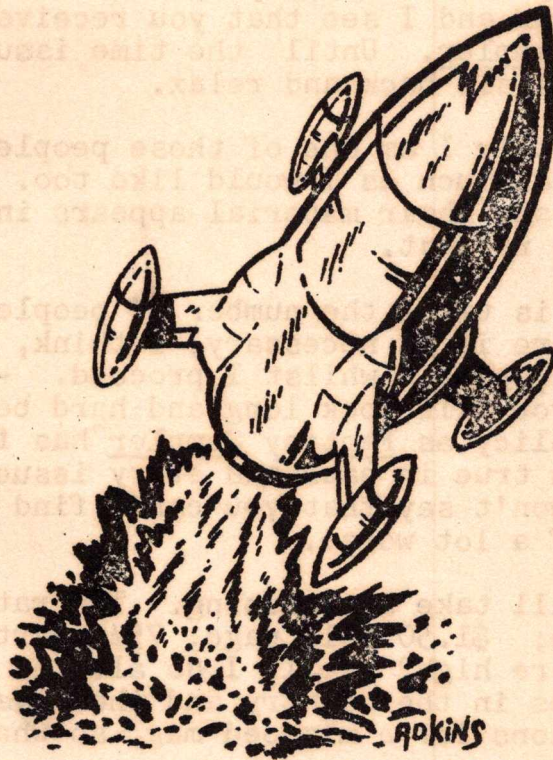


# FANTASY SAMPLER

№4

JUNE,

'56



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for: Fandom at random, various and sundry nons, members of: Imaginations Unlimited, Fantasy Amateur Press Association and waiting list of that sterling organization, International Science Fiction Correspondence Club, National Fantasy Fan Federation (certain members only) and the bum at the back door.

Statement of profound import: Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily shared by the editor. ... Two items in this issue may not be reprinted again in a fanzine without the permission of Arkham House. They are: "The Pow'r of Wine" and "From the Crypts of Memory".

An unusual (and heartening) amount of people have requested information about subscription rates. Beginning with issue number 7, the rate will be  $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per page. That includes the entire magazine, no pages pulled. Those people who do not trade need only to send me a dollar and I see that you receive in exchange 200 pages of Fantasy Sampler. Until the time issue #7 rolls around, all you need do is sit back and relax.

Unfortunately I am one of those people who are unable to pay for material as much as I would like too. Contributors receive a copy of the issue their material appears in and may receive additional copies on request.

As there is twice the number of people receiving this fanzine than ever before it is necessary, I think, to enlighten them somewhat. Pardon me, please whilst I proceed. -- All that is necessary to say is that you will look long and hard before you find a zine with as vast a policy as Fantasy Sampler has for subject matter. You won't find this true in each and every issue but if you stick around you'll see. I won't say that you can't find a better mag, but you can find a heck of a lot worse.

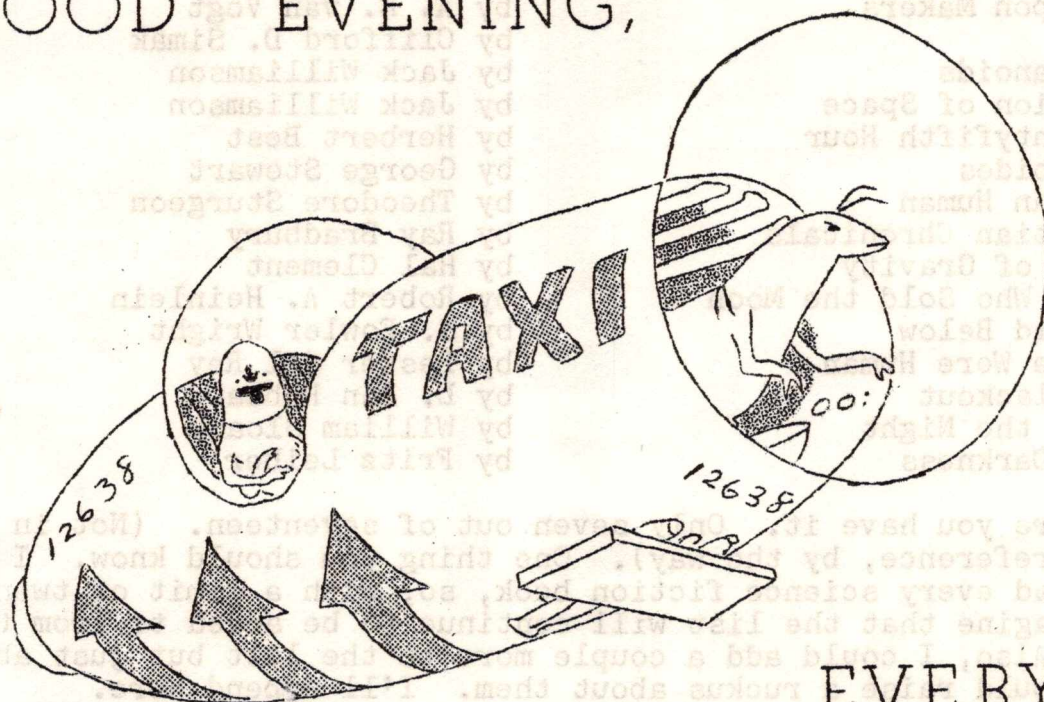
Yep, I will take advertising. The rates are for everybody: \$3.00 full page; \$1.50 half page; 75¢ quarter page; 20¢ an inch. (You say they're high? Well, I do all the work. You get one of the best mimeo jobs in the country and the advantage of one of the highest circulations for a mimeoed mag, so what are you hollering about?)

There are typographical errors in this issue. They are always included because there are fans who habitually look for them. I couldn't disappoint them.

Reveiwers will please note: THIS ISSUE IS FREE. Don't foul me up.

A Spindizzy Press Publication.

GOOD EVENING,



*Notela*

EVERYONE!

I see P. Schuyler Miller is conducting another science fiction symposium, this time the list to be the all-time great books. As Miller says, this symposium will probably be a lot different from the one published in Astounding Science Fiction four years ago. It will also be much different, I think, from the Arkham House symposium published about seven years ago. Both of these symposiums concerned themselves with "a basic science fiction library" idea. The Arkham symposium is particularly interesting in that it gives the selections and commentary of each participant. Be sure to read this symposium if you can find it. (In The Arkham Sampler, Winter, 1949 issue.)

Just for the fun of it, if a reason must be given, I've listed my own preferences in science fiction books. Whether there is anything very notable about the list is something only someone else can answer. There is one difference here, although it is not apparent. The books listed below are ones which I would enjoy reading again. A number of them have been read twice and one, six times. Therefore, in making up this list, I put enjoyment ahead of greatness. I've read a few books which I thought were great science fiction, yet for some reason I have little or no desire to read them again and again.

One other thing about the list, the ones with an \* in front mark the only books which I consider as all-time greats. The rest are great, too, but somehow they don't match the others. Here we go....

- \* The World of A by A. E. van Vogt
- \* Slan by A. E. van Vogt
- The Weapon Makers by A. E. van Vogt
- \* City by Clifford D. Simak
- \* The Humanoids by Jack Williamson
- The Legion of Space by Jack Williamson
- \* The Twentyfifth Hour by Herbert Best
- \* Earth Abides by George Stewart
- More than Human by Theodore Sturgeon
- The Martian Chronicals by Ray Bradbury
- Mission of Gravity by Hal Clement
- The Man Who Sold the Moon by Robert A. Heinlein
- \* The World Below by S. Fowler Wright
- And Some Were Human by Lester del Rey
- Final Blackout by L. Ron Hubbard
- To Walk the Night by William Sloane
- Gather Darkness by Fritz Leiber

And there you have it. Only seven out of seventeen. (Not in order of preference, by the way). One thing you should know. I haven't read every science fiction book, so, with a limit of twenty-five, I imagine that the list will continue to be added to from time to time. Also, I could add a couple more to the list but just about everyone would raise a ruckus about them. I'll append here.

- \* The House on the Borderland by William Hope Hodgson
- \* The Nightland by William Hope Hodgson
- \* The Web of Easter Island by Donald Wandrei

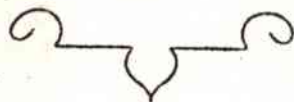
Most everyone else would class these as non-science fiction fantasy. Personally, I can't agree with that.

For the record, other books I have liked. Again the \* denotes a great.

- Sinister Barrier by Eric Frank Russell
- The Demolished Man by Alfred Bester
- \* Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
- A Mirror for Observers by Edgar Pangborn
- The Puppet Masters by Robert A. Heinlein
- Sixth Column by Robert A. Heinlein
- The Amphibians by S. Fowler Wright
- Not This August by Cyril M. Kornbluth
- Dragon in the Sea by Frank Herbert
- \* The New Adam by Stanley G. Weinbaum
- \* The Black Flame by Stanley G. Weinbaum
- Venus Equilateral by George C. Smith
- I, Robot by Isaac Asimov
- Needle by Hal Clement
- The Cometeers by Jack Williamson
- Beyond This Horizon by Robert A. Heinlein
- Lords of Creation by Eando Binder
- The Long Loud Silence by Wilson Tucker
- The Time Masters by Wilson Tucker
- Wild Talent by Wilson Tucker. (wot,him,again?)

CLARK ASHTON SMITH

MASTER  
OF  
FANTASY



THE LAST ROMANTIC

*a valuable and informative article by*

*S. J. Sackett*

FROM THE CRYPTS OF MEMORY

*a sampling of Smith's prose style*

C. A. SMITH IN BOOKS PART ONE

*listings for the collector, the aficionado  
and the curious*



The late Edwin Markham, author of "The Man with the Hoe" and other poems, once called Clark Ashton Smith "the greatest American poet." Benjamin De Casseres ranked Smith as a poet with Poe, Baudelaire, Shelley, Rimbaud, Keats, and Blake.

And yet, as George Sterling--himself once the leading contender for the laurel in this country, at least in the eyes of H. L. Mencken--has pointed out, "to our everlasting shame, he is entirely neglected and almost unknown."

The busy circles of professional esthetes have never heard of Smith. The not-so-high-brows, who get their introduction to modern poetry through the anthologies of Oscar Williams and Louis Untermeyer, will not find him in the indices to those volumes. At the best, you may get a facetious, Smith? Smith?

The name is familiar."

It is clear to those who know Smith's poetry and prose that the reason for his undeserved eclipse is purely a lack of timing. He lived at the wrong time. If he had been born in 1793, instead of a hundred years later, you would have studied him in your undergraduate English survey course. But the currents of his age have passed him by. He never heard about the wasteland; he thought it was a garden all along.

For Clark Ashton Smith is the last of the Romantic poets. There are other writers of traditional verse, but none of them are really Romantics as Smith is. In an anything-but-Romantic age, it is no wonder that his remarkable talents have been too little appreciated. He has refused to conform to the patterns of Pound or the accents of Eliot. He has gone on in the great traditions of poetry no matter what his contemporaries do. He has chosen, deliberately, to be unconfined by his historical period and to write for all time, if not for his age. It is therefore perhaps not wholly surprising that his age ignores him.

The general tone of Smith's poetry can best be described by the words fin de siècle. He is a brother-in-arms of Oscar Wilde, Swin-

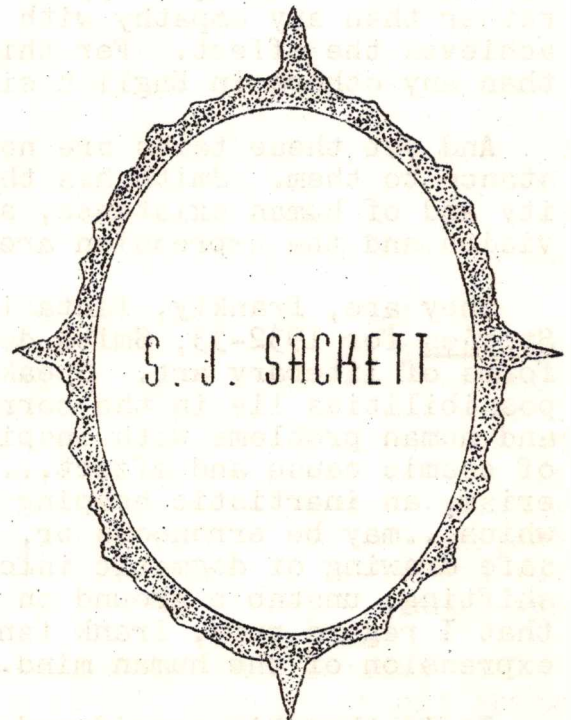
burne, D. G. Rossetti, and the other "decadents" of the turn of the twentieth century. He is a translator of Baudelaire and often writes of his own garden of evil in much the same way. Through these Bunthornes of the gay ninties, he looks back also to the Romantics, to Keats and Poe and Coleridge, and through them also to Milton.

He is, of course, derivitive. His detractors--who have been surprisingly vocal, considering the little impact Smith has made on the world of letters--have deprecated him as "a creative scholar". And this, in a sense, he is. Surely it is an achievement in itself to be so good a "creative scholar" as Smith is. After all, one could say the same for Eliot.

But Smith is original, too. Or, rather, if he is not original, neither were Tennyson or Keats or Poe or Coleridge, for they were all derivitive poets as well. There is something about Smith's work at best which marks it as distinctive, although it is true that in some poems his influences are incompletely amalgamated. And it is dangerous to try to find a source for all of Smith; his affinity to certain writers has occasionally led critics to assign to him influences in other poets whom he has never read.

Smith does not attempt to mirror the neuroses or frustrations of his age. He does not try to express his reactions to the ills of our world, except in his withdrawal from them. He has no political or psychological ax to grind. All he wants to do is write poetry, write beautiful poetry, write poetry with singing words that will delight the reader. He wants to amuse, in the most noble meaning of the word, just as Poe and Coleridge amused their readers with haunting beauty.

Smith's poetry has appeared in five collected volumes, of which THE DARK CHATEAU, published in 1951 by Arkham House, is the most recent and the only one which is readily obtainable. It contains a good sampling of Smith's output; there are the moody and romantic evocations which are his most characteristic utterances, such as "Amithaine", "Avereigne", "Zothique", "The Witch with Eyes of Amber", and "Luna Aeternalis"; there are some examples of his dabblings in Spanish and French poetry, both in his own compositions and in translations from other poets; and there are some of his more ironic pieces, like "Sinbad, It Was Not Well to Brag", "Sonnet for the Psychoanalysts", and "The Twilight of the Gods". From these poems, and the others



in this collection, it is possible to get an impression of what Smith can do and what he can do best. It is possible also to decide whether or not one likes him, for this is a matter of individual taste; but, for those who may approach THE DARK CHATEAU in order to make this decision, I have one caution. Read the poems aloud, for they have been written with a painstaking attention to sound.

A volume of SELECTED POEMS has been advertised for imminent publication ever since THE DARK CHATEAU appeared; I have been awaiting its advent but so far have been disappointed.

Smith also writes prose. He does not write short stories so much as short prose tales, more in the vein of Poe than of de Maupassant. The style is the important thing in Smith's fiction; he is concerned with his diction, with getting the exact word in the right place. Character does not interest him at all, and plot is only the framework for style. The best of his stories, however, are very good, once you have made the initial concession to judge Smith's work on its own merits and not to measure him against contemporary followers of Hemingway.

With Smith, as with Poe, the aim of fiction is the creation of a single emotional effect. Also as with Poe, the effect Smith most often aims at is terror. Whether he achieves his effect or not depends on the amount of co-operation he can extort from his reader. You have to approach his fiction with standards different from those by which you would judge most modern writers. You have to be willing to make that suspension of disbelief which constitutes poetic faith. But once you have made that effort of mind, Smith's prose will carry you into lands of the long ago and far away where strange and wonderful things happen. It is the music of Smith's language, rather than any empathy with the characters, which most frequently achieves the effect. For this reason, Smith's stories deserve more than any others in English since Poe's to be called "prose poems".

And yet these tales are not all emptiness. There is some substance to them. Smith has things to say about the nature of humanity and of human existence, and he says them in his own way. The vision and the expression are both unique.

They are, frankly, fantasies. In the letter column of Wonder Stories for 1932-33, Smith defended fantasy against more realistic forms of literary art. Speaking of realism, Smith said, "The best possibilities lie in the correlation of observed data about life and human problems with inspired speculation as to the unknown forces of cosmic cause and effect....The evil lies in a meaningless Dreiserism, an inartistic heaping of superficial facts or alleged facts which...may be erroneous or, at least, too incomplete to permit the safe drawing of dogmatic inferences.... It is partly because of this shifting, unstable ground on which the thing called realism stands, that I regard pure, frank fantasy as a more valid and lasting art-expression of the human mind."

It is, then his considered judgement that imaginative writing--



fantasy--is the only enduring type of art. As he has put it elsewhere, "The animals alone, without having imagination, have no escape from reality. From parietic to psycho-analyst, from poet to rag-picker, we are all in flight from the real. Truth is what we desire it to be, and the facts of life are a masquerade in which we imagine that we have identified the maskers." On epistemological grounds then, because it is impossible to ascertain reality, Smith has written entirely in the fantastic vein.

Smith's prose style has been accused of "verbosity" and of being "Byzantine". It has been called "intolerably arty." In defense of his ornate style, Smith has written that "it is designed to produce effects of language and rythm which could not possibly be achieved by a vocabulary restricted to what is known as 'basic English'. As Strachey points out (in his essay on Sir Thomas Browne), a style composed largely of words of Anglo-Saxon origin tends to a spondaic rythm, 'which by some mysterious law, reproduces the atmosphere of ordinary life'. An atmosphere of remoteness, mystery, and exoticism is more naturally evoked by a style with an admixture of Latinity, lending itself to more varied and sonorous rythms, as well as to subtler shades, tints and nuances of meaning ...."



If those are Smith's purposes, certainly it would be a mistake for him to adopt a monosyllabic style. And, in an age dominated by Hemingway, it is difficult for the average reader to see that such a style as Smith's can achieve the effects its author wants. Such, however, is the case; and the styles of Poe and Sir Thomas Browne, which have influenced Smith, are evidences.

Four collections of Smith's short stories have been published; one, by the auther himself, THE DOUBLE SHADOW, of which I understand that copies are still available; and three more, by Arkham House, of which the first, OUT OF SPACE AND TIME, has long been out of print, the second, LOST WORLDS, is also unobtainable, and the third, GENIUS LOCI, may still be available. A fourth Arkham volume, THE ABOMINATIONS OF YONDO, and a fifth, TALES OF SCIENCE AND SORCERY, have for some time been reputed to be in preparation.

I have never seen OUT OF TIME AND SPACE, but I can give brief descriptions of the other three published collections. THE DOUBLE SHADOW is a paper-bound booklet containing six stories, many of them available by the same or other titles in his other collections. Some of them are purely tales of terror; but two have additional significance. "The Voyage of King Euvoran", for example, teaches that pride can destroy us by driving us to go on when it would be wiser to admit defeat, and "The Maze of the Enchanter" affords a flash of insight into the soul-weariness and disgust with life of a man who can accomplish all things and for whom, therefore, defeat is never possible. As long as he lives, Tiglari, the hero, will have the memory of having dared a brave thing, fully aware of the price he must pay for defeat; Maal Dweb, however, who does defeat him, lives, by contrast, an empty and unhappy life.

LOST WORLDS contains twenty-three stories, fifteen of them set in imaginary worlds created by Smith--Hyperborea, Atlantis, Averaigne, Zothique, and Xiccarph. Apart from "The Maze of the Enchanter", which reappears here as "The Maze of Maal Dweb", my own favorites are "The Tale of Satampra Zeiros", "The Door to Saturn", "The Coming of the White Worm", "The Last Incantation", "The Death of Malygris", "The Holiness of Azédarac", "The Flower-Women", and "The Demon of the Flower". Most of these are tales of terror or of wonder, the other emotion principally exploited by Smith; but "The Door to Saturn" and "The Holiness of Azédarac", at least, display Smith's mastery of a kind of sardonic humor, in both of them directed against the priesthood. In "The Last Incantation" Malygris, the Atlantean philosopher, restores to life Nylissa, his long-dead love, only to find her disappointing; through this situation Smith demonstrates that, as Thomas Wolfe put it, "you can't go home again"--that it is impossible ever to recapture the past.

Smith's most recent collection, GENIUS LOCI, contains fifteen stories, only two of which, in my opinion, at all approach the best in LOST WORLDS: "Vulthoom" and "The Charnel God". Both are terror stories, but the first is particularly interesting because of Smith's effort to combine his customary weirdness and exoticism with some of the trappings of the science-fiction story. Although the combination is not always successful, the result is one of Smith's most suspenseful stories, and the ending is suitably spine-tingling.

Structurally, most of these stories are distinctly "tales" rather than short stories; one turns instinctively to the French word conte to describe them. The short story, in our day, is either a smoothly plotted but artificially constructed narrative or a "slice of life" without much plot at all. Smith's contes fit neither definition. They have a plot, but it is usually not dominant; it merely provides the showcase for other elements. In construction it is less like what one is used to in modern fiction than like folktales or travelers' yarns.

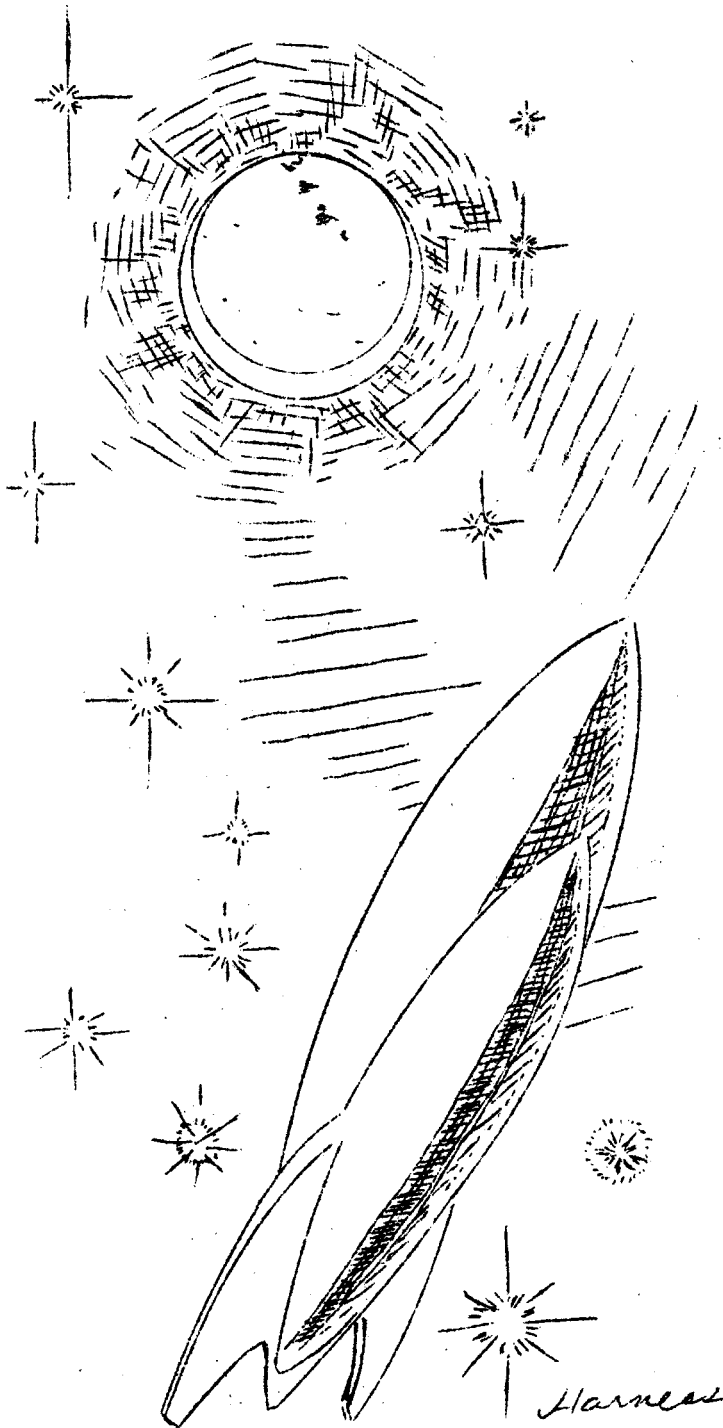
The novice reader of Smith needs one caution: these contes need to be read slowly and seldom. Smith needs to be sipped to be enjoyed.

You cannot read him hurriedly, or you will lose some of the bouquet. Similarly, if you read him for too long at a sitting, you will probably find that you have lost your taste for him, just as too much sweetness cloy. But read with attention and sympathy, and dipped into occasionally, his stories can be a rewarding experience.

Some day, a long time from now, there may be another Romantic revival. People may be less concerned than at present to find the poet who can most satisfactorily complete fuzzy-minded confusion. They may again turn to poets whose chief interest is in beauty and entertainment.

If so, it will be with considerable interest that the poems of Clark Ashton Smith will be discovered. "Here," they will say, "in the middle of the Age of Naturalism, a man trod on stars and looked beyond the world about him into the realms of the imagination. Wholly dissociated from the nervous currents of his period, he had for his only concern the creation of pure poetry. Wholly disregarded by his contemporaries, he can now, with the perspective of history, be recognized as one of the world's fine poets."

With that judgement, the life-long devotion of Clark Ashton Smith to the cause of beauty will be justified and rewarded. — S. J. SACKETT



# FROM THE CRYPTS OF MEMORY

by CLARK ASHTON SMITH

Aeons and aeons ago, in an epoch whose marvelous worlds have crumbled, and whose mighty suns are less than shadow, I dwelt in a star whose course, decadent from the high, irremovable heavens of the past, was even then verging upon the abyss in which, said astronomers, its immemorial cycle should find a dark and disastrous close.

Ah, strange was that gulf-forgotten star--how stranger than any dream of dreamers in the spheres of today, or than any vision that hath soared upon visionaries, in their retrospection of the sidereal past! There, through cycles of a history whose piled and bronze-writ records were hopeless of tabulation, the dead had come to outnumber infinitely the living. And built of a stone that was indestructible save in the furnace of suns, their cities rose beside those of the living like the prodigious metropolises of Titans, with walls that overgloom the vicinal villages. And over all was the black funereal vault of the cryptic heavens--a dome of infinite shadows, where the dismal sun, suspended like a sole, enormous lamp, failed to illumine, and drawing back its fires from the face of the irresolvable ether, threw a baffled and despairing beam on the vague remote horizons, and shrouded vistas illimitable of the visionary land.

We were a sombre, secret, many-sorrowed people--we who dwelt beneath that sky of eternal twilight, pierced by the towering tombs and obelisks of the past. In our blood was the chill of the ancient night of time; and our pulses flagged with a creeping prescience of the lentor of Lethe. Over our courts and fields, like invisible sluggish vampires born of mausoleums, rose and hovered the black hours, with wings that distilled a malefic languor made from shadowy woe and despairs of perished cycles. The very skies were fraught with oppression, and we breathed beneath them as in a sepulchre, forever sealed with all its stagnancies of corruption and slow decay, and darkness impenetrable save to the fretting worm.

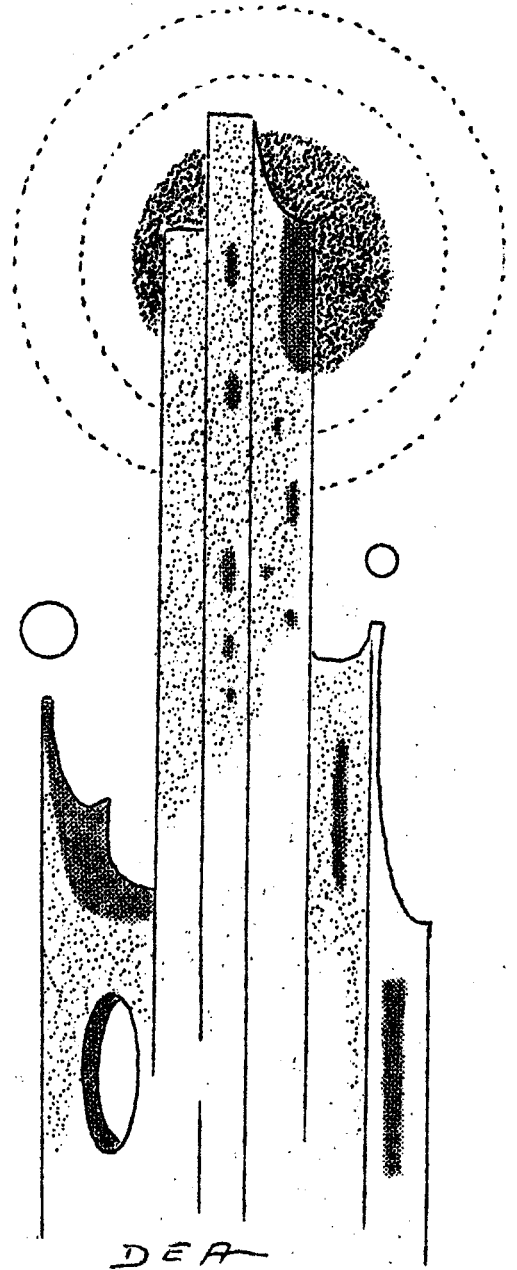
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Copyright 1922, 1942 by Clark Ashton Smith  
Reprinted by permission of Arkham House from  
OUT OF SPACE AND TIME by Clark Ashton Smith.

Vaguely we lived, and loved as in dreams--the dim and mystic dreams that hover upon the verge of fathomless sleep. We felt for our women, with their pale and spectral beauty, the same desire that the dead may feel for the phantom lilies of Hadean meads. Our days were spent in roaming through the ruins of lone and immemorial cities, whose palaces of fretted copper, and streets that ran between lines of carven golden obelisks, lay dim and ghastly with the dead light, or were drowned forever in seas of stagnant shadow; cities whose vast and iron-built fanes preserved their gloom of primordial mystery and awe, from which the simulacra of century forgotten gods looked forth with unwaterable eyes to the hopeless heavens, and saw the ulterior night, the ultimate oblivion. Languidly we kept our gardens, whose grey lilies concealed a necromantic perfume, that had power to evoke for us the dead and spectral dreams of the past. Or, wandering through ashen fields of perennial autumn, we sought the rare and mystic immortelles, with sombre leaves and pallid petals, that bloomed beneath willows of wan and veil-like foliage; or wept with a sweet and nepenthe-laded dew by the flowing silence of Acherotic waters.

And one by one we died and were lost in the dust of accumulated time. We knew the years as a passing of shadows, and death itself as the yielding of twilight unto night.

— CLARK ASHTON SMITH



# C. A. SMITH IN BOOKS

## PART ONE

From THE STAR TREADER AND OTHER  
POEMS -- Philopolis Press, 1912

Nero  
Chant to Sirius  
The Morning Pool  
The Night Forest  
The Mad Wind  
Song to Oblivion  
Medusa  
Ode to the Abyss  
The Soul of the Sun  
The Butterfly  
The Price  
The Mystic Meaning  
Ode to Music  
The Last Night  
Ode on Imagination  
The Wind and the Moon  
Lament of the Stars  
The Maze of Sleep  
The Winds  
The Mask of Forsaken Gods  
A Sunset  
The Cloud-Islands  
The Snow-Blossoms  
The Summer Moon  
The Return of Hyperion  
Lethe  
Atlantis  
The Unrevealed  
The Eldritch Dark  
The Cherry-Snows  
Fairy Lanterns  
Nirvana  
The Nemesis of Suns  
White Death  
Retrospect and Forecast  
Shadow of Nightmare  
The Song of a Comet  
The Retribution  
To the Darkness  
A Dream of Beauty

A Live-Oak Leaf  
Pine Needles  
To the Sun  
The Fugitives  
Averted Malefice  
The Medusa of the Skies  
A Dead City  
The Song of the Stars  
Copan  
A Song of Dreams  
The Balance  
Saturn  
Finis

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From ODES AND SONNETS -- The  
Book Club of California, 1918

Nero  
Ode to the Abyss  
To the Darkness  
The Retribution  
Satan Unrepentant  
Alexandrines  
Exotique  
Ave Atque Vale  
The Ministers of Law  
The Refuge of Beauty  
The Crucifixion of Eros  
The Harlot of the World  
Belated Love  
The Medusa of Despair  
Memnon at Night

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From THE DARK CHATEAU  
Arkham House, 1951

Amithaine



The Flower Women

Others

The Demon of the Flower  
The Plutonian Drug  
The Planet of the Dead  
The Gorgon  
The Letter from Mohaun Los  
The Light from Beyond  
The Hunters from Beyond  
The Treader of the Dust

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From GENIUS LOCI  
Arkham House, 1948

Genius Loci  
The Willow Landscape  
The Ninth Skeleton  
The Phantoms of Fire  
The Eternal World  
Vulthoom  
A Star-Change  
The Primal City  
The Disinterment of Venus  
The Colossus of Ylourgne  
The Satyr  
The Garden of Adompha  
The Charnel God  
The Black Abbot of Tuthuum  
The Weaver in the Vault

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From DARK OF THE MOON  
Arkham House, 1947  
Edited by August Derleth

The Eldritch Dark  
Warning  
The Hashish-Eater  
Nightmare  
Outlanders  
Nyctalops  
Shadows  
The Envoys  
Fantaisie d'Antan  
In Thessaly  
Resurrection

-----

From SLEEP NO MORE  
Ed. by August Derleth  
Farrar -Rhinehart, 1944

The Return of the Sorcerer

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From THE SLEEPING AND THE DEAD  
Ed. by August Derleth  
Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1947

The Double Shadow

-----

From BEYOND THE MOON  
Ed. by August Derleth  
Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1949  
The City of Singing Flame

-----

From STRANGE PORTS OF CALL  
Ed. by August Derleth  
Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1948-49

Master of the Asteroid

-----

From BEYOND SPACE AND TIME  
Ed. by August Derleth  
Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1950

A Voyage to Sfanomöë

-----

From BEACHHEADS IN SPACE  
Ed. by August Derleth  
Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1952

The Metamorphosis of Earth

-----

From TIME TO COME  
Ed. by August Derleth  
Farrar-Straus and Young, 1954

Phoenix



## IT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAY -

Some fans have a happy faculty of putting their foot in their mouth just about everytime they start putting typewriter-print to paper. That writing should have a certain cogency, even in nonsense verse, is something most people believe, but if they're like me they sometimes overlook it.

Self-expression is, with me as with many a fan, an intention rather than an accomplishment. However, tied in with that intent is an urge to display my brilliance in letters and articles to friends and fellow-clubmembers (and I include an amateur journalism society, a national "general" fanclub, and that entity called The Outlander Society, a somewhat-regional group of which no definition has ever been made that a member could fully support).

There is a saving grace for a writer in fandom. He can claim to be an amateur, and so glow with rare brilliance whenever something that may appear to be brilliant when read (and which may have slipped in inadvertently due to a typographical error or dropping of a word) comes up.

A fan can write on something, or he can write on nothing. There are many well-received writers who have found a happy audience through abilities in both fields. The discovery that a typewriter, in time, seems to have a way to write words of its own with little conscious direction has made many a fan-reputation. I say this as a truth, and will display another facet of fandom when I don't bother to give statistics to back this up.

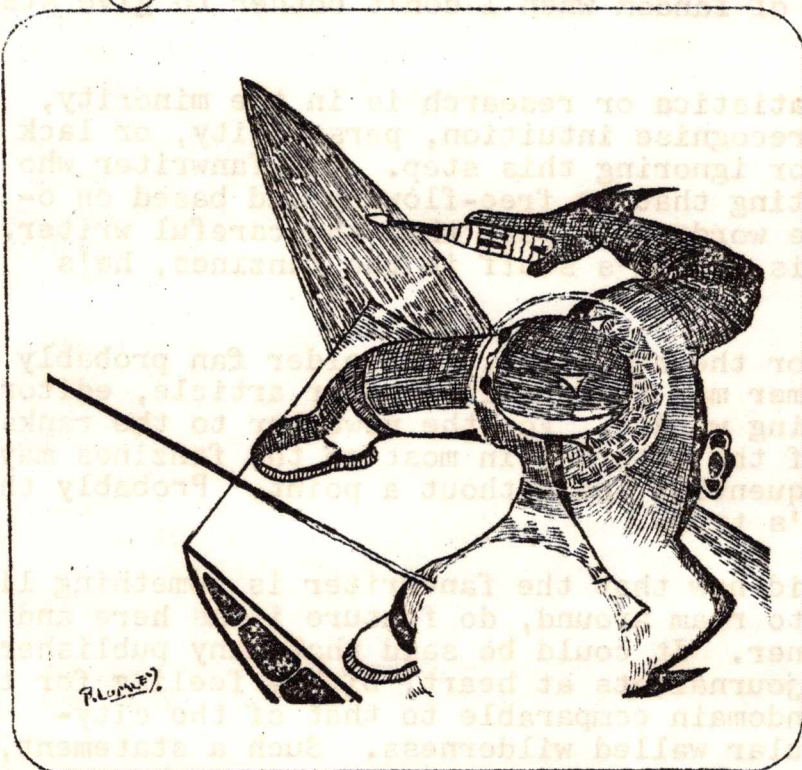
A fanwriter who uses statistics or research is in the minority, which is to say that fans recognise intuition, personality, or lack of time as a genuine excuse for ignoring this step. The fanwriter who has developed a way of writing that is free-flowing and based on opinions can stuff many more words on a page than the careful writer. With all the entries of this person's stuff in the fanzines, he's bound to get a following.

This is a brief essay for the newer fan. The older fan probably realizes it, but the newcomer may read article after article, editorial or review, with a gnawing wonder. For the newcomer to the ranks of fanzine-readers, much of the material in most of the fanzines may seem to be watery, inconsequential and without a point. Probably the reason for this is that it's true.

Probably it could be said now that the fan-writer is something like a hobo reporter who likes to roam around, do feature items here and there in an easy-going manner. It could be said that many publishers in the fan press are hobo-journalists at heart, with a feeling for the wide open spaces of the fandomain comparable to that of the city-dweller for his own particular walled wilderness. Such a statement,  
continued on page 21

The only real attempt to translate science fiction as such to the TV screen that I know of in 1955 was the half-hour weekly program "Science Fiction Theater". It was a serious effort to purvey the glamour which science fiction holds for its aficionados and covered just about every phase of the typical science fiction plots. It had everything from extra-sensory perception to time travel; Including flying saucers and visitors from outer space. But, in spite of the care which Obviously went into these productions, this series of science fiction stories was--in my opinion at least--a flop.

It seems to me that the main charm science fiction holds is the illusion it gives to the reader, of seeing new and hitherto unknown wonders. The descriptions were usually sketchy in the written form, and depended heavily on the readers imagination for supplying the unspoken details. Characterization in the written stories went heavily for 'stock characters'--puppets who were given life by the readers identifi-



# SCIENCE FICTION

cation of the role when reading--and a great deal of the action took place subjectively. What the hero and heroine thought and felt about an alien situation were just as interesting reading as what they said and did. Obviously, the TV screen is handicapped when it comes to presenting unspoken thought, and it takes a good deal more imagination to show the details of an alien culture than it does to imply them. It is much easier to say that all who beheld the mysterious stranger felt a strange 'unworldliness' about him than it is to actually show a character on the screen who does look 'unworldly'--in fact, in the entire series of pictures to date, I can only recall one time when the alien actually did look alien. That one time the other-worldly effect was achieved by using a very tall, thin actor and dressing him in a stovepipe hat with sidecurls. The incongruity of the Abraham Lincoln getup combined with a medieval ghetto hairdo succeeded in giving an alien feeling to the character, which the actor was wise enough not to dispel by saying or doing very much.... But the majority of "aliens" merely looked silly, either dopyly bewildered at it all, or so smugly superior to the surrounding actors as to give the impression they were overacting. Likewise, the actors themselves emoted to much.

Another difficulty was the buildup. There was an attempt to give a 'scientific' pill of information by the introduction and frequently Mr. Truman Bradley's little introductory skit was the most interesting thing in the entire program. It, at least, had the virtue of a certain amount of sincerity--whereas the story which followed more often than not was so phony as to offend the viewer who had been pleased by the 'science' previously. There was too wide a gap between the 'science' (which was on the college laboratory level) and the 'fiction' which was all too frequently on the crudest pulpzine level. A viewer who could be expected to appreciate a demonstration of a cloud chamber tracing the pattern of cosmic rays, could hardly be expected to appreciate a plot wherein the heroine turns green because of cosmic radiation. (The specific instance being that a bored young woman opens a cylinder containing mice which had been subjected to a cosmic ray bombardment and turned green. She caught the 'infection' and turned green also, only to be cured in the nick of time by some big shot 'scientist' flown to the desert from Washington D. C.). Or the plot in which a group of scientists were saved from death by blood transfusions--tried out first on laboratory guinea pigs by injecting them with human blood! The utter phoniness of the gimmicks were so offensively apparent when shown on the screen--especially after the 'scientific' introduction by Mr. Bradley--as to repel the viewer. Possibly, without the introduction the stories would have seemed less repulsive but the juxtaposition of elementary science and pulpzine fiction did neither of them any credit.

However, I suspect that the greatest difficulty was the direction

itself. I felt throughout the series, as though this program was being consciously 'cut down' to some hypothetical level. Although the dialogue contained a high content of jaw-breaking jargon of supposedly technical nature, the rest of the picture was all too frequently simplified to the point of absurdity. In stead of taking the original premise for granted and building the plot from there--they kept belaboring the point continually to make sure that everyone understood what it was all about. And when the point was unmistakably beaten to death, so that it could not possibly escape even the stupidest viewer, the story was over with nothing done about it anyway.

The failure of "Science Fiction Theater" to capture the spirit of stf I attributed at first to an innate incompatibility between the written word and the screen. But I have since revised my opinion and blame it on the faulty direction mentioned above. My reason for changing my opinion is that TV has managed, without any fanfare or publicity to translate some of the most delightful whimsy into TV 'Fantasies'. Although they are classed as 'Fantasies' because they are obviously not realistic fiction, nevertheless some of these so-called 'fantasies are definitely science fiction. Take the young newlyweds who were stranded on top of the tallest building in New York when the world was suddenly depopulated. Their gradual realization of their plight--plus the evidence which convinced them--was in the finest of science fiction form. Likewise, "Skin of Our Teeth"--an adaptation of a Broadway stage play--was an unheralded bit of science fiction which followed the evolution and progress of humanity. Its whimsical treatment of mammoths and dinosaurs was never ballyhoo'd as such, but in spite of the philosophical implications of the psychology involved, this play was as delightful as anything L. Sprague De Camp ever gave us.

Walt Disney's hour--particularly that portion of it known as "Futureland"--is one of the most comprehensive compilations of information about space travel that has ever been presented to the public. His "Natureland" series also present little known facts about fauna and flora in a form as easily assimilated as any outright fiction and just as interesting. Often extra-sensory perception stories masquerade as ghost stories; occasionally the full length 'film revivals' feature borderline classics which could be considered science-fantasy if not outright science fiction. The "You Are There" series could not fail to class as anything else than time-travel although I haven't seen anyone else mention it. Personally, I do not happen to care for that series but no matter what you may think of the production, the fact that it purports to take the viewers back in time definitely places it in the category of science fiction.

In short, there is a definite thread of science fiction to be found in current TV fare, but it is usually to be found under the label of fantasy. The stfan will have to hunt for it like a prospector mining for placer nuggets--just sample at random wherever it looks as though there might be a trace. The TV guides which

offer brief resumes of plot are the best help. The fan with sufficient imagination to enjoy stf in the first place, will usually have enough imagination to brief in whatever clues these plot resumes may give. At least, that is the only suggestion I can offer, because my own experience has been that science fiction is where you find it -- and that is likely to be any program at all except "Science Fiction Theater". All you will find in the latter is the corned-up hokum which is the average layman's idea of what is meant by the term "science fiction".

It's Not What You Say con't from page 17.

of course, would be couched in hidden barbs, hinted at in the tradition of much fan-writing. It would probably add a sense of mystery to the whole essay, hinting at a depth that words alone could not touch. It might add a sort of arcane halo to the whole thing.

For the fan-writer can hide from himself perhaps better than his chosen audience that he is treading on words rather than green, grassy reality. However, it is tied up with his dreams--or are the philosophic meanderings of a Freud or the non-Aristotlian incorrect? Maybe time will clear up the matter.

So the reader reads through the essay--or article, review, story. He finishes the final word, and wonders--

"What's that to do with the title?"

For often the fan-writer doesn't know what he'll say when he starts writing. He doesn't know what he's getting at, often, until the end. And if at last the subject-matter ties together somehow, you know that it's a really fan-type article.

And the last gossamer word-thread has been tied.

oooOooo

The above article by Stan Woolston is from the National Fantasy Fan Federation Manuscript Bureau. Fantasy Sampler receives Stan's material directly from him for the most part but with the understanding that N3F Manuscript Bureau is credited. JWM.

# THE POWER OF WINE

H. P. LOVECRAFT

Hail! gift of Bacchus; red, delicious wine,  
To raise the soul, and ev'ry thought refine;  
What blissful transports can thy pow'r impart,  
And fill us with Anacreontic art!  
Unhappy man above the beast was plac'd,  
Stript of his joys, and with mere Reason grac'd:  
Sweet Wine alone his blessings can restore;  
Let him but quaff, and he's a beast once more!  
Say, good Silenus, how the grapes inspires  
The bashful bard, and fans poetic fires.  
The halting quill, inflam'd to vinous rage,  
With Alcoholic fancies fills the page;  
Convivial poets have no use for sense,  
If they be gen'rous to their audience!  
What sapient speeches fills the tavern hall  
Where smoke and spirits rouse the minds of all!  
Here church and state their proper functions learn,  
And patriotic hearts their brightest burn.  
Yon hoary sage, supported by the bar,  
Shows how the Germans should conduct the war,  
Whilst others near him teach with brains aglow  
The only way to conquer Mexico.  
Behold the singer, who with trembling notes  
Upon his home and loving parents dotes.  
Benignant Wine can all his sorrow quench,  
And he forgets his home is the park bench.  
Another glass from teasing mem'ry saves  
Of grieving parents sent to early graves.  
Drink deep, thou pauper, and forget with glee  
The ailing wife, and starving family!  
Forget their sorrow in the hour's delight;  
To kill thy reason is a vested right.  
Down with thee, base Reformer! to disturb  
Our happy state, and all our spirits curb.  
Tyrannic fool! seek not to interfere  
With pers'nal liberty, and lawful cheer.  
Reflect, ye fathers, how the fluid speeds  
Your sturdy sons to bold and manly deeds.  
The youthful Tom, with Dionysiac might,  
Waylaid and robb'd an aged Jew last night,  
Whilst reeling Dick, with Bacchic ire possess'd,  
Shot down his best beloved friend in jest.  
How great the pow'r of Wine to beautify

The manly form, and please th' exacting eye!  
What graceful steps the polish'd drunkard knows!  
How sweetly he in the road repose!  
The flaming face, the gentle leering stare,  
Bespatter'd clothing, and disorder'd hair,  
The od'rous breath, and incoherent voice,  
All charm our fancy, and increase our joys.  
The sparkling Wine, display'd on gentle boards,  
A just example to the poor affords:  
What man so destitute he cannot gain  
A blissful glass to elevate his brain?  
Since pride, as proverbs say, precedes a fall,  
In Wine we find the greatest boon of all.  
By no man let its wonder be deny'd  
But here beholds the deadliest foe to pride:  
The needy Prince a whining beggar turns,  
To ease the thirst that all his body burns.  
Come, all ye Bacchanalian train, and sing  
The bliss that Wine to fever'd brains can bring.  
Rehearse the pleasing form that oft appear  
To him who know the grapes for many a year.  
Observe, Sir Drunkard, in the growing gloom  
The nameless things that fill thy shadow'd room:  
How bright those eyes with fearful lustre shine;  
How smooth these coils about thy limbs entwine;  
Rejoice, Silenus! for thy lengthen'd spree  
Hath form'd the beautiful comrades just for thee.  
Hosts of the Darkness, join our merry throng!  
Satan, arise, and pass the cup along!  
Laugh, brethren, laugh! for in each flowing bowl

Our band infernal gains a human soul.  
Shriek with delight, and writhe in ghoulisn mirth;  
With ev'ry draught, another sin hath birth;  
Beat your black wings, and prance with cloven feet  
With hideous rites the friends of Chaos greet!  
Minions of Hell, your fiendish tones combine,  
And chant in chorus of the Pow'r of Wine!

---

Fantasy Sampler thanks Mr. George Wetzel for furnishing the  
above poem.

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1916.

In the preparation of this issue, I asked nearly two dozen fans their opinions of Herman Wouk's "The Lomokome Papers"--a slick science fiction attempt published in Collier's for February 17, 1956. The response was far from satisfactory. However, here are the views received from the two interested parties.

RICHARD SAND-- As for my opinion of the Lomokome Papers. It just happened that my sister had brought that issue home, but I hadn't read it until your letter came. I am frankly not very impressed by it, nor very interested. Maybe because I am a science-fiction fan plus a liberal, makes a lot of it seem old hat. That it is a political satire first, and fiction second, I think was all too clear. It was "set up" to cause interest by curious arrangement, not by gripping the reader's interest with active words. Whereas, in *The Caine Mutiny*, Wouk makes the characters real and alive, there is no attempt to here. The style of writing itself reads more like a take off on Johnathan Swift, rather than a naval officer.

He states his own reasons why the science is off, so we are not asked to accept this as a science-fiction story, but a sheer flight of fantasy. And he spells out his satire on our world today in letters big enough for even readers of Colliers. But to playbit safe the editors plainly label it as such.

One of his best points, of which there are many, shows how hard it is to honestly judge the other side by its writings. Another was placing the "narrator" on a side which closely resembled the Communists, thus allowing a more critical look at the foibles of our own society. On the other hand he takes some rather pointless (at least so it seems) swipes at the ethics of the US press. I don't mean unjustified, just that they were unexplained.

The theory of the Reasonable War, which seemed the whole point of the story, left me rather cold. As a serious suggestion it is impossible. As satire it was meaningless and as humor it was a little too grim.

In general I would say that as a story it would be of little interest to fans. As for non-fans, it might prove more interesting due to its strangeness, and freedom of thought (by comparison). It is not something to cause its readers to rush out to buy more Science Fiction. I fear it may not even cause many of them to think. But, if it does bestir a dozen souls to see not only the danger of our time, but the stupidity of it, it will be worth the trouble. But it definitely will not rank with *Gullivers Travels*.



Robert Bloch-- It is interesting that you ask me about the Wouk work. On April 7, the University of Chicago SF Club is holding a panel symposium. Scortia, Tucker and I will be talking on "The Best and Worst of SF and selecting books as examples of "best" and "worst". I have already chosen Wouk's effort as the worst. I'll be talking ad lib rather than writing the material down, but my thesis is that Wouk had a good 3-page satirical essay about war (such as a good fanzine would print) but his alleged "story" was puerile, juvenile, and a cheat on the reader with its contrived gaps ... and that if it weren't for the Wouk name this kind of writing wouldn't sell to a  $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ market. I hate to see this stuff in a big magazine as an "example" of sf.

oooOooo

Good Evening Everyone! con't from page 4.

Player Piano	by Kurt Vonnegut
Station X	by G. McLeod Winsor (oldie, 1919)
Sands of Mars	by Arthur C. Clarke
Against the Fall of Night	by Arthur C. Clarke
Prelude to Space	by Arthur C. Clarke
The Day of the Triffids	by John Windham
Takeoff	by Cyril M. Kornbluth
The Space Merchants	by C.M. Kornbluth & F. Phol
Shadow on the Hearth	by Judith Merrill
Bring the Jubilee	by Ward Moore
Children of the Atom	by Wilmar Shiras

And, there may be others but I reckon you're bored, so I had best quit. Why not send me your list? I'd like to see what the rest of the fan world likes.



Scribblings: George Earley's column EN Garde, You All! does not appear this issue. Hope to have George back soon. He has a new address, by the way -- 9 Hiram Lane, Bloomfield, Connecticut.

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*and that's it for now.*  
*Jolan*

HEY, YOU! YOU WIT DA  
BUG EYES. YEAH, YOU. TELL  
ME, FRIEND, HAVE YA SENT YER  
TWO BUCKS IN FOR DA BIG CON  
YET?

NO?

WELL, BOY, YA BETTER HOP ABOARD  
YER POGO STICK AN' SEND 'EM TO:

WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 272, RADIO CITY STATION,

NEW YORK 19, N.Y.

*See you at the*

BILTMORE



*City of the Future*