Golden Atom** has been received, and I anticipate some very enjoyable times with it when I can sit down and read it thoroughly. You are to be very highly commended for your enthusiastic interest. ."

W. Paul Cook's "THE RECLUSE"

(THE VERY FIRST OF THEM ALL IN THE "PRE-WORLD" OF FANDOM)

In answer to a question by Mildred: W. Paul Cook has yet to receive the credit due him as publisher and editor of the very first non-commercial magazine in the science-fantasy field, for his superb "The Recluse" of 1927, a large-size magazine, now probably the very rarest item of all, as only 100 copies were printed: "the realization of a dream, long cherished, of the publication of a magazine to please the producer only . . . Nothing will be paid for contributions, and the magazine will, as have former efforts, be issued as an amateur and money cannot buy it," all copies being given to friends only. (My own copy was secured from Clark Ashton Smith, a telegraphic order of mine beating an air-mail special delivery offer by a rival collector who had somehow gotten wind of developments! Ed.) Your editor had long toyed with the idea of continuing "Golden Atom" again, if only as a sort of token repayment for the generosity of such friends as Paul Cook, who sent us a complimentary copy of everything he published for so many years afterwards. But when a fellow is away from science-fiction for so long and then happens to make a comeback, he is liable to strange surprises; and you can imagine the shock with which we first read on August 12, 1952, of Cook's passing away, several years before this. (No wonder an attempt to renew correspondence had proved unavailing, which should point out a moral or two, about taking time for granted, on our part.)

One of "The Recluse" items, which has been twice reprinted in book form since, by August Derleth's Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin, (as a book in itself and in "The Outsider and Others"), was the feature, H. P. Lovecraft's superb essay, "Supernatural Horror in Literature." This scholarly essay traces the "literature of cosmic fear" from its dawn to the present day, summarizing and reviewing all the important works of this type, including Captain Marryat's "The Phantom Ship," Emily Bronte's "Wuthering Heights," Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The House of the Seven

Gables," Robert W. Chambers' "The King in Yellow," Irvin S. Cobb's "Fishhead," (later to be noted for the movie, "Judge Priest," with Will Rogers), and the modern masters, Frank Belknap Long, Jr., Clark Ashton Smith, etc., besides Blackwood, Bierce, Machen, M. R. James, and similar titans.

Another of the items was Donald Wandrei's "A Fragment of a Dream," ("From every side as he passed came, low and elusive, the rhythmic cadences, a mournful litany from the susurrous grass, All the plain seemed weeping at his passing, and he became filled with a desire to rush through the trackless extent and soothe the crying of the grass. But there rose before his eyes the shadowy, haunting beauty of Loma. . . And the plain was a thing that, having lived, had died.")

There was also material by Clark Ashton Smith, H. Warner Munn, Frank Belknap Long, Jr., Samuel Loveman, and a checklist of George Sterling.

* * *

We haven't even begun to quote from all the letters received after the tenth issue. There were also such superb comments in the 26th Fapa mailing that I can't resist quoting a few lines:

From Larry Shaw: "Far surpassed my expecations, and I expected quite a lot." From D. B. Thompson: "A monumental issue; congratulations! For the first time, the trials and tribulations of the searcher after rare items, as described by Farsace, have awakened a feeling of kinship within us. This issue should be of real value to Lovecraft fans."

From Roscoe E. Wright: "Beyond a doubt the best thing in the mailing." From A. Langley Searles, critic: "A good issue—and I don't particularly care for poetry, either." From Norm Stanley: "All most intensely interesting stuff, this collector's tales and travels. News to me was word of C. A. Brandt's death. His book reviews were a feature that I used to enjoy reading in the old **Amazing.**"

From James L. Kepner: "I enjoyed the travelog very much. Somehow, I can't quite get the knack of interesting reporting myself (that from a fan who desires to make his living by writing.) The poetry was excellent, **Poet's Lament** being among the best fan poems I have read as yet. (You should read what Hannes had to say about this! Ed.) The poems by Lovecraft, Smith, Sterling and French, as well as the HPL notes, were well worth the cost of membership in FAPA. Or ought I to use less mercenary examples?"

From Mel Brown and Mike Fern: "Easily the best in the mailing. This is our idea of the ideal magazine." From "Intelligence Quotient"; "Certainly the best in the mailing. I enjoyed this publication so much, that further comment on it seems superfluous. I can only add that I fervently hope this will not be the last one."

From Francis T. Laney, who carried on where we left off in regards to Lovecraft and Barlow, after our tenth issue: "This is absolutely magnificent. Critical comment is pointless when everything is so good, but I believe that **The Last Martian**, by Weinbaum, the Lovecraft story notes, and the hunting experiences of the Very Young Man proved most enjoyable. I'm going to be very much vexed if you don't publish this magazine after the war."

What really amazed your editor was the almost complete lack of "Kics," even though the tenth issue, which had quite a bit of poetry, was for an audience not particularly poetry-loving! Actually, the only barbs we drew came from that letter by Bok (though he did follow through with such soothing ointment!), and such lines as: "The only real faults I can find with it are the tendency of the last pages to come unfastened; and such flaws are minor when overbalanced with a plethora of such magnificent material," this also by Laney.

So you lucky people better come through with some "Kics," (and also some "Pics"), for our next issue; or we may be tempted to change the name of this department to something like "Orchids for Lylda"!

Already, A Prevue Comment on This Issue

This is one time when we can cross a bridge before we get to it, for here is a letter from Mrs. Frances Slocombe, of Rochester, to whom we are also indebted for helping us to select the right pictures, before "Lylda" went to press:

"FRANCES"

"To say I was thrilled on being the first to read the pages of 'Golden Atom' would be putting it mildly. You know, of course, that I am not a science fiction fan. At least, up to now, I never even heard of such a hobby and certainly never realized that it could be so exciting.

"It's just like entering into a brand new world. To the average person, who has never heard of 'science fiction,' it would seem like a cut and dried out subject, but to a newcomer fortunate enough to have been introduced to it through 'Golden Atom' there is an appeal which certainly cannot be denied.

"It's something indefinable, a quality completely new to me. Already I feel as if 'Lylda' is an old friend I've always known. Please—don't stop!"

Down to Earth Foods and Recipes

No. 1. THE ARTICHOKE

Typically a product of this, the third planet of our well-known though minor star, Sol, the artichoke was at one time considered a luxury food, having its first recorded origin in Naples about 1400 A. D. . Now, however, it has become a favorite in countless homes throughout the world and has been successfully gaining its place as a preferred food. Even children will often ask for the "artichoke bottoms," (cleaned of their tops of delicate grasslike "fuzz"), after their parents have shown them how to eat the tender lower part of each leaf.

Since taste is practically impossible to describe, when there is hardly any comparison, that will have to be left to your first experience, if you are not already a happy initiate. But, by all means, do not let your introduction be in the form of the canned product which is completely tasteless in comparison.

A favorite method of preparation is to slice the tops across evenly, discarding them, then washing the artichokes and stuffing them with a mixture of bread crumbs, garlic seasoning and grated fresh Italian cheese. After this they are put in a pan where about a half inch of water is already boiling. About a teaspoon of olive oil is sprinkled on each artichoke, after which they are covered and cooked with a low flame for abut thirty minutes.

We will now await the reaction of any interested readers who may consider this recipe in the nature of an experiment if it is their first time.

PERSONALITY PORTRAITS

No. 1—Rosalie, of Birmingham

First Heartbreak

A day of moving led to childhood grief,
A dream of school days, shattered by the stroke
Of bitter circumstance, that heartless thief
Who stole such joys. It almost made her choke.
For she had longed with all her little heart
To go to school as soon as she was six;
Her brother's talk had made their teacher part
Of childhood dreams, where grace and goodness mix.

She was a woman who was sheer delight,
A joy to know whom she had found was true,
So that her first two weeks were like a height
Of love from which she fell, when they were through.
They had to move; (How loud her heart could sigh!
As with her arms she hugged a tree to cry.)

(December 30, 1950)

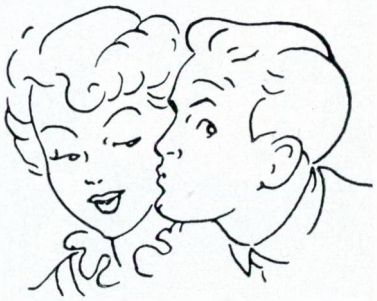
At Twenty-Two

You'd never know that once she had been shy,
A blushing girl of six in class at school,
With stagefright like a new moon in the sky,
Each time she had to quote a rhyme or rule.
Her cheeks grew red beneath her pretty eyes,
For there was hidden love for all concerned;
I'm sure her teacher didn't realize
Quite all the childhood worship she had earned.
Today she is a miss of twenty-two,
As lovely as a southern belle can be,
No longer ill at ease when out in view,
But charming with her life and gayety,
While flashing dimples and an impish gleam
Contribute to the modern young man's dream!

(The above portrait of a sister-in-law, Rosalie, is our idea of a general-interest type department. Possibly, with your submissions, we could continue this feature. Send your favorites in; and they don't have to be poems or photographs.)

The First Love

By **MICHAEL MONAHAN**



(Often, in doing research on science-fiction, we come upon other items which linger in our memory, unforgettably. This brief love story is one such instance. It appeared in the May, 1909, issue of "The Papyrus," "A Magazine of Individuality," published by Michael Monahan, in East Orange, New Jersey, probably the most popular little magazine ever published in the years from 1903 to 1914 or so, when it continued as "The Phoenix."

He was to East Orange what Elbert Hubbard was to East Aurora, New York. In its pages appeared original material by Rudyard Kipling, Edwin Markham, Jack London, Charles Baudelaire, Andrew Lang, William Butler Yeats, Lafcadio Hearn, as well as George Sterling and Benjamin DeCasseres, probably the very earliest evidence of writers who were later to be associated with "the Lovecraft circle" of science-fantasy, especially through Clark Ashton Smith.

Typical Monahan items: "Love is a madness, but even the wise agree that it is worth all the wisdom in the world."

"The inner life has its joys and consolations, and very precious they are, but forget not that the more you seek them, the less becomes your chance of success in the world outside."

This particular story also brings to mind two which were written at a later date: Stephen Vincent Benet's "Too Early Spring," and August Derleth's "Evening in Spring." Actor George Murphy had the right idea when he said, after being interviewed by high school editors: "Kids . . . hate the mushy love scenes in movies. I remember when I was a kid. I would walk in front of my girl's house. If she happened to look out the window, I got a terrific thrill.")

A man never forgets his first love, however early in life it may have come to him; through all the ensuing years he bears this precious blue flower of the heart. Even amid the storms of later passion, or the tranquil joys of an assured love, it keeps its unseen, mysterious, marvelous life. However the heart may burn, it still has dew enough for this unfading blossom; however happy and content it may be in another love, yet has it a secret longing which only this can appease.

Is it not astonishing how early we begin to love—as if Nature had no other use for us? I can scarcely remember a time, however distant in my childhood, when I was not in love with somebody. Ah, do not think those earliest troubles of the heart are to be smiled at as children's play. Innocent though they were, what exquisite pain they caused us! What cruel unhappiness, since to be young and unhappy seems to be a special malignancy of fate! What ineffable longings, that our childish minds vainly sought to understand! What torments of jealousy, which the storms of mature passion have been impotent to efface! Mamie! The name will never lose is magic for me and to the end it will continue to be whispered from my dreams. And to think I have now a daughter older than she was when I first saw and loved her. O time the inexorable!

She was twelve and I sixteen when we tasted together the poignant sweets of young passion, the delicious fruit of that one forbidden tree in the earthly Eden which to eat and enjoy humanity will ever gladly face exile and death.

Yet Mamie was only a little girl just entering her teens, though developed like a child madonna and, as I was to know, with feelings beyond her years. I have never seen anything like the proud beauty of her face with its glorious hazel eyes, rich brown and red cheek like a ripe fruit, and scarlet sensitive mouth, all framed in a setting of dark auburn hair.

I pause to smile a little at this fervid description, but you will understand that I am trying to look into the Boy's heart and write what I find there. That this Fairy Princess of love was only a little household drudge kept from school and slaving all day for her large German mother married the second time to a small German tailor who had a younger daughter of his own by this said mother for whom he evinced an unpleasing preference,— these things may hold well enough together in a world of hard facts, but the Boy saw them through the lens of his romantic imagination. And so complete was the illusion that after more than twenty-five years the Man cannot easily shake it off.

The very beginning of it I can't remember—perhaps we never do recall those first obscure intimations of a passion. I have a delicious but confused memory of long evening walks with her and the little sister—she, as I recollect with an old pang, was nearly always with us. It was summer and the place was an old New England town with a narrow river spanned by quaint bridges flowing through the midst of it. I have known love since,—ah me! —and real passion, the kind that consumes a man's life as flame licks up oil; but never again have I known any thing to compare with that young dream.

Crossing one of these bridges on a certain evening sacred to the angels of Memory and Joy, the little sister stopped behind not more than a minute to tie her shoe; and we had our first kiss! (The Man trembles at the remembrance). I did not ask for it—I feared her, that is, loved her too much; and she knew no more of coquetry than a babe. So far as I can be sure, the impulse was at once mutual, natural and irresistable. O clinging dewy mouth! O young heart fluttering wildly against mine!—when have I ever drunk at so pure a fount of joy! . . .

After that our evening walks were mostly made up of kisses, for the little sister (she was nine) had to be let into the secret, and as I recall with some surprise, she never betrayed us. This was the more to her credit, seeing that she was only a half-sister and the favorite child. But not even a little girl of nine can bear to see another getting all the kisses, and so she would be vexed sometimes and cry pettishly, "Oh kiss, kiss!—why don't you get married?" Then I would appease her with candy or a promise of something nice,—and we would enjoy our subsequent kisses all the more for the little interruption. Oh far years, wafting to me a faint scent of lilac! Oh youth that is no more! . . .

This lasted a whole summer,—the only entire season, the Man freely admits, that he ever passed in Paradise. Could he now go back through the crowding years, I am very sure that he would make a bee-line for that old New England town and with a heart thumping in his throat, look for a beloved little figure on one of the quaint bridges in the summer gloaming.

Here the Boy tugs at my sleeve and asks me not to tell the prosaic occasion of those twilight walks with Mamie and little sister; the same being that the tailor sent them every night but Sunday (ah, those heart-hungry Sunday nights!) for a pint of beer and often chided them for bringing it home flat. He, the Boy, is quite sullen when I try to make him understand that this homely detail but adds to the pathos of his romance. Stubborn Boy indeed... and the Man not so much better!

I had to leave the little town at the end of that summer of love and so suddenly that there was no chance to bid her good-bye. Once again, and only once, I saw her afterward when about two years later I visited the place. On our dear bridge, too, and with little sister grown formidably larger, and more knowing. She came defiantly between us at once and I saw with a sinking heart that we dared not renew the old love-making. Mamie was taller, paler and, as I thought,—I mean the Boy,—lovely as an angel. I scarcely remember a word that she said to me—the constraint of

"There is nothing wrong with America that the faith, love of freedom, intelligence and energy of her citizens cannot cure."

—Dwight D. Eisenhower

the sister's presence checked us both. I think she was chilled too by the fact that my visit was to be only for a few days; and she doubtless realized the truth, that I was passing out of her life. Never have I been more wretched than during that last walk with Mamie.

On leaving her I mustered up my courage and ignoring little sister, whose eyes were bright with malice, offered to kiss her. She turned her cheek toward me, saying calmly: "I am going to be confirmed on Sunday."

That cold kiss is my last memory of Mamie, of the warm loving child-woman whose mere name, seen or heard, causes my heart to thrill as when a boy. I never saw her again. . .

Where is she now? God knows: yet in no worse place, I trust, than that consoling heaven of our dreams where the precious things of the heart that we have lost in our journey through life are restored to us; and most dear and precious of all; our first love.

Don't skim pages to save time, you don't."—James Hilton, in "Lost Horizon."

For Science-Fiction Collectors Only

(Mimeographed Item)

We almost forgot, but copies are still aavailable of the one and only SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM, Winter, 1940, fifty pages, counting unnumbered cover insert, largest fan magazine up to that time; sale at $ a copy. Featured article was "Fantasy is Growing Up," by P. Schuyler Miller, author and reviewer, now running "The Reference Library" department in "Astounding Science Fiction."

Other articles and fiction by Sam Moskowitz, (editor of the late "Science Fiction Plus"), Henry Hasse, (author of that "golden atom tale," "He Who Shrank"), with his "The Sublime Challenge," and our good friend, Bernard A. Seufert, with "Final Flight." Departments include, What They Consider Their Best Stories, Their Pre-Publication Titles, Unique Items for the Collector and The Fantasy Record: Men Who Make the "Argosy." Book Reviews told of "The Fallen Race," (1892), "Lenawa, the Sky Magician," (1870), "Wilmoth, the Wanderer," (1888), and "The Pallid Giant," (1927), which was later reprinted with an introduction by none other than statesman and presidential adviser (Wilson to Roosevelt), Bernard M. Baruch. There was also an article on the fabulous Buffalo bookstore.

We never even tried to sell this, after the enthusiastic letters about "Golden Atom" started coming in. Copies were pushed aside and almost completely forgotten with all the fuss made over "Lylda.". However, maybe it was fate to save them for a slightly rainy day. Sometimes things happen for the best. I can't find the folder with the comments right now—I know we had some by H. C. and Sammy—but here's one from a letter by Ray J. Sienkiewicz, of Scranton, Pa.: "Twenty seven features, all in one magazine. Well balanced with not too much fiction, articles, poems, or reviews. A truly 'Dream Fan-Mag'!", and one from Henry D. Goldman: "The first issue of SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM was a honey and certainly covered all phases of fandom."

Let me also add: There was also a humor-section by "Ame Erritt," (a sequel to "The Conquest of the Moon Pool"), and "O. Migosh!", (also Henry Hasse, if you must know!)

* * *

For the record: We must not forget the beautiful blue "ATOMS FOR PEACE" stamp, (July 28th), with the words, "To find the way by which the inventiveness of man shall be consecrated to his life."

"STAR-BOUND" (Continued from Page 73)

wouldn't be surprised if I was able to repeat them all from memory, I've read them—and reread them so much. I'm sure it will be one of my cherished possessions."

We kept advertising this, (Jacksonville, Florida), wartime booklet, "Star-Bound," in various college papers until 400 of the 500 printed were sold, then hated to completely sell out! However, we will tearfully let a few copies go at a dollar each. (A poet should meet a bit of loose change somewhere in the world—**as a poet,** that is!) Across the years, we wish to thank our printer, Robert E. Lane, who took such a personalized interest, ("I have been as nervous as a bride about this book because I wanted it just right for you.")

"Star-Bound" also contains a reprint of "Sky-Worlds," the first poem purchased by "Famous Fantastic Mysteries," (May-June, 1940), breaking their no-poetry policy! The cover of our sixth issue of "Golden Atom," in 1940, was drawn by Jean Finlay, sister of our famous artist, Virgil Finlay, also from Rochester, to illustrate one of the lyrics—this mentioned just to show a connection with "Golden Atom"!

But please don't rush forward. This is one time when we did get a bit of criticism from almost every fellow who did not write poetry himself, strangely enough. But glory be, nothing but pretty wild flowers from every one of the girls!

Incidentally, we have followed a bit of most intimate advice (in quoting from the above "fan mail,") given to us so repeatedly when being entertained by the Finlays in their delightful Brooklyn apartment one night: "Why publish anybody else's poetry, Larry? You've **got** to blow your own horn—**nobody** else will."

THE GIFT

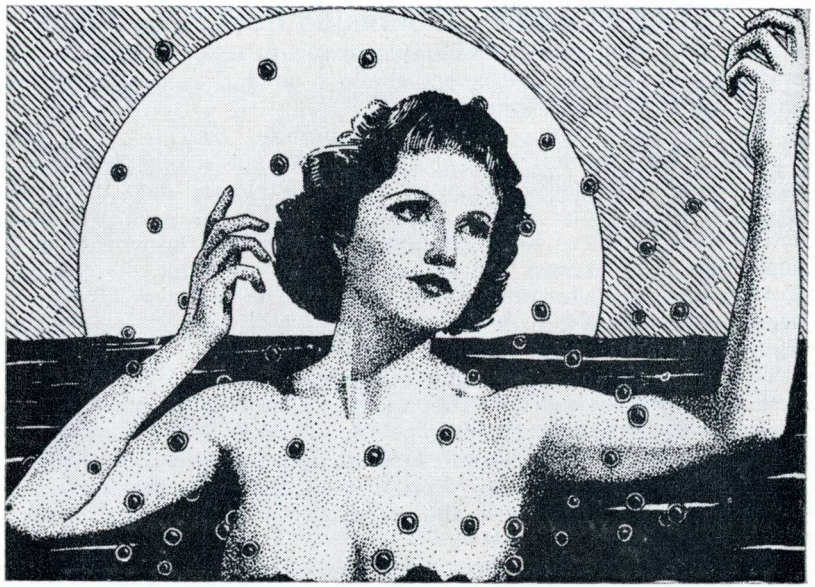
By DON BARTHOLOMEW

(Don Bartholomew was a most dynamic individual who visited us some years back, testing our susceptibility to a then current fad known as Dianetics, which we had for a time been enthusiastic about, admiring its fine points against such things as frontal lobotomy, but which we had later just as enthusiastically ripped apart, condemning it to practically the same regions as astrology.

He didn't sell us on the subject.

However, that doesn't mean that we didn't fall in love with his four line poem, which we are proud to present herewith!)

To each, is given
One priceless possession:
The eternal right
To believe in himself.



A POEM TO DREAM ON

For the following, our poetry reprint, we wish to give credit to "The Deventioneer Alchemist," published by Lew Martin, (now at M.I.T.), for the Third World Science Fiction Convention, held in Denver, in 1941. Imagine such sheer perfection in such perfect obscurity!

Illustration is by our "Golden Atom" reader, Tom Wright, from his one-shot "Dawn," published at the time of our last issue in Spring, 1943.

Clark Ashton Smith, an original contributor to Hersey's "The Thrill Book," needs no introduction to many of our readers. To others, let me say that he has written some of the most beautiful poetry and poetic tales it has been our good fortune to discover anywhere, poems which have appeared in Stanton A. Coblentz's "Wings," and anthologized by August Derleth, and unforgettable stories, such as "A Night in Malneant," "The Willow Landscape," and "The City of Singing Flame."

You will not find Mr. Smith in "The Saturday Evening Post;" neither will you find there poetry with such uncompromising ecstasy of emotion as the following:

WIZARD'S LOVE

By Clark Ashton Smith

O perfect love, unhoped-for, past despair!
I had not thought to find
Your face betwixt the terrene earth and air:
But deemed you lost in fabulous old lands
And rose-lit years to darkness long resigned.
O child, you cannot know
What magic and what miracles you bring
Between your dulcet breasts, your tender hands;
What lethal wound your balmy lips have healed;
What griefs are lulled to blissful slumbering
Cushioned upon your deep and fragrant hair;
What gall-black bitterness of long ago,
Within my bosom sealed,
Ebbs gradually as might some desert well
Under your body's heaven, warm and fair,
And the green suns of your vertumnal eyes.

O beauty wrought of rapture and surprise,
Too dear for heart to know, or tongue to tell!
Now more and more you seem
Fantasy turned to flesh, incarnate dream.
Surely I called you with consummate spell
In desperate, forgotten wizardries,
With signs and sigils of dead goeties,
With evocations born of blood and pain,
But deemed forever vain.
Surely you came to me of yore, among
The teeming spectors amorous
With faces veiled and splendid bosoms bare,
That filled my sleep with fever and delight
In ever-desolate years when love was young.

For all your heart and flesh are sib to me,
And in my soul's profound,
Your face, and irrevocable pearl,
Is ultimately drowned.
So thus, delicious girl!
In love's foredestined weal and fated woe,
I hold you now and shall not let you go.

Hold Tight for "FASCINATING"

"A Magazine of General Interest"

Introducing "Be With Me," a song that needs only a little publicity — already praised by "The Four Aces," but at a time when we had agent trouble. (Let's hear from you again if you read this!)

We did intend, (and with the best of recommendations from a keypoint in Birmingham, Alabama), to get an ex-Miss America, (one who also has musical aspirations and who, as we understand it, was first discovered by a photographer from our own Eastman Kodak while on vacation at Mobile), to "see great possibilities" in "Be With Me," but ran against a wall of financial considerations instead, her company, of course—Honestly now, could you afford to pay $500 for three little words?

(Besides, we'd rather have something spontaneous anyway!)

Melody by Sam Profetta, lyrics by yours truly.

This will be our sidekick venture: A Yankee-Dixie Publication, same address as "Golden Atom."

WORDS WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG

(COMMENTS FROM OUR EARLY DAYS)

From MARY GNAEDINGER, editor of "Famous Fantastic Mysteries": You mention us on several different pages which is very gratifying, indeed. You couldn't have given us a better send-off and the Munsey Company wants to wish you all the success in the world in your venture.

Later: Your sketches of the stories are very good advertising copy. I should think you could go into the book advertising field quite painlessly. I referred your book to our advertising department, to lift some juicy phrases, and good working surveys of the stories.

I don't know how strong I made my first statement about the way the reprinting of "The Girl in the Golden Atom" was received. It was apparently tremendously satisfying.

Bob Davis had the same response, of course, when it was first published. In both cases letters came in immediately from delighted and grateful readers.

From JOHN W. CAMPBELL, JR., editor of "Astounding Science Fiction," (who was also in our 7th issue): The difficulty of getting good fiction material for a fan magazine always seemed to

be a considerable problem in the fan field, it seems to me. I will be interested to see what future issues of Golden Atom can do in this line. (Here's hoping you're still as interested! Ed.)

From CLARK ASHTON SMITH, poet-author, of California: I had meant to write and express my appreciation of Golden Atom. Keep up the good work.

IN THE FUTURE

"FEMININE MAGIC," a story by Col. David H. Keller, (whose "The Psychophonic Nurse," was recently dramatized on TV), will be in our next issue—although "Golden Atom" has not been primarily a vehicle for stories. However, after reading this quite humorous tale by a master story teller, whom many will recall as "the Good Doctor," (See his "Tales from Underwood," Arkham House), we just had to make an exception in this case. A subsequent rereading, together with the Mrs., confirmed that original inclination, and so we are happy to present the second story "Golden Atom" has ever accepted for publication. (The only other tale appeared in the first issue, while we were still formulating a policy).

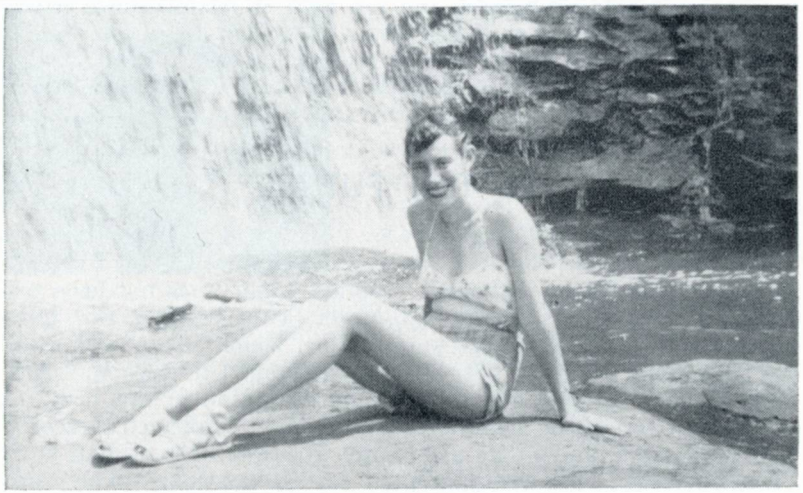
Newcomers to the field have no idea of the tremendous popularity of "the Kelleryarns," (several of them O. Henry Memorial Award stories), with their psychology, their concern for people as such, and their everyday problems in an age of progress, at a time when most stories emphasized a scientific gadget or concept, often at the expense of characterization or human insight.

We also have original material by:

AUGUST DERLETH, the man who has done more than anyone else to rescue the works of such writers as H. P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Greye La Spina and Donald Wandrei, from the comparative obscurity of pulp magazines, through his Arkham House publishing venture, author of such memorable books as "Evening in Spring," (one of our favorites: "the romance of the placid Margery and the imaginative, tempestuous Steve— who would grow up to be 'a rational man, but perhaps never happy' ", a chapter of which appeared in "Coronet"), "Shield of the Valiant," "Wind Over Wisconsin," and "Country Growth," (Scribner's), and whose stories have been widely reprinted and rated most highly in the O'Brien anthologies of best short stories.

What we have is an article, but it is by a writer of whom John Cournos of "The New York Sun" said: "d serves to be noticed in a day when toughness and four-letter words are subtstituted for

(Continued on Page 95)



APPARENT ATTRACTION

(A rose is a rose is a rose—as an oldtime poet once said. A poem, however, may be more than a poem. It may sometimes have a story, and Mary Jo of Georgia, who inspired the following lyric, was quite intriguing with such admissions that she was well-known in the hillbilly world under the show name of a famed electric steel guitar player—kidding, of course, but it's funny how a fellow likes to believe the impossible!)

I like a girl
Sedate and sweet,
Who is precise
And very neat,

Who does not waver
Nor beguile,
And can be trusted
All the while.

And yet my fancies
Turn to one
Whose only thoughts
Are having fun.

Who slyly winks
Her eyes at me
And has
An impish quality.

LOVE IN CONTRAST

Girls marry and outgrow their teen-age skates,
And yet I know girls who have not outgrown
Their wide-eyed innocence, although they've known
The best of bliss and more fulfillment waits.

Each lives appreciative of just one man
And makes a heaven for him in her arms,
While he in turn dissolves her least alarms
As only kisses born of trusting can.

Yet there are those who turn to emptiness
Before they have known what the word love means;
They make a mockery of all their teens
And sell themselves pretense at happiness

Beneath the trudge of many men who give
Bewilderment where love could never live.

IN THE FUTURE (Continued from Page 93)

art. Derleth's art is delicate, often exquisite, rich with that poetry which alone can deal with intangibles."

STANTON A. COBLENTZ, publisher of "Wings," the foremost classic-type poetry magazine in the country; and author of such delightful satires, as "The Blue Barbarians," "The Sunken World," and "When the Birds Fly South," so reminiscent in style to W. H. Hudson's "Green Mansions."

BARONESS GREYE LA SPINA, author of the first story in the first issue of "The Thrill Book," the first science-fantasy magazine ever published, and who wrote such delicately eerie stories as "The Wax Doll," and "Great Pan is Here."

CHAPLAIN DARRELL C. RICHARDSON, one of the country's most noted collectors and author of "Max Brand: the Man and His Works," (to which "Time Magazine" devoted a three-column review in its August 25, 1952, issue).

There will also be material by Paul Spencer, textbook editor, and Arthur J. Burks, well-known writer. We are also on the trail of an early story by H. G. Wells, which has never been reprinted and is not to be found in his "Complete Works," a fact which should be of interest to libraries. If not successful we'll let you in on the story anyway!

The only problem, (since we hate to disturb Charlie Hickox out of his retirement!), is getting suitable illustrations. Maybe we should run a contest for this purpose, but a hint to the artists

should be sufficient! Rates on request.

To all: If you have enjoyed this issue of "Golden Atom," show it to others whom you feel would be interested, and don't forget to send for our next issue, with the conclusion to Harold Hersey's article, and "Feminine Magic," by Colonel Keller. Also, don't forget our PICS & KICS!

JUST PLAIN LUCK AND A THANK-YOU

By the way, if you think this magazine is based on luck and coincidences, how right you are! To begin with, it's just an accident that you are reading this—as is, at the time you are, and with the photos you see—since, while getting off the bus one day, on the way back from a studio, our attention was called by a friend, and our G. A. brief case, with everything in it, was completely forgotten. (That's the trouble with carrying more than one bundle! It was a co-worker who had just noticed me and had called to tell of a column by Henry W. Clune, columnist and author, about my science-fiction collection, which had appeared in an issue of the Sunday "Democrat & Chronicle," while we had been away on vacation).

I thought, for sure, that was the end of "Golden Atom."

(How many a beloved project has also been lost, in much the same way, in the past?) (Continuel on next page)

I LOVE A VERY PRETTY GIRL

I love a very pretty girl,
Who likes me very much;
I love a very pretty girl,
And love her gentle touch.

She likes to merely sit and talk,
Is satisfied with tea;
She likes to go out for a walk,
As long as she's with me.

And sometimes there's a spe-
cial joy,
Like sodas and ice cream,
A treat for just a girl and boy,
Who live in love's young dream.

I love a very pretty girl,
Who makes the most of tea;
I love a very special girl,
Who only cares for me.

The Golden Atom Publication, "Be With Me," from which the above lyric was taken, is available for twenty-five cents. If you have a craving for light lyrics, you can't go wrong.

But fate was really kind that day and the public heartwarmingly honest. So you can imagine how happy I was to see that brief case back again, representing everything you have been seeing and reading, safe and sound, in the hands of the driver, a Mr. Theodore Hartman, of the Rochester Transit Corporation, whom we want to thank all over again!

All comments are welcome, even after a handful of years. We are considering a prize for the most interesting letter in our future PICS AND KICS department. (We'll try not to be influenced by any pictures. Constructive suggestions welcome.)

LAST MINUTE COMMENTS

From John Wasso, Jr.: "This is good news!" From Arthur Jean Cox: "The Hersey article sounds very interesting, indeed!"

Famous writer Robert Bloch says, "Fabulous!"

From E. A. Grosser: "I am very pleased to see you back in the publishing of such magazines, and hope that you will continue—even if only as an annual.

"Robert A. Madle's reports, (INSIDE SCIENCE FICTION), in Future Science Fiction are certainly very helpful, and, as he says, Hersey's article must be a real scoop. I wish you the best of success." (Continued on next page)

PARDON OUR "NEW YORK NEWS" ABOUT GOLDEN ATOM

In one of the advance circulars we mentioned that, by a coincidence, there was a "Golden Atom" item in the same issue of the "News" for March 29, which had the following by Danton Walker:

"Degravitation, regarded as a more important scientific contribution even than the atom bomb, has been achieved in one of Uncle Sam's hush-hush military experiments (degravitation permits an object, regardless of weight, to remain suspended in mid-air) . . ." (Somehow, we couldn't help thinking of Dr. Edward E. Smith's "The Skylark of Space," of of the major s-f landmarks of 1928, after this).

Well, later on, we discovered that the dates had been mixed up. It wasn't "Golden Atom" in the March 29th issue, but just a letter of ours commenting on a vivid short story entitled, "Forever and Ever." The "Golden Atom" item, "Science Marches On," turns out to have been in the March 24th issue.

There has been entirely too much talk against a person's better nature, as if to indicate that it is a crime or a sin for a person to think too highly of himself. This has often led to someone's being cynical of not only his own self, but everyone else, a warped conception of life that could so easily have been prevented if his life's companions had had a clearer conception of reality and the realization that love for others must necessarily start with self-respect for one's self.

We didn't see "Future" until after this, and Bob Madle's comments were certainly gratifying, giving just an inkling of Lylda's appeal, with such a statement as: "Golden Atom ('s) . . . revival issue will feature one of the most fabulous scoops in all (science fiction) publishing history."

GUIDING LIGHTS (AND PRIZES)

We hope that "Golden Atom" changes the atmosphere of your day to a golden brightness.

Don't forget: We enjoy reading of your pleasure and will appreciate any constructive criticism. Also, let us know how you like our manner of presenting the subject of science-fantasy, especially if you are reading about it for the first time.

Any good snapshots accompanying letters for the PICS & KICS department will be considered for publication. There is also a standing prize of $10.00 for any suitable one accepted as the "Golden Atom Girl" of the year.

THE ULITIMATE PARADOX

We're nothing . . . yet everything.

When I feel depressed and low,
Man is a shadow on the planet,
Living off the green growing things,
Trying to upset the delicate balance of earth.

But when my wishes triumph,
He becomes more than mortal dust:

I see his mind flash heavenward,
And he is himself more than just a seeker of stars,
But the very reason for their existence!

Putting Our Best Hopes Forward

We hope you have enjoyed your date with "Lylda." It's really a rare occasion, and memorable, since we're sure you will agree that she is a beauty of infinite awareness that no one would otherwise know.

For "Golden Atom" is really more than meets the eye, and its value should not be underestimated because of size. We could, indeed, be at the beginning of a new Golden Age. After all, it is not every time and place that will make possible a glass to uplift human observation, and to achieve better understanding among people.

As stated in one of our advance circulars, we have brought you to the world of science fiction, "but it is only one reflection of our tremendous interest in life and people, only one facet of the golden atomic age we would help bring into reality. For the ideal is not merely a matter of science. It is also a matter of anticipations and of warm human qualities.

"Our ultimate goal is a glowing awareness in the great possibilities of man, a greater appreciation of beauty wherever found, and the wonder of life that can be found even in the smallest things, whether outside, in the home, socially speaking, in oneself, or in the infinitesimally small. There is a fear of the unknown, but the atom can also be harnessed for good."

If possible, we would sow stars along the way of life. But that can

only come with a two-fold appreciation and, who knows, even an ideal may be possible!

In the first place, there must be the realization that nothing one loves is ever outdated. So as our background there is ever the viewpoint of one who has drawn long-range values of love and inspiration from the stability of a happy home life. (No science fiction at best can lose sight of this. That's why we like Keller and, even the realism of such novels as Orwell's "1984" and Huxley's "Brave New World" is due to the realization that such values as these might be lost if so-called "science" is enthroned at the expense of man's freedom. Real science must, paradoxically, spring forth from man's heart.) So you need not fear that our trend of likes and dislikes will necessarily follow the circulation figures of a magazine or a current style of writing.

Secondly, one must take for granted the apparent impossible. Let's admit to an appreciation of the classical, as well as the best of the popular, not only in literature, but also in music and art. After all, life is a combination of both the gentle and the fierce. It's true that we should nourish the intellect, but yet not at the expense of our honest emotions.

Somehow, the best things seem always to be paradoxes, science and fiction, fantasy and fact, action and rest, anticipations and reminiscences, the experience of age and the curiosity about things and enthusiasm which is the mark of youth . . . the delight of recognition between friends and the vast anonymity of downtown crowds, so necessary for commerce, yet how often nourished to inhuman extremes (and brought home to neighborhoods which could be as friendly as some we've known down south!) . . . poetry periodicals on the one hand, read by so few, and art magazines on the other, thought of as separate entities, although one of the latter may feature a tantalizing glimpse of beauty which was, (or who was), the inspiration for a gem-like poem! Is there always to be a void between an entertainer earning millions per year and a scientist who may not earn more than a poet who has to work at a menial job? One should not take the recluse, nor the overly popular whose days are brimming over with engagements, as ideal, yet, by the same token, the ideal should have qualities of both.

Surely, there must be a happy point of compromise between the practical, (let's be down to earth with a book of recipes), and the "impractical." (After all, freedom for the common man was once an "impractical" dream in some imaginative poem). Let us say that such a happy point of awareness . . . this concept of timely and timeless enjoyment . . . a lively, yet unhurried publication . . . is our intention from the very start!

Actually, you can say that our chief attraction to science fiction was its emphasis on the worth of creative imagination, which we would like to see displayed in all other spheres of life. At least, that was the original picture. So, just as this original attraction of science fiction was its apparent blend of science and literature, (though it turned out to be largely pseudoscience!), so, too, do we now try to fit our unlimited interests into such a microcosmic space!

We want to set the atmosphere for the encouragement of bright and fascinating societies. There's no denying that wonderful associations often lead to great works, but at the same time there must be the development and awareness of great audiences, too!

Has it been worth it? Not financially speaking, not when an edition of 1200 copies has cost us over $1500.00!, not that we intended to spend

that much. But it seems that "Golden Atom" just grew and grew, and this came at a time when our pin-up dolls, Marilyn and Diane, (whom you have seen in a fantasy of imagining apple pie as cold cream!), were going through the stage of waking up with such happy, high-toned baby sounds! It's too late now. They have passed from that stage into the more reserved, yet equally joyous time of young girlhood. A sound recorder would have been so welcome then, to record such moments, now lost beyond recall. But at the same time there were bills for a printed "Golden Atom," and the choice had already been made, (just as once before there had been another choice at the expense of "science-fantasy"!)

(But such is life and the material of books . . . so often forgotten in an attic when they could be the stuff of life, a catalyst for bringing happier societies of people into reality.)

Neither can the value of the time spent be underestimated. But by reviving "Golden Atom" as an annual, we thought that this work could be kept in its place without too much interference with family activities, (and bedtime stories). Indeed, that was our plan, as stated in our letter to Harold on May 13, 1952. But even so, there has been comparatively little time for such creative work, even though it has always been a vital need with us, especially with the thought of a live, appreciative and fascinating audience, our admitted weakness!

This lack of time, due to priorities of daily living with its more immediate interests and responsibilities, can really be frustrating. For example, consider the following: For several years now, after reading an item about Dr. Einstein, in the newspapers of January 2, 1942, we had been planning to write and ask his opinion of science fiction, if he had actually read any stories of that nature, such as H. G. Wells, if he had any favorites, etc. But we never did find the opportune time to write, even though the idea was somewhere on the horizon of our mind for over twelve years!

In retrospect now, I wonder what he would have thought of "Golden Atom"? I have the feeling that he would have found "Lylda" of great interest, since he was not only fascinated by science, but was also aware of the attraction of beautiful women, (and as you see, we do try to dress up our pages suitably, our cover model, Irene McKinley, having been discovered by a Sergeant from Rochester in wartorn Germany).

As Einstein so aptly stated in a humorous explanation of his theory of relativity: "When you sit with a nice girl for two hours, you think it's only a minute. But when you sit on a hot stove for a minute, you think it's two hours. That's relativity."

The 1942 item, incidentally, was an interview with his blonde stenographer of the time, who said that he had "one pet expression that he rang in over and over again, and that was infinitesimally small," and if that doesn't bring you right back home to "Lylda," then surely you should read this issue over again!

GOLDEN ATOM

"A JEWEL FOR THE ATOMIC AGE"

Call this fantasy or fancy if you will, but you are also touching the heartbeat of reality!