

# THE ACOLYTE



ALVA ROGERS



# THE ACOLYTE

AN AMATEUR MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENTIFICTION

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## EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

THE DOG IN THE MANGER. It is excessively distasteful to encounter a fellow hobbyist who is unwilling to share with his fellow fantasy lovers the results of his research into fantastic literature save at a prohibitive price in either money or self-respect. A New York fan, one A. Langley Searles, has been compiling a rather large and pretentious bibliography of fantastic book titles (certainly a project which has long been needed in our field). Instead, however, of publishing it as a complete volume, he has caused individual leaves of it to appear at irregular intervals as a supplement to a "fan news" sheet. Complete sets of the portion published to date cost 5¢ per sheet from the publisher (not Searles), as contrasted with the charge of 15¢ for 15 sheets made by The Acolyte for comparable mimeography.

Believing that this extortionistic method of publication was adopted by the mimeograph-less Searles only as a last resort, your editors last fall made overtures to him, offering both to help him extensively with the vast labor of compilation and revision and to mimeograph and publish the bibliography for him as a complete bound volume. His arrogant and supercilious reception of our disinterested offer made any such collaboration utterly impossible, unless we were willing to sacrifice far more self-respect than any hobby venture can be worth.

Since we were dissatisfied with the haphazard way in which the Searles biblio has been published (22 sheets in over two years), we then made plans to publish a title-list of our own. Though Searles' unwillingness to collaborate made it necessary for us to plan on redoing the vast amount of work he had already been over, (certainly an irritating waste of time and effort!), both our own honesty and the surprising number of errors in the completed fragment made it impossible to use Searles' listing as a partial basis, as we had originally intended when we assumed Searles would welcome cooperative help. But the work is badly needed by collectors and students; we felt that a definitive listing was worth whatever sacrifices it might entail.

A letter received from Searles on December 8, however, puts an entirely different face on the matter. Searles informs us, nastily, that his bibliography is copyrighted, that any bibliography which we might elect to publish would subject us to an immediate lawsuit from him. We doubt strongly if such a suit could possibly hold water; witness the large number of copyrighted dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other books of reference--many of which cover the identical ground without infringing each other's rights. On the other hand, family and other obligations leave neither of us in a position to take a chance on having to defend an action; whether collectable or not, such an episode would involve us in expensive attorney fees.

So, regretfully, we shall have to withdraw from the field. We would not have violated The Acolyte's long-time rule against publishing controversial matter by mentioning this mess had it not been for the fact that we felt it best to explain the whole matter fully and impartially, then drop it. Also, some of you may in the future wonder why it is that this magazine carries little or no bibliographical information.

If the scope of The Acolyte may from now on seem somewhat curtailed, we suggest that our readers give a vote of thanks to A. Langley Searles, fantasy's dog in the manger. FTL

---ooOoo---

A NEW SEMI-PRO MAKES ITS BOW. The editors of The Acolyte wish to extend congratulations to a very promising new semi-professional literary magazine, Different. This periodical, the first issue of which may be expected about March 1, is the



# PROSE PASTELS

CLARK  
ASHTON  
SMITH

## 9. NARCISSUS

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Splenetic pale Narcissus, in the green dead depth of some rotting pool thou seest thine image drown and re-emerge amid the shifting iridescent films of corruption, the beautiful bright scum that damascenes with fantastic arabesques the fetid waters. Or in the brazen mirrors, mottled with verdigris, of queens that were fair and fatal, avid and insatiate of love or pain in lands the desert has now obliterated, perchance thou viewest the implacable perverse nympholepsy of thy mien. Or in the rusting shield of some ancestral warrior, peering with a casual curiosity, thou findest thine eyes alone reflected in pools of clear steel amid the tarnish, and in them a spark that has fallen from the perished flambeaux, a gleam from the brave and rutilant camp-fires whose ashes have fed the fertility of alien fields, sown and harvested a thousand times since the red autumn of the last, legendary battle.

----oooOooo----

## 10. THE PERIL THAT LURKS AMONG RUINS

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"Go not too often among ruins," said the Demon in one of his rare moods of admonitory confidence. "For there is a strangeness in the shadows which these memorials of the vastness of the Past, broken though they be, have thrown for so many centuries upon the selfsame spot as in the dawn of their erection. Such shadows have gathered strength from their ancient and unbroken brooding; and they are not as the shadows of natural objects, for human time has accumulated within them like unswept dust, and memories of the dead cluster there like bats in a cavern. They have all the power and all the sopor of despair; they are deep as death and hollow as limbo. The earth has grown abysmal beneath them, and the air is full of unseen precipitate gulfs.

"He is not wise who walks frequently and habitually amid these shadows. For, heedless of the peril, one may slip on some invisible precipice of the Past and go falling forevermore, a phantom among phantoms, sere and purposeless as a blown autumnal leaf, through the windy eternal night of bygone things. Yea, lost from time, he shall whirl impalpably with the gusty sand through shattered arches and between domeless columns; apart from the cycles of being, he shall dwell henceforward as a shadow with shadows."

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## CHALLENGE

To split a skull and laugh in furied glee at the red soul revealed,  
To strike and fend where death doth sing in every tongue of steel,  
Might make my life a precious article,  
That now I barter as of little worth,  
Trading rich days for doubtful coins  
Which may or may not buy me one tomorrow  
In the exchequer of the careless fates.  
Fool's gold, farewell!

Satan, on guard!

No more you'll hoodwink me with dreams of future bliss.  
Find other men to sell tomorrows to.  
Those coins I sweat for---yours---I throw away!  
You planned no payment, and I ask no pay.

----Fritz Leiber, Jr.



# EDGAR POE AND THE FRENCH PARNASSIANS

Translated from the French of Leon Lemonnier by Harry Warner, Jr.

-oOo-

Repeated allusions to the influence of Edgar Poe on both Baudelaire and the first symbolists make it seem fitting to consider the intermediate bond, and to study the connections between Poe and the French Parnassians.

If Poe and Baudelaire have remained so closely associated in the memory of the French reading public, certainly it is in no small part due to Gautier. In the obituary that he devotes to Baudelaire in the Moniteur, Gautier speaks at length of Poe; the following year, in his Report on the Progress of Letters, he resumes the task.

But most particularly through his edition of the complete works of Baudelaire did Gautier publicly emphasize Poe's importance. He closely united the two men in his preface; with the result that for fifty years, so long as the copyright of Calmann-Levy endured, readers of The Flowers of Evil noticed these remarks. It cannot be doubted that this incited them to read the works of the American. And if it be noted that they occupy three of the seven volumes of the Complete Works of Baudelaire, it will be realised that Gautier has sent both men forward toward glory together. Thanks to him, the work of Edgar Poe has been embalmed in that of Baudelaire, like a strange insect in rare amber.

Nor was this done solely from respect to Baudelaire and his well-known admiration for the American. Gautier himself shared that admiration. How much influence Poe exercised on his fantastic tales we shall demonstrate elsewhere. In the role of poet as well, he has adopted the aesthetic doctrine of Poe.

Did not Gautier himself, in his first prefaces and particularly in that for Mademoiselle de Maupin, proclaim the cult of art for art's sake? And he still repeated these principles of his youth two decades later, in the manifesto that announced publication of The Artist, and in his poem on Art. Through psychological reasons quite dissimilar to those of Poe, Gautier arrived at this philosophy independently. Frequenting painters and sculptors, a painter himself, it was in the practise of the plastic arts that he came to feel that art should be free and untrammelled. In Poe's case, this same idea came from an inherent tendency toward aimless dreaming, and from the ecstasy that his logical mind had systematically elaborated.

Like Baudelaire, and thanks to him, Gautier was immediately carried away by Poe's doctrine; it brought a psychological foundation and a formal rigidity to what had never been for him anything but a manner of feeling. And in the preface to The Flowers of Evil, he does not spare his admiration. But he shows unskillfulness; he can only repeat, without even paraphrasing, and contents himself with quoting a passage which he believes to be Baudelaire's, but which Baudelaire had borrowed from Poe without definitely acknowledging his debt. Thus he shows his powerlessness to re-phrase for himself Poe's aesthetics.

## II

Banville, on the contrary, was able to take inspiration, assimilate, and at length comprehend without servilely repeating. His own aesthetics presented marked similarities to those of Poe. As early as 1845, in verses that are among his loveliest, he had thus described poetry:

And captive forever in the inflexible rhythm,  
It endlessly strives to rise up to heaven...  
And tries, its eye lost among the open skies



To hear again the voice of that sonorous bow  
That, so far from the desert where its songs will be born  
Brings, into the infinite, the universal choir.

So for him, as for Poe, poetry is in essence a pure drive toward a superior reality; before all, it is a music which must be enclosed in a flawless form. Banville seems at first to have considered this doctrine to be a heritage of Greece; in his poems it mixes with reminders of the music of the spheres and Platonic memories. This appears not only in the verses of 1845 we have just quoted but again in Erinna, which dates from 1865:

Rhythm is all: it is that which lifts worlds,  
And, singing, carries them into the aetheral spaces...

But when, in 1872, he resumes the same ideas in prose, attempting to give them a logical form in his Short Treatise on French Poetry, the influence of Edgar Poe erases the remembrances of antiquity. Banville undoubtedly did not read the American author in the text, knowing him only through translations and the prefaces of Baudelaire; but these were quite enough to give him a precise idea of Poe's aesthetics. Moreover it is quite possible that Baudelaire, in conversations with his friends, added oral explanations.

However it may be, Banville's ideas are expressed, in his Short Treatise, in a form very closely related to that of Poe. The latter claimed that art must never teach a social or moral truth, and he protested against what he termed "the heresy of didactics". Banville writes, with the same clarity: "The didactic poem not only no longer exists, but never again will exist."

Banville admits, like Poe, that prose may sometimes have truth as an object; for there is a radical difference between verses and prose. Banville declares that he cannot conceive of the existence of poems in prose; an idea so close to those of Poe that he might contrive the reciprocal proposition, "After Balzac and Poe, the tale in verse no longer exists." Having both reduced poetry to lyricism, Banville and Poe both claim that the poetical inspiration may disdain all other forms of human activity because it goes beyond all. Poe declared that, through poetry, we have a "glimpse of divine and ecstatic joys". Banville repeats, "Poetry...is addressed to that which there is of the most noble within us; to the Soul, which may be in direct contact with God."

Poetry has here only one rival, music. Our two poets have identical opinions on the alliance of the two divine arts. Poe: "There can be little doubt that, in the union of poetry and music in the popular sense, we shall find the widest field for poetical development." Banville, without the slightest allusion to the harmony of the spheres, uses the dry form of Poe, saying, "Properly speaking, there is no poetry or verse outside of song." No one can doubt the influence of Poe upon him, for a certain parallelism of expression is evident. Banville writes, for example: "In order that the poem may merit its name of poem..."--echoing the preface of New Extraordinary Stories: "A poem merits its title only inasmuch as..." And that phrase is a faithful translation of Poe.

Under Poe's influence, Banville **imitated** Poe's reconstruction of the manner in which he wrote The Raven. More modest than Poe, he chose as an example not one of his own poems but the two famous lines by Racine:

Ariane, my sister, with what wounded love  
You died on the shores where you had been left...

Banville followed Poe's method. The latter, if one is to believe him,



wanted to write a melancholy poem, and did not in the beginning choose a subject; seeking instead a sad and sonorous word to put at the end of each strophe. He found Nevermore--jamais plus. And, he said, around that word he constructed his poem, by means of mathematical deductions. Banville proceeds in exactly the same way: "I imagine that you think of Ariane abandonned by Thesees...A clear word--decisive, familiar, and tragic at the same time--will rise to your thought." And from that word--"left", from the final rhyme--Banville believes he can make his reconstruction.

The influence of Poe is not arguable here. No doubt Banville had not awaited Poe to realize the agitation produced by rhymes in certain minds; it was enough for him to notice what took place in himself. But in the quoted passage, Banville expresses himself with that appearance of mathematical rigor (or, if preferred, with that scientific charlatanism) that is certainly the individual mark of Poe. Thus the American has acted upon the Frenchman. Finding in Poe an adept of the doctrine of art for art's sake and recognizing in himself bonds with the artificial versifier of The Raven; Banville has, thanks to him, perfected that theory which gives to the rhyme the primary role in poetic production. It is not a question here of accidental meeting. There is, in the last analysis, the same essential conception of poetry. Removed from all thought and feeling, it is before all a music, rougher and more sonorous with Banville, more fluid with Poe; but reached with both through logical and ingenious means. Reduced to being only a form and a music, poetry permits the obtaining through ecstasy of a super-terrestrial truth. Banville and Poe represent pure and ethereal lyricism in contrast to the personal and passionate lyricism of the great French romantics.

And that analogy has its consequences from the viewpoint of literary history. It escaped neither Baudelaire nor Mallarme; it explained the cult that both of them had for Banville and Poe. Both have written it: if they have loved Banville, it is because he does not describe life and its passions, but the enchantments of a dream world. And it is certainly for that reason that they have loved Poe.

Banville has been too long considered as an amuser; too much has been made of him as a versifying rope-dancer, the clown of the rhyme and the Pierrot of the pun. Baudelaire and Mallarme have admired in him, as in Edgar Poe, the pure lyricism. And despite his too visible errors, he must be considered beside the American as one of the masters of symbolism.

### III

Among the younger poets, the pure Parnassians offer very little evidence of the influence of Poe.

But they knew him, in particular one of the more obscure among them, Armand Renaud. Collaborator of The Contemporary Parnassian, he was the colleague of Verlaine at L'Hotel-de-Ville, and frequented the home of Nina de Villars. It is certain that through him the Parnassians heard a great deal about Poe. After Baudelaire's death and during the exile of Mallarme in the provinces, Armand Renaud made of himself Poe's interpreter.

In the Parisian Review in 1864 he devotes a long article to Poe's poems, even translating some of the more important ones. He does not class Poe with the supreme artists, putting him on the same level with Longfellow. He is most impressed--as would be expected of a Parnassian--by the strangeness of form: "Edgar Poe, in his poetry, particularly loves the effects produced by repetition. There are many doubled rhymes, chimes... There results from this aggregation of similar sounds a sort of monotony, but so artistic a monotony that, instead of inciting boredom, it becomes something strange that fascinates



and lulls... The material form of Edgar Poe corresponds exactly to the forms of his ideas; with other poets it would be pretentious and puerile, with him it is magical."

Can we not imagine here phrases going back to the charm of certain poems by Verlaine? And, when one considers that he who wrote them was a constant companion of Verlaine, one cannot fail to think that Armand Renaud aided the author of Saturnian Poems to grasp the magic secret of Poe.

In any case, it cannot be doubted that Renaud, through his article and conversations, made another member of the group, Leon Dierx, ready to submit to Poe's influence. Renaud had in his article strongly praised one of Poe's prose poems, "Shadow". Dierx took up the theme in his "This Evening". Around him, as around Poe, beloved dead rise up; they are there, very close, and inspire in him simultaneously attraction and a divine terror. It is death, as in Poe's work, who speaks with their voice:

As through a triple and magic crown,--  
O night, O solitude, O silence--my soul  
Through you, this evening, near the dark hearth,  
Gazes beyond the doors of the tomb.

This evening, full of the horror of the assailed loser,  
I feel the dear dead surge up around me.  
Their eyes, as if to read the depth of my fright,  
Shine plainly in the trembling silence.

Behind me, this evening, someone is there, very close.  
I know he is watching me, and I feel him touching me.  
This anguish! He is there, behind my shoulder.  
If I turned about, I should die on the spot!

From the depth of another life, a far distant voice  
This evening has spoken my name, O terror! And that noise  
That I hear--O silence, O solitude, O night--  
Seems to have once been born with humankind.

That poem is frankly Poe-esque. In another selection, carrying one of Poe's titles--Shadow, are many similar reminders of the American author.

These, however, are simple curiosities, rather than incidents of literary history. Dierx seems particularly important as an intermediary between Poe and Verlaine. The passage in which the latter gives homage to Dierx will be recalled, "...these scraps in which the rhyme returns without monotony, an entirely new form. Baudelaire borrowed from Poe the reiteration of the verse, but limited himself to making a refrain come back at the same place; while Dierx brings forth, like truant scholars, several rhymes in the same poem, like an improviser at the piano who lets several notes wander."

That appreciation is unjustly severe to Poe and Baudelaire, as it is unjustly favorable to Dierx. Dierx, like Poe, places in each strophe a certain number of repetitions at fixed spots, and adds, exactly like Poe in The Raven, some whimsical repetitions. In The Dream of Death--fantastic like Poe's--Dierx takes up at the fifth verse the word that forms the rhyme in the first, and at the sixth, that of the second. But it is the only rule that he utilizes; sometimes he takes up only the word of the rhyme, and sometimes the whole verse; sometimes too, and in an unexpected way, a repetition is found from one strophe to another:

An angel on my forehead unfolded its great wing,  
A shadow slowly fell upon my eyes.



And on each eyelid, an urgent finger  
 Came to weight the thicker night around it.  
 An angel slowly unfolded its great wing,  
 And under its leaden fingers sank my eyes,  
 Then all vanished, sorrow, struggles, memory,  
 And I felt my form float before me.  
 And my thoughts of myself, or of shame or glory,  
 Fled pell-mell from my body lawlessly.  
 A form floated that seemed to be my image...

Exactly as in The Raven, all these repetitions stir capriciously, but in a very definite and regular frame; they can never descend below the minimum that the poet has fixed himself from the beginning.

A certain impression of terror and mystery in a few poems, an artificial manner of entwining repetitions--that is all that Dierx owes to Poe. Very little, altogether, had he not transmitted to Verlaine that soft monotony which so softens Parnassian roughness.

#### IV

Leconte de Lisle's debt is even slenderer, and could be ignored did it not show that Poe haunted all the poets who followed Baudelaire, even those who in no way resembled him. de Lisle has written a poem which is called The Raven, and his bird strongly resembles the American's. The epithets are identical. Ungainly, it is exactly like "awkward and heavy" ("gauche et lourd"); gaunt, "of a terrible thinness" ("d'une maigreur affreuse"); "shorn", "completely de-feathered" ("tout déplume"); his fiery eyes, "his eyes flamed" ("ses yeux flambaient"). In both cases, this very old raven is sent by Satan; it appears to a recluse--poet or monk--whom a single thought obsesses, and answers so well to the preoccupation of the man that it soon appears like a symbol.

Here the superficial resemblance stops. There are few similarities between the fierce, greedy bird of carnage and the sad bird of regret. Poe and de Lisle remain completely distinct. Probably both have realised the union of science and poetry, but one turned towards mathematics, the other towards history. Poe's art is musical; he would evoke indefinite visions, dreams. Leconte de Lisle, on the other hand, is graphic; he wants to reconstruct, with an objective precision, the vanished eras. The one's poetry is lighted by a gentle, melancholy style limned with the light of Beyond; that of the other blazes with the glaring noonday sun.

Altogether, the links between Poe and the French Parnassians may be reduced to two points; the same conception of the autonomy of art, and the same artificial curiosity of form. Poe has brought them a smooth use of repetition; especially has he furnished clear aesthetics. To the extent he has acted upon the orthodox Parnassians, he has turned them aside from the tendencies peculiar to the school. In the bronze of the strophe, he has induced a kind of flaw. In a plastic doctrine that was to reproduce the matter, he introduced a musical and immaterial element. In a modest way, he has doubtless been one of the elements which have split up the Parnassians.

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(Editorial Note: This article appeared originally in Revue de Littérature Comparée Vol. 9, No. 4, October-December 1929. To our knowledge, it has never before appeared in English. By way of explanation, it should be pointed out that, while the text of the essay has been put into fairly colloquial English, the translator thought it best to leave the examples of verse in a literal translation. It also might be mentioned that the quotations from Poe may be somewhat inexact, as we have not collated them with the original. FTL/SDR)





INACCURATE CONCEPTION



# TOY CASSOWARY

ANTHONY BOUCHER

"No, Judge," Martin was saying, "you are wrong in principle. You are still acting on the outworn theory that the life of the individual is important."

Judge Maxwell was a trifle irritated. "It's all very well to talk big," he answered, "but you know as well as I do, Lamb, that there is a basic human feeling in us that doesn't like death, even the death of other people."

"Excepting when it furthers some idealistic plan--such as, say, the increase of mass production."

The Judge smiled in tolerant amusement. "Keep away from economics, Lamb. It's not your field."

"No more is the occult yours, Judge. Daniel Legrand was no charlatan, no cheap witchdoctor compounding 'love potions' out of house-dust. Have you read his book on voodoo?"

The Judge shook his head.

"I thought it might have helped you in reaching a verdict. It's really a masterpiece of intelligent, dispassionate reasoning. When you've read it, you feel that its author must have...powers."

The Judge was unimpressed. "'Powers' don't make murder any the less murder, old man."

"Murder? Say euthanasia. We shoot mad dogs and nurture human imbeciles. To that halfwitted negress, death was as welcome as life. The whole business was indifferent to her. Legrand knew that she had no claim on life; perhaps he did have a claim on what he might have attained through her death."

"Whatever he wanted to attain," Judge Maxwell persisted. "I'm glad the police broke in first. It was unnatural, it was repulsive to every fiber of American manhood."

"Legrand knew that." Martin was insistent. "That's why he rejected jury trial, and preferred the judgement of one (he hoped) intelligent man."

But the Judge was becoming bored. "It's done with now, Lamb; at least, it will be at midnight. And all your bad logic and false emotion can't keep Legrand from being executed tonight."

Martin walked over to the window. "I wasn't trying to save him, you know. I just wanted to make you see that..."

"...there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatius," the Judge concluded. He always believed in a bit of the Bard to round off a dictum, and certain of his textual variants would have amazed scholars. "All right, old fellow. I'll take your word for it. And now it's time for us to stop in on Dick's birthday party. Come on."

He was silent as they left the library. "There was just one thing I would never forgive him," he confided to Martin while they walked down the hall. "That was the way they gouged out her eyes before they killed her."

The tablecloth could be most simply described as a mess. Bits of pink icing and crumbs of cake--some dry, some soggy with spilled fruit juice--mingled with the fragments of eight wax candles. The remnants of bonbons and tattered paper hats lay about the outskirts of the deserted field. In the center of the table reigned an impressive monarch, a stuffed toy bird, who balanced precariously on two legs and surveyed the surroundings with a cynical and slightly disgusted air.

As his eminent father entered the room, Dick Maxwell broke off the joyous wrestling match in which he was engaged with one of the



two remaining party guests. He nodded a greeting, speechless from excitement.

"Well, son," the Judge said affectionately, "did you have a nice party?"

"Oh, keen, dad!"

"That's fine. Lots of nice presents, eh?"

"Lots and lots and lots. Look, dad. Look at this cowboy suit from Aunt Caroline, and look here..." He took exuberant glee in giving a complete catalog of presents, even down to the book which Martin had findly hoped would not be too old for him.

"And which do you like best, Dick?"

This was a hard question. "Oh, I don't know, Uncle Martin. I sort of think maybe I like this funny old bird the best. He's funny, he is."

"Who gave him to you?" the Judge asked, fearful lest he encounter some none too subtle bribery.

The nurse, who had kept herself discreetly effaced, now stepped forward. "I don't rightly know, sir," she admitted. "You see, as all the things came in the mail, I'd unwrap them and put them in here, and I guess the card for that one just must have gotten lost some way. Funny the way those things happen."

The Judge picked up the creature in his hand. "Curious looking bird, isn't it, Lamb? Looks something like an ostrich, and yet it doesn't, if you know what I mean."

"It's a cassowary," Martin murmured. "Related to the ostrich." He took the toy himself. "Damn good reproduction, too. Just feel that hard, horny beak, and look at those eyes. It reminds me of a little verse of mine" (the Judge grunted) "that starts

'The cassowary's evil gleam

'Sets him apart from birds who beam;

'Each eye's a...'"

But Martin never reached the actually quite amusing end of his verse. He suddenly dropped the bird and stared at it with something very close to fear.

"Why, what's the matter, old man?" the Judge queried concernedly.

"I've been reading too many horror stories, I guess. I thought I felt it move... Silly..."

"No more so than your theories on penology, Lamb." And the Judge laughed ponderously.

Martin joined in courteously, and then broke off. "I don't like it," he said. "Its skin feels almost real, and...the workmanship looks West Indian, and they don't have cassowaries there."

The Judge continued to laugh. "There's nothing wrong, old man. Look how Dick loves it... Come into the library for a highball. And if you could stay tonight, I should like to..."

As Martin followed the Judge from the room, he could hear Dick's happy voice. "Uncle Martin says it's a commissary. Isn't that a funny name for a bird?"

But Martin was unable to stay that night; and so it was not until he read the morning paper that he learned how Dick Maxwell had roused the household with his screams at midnight, and how the child had been found with both eyes gouged out by a night-prowler, although the windows were locked. The account, written by an exceptionally obnoxious sob sister, was most detailed. Martin noted particularly the phrase of the nurse, who described the eyes as looking "pecked out", and the gruesome care with which the writer had pictured how blood had



stained "the tiny pajamas and the darling toy bird which the poor lad held clasped in his little arms".

In an adjoining column was an account of the execution--"According to sentence passed by the Hon. Robert Maxwell"--of Daniel Le-grand, Negro, 38.

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## THE HIGH PRIEST

An old man was her only guide that night.  
The drums of thunder rolled; and drenching rain  
Soaked his gnarled face. The stabbing light  
Caught his bright eyes. He stopped and spoke the name  
Of that black spot of evil nestling in the hill,  
Where Druids once had raised the sacrificial blade  
And chanted as they watched the red blood spill  
From the fair form of some Welsh maid.

She glimpsed the altar in the lightning's glare  
Beyond his pointing finger; and then stood  
Affrighted --- for around the stone set there  
Were crouching figures, garbed in cloak and hood.  
The old man cackled. "Offer up your life!"  
And lightning glittered on his swift-drawn knife.

---Arthur F. Hillman

---ooOoo---

## GHOSTS

New built am I, yet haunted---  
A prey for things from the elder years,  
A penthouse smelling of plaster and paint,  
Yet let only to ghosts,  
By them sublet to ghosts of ghosts.  
Where are the new tenants?

---Fritz Leiber, Jr.

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ROBERT E. HOWARD

E. HOFFMAN PRICE

(Editorial Note: This article consists of two portions, the first being a verbatim transcript of a letter from E. Hoffman Price to H. P. Lovecraft, written immediately after Howard's death in 1936; and the second being excerpts from a letter of further explanation written by Price to Laney on July 22, 1944. It should be explained that the older letter was stencilled by R. H. Barlow for some publication of his which did not materialise; these stencils came to The Acolyte from the estate of Paul Freehafer.

Due to the fact that we thought it advisable to use Barlow's original stencils, the format of this article has suffered somewhat. The Barlow stencils have been printed on pp. 12, 13, and 14. Commencing on the bottom of page 14, we have set up the excerpts of further explanation from Price's more recent letter.

The editors of The Acolyte wish to thank E. Hoffman Price for the opportunity to publish this material, which throws so much light on the rather unknown personality of one of Weird Tales' best loved authors.

---FTL/SDR)



E. HOFFMANN PRICE'S REMINISCENCE OF ROBERT E. HOWARD

From a letter to H.P. Lovecraft

June 25th

1 9 3 6

LAST PAGE YOUR letter hit me between the eyes. I don't know what to say. Incredible about Howard. On June third he wrote me post card reporting prodigious bale of sales, for cash, to Argosy, Top-Notch, and Action Stories, in each case with an order for a series.

Can you authenticate the story? It seems so damn outrageous I can't believe it. Or is that because I don't want to believe it--- just like hearing of Whitehead's death left me a bit numb, so I had to tell myself over and over that he really was dead, and wouldn't write the letter he promised in that last postal card. And now Howard's final postal card--- ye gods, what sinister fatality is there in postal cards?

To hell with the blow to literature and/or fiction, I laugh that off. You see, I had twice halted my caravan at his door, and the loss of the man is so damned incomparably greater than the loss to anything as stupid as literature that I can hardly hold the two ideas in my mind simultaneously. Maybe, later, I'll acquire the mental agility.

I appreciate your nomination for writing the obituary. Right now, I don't know what to say. Perhaps it might be easier for those who never met him at all. A complex and baffling personality one can't--- couldn't--- get all at once. An overgrown boy--- a brooding anachronism--- a scholar--- a gripping, compelling writer--- a naive boy scout--- a man of great emotional depth, yet strangely self-conscious of many emotional phases which he unjustly claimed he could never put into writing fiction--- a burly, broad faced, not unduly shrewd looking fellow at first glance--- a courtly, gracious, kindly, hospitable person--- a hearty, rollicking, gusty, spacious personality loving tales and deeds that reeked of sweat and dust and dung of horses and sheep and camels--- a blustering, boyish, extravagantly-spoken boy who made up whopping stories about the country and the people and himself, not to deceive or fool you, but because he loved the sweep of the words and knew you liked to hear him hold forth--- a fanciful, sensitive, imaginative soul, hidden in that big bluff hulk. A man of strange, whimsical, bitter and utterly illogical resentments and hatreds and enmities and grudges--- hell--- I can't begin to tell you what a man this Howard was. Not a thing I have said, understand, is really true--- merely as true as I can make it in my bungling attempt to describe so many facets.

I'm baffled. Describing Howard is like trying to tell you, in words written or spoken, the difference between rye whiskey and bourbon whiskey--- only infinitely more difficult. Rye whiskey of course has the flavor of rye--- but what does that mean to a man who perchance has never tasted rye in distillation? I can describe it only in terms of itself--- and Howard only in terms of Howard. If you met Howard, I can not add; if you did not, I can not start. And the Howard I met may be a different Howard from the one you might have met had you enjoyed my opportunities.

Right now, I feel sort of clubbed on the head. I asked Mashburn to let me monopolize your letter, in that your remarks were esoteric retorts to long bandied jests and "conversations" so that it would be to a degree unintelligible to him. So I read. We had just spoken of Howard, oddly enough. Then this---

His best works, for the past seven years, did not appear in



W.T., but in non-fantastic fields. His earlier weird yarns, plus his "rational" stories of modern times, Texan characters, were the cream; his Conan series were really the dregs of his talent, not the tops.

That obituary--- hell, I don't know what I could write. A lot of silly sounding drool--- my effort to say what I found when I went to Cross Plains. How I drove to the "Accursed Mountain" with him. How I went from village to village listening to local lore of mighty slayings, maimings, battles. How he found me an oil driller in operation, presented me to the old Pennsylvania Dutchman, who courteously explained all the finess of a "Ft. Worth spudder" as compared with other drilling tools. And how Howard, after we left, seriously told me that if the Dutchman had omitted one trivial detail or held out one fine point, he, Two Gun, would go back and maul him to a pulp with his bare hands, just as a lesson and a warning that visiting dignitaries were not to be slighted. How he would from time to time draw his Colt Automatic from the side pocket of his car as he approached locales where his "enemies" might be lurking--- how he gravely and seriously queries me as to my enemies. And so on--- a man of such dazzling whims and humors and fancies, profound, naive, philosophic, boyish--- aw, hell--- how would a heap of suchlike drool look in print? How we led the Sacred Cow to pasture--- how he had a sense, deeply and unwarrantably ingrown, of his own unworthiness and ineptitude as a writer. How the town despised him as a loafer and varmint and freak, and how it pleased him to have "nationally known" writers visit him, so that "these G--- D--- x--- ng x---ng" yokels of Cross Plains will know I at least have friends who amount to something in this writing business, even if I don't." And he'd write me, "My stock went up a good many points since I showed you around town--- " Too sincere and hearty to say such things as a "compliment" to a guest; just his incomprehensible and utterly unwarranted self deprecation beyond any traditions of "modesty". Now was it as a crude bait to "fish" for a compliment to assure him he was quite a great fellow. He was so damn simple and hearty, sincere; so devoid of any cheap tricks of that sort that in piecing together those trifling remarks, I can only conclude that it was neither flattery to a guest, nor "fishing" for a compliment, but an humility and sense of inferiority that no one shared with him. So--- and I cut this short--- how the hell can I write about the man without, through my crudeness of expression and inaptitude of example and interpretation, doing him injustice, making him seem odd, freakish, uncouth--- instead of just unique; a person unlike any other? Doubtless he WAS freakish, uncouth, provincial in some aspects--- when viewed by an UNSYMPATHETIC PERSON --- but the man himself had so many diverse aspects that no one, no two, no twenty facets can possibly "characterize" him. Perhaps I liked him well enough to see all these many facets--- liked him, so that I joined him in his freaks and whims rather than viewing them from a detached angle. I can't "interpret" him. Howard was a unit--- remove any one facet, and you no longer have Howard, the man of dizzying contradictions. And now my great grief is that en route from Mexico to California I "didn't have time" to detour and spend another day with him--- I visited him, you know, en route from California to Mexico. But I didn't anticipate this. And it leaves me feeling sort of amputated, bludgeoned, robbed, or something. And what the hell can I write? I did appreciate his writings, deeply and heartily, and often wrote him to that effect. I was deeply grateful for his encouragement when



I went into the fiction writing business in 1932, and often told him so. Our first correspondence arose of our having simultaneously written the editor of W.T. a fan letter, each about the other's story--- neither suspecting that the other was doing the same.

That hearty, gusty, salty, high invective and prodigious oaths with which he garnished the higher moments of our conversations, when we savagely assailed some of the more effeminate and less virile seeming members of the writing tribe and their foibles. An intolerant, rabid, extreme sort of fellow, Howard, with mighty likes and dislikes--- whether reasonable or not, makes no difference.

And that hospitality and cordiality and brotherliness of the reception one gets--- though if one were disliked, I fancy one would be greeted with great blocks of cord wood hurled at one's chin, would be mightily kicked in the stomach, dragged through fresh dung newly dropped by Delhi, the Brahma-Jersey cow, keel hauled, and hurled into a cactus patch!

All of these impressions, reminiscences, pictures, recollections of the Howard personality would sound a bit odd in print, would they not? But I can't write his obituary in any other vein than his own--- gusty, profane, sweaty, vulgar, boisterous, whimsical, gargantuan, fanciful, exaggerated---

And one of the best things he ever wrote appeared under the name of "Sam Walser" in "Spicy Adventure", a bawdy yarn of high hearted breeziness, saltiness, which--- oddly enough--- was utterly free of the forced, cheap smut that characterizes the book.

Maybe that last bit gives you another angle on that complex Howard I'll never again try to outdo in prodigious oaths and extravagant invective and more extravagant conceits.

Now, write all that into the Eyrie! What he wrote was a joy that lingers, and I have many a time re-read many of his tales--- but what he wrote was so god damn insignificant compared to the man himself that I can't be bothered with any appreciations of his writings.

In fact, I feel very much robbed, and I can't waste any emotions on the loss to "literature"--- I'm too god damn concerned with how beastly dreary it will be the next time I cross 1100 miles of Texas without swilling mighty flagons of beer and buttermilk with Bob Howard.

If you have any hints on how to write it, how I ought to write, what I ought to write, how to say my say without becoming stereotyped, and yet saying it in a way than an editor could put into print--- sound off, and I'll welcome it. And is there any chance that the rumor may be incorrect? I'd hate to waste an obituary like this unpublishable one of today, on any living man.

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E. HOFFMAN PRICE'S FURTHER REMINISCENCES OF ROBERT E. HOWARD

From a letter to Francis T. Laney

July 33rd

1944

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I have the clippings from the Cross Plains paper which state unequivocally that REH died from a self-inflicted pistol wound, and that the probable motive was the knowledge that his mother's illness was fatal, and beyond any hope; and that for three days and nights he had been sitting up, until he got the doctor's decision in terms which overwhelmed any possible hope. He stepped out the back door--I picture it all; I remember the gate through which he must have gone to get to his Chevvie, which was probably parked alongside the fence, his father's car being in the garage--took the pistol from the side pocket--another



thing I picture, as I saw him draw that very pistol on one occasion when we were driving across the open country and he suspected an ambush. It is all too clear and sharp a reconstruction.

It was an automatic; whether a Colt or a Savage I do not remember. It is my impression that it was a .32, but whatever it was, it was big enough. I do know positively that it could not have been heavier than a .38, and, somehow, I always come back to the feeling that it was a .32, even though I did not have any occasion to heft the weapon or even scrutinize it. I think my familiarity with pistols makes my guess passably sound.

The bullet went in the right side of the head, coming out the left. His vitality was such that some hours passed before it was certain he would die. Not knowing the precise trace of the bullet, and being aware of the tricks played by bullets directed with suicidal intent, I am not able to state whether his surviving for some hours after the shot is or is not remarkable; yet I do feel justified in hazarding the guess that uncommon vitality was necessary to stave off the shock, and for such a period resist a fatal wound....

...REH at the age of 30 had that same dismay and despair that one might expect of a child who has lost his mother. When I was a kid, very young, I remember my feelings when my mother was seriously ill and her survival was doubtful. Forty years later, on the event of her 75th birthday, I tried hard to consider realistically that despite her good health and good spirits she could not have many more years to go. But today I consider the inevitable with an entirely different emotional flavor; twenty years ago, when I was younger than REH, I'd have considered her death in somewhat the way I would today, or five years hence. As a child there was that natural feeling of dependency---and also, shrinking from strangers, most of whom I felt were enemies---so that my mother's death then would have delivered me into the hands of the Philistines! More than mere bereavement, there was plenty of self-centered fear of unpleasant possibilities, grim certainties---a terrifying world in which I'd have not an ally.

Now it seems to me that REH, big and grown up and rugged and bluff as he was, had carried with him from early childhood a lot of the state of mind I have tried to describe; and with his growing up, he had also acquired a lot of grown-up grimness, lack of which would have made his act impossible.

While a 5-year-old would be terrified of a world devoid of a mother's emotional and spiritual sustenance, to say nothing of her material support and attention, he'd finally adjust himself; he simply would not have the means of escape, or, if he had, he'd lack the brute courage to use the means on himself. But REH had, in a way of speaking, the 5-year-old's crying need for escape, and the grown man's stern resolution. He was a strange blend of the rugged, the grim, and the highly emotional, the sensitive, and the super-sensitive.

I have often wondered if Dr. Howard---a physician, and a very wise and experienced man, as is inevitable from having practiced medicine for 40 years---has seen it in that light, and has asked himself, in his loneliness and bereavement, if there could have been any forestalling or warding off of the tragedy, had Robert found stronger interests away from home. He has never, in any of his many letters, suggested this possibility; but while affable and cordial, and inclined to reveal his thoughts to one whom he considers one of Robert's foremost friends, Dr. Howard has also a realist's full knowledge of the futility and unmanliness of speaking in terms of "it might have been otherwise". A man of his fortitude and courage may even within himself think such thoughts, but he'll rarely if ever utter them.

One is not to assume that Robert was a stay-at-home. He got



around quite a bit. Yet spiritually, rather than in the flesh, he was, as I see it, a stay-at-home--too closely linked, for his age, to his parents, and especially to his mother; though he had a great esteem and affection for his father, and a solicitude whose sincerity was beautiful to note. He told me, many a time, how he had to "look after" his parents; whereas my impression was that Dr. Howard, then about 65, was quite capable of looking after himself in all financial and material ways. Dr. Howard was a man of intense vitality and strong personality. Only recently has his health begun to fail. I do not know how active his practice was at the time I met him; he was what's called a "country doctor", a rugged and sturdy type that is today all too rare. But while these "country doctors" rarely become affluent, they rarely lack the proper comforts of life, the modest requirements of their station. So, I felt that something other than material consideration of his parents' welfare was behind Robert's statements.

Manifestly, his suicide wasn't an act tending toward his surviving parent's welfare! With all affection and respect, I repeat what is my conviction: that it was the act of a 5-year-old's emotion driving a grown and rugged man accustomed to firearms and violence; and that while mere absences from home would not have changed his emotional set-up, the normal keen interests which inevitably make most of us finally see home as a pleasant memory rather than as that without which there is no use living, would have saved REH....

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BOOK REVIEW -- Francis T. Laney.

Alan Swallow, Editor. American Writing, 1943. The Anthology and Year-Book of the American Non-Commercial Magazine.  
Bruce Humphries, Inc., 30 Winchester Street,  
Boston, Mass., 1944. Price \$2.50

This 161 page volume should be of prime interest to every fan magazine editor or contributor. Consisting exclusively of reprinted items from the so-called "little" magazines, it is an annual volume which attempts to give more permanent form to the best of the semi-professional material. Since fan publishing may properly be considered a segment of the "little" magazine field--though one of its more obscure facets--fan editors should consider the possibility of being reprinted in some subsequent volume of the series.

American Writing, 1943 contains eight short stories, fifty poems, several pages of honorable mentions, a complete listing of currently published "little" magazines, and an exceptionally interesting and stimulating introductory essay. Despite a certain unevenness in quality, the bulk of the selections proved themselves thoroughly satisfactory, and the volume as a whole compares quite favorably with other, more highly touted, anthologies of different types.

It may be of interest to Acolyte readers to note that Cosette Middleton (author of Strange Entity in the last issue of The Acolyte) is represented by a semi-fantastic poem, Code. Fantasy is otherwise largely conspicuous by its absence, but a letter from the editor of this volume, Alan Swallow, states that he was not familiar with the fan publishing field, and that he would like to receive fan magazines for consideration in making future selections. Since Mr. Swallow is at present in the armed forces, we suggest that interested editors contact us for his address.

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If the space to the immediate left of this sentence carries a rubber-stamped date, "Jan 1", it means that your subscription has expired, and that a renewal is in order. --FTL/SDR



# THE KEY

JOHN HOLLIS MASON

"Pardon me, but you are Eric Kenley, the weird tale author, are you not?" The query was more statement than question.

I turned. It was the dark man. Several blocks back I had thought I noticed a tall figure following me. At first I wasn't sure. Then when I turned off down a small side street, an infrequently used little thoroughfare, and he followed, I knew that I was being trailed. Now I faced him.

"That's right." I waited for him to go on.

"You must pardon my accosting you this way, but I had to talk to you." His strong, dark face seemed somehow out of place as it mirrored indecision and fear. "Could we go somewhere that we could talk? This street, it...." His voice trailed off.

"Certainly," I replied. "I live near here. We can talk at my place in privacy."

He looked relieved as we started off down the street, falling into step beside me.

As we walked, I turned this strange meeting over in my mind. The dark man seemed to be afraid of something, but where did I fit in? His first speech indicated that he knew of me through my writings and I smiled to myself as I reflected that he might well be a protagonist from one of my own stories, begging help of some well-known believer in that fascinating field so erroneously dubbed the supernatural.

It was only a short distance to my apartment, and I was still wondering about my new-found acquaintance when we reached the building. Admitting myself with my key, I beckoned the other inside.

I led him directly into the library which serves as a combination den and workshop. On the table in the east window was a big Underwood, around it the scattered sheets of a story that had been engaging my attention for the last month. Built into the walls were utilitarian shelves and bookcases, stacked to overflowing with a melange of books. My guest took all this in with a glance, then settled into the big chair across from me.

"A drink?"

He shook his head. "Thank you — no. I think it would be best if I abstained until I have told you my story."

I was becoming interested. So he had sought me out to tell me a story? Perhaps, I reflected with amusement, one of my characters had come to life; perhaps my life was about to be changed by one of my own plots as I changed the lives of the characters in my tales. But somehow the seriousness of this dark stranger soon banished the amusement from such thoughts.

He was speaking. "Do you believe in dreams? Do you think, as Dunne maintains, that some of our dreams are the precursors of what is to come?"

"That all depends on what you are applying his reasoning to. I've always thought Dunne was as near the truth as anybody, but such a subject is much too extensive to permit of generalisation. So much of our so-called evidence might merely be the fiction of the subconscious. Where can anybody make the demarcation between what is true and what isn't? Like everybody else, Dunne was only guessing." Actually, I held with Dunne's theory myself, but until I'd heard what was troubling this man, I felt it unwise to commit myself.

"I only wish I could believe that," replied the other. "But I have a feeling of — of absolute, horrible certainty...."

"Let me tell you my tale."



The dreams began (the stranger said) about two weeks ago, though it seems more like two years. I have always been perfectly normal as far as dreams are concerned, never had any out of the ordinary ones until this night.

At first it seemed as though I were walking down a dark street at night, alone. Then I knew someone was following me. I heard nothing, nor did I see anyone, but I knew.

I was terror-stricken as I made my way down dark streets, a horrible, nameless fear tearing at me. At last I was home. I entered my apartment quickly and locked the door behind me, feeling greatly relieved for the moment. But even in these familiar surroundings--in the dream I was accustomed to them, though they didn't resemble my apartment in any way--I couldn't shake off that awful fear.

The next dream might have been a continuation of the first, but I can't tell for there was no sense of the passage of time. I was reading a book. I can see the title and the author's name as clearly at this moment as I could then. It was The Devil Is an Egotist by Eric Kenley. Yes, it was by you, though even in my dream I thought it rather strange for I've read all your books and you never had one published of that title. It was an excellent tale about a man who bought the Devil's services, then beat his Satanic Majesty at his own game because of the latter's inherent egotism.

The plot of the story involved a key which Sathanas should have had in his possession at the end to substantiate his claim for the man's soul. But the other held it out to the Devil--token of his victory.

In my dream I had just finished reading the book. I suddenly felt as if there was another presence in the room. I looked up, glanced carefully around the darkened corners of the chamber. Then I froze.

In the middle of the room was a tall, dark figure, vaguely blurred. But I felt with a sick horror that I knew this figure, knew it from the depths of nightmare and the dark places of the mind. It came towards me slowly and I watched with the fascination of the bird for the advancing python.

It halted about two feet from my chair, still indistinguishable in the gloom. For some reason I felt glad I couldn't see that countenance. Then it held forth a hand and the swirling luminescence that was its face cleared enough to let me see red, sensuous lips smiling in sheer, quintessential evil. I looked downwards at the hand. In its outstretched palm was a key.

In that moment I was the man in The Devil Is an Egotist, while before me stood the Devil himself--holding out the key. An apparently simple thing, connected by my troubled mind with the character in your book. But I knew with that uncanny surety of dream-life that if I was made to accept the key I would be eternally damned, for I had given the Prince of Darkness the worst affront that could be given.

The dream finished abruptly. But the next night it came again, more clearly this time. The figure that followed me down the dark street seemed to be more distinguishable, the face behind the swirling luminescence that handed me the key in the second dream less obscured. And each night for the past two weeks it has haunted me, becoming clearer and clearer, until last night I saw him. He was reaching forward to me, thrusting the key into my hands, when the dream ended.

But I know that tonight he will reach me, force the key into my hands. If he does that, I'm doomed. You must help me, Mr. Kenley!

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There was silence in the room as the stranger finished. I glanced involuntarily at the writing table in the east window, the sheets of typewritten manuscript scattered around on its top as I had



left them the night before. The rough draft of my new novel, The Devil Is an Egotist.

Then I glanced back at the dark stranger.

"How did you know about my..." The words trailed off.

The other was holding out his hand, smiling. In that hand was a key.

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## DEFIANCE

The church bells toll on sabbath morn  
And I must don my finest gown,  
And with my family sally forth  
To go to church in Hilltop-town.  
Yes, I must step through yawning doors  
Into that holy atmosphere,  
While all within me crawls and cringes,  
Half in loathing, half in fear.  
And I must sit with folded hands  
Sedate and prim within my chair,  
And listen to the preacher's drone  
And bow my head in humble prayer.  
And I must sing their foolish hymns  
And raise my voice in harmony.  
But I insert a word or two  
And change it to a blasphemy.  
At all these good and holy things  
My inward spirit doth rebel,  
And fervently, though silently,  
I call upon the King of Hell.  
I pity these poor simple folk  
Who spend their lives on bended knee.  
Uninteresting people they,  
How boring paradise must be!

You ask, do I not dread the day  
When I must for my sins atone?  
Ah no, Hell is a welcome place.  
I know the Devil loves his own!  
My family is a pious lot,  
And by their laws I must abide,  
But they forget. In Salem-town  
Some of their forebears lived and died.  
My great-great-grandma, long ago,  
Was burned for deeds that she had done.  
'Tis said that I resemble her.  
I do.....and in more ways than one!

---Tigrina

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### EDITORIALLY SPEAKING. (Cont. from page 2)

result of a merger between two of the leading "little" magazines: Lilith Lorraine's The Raven and Lucille S. Jackson's Now. Different, committed to seeking out new writers and off-trail literary expression, will be of comparative size and format to the New Yorker, will run 32 pages per issue, and will appear bimonthly at \$2.00 per year or 35¢ per single copy. Of especial interest to fantasy lovers is the news that

(turn to page 24)



# SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS ABOUT LOVECRAFT'S WRITINGS

Fritz Leiber, Jr.

-oOo-

I believe that the entities of the Cthulhu Mythology, as employed by Lovecraft, are predominately malevolent, or, at best, cruelly indifferent to mankind. They are a reflection of Lovecraft's oft-avowed scientific materialism--his belief in a soul-less and goal-less cosmos, whose only meaning is that dreamed into it by frail organisms which are themselves the sport of blind chance.

Any attempt to analyze the Cthulhu Mythology, as employed by Lovecraft, into balancing hierarchies of good and evil, a la Zoroastrianism, is highly misleading. The characteristic Lovecraftian flavor is thereby lost: that sense of a universe in which only the most inadequate and arbitrary barriers stand between mankind and ravening, paralyzing horror. Lovecraft's stories are at the antipodes from the traditional Christian tales of the supernatural, in which God defeats Satan off-hand, or with the assistance of a dash of holy water, from those pseudo-oriental yarns in which a Black Magician is conquered by a White, and from others of the ilk. Like James, he believed that in a satisfying horror tale the spectral phenomena should be malevolent.

It is noteworthy that, as Laney points out in his Glossary, the benevolent Elder Gods, with the exception of Nodens, are never mentioned save by inference. I fancy that they were only brought into the Lovecraftian horror-cosmos to explain why the malevolent entities had not long ago overrun mankind, and to provide a source for incantations by which earthlings could to some degree defend themselves, as in The Dunwich Horror and The Case of Charles Dexter Ward. However, in the majority of Lovecraft's tales it is the chance indifference of the malevolent entities that allows the hero to survive, and in some (The Dreams in the Witchhouse, Dagon) they plainly triumph.

Furthermore, the benevolence of the Elder Gods is dubious. In The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath we find the Gods of Earth to be relatively weak and feeble (symbolic of the ultimate weakness of even mankind's traditions and dreams) and the more potent "Other Gods" or "Ultimate Gods" to be "blind, voiceless, tenebrous, mindless...."

Undoubtedly Azathoth is the supreme entity and embodiment of the Cthulhu Mythology. There is never any question of his being merely an alien entity from some other planet or dimension (like Cthulhu or Yog-Sothoth or the alien races of the later stories). He is unquestionably and unalterably "god". And he is the blind, idiot god, the god of the ultimate chaos---perfect personification of the purposeless, mindless, cruelly indifferent cosmos of materialistic belief.

And Nyarlathotep, the crawling chaos, is his messenger---not mindless like his master, but evilly intelligent, pictured in The Dream-Quest in the form of a suave pharaoh. The Nyarlathotep legend is one of Lovecraft's most interesting creations. It appears in the prose poem of that name and the XXI Fungi From Yuggoth. In a time of widespread social upheaval and nervous tension, one looking like a pharaoh appears out of Egypt. He is worshipped by the fellahin, "wild beasts followed him and licked his hands". He visits many lands and gives lectures with queer pseudo-scientific demonstrations, obtaining a great following--rather like Cagliostro or some similar charlatan. A progressive disintegration of man's mind and world follows. There are purposeless panics and wanderings. Nature breaks loose. There are earth-



quakes, weedy cities are revealed by receding seas, an ultimate putrescence and disintegration sets in. Earth ends.

Just what does Nyarlathotep "mean"? That is, what meanings can most suitably be read into him, granting that, by him, Lovecraft may not have "meant" anything. Man's self-destructive intellectuality ---his knowing too much for his own good? The spirit of the blatantly commercial, advertising, and acquisitive world that Lovecraft loathed? (Nyarlathotep always has that aura of the charlatan, that brash contemptuousness.) The mockery of a universe man can never really understand or master? It is interesting to speculate.

-----ooOoo-----

Great natural catastrophes seem to have fascinated Lovecraft, as might be expected in one who chose cosmic horror for his theme. It is possible that reports of such catastrophes caused some of his stories to crystalize, or were the nucleus around which they crystalized. The Vermont floods of 1927 and The Whisperer in Darkness. Reports of oceanic earthquakes and upheavals and Dagon and The Call of Cthulhu. The inundation of acres of woodlands by a manmade reservoir and The Colour Out of Space. Regional degeneration and The Dunwich Horror, The Shadow Over Innsmouth, and The Lurking Fear.

It has always seemed to me a particular pity that Lovecraft did not live to experience the terrific and unparalleled New England hurricane of Autumn, 1938. I was in Chicago at the time, when, partly crowded out of the headlines by the Munich Conference, the alarming reports came in, including word that the downtown heart of Providence had been invaded by the sea, to the accompaniment of terrific wind and downpour. My first thought was, "What a story this would eventually have gotten out of him!"

-----ooOoo-----

Lovecraft's great poetry--Fungi From Yuggoth--was written within a week, December 27, 1929-January 4, 1930. I wonder just why that creative burst came. I note that, of his tales, The Dunwich Horror was written in 1928 and The Whisperer in Darkness in 1930, with nothing intervening. The poem Brick Row is dated December 7, 1929. Perhaps this excellent poem, inspired by a demolition-threat to old warehouses in South Water Street, Providence, was the harbinger of the sonnets. This leaves completely unexplained why he suddenly shifted to the sonnet form after years of heroic couplets and Poe-esque rhyme schemes. Now if it could be proved that The Messenger, a sonnet form reply to a newspaper challenge, had been written at about the same time....

At any rate, the peaks of his prose and poetic creativity coincided.

-----ooOoo-----

I disagree with many, including Lovecraft himself, who rate The Music of Erich Zann as one of his two or three most excellent tales. Of course, this business of choosing "bests" is just a literary pastime, but it strikes me that Zann is uncharacteristic--an experiment in the genre of E. T. Hoffmann. The same applies to The Outsider, his most Poe-like tale. I would look for his best among those stories that are, in style and subject matter, most wholly his own, in the main current of his creativity. They include Dagon, The Statement of Randolph Carter, The Temple, The Festival, The Shunned House, Pickman's Model, The Haunter of the Dark, The Dreams in the Witch-House, The Thing on the Doorstep, The Call of Cthulhu, The Colour Out of Space (a good choice for his "best", as many agree), The Dunwich Horror, The Shadow Over Innsmouth, The Shadow Out of Time, and At the Mountains of Madness. My personal favorites are The Shadow Out of Time and, especially, The Whisperer in Darkness.



The last story is remarkable for the way in which the horror of the alien and the fascination of the alien are equally maintained until almost the very end. Machen is the only other writer I can think of who could do this as well.

\*\*\*\*\*

## THE RUNNER

They said to leave the ancient house alone:  
Some Thing lived there that none would call by name.  
But I was bold and did not mind a bit  
The cobwebs and old stoves that knew no flame.

A creaking stair led upward in the gloom  
To strange old gables, hoary now with mould.  
A study there, with dusty books and scrolls  
That made my seeking fingers numb with cold.

I could not read those tomes of Elder lore,  
And laughed at what the people once had said:  
A man had called a thing from far below,  
A running thing that had no eyes or head.

It had fast feet (the ancient legend said)  
And lurked around the shadows of the stair.  
It chased intruders, drove them mad, perhaps;  
Or brought them back unclothed into its lair.

I laughed again at these wild tales and left,  
Because I saw no living thing within the place.  
Books, manuscripts and scrolls I later burned,  
Nor did I see the Running Thing without a face.

The doctor says that I imagine things:  
No creature dogs my footsteps night and day.  
But now I have a pounding in my ears  
As if the hounds of hell were all at bay.

Sometimes a cold, dank wind will whisper by,  
And hurried footfalls plague my weary ears;  
Though I see nothing and my friends do not,  
I cannot chase away these horrid fears.

Now far, now near, the awful Runner goes,  
And one dark night I saw a silhouette  
Of lumpy shoulders and a bony, outstretched claw.  
I fear the Thing is going to catch me yet.....

---Duane W. Rimel

## THE MUMMY

-----oooOooo-----

We found the tomb at sunset, but the brown-skinned fellows  
Refused to pry into the hallowed ground.  
My comrades slept. Amid the dark and filthy cellars  
I hacked the ancient door, and with the sound  
Of ghastly wailing wood its queer seals gave;  
My flaring torch disclosed a mummy bound  
Upright in one end of a darkened cave.  
Dread shook my limbs as I approached the fearsome place  
And gazed into its black, dilated eyes.  
An odd aroma stung; I saw its wrinkled face  
Smile. I heard my quick and gasping sighs;  
Then...felt my arms tight in white folds; I saw  
A strange white man go through the open door.



# LITTLE-KNOWN FANTASISTS

HAROLD WAKEFIELD

7. E. M. FORSTER

-oOo-

(Note: At the last moment before stencilling this department we received a brief note from Mr. Wakefield, stating that he had discovered a further volume of short fantasies by Forster, The Eternal Moment. Due to the short notice, it has proved impossible to incorporate any information concerning this volume in this present article; we shall, however, attempt to have a supplement to the Forster essay in the next issue of The Acolyte. -- FTL/SDR)

-oOo-

E. M. Forster, the British author of such books as Howards End, Where Angels Fear to Tread, The Longest Journey, A Room With a View, and A Passage to India, makes his contribution to the field of fantasy with a collection entitled The Celestial Omnibus, first published in 1912, and reprinted by Knopf in 1923.

This volume is one which may not appeal to all lovers of fantasy. The reader who seeks only the cosmic horror of the Lovecraftians, or the one whose taste leans only to the sensational will find little here to his liking. For those who enjoy a quiet, urbane style with a pleasant touch of the whimsical, this book is thoroughly recommended.

Mr. Forster, one imagines, would have been happy in ancient Greece. Pan, fauns, naiads and dryads, all appear in his stories, even though all in this present volume have a modern setting. The title story, "The Celestial Omnibus", is woven around the very trite theme of a young boy who is transported to heaven in a mysterious omnibus, there to meet the great poets of the ages and their creations. The story, however, does end on a note of genuine horror when the boy's companion, a worldly-wise man who lacks the innocence of heart to venture into the celestial regions, leaps from the vehicle and is found next day on the streets of London, horribly crushed as though fallen from a great height.

The best story in the collection is, perhaps, "The Story of a Panic", which deals with the great god Pan and the stark, panic fear he brings to a group of tourists in Greece by his presence. The rather obnoxious youth who actually sees him becomes estranged from the rest of humanity and from then on leads the life of a wild creature. The intimations of the presence of the fearful deity are handled with extreme skill.

"The Other Side of the Hedge" (the least effective story in the book) is an allegory telling of a strange, peaceful world from which all human strife is banished. The idealism and sentimentality of this item seems today strangely outdated. A much more effective piece of writing is "Other Kingdom", in which a young woman--always very close and akin to nature--actually turns into a dryad to avoid the attentions of an unwelcome lover. The sense of the unknown pervades this story strongly. It and "The Story of a Panic" are the two best in the book from the point-of-view of a strict weirdist.

"The Curate's Friend", a whimsical bit, deals with a faun who actually lives in 20th century England. The tale treats of his friendship with the local curate, and the disastrous way in which the faun's effort to help him reacts on the curate's love-life.

The volume concludes with the rather poignant "The Road to Colonus". In it, an elderly traveller in Greece encounters a wayside shrine to a naiad and a dryad, experiencing for a brief period the fever of Hellenism, only to be torn away from strange and unimaginable



joys by the hum-drum ties of his everyday existence.

Lovecraft, in his "Supernatural Horror in Literature", praised "The Story of a Panic", but compared the remainder of Forster's fantasies to those of J. M. Barrie, which seems hardly just. Many lovers of the less gruesome type of weird tale would undoubtedly enjoy the scholarly and pleasing restraint which characterises these little stories.

Forster is the master of a sly, tongue-in-cheek manner of telling a story. A particularly enjoyable characteristic of his work is the way in which he so often tells the story through a pompous, self-satisfied, worldly-wise character who is totally incapable of comprehending the remarkable significance of the events he is relating. This reviewer recommends Forster's work highly.

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING. (Cont. from page 19)

Stanton A. Coblentz will occupy an important editorial post with Different, and that the magazine will carry one fantasy story per issue. It is highly probable that the off-trail aims of this publication will result in the production of artistic fantasy of permanent literary worth. We suggest that interested readers write to Different, Box 238, Dallas, Texas.

---ooOoo---

THAT OLD SONG AND DANCE... As usual, we are scraping the bottoms of our files for serious, worthwhile essays. We have a plethora of usable fiction, and acceptable verse seems to come our way without our making any particular plea for it, but articles of any real worth are woefully hard to come by. Won't some of you more studious collectors take the time and trouble to write something for us? Don't feel that you need be a polished writer; we will be only too happy to smooth over any slight ineptnesses in rhetoric. The main thing we want is authentic information of either a biographical or bibliographical nature, or else thoughtful contributions to fantasy criticism...if the writing isn't quite up to snuff we'll see that it's fixed. Don't feel that the subject matter must be limited to H. P. Lovecraft or his friends--while HPL and the gang are of prime interest to us, we are highly anxious to publish definitive critical articles on such writers as H. Rider Haggard, S. Fowler Wright, W. Olaf Stapledon, and other authors of literate fantasy and scientifiction.

---ooOoo---

CHANGE OF PUBLICATION DATES. Due to a change in FAPA mailing schedule which necessitates considerable changes in our spare-time programs, the publication dates of The Acolyte will henceforth be the 15th of January, April, July, and October. We shall bend every effort to maintain this new schedule as well as we did the previous one.

---ooOoo---

VAN VOGT MOVES TO LOS ANGELES. The local fantasy circle has lately been augmented by the arrival of the Toronto writer, A. E. van Vogt and his personable wife, who arrived here in mid-November. van Vogt, author of some 700,000 words of published scientifiction and fantasy and known to all readers of Astounding and Unknown for such opuses as Slan, The Witch, Black Destroyer, and scores of others, plans to make his permanent home in or near Los Angeles. The van Vogts made a terrific hit with the local fans, and we are certainly glad to have them with us.

---ooOoo---

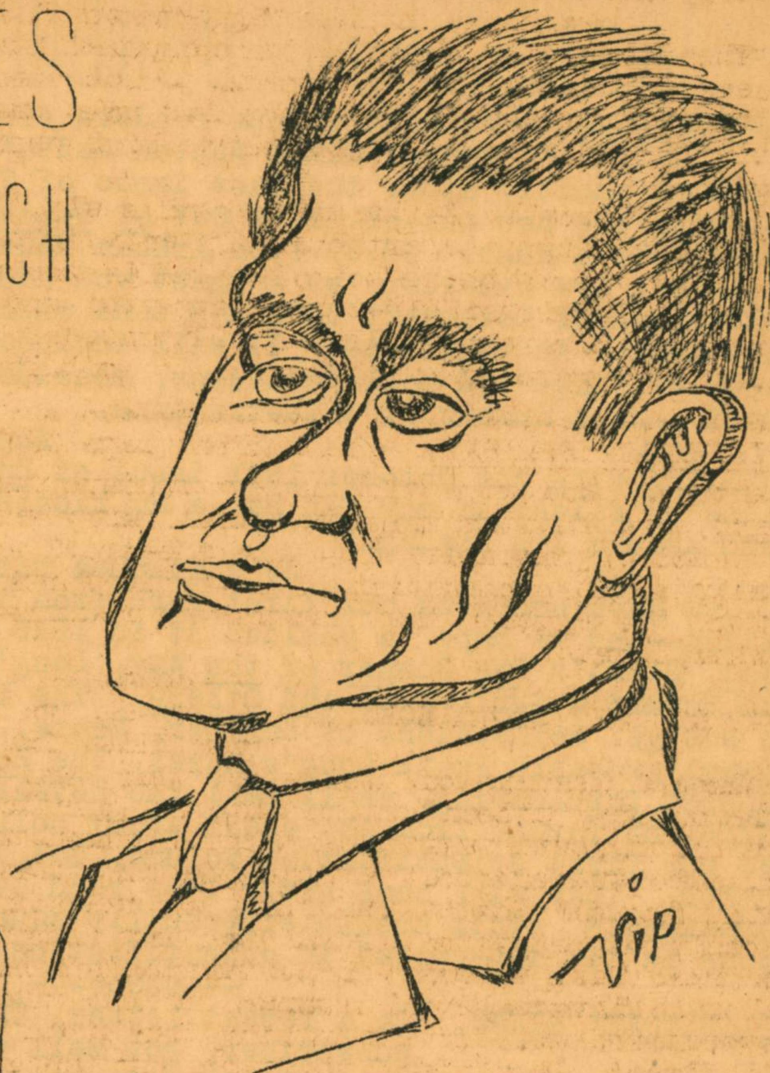
MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

---ftl/sdr.

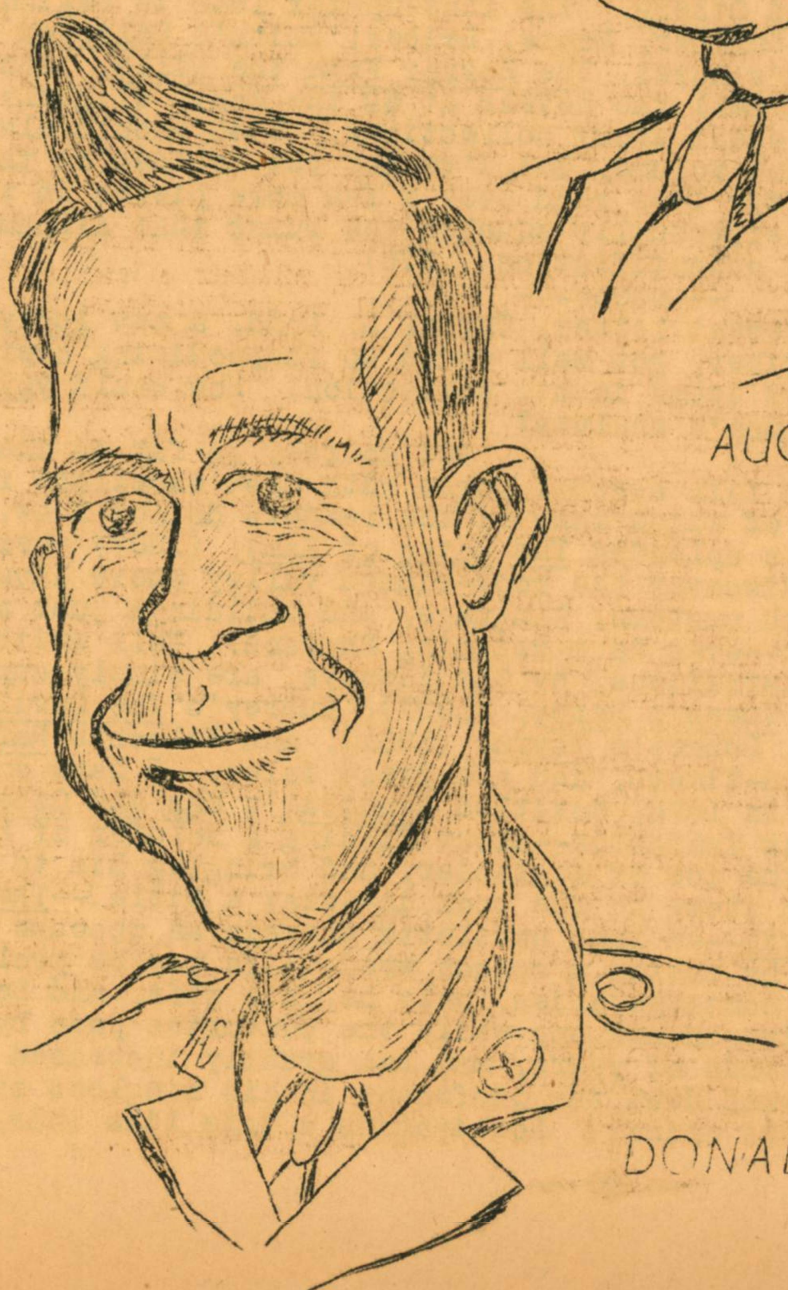


# CARICATURES

## VIRGIL PARTCH



AUGUST DERLETH



DONALD WANDREI



# BANQUETS FOR BOOKWORMS

ARKHAM HOUSE. As most of our readers doubtless know, the second volume of Clark Ashton Smith's short stories, Lost Worlds, appeared shortly after the last issue of The Acolyte. Uniform in format with the now out-of-print Out of Space and Time, this volume is positively a must. \$3.00 from Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin. While you are ordering, we suggest you add \$3.00 for Marginalia, the collection of Lovecraft odds and ends which should be out by the time this notice is published. It will include a miscellany of HPL's lesser-known writings and collaborations, considerable material about Lovecraft, and a number of illustrations.

August Derleth writes, "I am still missing the October 1941 issue of Unknown, which I need to complete my files; if any fan has a duplicate he wants to sell, pass the word around I'm buying."

He continues with Arkham House's future plans: "...we have accepted our first work from ms.--Witch House by Evangeline Walton--and we hope to publish it in 1945 along with my own Something Near, Bloch's The Opener of the Way, Long's The Hounds of Tindalos, and Howard's Skull-Face and Others. The line-up for 1946 is beginning to emerge: collections by Kuttner, Moore, Leiber; Smith's Selected Poems; probably Frank Long's novel, The Horror From the Hills. Fan support forthcoming, we'll sell the novels at \$3 the copy, slightly different format from the short story collections. 1946 should also see our first scientifiiction volume, but I've not yet decided on the author. That will come after I've read over a few more pieces in the magazines." (This should effectually squelch the rumor that Arkham House is not interested in scientifiiction. FTL)

---ooOoo---

COLLECTORS' ITEMS. In a recent letter, Thyril L. Ladd, a new Acolyte subscriber, got well wound up rhapsodizing over certain of the more obscure items in his collection. How would you like to get loose in this man's shelves?

"Of course, as far as that goes, both you and I could fill several pages with most excellent fantastic and bizarre tales, of which many of the readers do not know. Items like Baroness Orzcy's splendid The Gates of Kamt, (1907) where the two young Englishmen discover the rock-rimmed valley where lives a great nation of people with customs, language, and buildings just as they were in ancient Egypt--even to a reigning Pharaoh. Well written, too. And the colored illustrations, by the Kinneys, are simply superb. Or Mrs. Blodgett's At the Queen's Mercy, (1897), Aubrey's The Devil-Tree of El-Dorado, (1897), Bennet's Thyra, (1901), and Wilson's Rafnaland, (1900)---all very old-timers, and all great tales. I have one book, published in Albany in 1878, entitled Hannibal's Man and Other Stories. The title-tale is fantastic--about finding a soldier of Hannibal's army imbedded in the ice of a glacier, and bringing him to life--but the really great story in the book is--what a title!--The Secret of Appolonius Septrio---a long novelette wherein an obscure professor discovers that, by eating a common weed, life may be prolonged forever. Ridiculed by contemporaries, only he, his wife, and her brother eat of it; they live on and on, while the centuries pass by. After thousands upon thousands of years, man has greatly increased in stature and grown wings---and deem the professor in his wingless state a freak, probably some queer animal! Now imagine a tale like this,



--nearly 67 years old, too!

In later time, there are also scores of fine fantasies which, I venture to say, are in great part unknown to hosts of fans: Warner's thriller, The Bridge of Time (1919), wherein an Egyptian Prince is put in magic sleep and wakes, amazed, to the year 1914--can you imagine his astonishment when he first saw New York's subways?; or The Light in the Sky by Clock and Boetzel (1929)--a new and terrific idea; or E. Charles Vivian's "lost race" tale, The City of Wonder (England, 1923); or Edward Shank's great story, The People of the Ruins (1920), where--as in Wells' When the Sleeper Wakes--the hero awakes to find himself in a decadent, half-ruined England....

---ooOoo---

PENGUIN RINGS THE BELL. American "Penguin" added another excellent item to the growing list of fantastic pocket-books under date of November 1944, when they reprinted (for the first time in cheap format) William Sloane's fine To Walk the Night (originally published by Murray Hill, 1937). This tremendous novel of the possession of an idiot girl by an alien intelligence is recommended unreservedly. Penguin book No. 550, it may be had for 25¢ at your newstand.....The Penguin anthology, Out of This World, is not worth the 25¢ to any collector of any standing, who is sure to have all the good stories in a dozen or more other anthologies. ---FTL

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## FANTASY FORUM THE READERS

W. PAUL COOK writes from North Montpelier, Vermont:

I was interested in the "Postscript to the Checklist of M. G. Lewis" which Mr. Koenig furnished for the Fall issue of The Acolyte. He had previously been courteous enough to send me a copy of the letter from which it was taken. It was a valuable comment on the list by "W. Paul Cook and R. H. Barlow" published in a previous issue. However, it impells me to write you a letter I have long had in mind in reference to these various check lists "by W. Paul Cook" which you have been publishing.

I am perfectly willing to have these lists used for what they may be worth, but I wish to clear up any misunderstanding in the matter. These lists were never released by me for publication. They were my own private checklists for my own guidance when I was collecting the authors in question. While they are largely taken from my own collection and are therefore authentic, in many cases they only embodied what information I had on the subject and merely represented what I was looking for. Lovecraft had copies of some of my checklists, and I presume these are what Mr. Barlow has been handing you. I have been in no way consulted about the matter and my consent to publication has at no time been obtained. And certainly I have at no time collaborated with Mr. Barlow in the preparation of any Lewis or other check-list.

I trust I make myself plain. These lists may be published for what they are worth, as I said, but as I prepared them they were never meant for publication. I do not care to have fantasy fans or others imagine that I am releasing for publication what I regard as definitive lists of these authors.

(Note: I believe that Mr. Cook's letter clears this matter up. The Acolyte staff wish to apologise to him for any possible misuse of his lists. It might be said in extenuation that Barlow sent us several packages of mss. for possible publication, and these two lists were among them. We naturally presumed that their inclusion indicated



that no objection existed to their publication. Barlow was shown as co-author of the one list because several titles had been added to it in his handwriting. We shall be on our guard against similar happenings in the future. --FTL)

---ooOoo---

An Excerpt from a letter written by CLARK ASHTON SMITH to R. A. Hoffman 9-9-44:

...As for a third volume of stories, I haven't settled on all the titles yet and am hoping that I may have some new work to include by the time Arkham House is ready to publish it. Definitely, however, the book will contain: The Garden of Adompha, Genius Loci, The Charnel God, The Colossus of Ylourgne, The Disinterment of Venus, Vulthoom, The Devotee of Evil, The Voyage of King Euvoran, The Willow Landscape, The Eternal World, The Black Abbott of Puthuum, The Witchcraft of Ulua, The Phantoms of the Fire, and The Ice-Demon. I haven't a title yet for this volume.

My prose pastels will be included in the collection of my poetry which Derleth and Wandrei hope to bring out in 1945 or 1946. This will be entitled The Hashish-Eater and Other Poems and will be uniform in size, format, etc. with the volumes of tales. For the past week I have been exhuming ancient mss. and even retouching some of them in preparation for the immense job of typing which Wandrei has set me. He wants a copy of every poem I have ever written! Incidentally, he wants to use a reproduction of one of my paintings (not yet selected) in full color as a frontispiece.

---ooOoo---

ROBERT BLOCH joins us from Milwaukee, Wisconsin:

There's stimulation in Price's note, but before responding to it, I'd better insert a preamble. Back in 1934 I wrote a letter to WT in which I expressed my opinion that Howard's Conan stories were vastly inferior to his Kull or Solomon Kane tales, and deplored the intemperate shedding of gore in the Conan series. Well....by the time my letter appeared, I had my own first story scheduled for the next issue of WT. Result--Conanophiles rose and denounced me as "an author criticizing another author". Since that time I've shied off any commentary...and will take care to keep my remarks inspired by Price's article generalized so that I won't step on the toes of anybody.

Price refers to HPL as an "amateur". How true that is! And how often I have been impressed, while reading through reams of critical commentary on HPL's work, by the fact that most of these appraisals are superficial in the extreme. (No, I'm not referring to Fritz Leiber's splendid notes in the current Acolyte; they are impressive and authoritative.)

But the bulk of HPL's critics, when seeking to explain his genius, miss the mark entirely. They try to dissect the secret in his "style" or his "approach"...and they enter the glib jargonesque realms of "genre" and the like.

But Price hits the nail on the head.

H. P. Lovecraft wrote the kind of stories he did because of the kind of person he was.

That doesn't sound either very grammatical or very profound, does it?

Yet it contains, in essence, a truth about authorship all too frequently overlooked.

When they moan, "Where will we find another like HPL?", they completely overlook the obvious answer...another HPL will be found only in the person of an author with commensurate intellect who lives with comparative individuality of outlook.



There are some swell yarns being written for money these days. But the same boys who turn them out also bat out the god-awfullest crud that ever cascaded out of a Corona. And the old gag about no man being able to serve two masters is pretty accurate. True, HPL made a business of revision, etc...but his own writing was never regarded by him in that light.

HPL used to send his original mss. to me, and to Derleth, Smith, Price, and the other boys, and ask quite candidly: did we think this yarn was good enough to submit?

G. G. Glopp, with stories in 15 magazines this month, including 5 cover yarns, would have ripped his mss. off to his agent so fast...

But why belabour the obvious?

Few will dispute that Clark Ashton Smith is probably the greatest living serious fantasy writer. I don't think it's any coincidence that CAS is also one of the few fantasy writers whose work is a labor of love. CAS has never changed his style for new magazines, new editors, new rates. CAS doesn't wait for "market tips". Neither did Lovecraft.

Understand, I am not saying you can't write a good "commercial" story. But I do say that if you write "commercially", every story will not be good--in fact, every third or fourth story will hardly rate more than fair--and only about once in every ten tales can the average author expect to turn out a yarn worthy of appearance in print alongside the work of the conscientious creators of fantasy.

I know. I've done my share of hacking. I know lots of the boys who also do their share...and I know that many of them have genuine ability and an aptitude which, if properly developed, might blossom out into an individual style.

I'm not blaming the boys, any more than I would blame myself. We don't own any ivory towers in which to hide from mundane responsibilities...and I suppose that HPL and CAS might have bowed to convention had they assumed the burden of family life and obligations.

A large share of the blame (if any) rests squarely on the shoulders of editors and readers alike...editors who haven't the guts to insist on paying good rates (they know that their publishers are giving 5¢ a word to detective story writers while limiting their fantasy authors to 1¢ or 1½¢)...editors who have pet "slants" and accept stories that conform to their "ideas about fantasy" (which are suspiciously concrete rules for a supposedly ethereal field). Readers are guilty only of poor taste...though I think a renaissance of interest on their part in the genuine fantasy would not be impossible.

Well, I'm rambling and know it. But to me, it has always been patent that HPL's genius lay in his personality--that his style and subject matter alike were always secondary manifestations of his modus vivendi--and to me, the secret of good fantasy lies not in the study of Lovecraft's literary methodology, but in a sincere consideration of his personal philosophy and ethics. When more writers live the kind of life that Lovecraft did, then more great fantasies will be written..

---ooOoo---

Lack of space crowds a number of highly interesting letters out of this month's Fantasy Forum. We have to hold over for the next issue letters by T. O. Mabbott, Mick McComas, Stuart Boland, Fritz Leiber, Mike Fern, and a number of others. We hope that this necessary curtailment will not impair the flow of usable letters; lack of time compels us to limit this magazine rigidly to 30 pages. If we have sufficient material, we shall set aside six pages of next issue for the Forum, which has always been one of our more popular features? Won't you send us your letter?

---FTL/SDR



# BASQUITAL SCHOOL BOOKS

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DEVIL STORIES - a collection. \$2. \*\* DREAM by S Fowler Wright, \$1.75. \*\* THIS ABOVE ALL, MPShiel. \$2.50. \*\* WEIGHER OF SOULS, André Maurois. \$2.50. \*\* HORROR ON THE ASTEROID, Edmond Hamilton selections. \$1.75. \*\* COLD HARBOUR, on the Lovecraft "Must" List. \$3. \*\* THE ABSOLUTE AT LARGE, Karel Čapek. \$2. \*\* THE LIVING BUD-DHA. \$2. \*\* THE UNDYING MONSTER, \$2.50. \*\* THE WITCH OF PRAGUE, \$1.25. \*\* THE NEW GODS LEAD, SFwright. \$2.50. \*\* THE SECRET PEOPLE, John Beynon. \$1.50. \*\* THE BABYONS (Laney's Discovery) - \$1.50. \*\* JOHN BROWN'S BODY (British) - \$1.50. \*\* CLARK GIFFORD'S BODY, \$1. \*\* PHOENIX, HOWells. \$1. \*\* DR KRASINSKI'S SECRET, MPShiel.. \$2.50. \*\* THE NEW ADAM, Weinbaum. \$2.50. \*\* SINISTER BARRIER, English edition of the Eric Frank Russell Unknown novel. \$3. \*\* THIRTEEN O'CLOCK (Stories of Several Worlds) - Stephen Vincent Benét, \$2. \*\* BEYOND THE RIM, SFwright. \$2. \*\* ODD JOHN, Olaf Stapledon. \$2. \*\* LO! Fort. \$5. \*\* THE KING IN YELLOW, Chambers. \$6. \*\* SAUR-US, \$3.50. \*\* THE SHADOWY THING, \$2. \*\* THE HOLLOW SKIN, \$2. All ppd.

## Collectors' Items

'Hymn to Satan' - by Tigrina. A weird piece for the piano. 25c  
'The Hyborean Age', a LANY (Los Angeles-New York) Memorial Volume for Robert E. Howard, with Foreword by Lovecraft and chronological account of Conan's career by P. Schuyler Miller. Price, \$1.  
'Shadow Over Innsmouth' in Canadian Weird Tales. Illustration on the cover, with different interior picture from the US. \$1.  
'A History of the Necronomicon', original printing. 35c.  
'Mystery of the 33 Stolen Idiots', Amy Worth (Keller penname) 50c.  
'Athane', a moonbeam fantasy by J Chapman Miske. Last 4 copies of a limited edition of Chaos #1. 75c.  
'13 Phantasms' by CASmith, Fantasy Magazine, March '36. In the issue also: A biographical sketch of August Derleth. \$1.50.  
'Men of Avalon', Keller; 'The White Sybil', CAS; together in the same printed pamphlet. 75c.  
'The Nameless City', first printing of the Lovecraft tale, with woodcut illustration. Also stories by Howard, Keller, Rimel, Wollheim & Derleth, all in the first & only issue of Fanciful Tales of Time & Space. \$2.  
'The White Gulls Cry', by P. Schuyler Miller. #1 Unusual. \$1.50  
'The Discovery of the Future', word-for-word transcript of Robert Anson Heinlein's dynamic Denvention speech. 25c.  
'Fantasy Loses Lovecraft', interview with Olaf Stapledon (including foto) plus other stf-fantasy items. In Scientifiction for June '37. (British) \$3.50.  
'The Garden of Fear', Robt E Howard; Frank Belknap Long Jr's 'The Dark Beasts', and others. Marvel Tales #2. \$2.  
'Nymph of Darkness', Catherine L Moore & Forrest J Ackerman, illustrated by CLM. Linoleum block of HPL, with interview. Associated items, in the Weird Tales issue of Fantasy Magazine. \$2.  
'Woman of the Wood', Merritt, 2 parts, Science Fiction Digest. \$5  
'The Metal Emperor', Merritt, 11 pts., Science & Invention, \$25

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