

# Urbanian



J. CANTHORN  
6-8-58



This issue opens with an article by Bjorn Nyberg relating a few facts about himself and how he came to write "The Return of Conan". It is probably putting the cart before the horse, featuring an article on Howard's successor before one on Howard and Conan, but I feel that Robert E. Howard needs no introduction to the majority of ERB fans. All I can say is, that if you haven't read any of the Conan books don't hesitate if you get the opportunity. It probably came as a surprise to many Howard fans to learn that another author was continuing the Conan saga, but due to the fact that an unknown author was being used it seemed probable to assume that the book was being published on story merit alone, rather than if a "name" author had been commissioned to continue the series. I for one found "The Return of Conan" very satisfactory.

I have had a number of requests for a further article on Bantan, so who better to write one than Maurice Gardner. To round off this issue a film review and an article on one of REH's other characters Soloman Kane by Albert E. Gechter. And not forgetting Jim Cawthorn of course, who I'm sure you will agree has done some very fine illustrations.

There has been a great deal of controversy in recent issues of ERBANIA as to whether or not ERB is still popular with the general public and whether his books would sell if they were reprinted again. At this moment is on trial in this country. Four Square Books, a relatively new publishers, are to bring out a p/b edition of "Tarzan of the Apes" in January to be followed by "The Return of Tarzan" in February, they have no other titles under consideration, but are waiting results of the sales of these two books; if they are successful they will go ahead with some other titles. W. H. Allen must have found the pocket books successful, because only a few months ago they reprinted four of the Tarzan titles. Four Square Books seem to publish a better class of p/b's, with some of the most attractive covers on view today and their covers for the two Tarzan books will be no exception. They are illustrated by Mortelmans, one of their staff artists. If you have difficulty getting copies, the address is Landsborough Publications Ltd., 173 New Bond St., London W.1.

Something epochmaking has happened in England, for the first time in the history of Erbdom an original ERB comic strip has appeared in an English periodical. "THE MARTIAN, Based on the famous book A PRINCESS OF MARS by Edgar Rice Burroughs-the creator of Tarzan" commenced in the Oct 25th issue of THE SUN Weekly. The drawings are very well done by Dave Motton and the strip is keeping very faithful to the book, moreso than the Dell John Carter comic. For any U.S. reader who might like to write for copies the address is, Room 603, The New Fleetway House, Faringdon St., London E.C.4. The strip is still going strong at the time of writing this editorial (December) and will probably continue for several months

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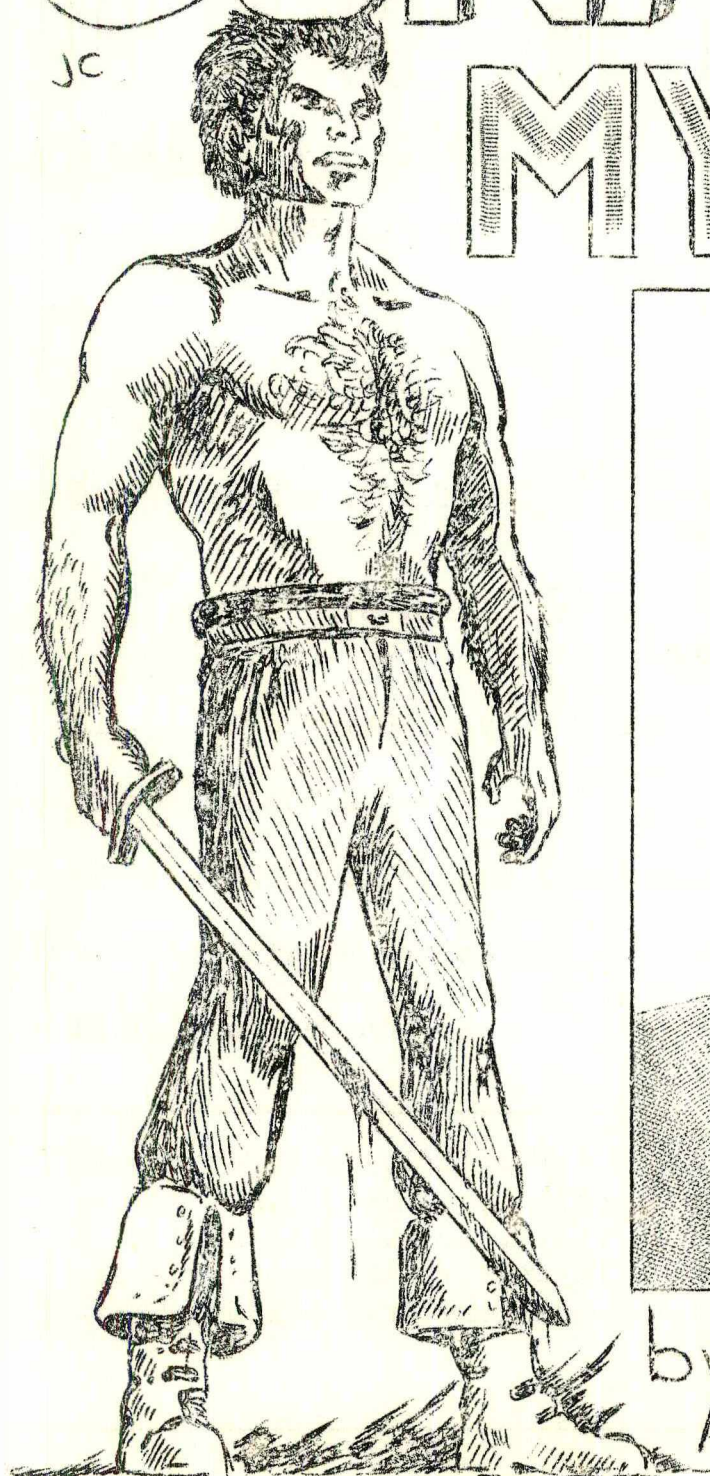
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# CONAN and MYSELF

JC



by BJORN NYBERG



"The Return of Conan" really got written by accident. During one of the early months of 1955, I was sitting in my room, relaxing during the lunch hour, when I got the impulse to use the spare time to improve my typewriting speed. And what better way than to attempt a sequel to "Conan the Conqueror"? I had always been eager to know what happened afterwards, I had no thought of publishing, it was only done for fun.

And when the manuscript was half finished, one of my friends the owner of the Swedish SF magazine HAPMA, K. G. Kindberg, got to read it and liked it. So, during a trip to the USA, he met Greenberg of Gnome Press, who was immediately interested. It was agreed that I should complete the manuscript as fast as possible and send it over. Later it was decided that de Camp should go over it, examining both language and novelistic technique, making the changes that he deemed necessary. And here I must state that I have had the most pleasant cooperation imaginable from de Camp and he has given me many valuable pointers and good advice for future writing.

And so it came about that Conan had at least one more adventure.

De Camp pointed out to me that perhaps the most interesting period still uncovered is Conan's service as a Turanian mercenary in his youth, which I have begun to explore; but there are also several unwritten leaves in the days of his youth, when he still lives in Cimmeria and I am working on a story giving the background to his decision to leave his native land and go forth into the world.

I have got a folder full of sundry ideas, synopses and half finished stories. Most are about Conan, but there are a few straight sf ideas in the lot. I have not intended as yet to continue the Conan saga to see what happens after "The Return of Conan", but rather to fill in several gaps left in the chronical of his former life.

Tentatively, I have five novelettes planned that will fit into a new book after magazine publication. Martin Greenberg has written me, urging further production and as soon as I can, I will go to work on it, but I am sadly short of hours these days and haven't had the necessary time to complete them. The fact is that I am a 1st lieutenant of the Swedish Air Force, Quartermaster section and outside of my work in the service I have been studying at the Handelshogskolan in Stockholm, which is a sort of university of economics and related subjects, giving a degree comparable to Bachelor of Science. So you see that what with service

(continued on page 13.)



## CONCERNING

*Bantan*

by MAURICE B. GARDNER

illustrated by JIM CAWTHORN

The editor of ERBANIA has requested that I introduce myself and how I happened to conceive Bantan, my South Sea Island character. I'm sure no one is interested in me, but I will concede that I am neither young or old.

One summer afternoon while I was swimming alone in a river near where I live, my youthful mind was always alert for new ideas to put down upon paper. I had written many stories, both short and long, prior to this time and even dabbled in poetry. Incidentally, "Son of the Wilderness", my third published story, had been written, concerning a youth reared to manhood in the remote Maine woods. I thought a lot of this story, but my mind was always alertful to new ideas and I wanted to write a long novel, since I had considerable idle time on my hands.

And so on this warm summer afternoon while swimming alone, the name of a fiction character occurred to me - one who liked to swim as I did. Just like the snap of one's fingers a name that I had never known before became a reality - BANTAN. Then the next thought occurred to me - where is Bantan going to exist? At the next moment the thought of the South Seas occurred to me. There, I had conceived my leading character's name, also his far-away home.

That evening at home I gave the matter considerable thought, even going as far as doing a little outlining of the story subject. Thereafter, during the balance of the summer, fall, winter and spring, I wrote in longhand unceasingly - the story of Bantan seemed to tell itself and I merely recorded it. I originally named the novel just "Bantan". Further thought, added God-Like Islander to the title. It was a long story, something like 100,000 words in length. I naturally recopied it on the typewriter, making few changes. I ended the story with every prospect of Bantan returning to America with the American girl and her father who had sought him.

For some unknown reason I didn't hurry sending the story to a magazine editor, but eventually I sent it to the editor of Blue Book magazine. They kept the book a month before returning it to me with a rejection slip.

Later, I sent it to Meador Publishing Company, of Boston, Mass., and they liked it. We made arrangements and the first limited edition was finally issued. The book sold fairly well



MAURICE B. GARDNER'S

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despite the many typographical errors this first edition contained. When "Son of the Wilderness", my third book appeared, I suggested we put out a second edition of the Bantan book. The publisher agreed and I was more proud of this edition.

Meanwhile, I was trying to conceive a way of having Bantan remain in the tropics. At last I created a feminine character quite the equal of the heroine of the first book and I wrote "Bantan and the Island Goddess". I consider this one of my finest Bantans. The ending of this story assured the bronzed giant's future residence would be in the South Seas.

Later, "Bantan Defiant", the third book in the series, was written, and this was followed by "Bantan Valiant". At the time I contracted for this book I thought it feasible to have another edition of the out-of-print first Bantan issued. I changed the title to "Bantan of the Islands". Secretly I had felt "God-Like Islander" was a little elaborate, and with this new change of title I felt appeased.

Another Bantan novel is written and bears the title "Bantan's Island Peril", which I hope to have issued in book form in the near future - and this story I hope to have illustrated for the benefit of the readers.\*

I also propose to write a book of Bantan's boyhood days - as hinted in the first volume - to be titled, "Bantan's Island Tales". Several of these stories have already been written.

I have followed the writings of Edgar Rice Burroughs since I was a boy of eleven and in my mind Tarzan knows no equal. Unconsciously I may have been influenced by the jungle lord, but at no time would I attempt to plagiarize his adventures.

Meanwhile, if the good Lord permits me the grace to do so, I hope to continue Bantan's adventures. Much preliminary writing on another new novel has been done. Any of these days I expect to be "banging the typewriter keys" with real fervor. All I need is a little more encouragement from my readers, for I am inclined to become lazy.

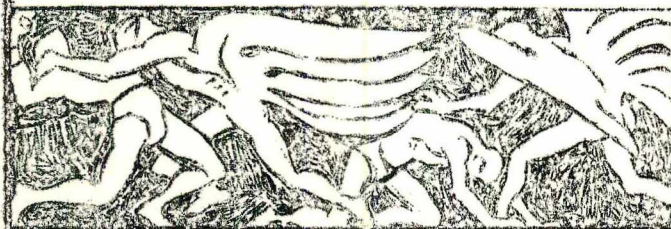
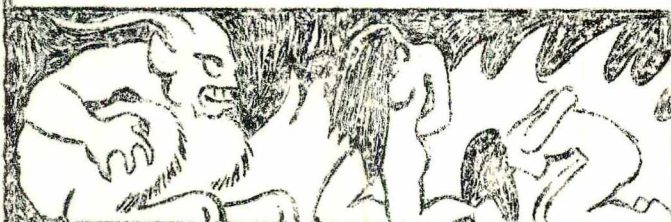
Before concluding my article, many readers may wonder why Bantan hasn't become married before now. I can answer that question very easily. By keeping Bantan unmated, just consider the future romances he can take part in for the benefit of the story situation. Isn't that more appealing than having him married and "settling down to a mundane existence" that so many millions of men consider their goal in life?

\*I am very pleased to announce that Maurice's new book will be illustrated by none other than Jim Cawthorn with six full-page illustrations and dust-jacket, and should be a very attractive volume.  
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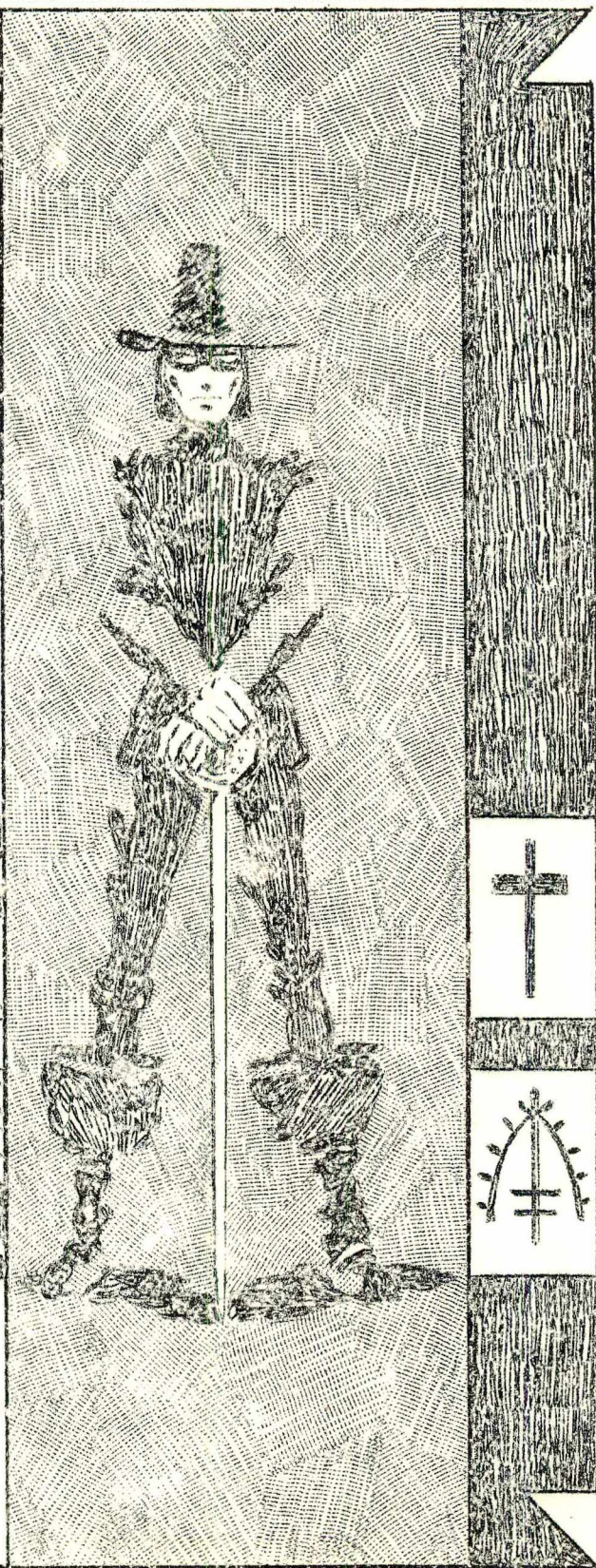


JC

# HOWARD'S SOLOMON KANE



BY  
Albert E. Gechter





Robert E. Howard was one of the most prolific and exciting authors of fantasy fiction that emerged from the pages of the old WEIRD TALES and other magazines of the Depression years. He created many memorable heroes - Conan the Cimmerian, King Kull, Brule the Spear-Slayer, Bran Mac Morn, Black Turlogh, Sailor Steve Costigan, Breckenridge Elkins and among the rest, one of the most outstanding was Soloman Kane.

Soloman Kane, the grim, dour, fanatical, dedicated Elizabethan English Puritan gentleman-adventurer, whom Sir Francis Drake called "Devon's king of swords" for his fierce fighting and invincible skill with the rapier. Soloman Kane, "God's angry man," who devoted his life to wandering about the odd corners of the world, aiding the weak, avenging the wronged, waging a one-man-war-to-the-finish against tyranny and oppression, exploring new lands, and combating the black forces of supernatural evil that roamed the earth in those days.

This fabulous figure made his initial appearance in the August 1928 issue of WEIRD TALES in a novelette called RED SHADOWS. Since it has never appeared in hard covers, it might be well to summarize the plot in some detail.

The forest, mountains and valleys of France were being terrorized by Le Loup (The Wolf) and his gang of French and Spanish brigands. They raided a small village in the valley; one of the pretty village girls, hoping to escape their lust, fled up the valley, but she was overtaken by "The Wolf" who brutally ravished her and then stabbed her with his dagger. Down the road by moonlight came a strange pale faced, black-haired man, with fierce gray eyes, an intense, earnest expression, plain black clothes, a featherless slouch hat, and a long Spanish rapier hanging from a baldric at his side. Soloman Kane! He found the dying girl, learned from her lips what had happened and though he had never seen her before in his life, he swore he would never rest until the Wolf and every one of his bandits were dead.

In the months that followed he relentlessly tracked them and one by one he killed them, until only Le Loup himself was left alive. Finally Kane and the Wolf met face to face in the robber's cave, but the brigand chief escaped by a clever ruse. And thus began the great chase. Kane followed Le Loup to Italy and then to Spain, but the scoundrel was always one jump ahead of him and it seemed he would never catch up to him. Le Loup took passage on a Spanish shipbound for the Slave Coast of Africa; there were heading out to see as Kane came galloping down to the docks. Too late again!

But Kane learned his destination and followed him in a Portuguese ship which he chartered for the purpose. Landing on the Slave



Coast, Kane ventured alone into the jungle night down a dark trail. Suddenly he was struck down from behind without warning by a great black shape. The drum talk sounded through the night.

He awoke to find himself a captive in the village of the cannibal Chief Songa, whose new right-hand Le Loup had become, while the witch-doctor N'Longa had fallen from power since his arrival. Kane and N'Longa were to be sacrificed that day to a hideous, carved native idol, the Black God. And so they made an alliance together against Songa and Le Loup and their giant black hunter Gulka, the gorilla-slayer, who had captured Kane on his way to the village the night before. Gulka took one of the villagers to the Black - God altar and stabbed him to death with his spear. Then Kane and N'Longa were about to be burned at the stake, when the wizard performed his greatest feat of ju-ju. His body fell into a trance while his spirit passed over into the corpse on the altar, animating it, the dead man rose and attacked the cannibal king. Songa threw his spear at the walking dead man. Uselessly, one cannot kill a corpse! The savage chief died screaming, while the corpse fell lifeless beside him and N'Longa's spirit returned again to his own body which once more revived. Le Loup fell into a panic, while the natives scattered and put out the burning faggots and freed Kane and N'Longa. Armed again with his trusty rapier, Kane dashed down a jungle trail in hot pursuit of his fleeing foe, as the drums beat out their message to the tribes upriver.

At last, Le Loup turned at bay and met Kane, sword to sword, in a duel to the death. Kane received two severe wounds before he disarmed his enemy and ran him through. He dropped his blade and went to a nearby stream to cleanse himself. He looked up to face the giant Gulka, who had followed the white man to kill him.

And then the giant gorilla appeared, eager to slay the black hunter who had killed his mate and charged Gulka who vainly attempted to defend himself with his spear against the enraged, huge, monstrous beast. The gorilla broke and tore his body and tossed it into a treetop, then turned and quietly disappeared into the jungle, without paying the slightest attention to Kane who staggered back to the waiting ship lying offshore in the bay.

This story made a hit with the readers of WEIRD TALES and Howard followed it up writing an entire series of stories with Solomon Kane as the hero. Fortunately, the remaining tales in the series have been collected and published in the huge omnibus book, SKULLFACE AND OTHERS by Robert E. Howard (Arkham House, 1946 - 474 pages). This volume is closely printed and contains three times the material you would find in ordinary books; for sheer bulk alone it is a bargain at the price of \$5.00, and would certainly cost twice



as much at least, if it were published today; besides the Soloman Kane stories and the title novel it also contains all the stories about King Kull, Brule the Spear Slayer and Bran Mac Morn and a generous selection of the cream of his other stories.

SKULLS IN THE STARS, a short novelette (WEIRD TALES, Jan.1929) tells how Soloman Kane dealt with the ghost that haunted the road across the moor to Torkertown in England. Kane had seen deeds of the witchfinder and the Spanish Inquisition, but never had he seen human beings torn and mutilated the way this spectre left the corpses of its victims.

RATTLE OF BONES, a short story (WEIRD TALES, June 1929) tells of the adventure involving treacherous murder, brigands and a sorcerer's skeleton that befell Soloman Kane and the dashing French cavalier Gaston l'Armon at the Cleft Skull Tavern in the Black Forest of southern Germany.

THE HILLS OF THE DEAD, a novelette (WEIRD TALES, Aug.1930), tells of the terrifying adventure that Kane experienced when he returned to the Slave Coast and again met his old friend, N'Longa, the master of voodoo, who gave him his magic fetish staff of carved black wood, which has the power to protect him in time of danger. Kane was armed to the teeth already with a musket, pistols, rapier and dirk, but the time soon came when the wooden staff turned out to be his most valuable weapon. Travelling in the jungle, he came to a land of blood-drinking zombies and the most perillous predicament of his career.

WINGS IN THE NIGHT, a long novelette (WEIRD TALES, July 1932) relates Kane's further adventures in Africa's unexplored wilderness and his tremendous struggle with a weird race of bat-winged men who feed on human flesh.

The last recorded adventure of Soloman Kane is contained in the ballad, SOLOMAN KANE'S HOMECOMING (from DARK OF THE MOON, edited by August Derleth, 1947, an anthology of weird-fantastic poetry by various authors). Kane has had a long and varied career. He has pulled at the oar of a Turkish Galley, toiled as a slave in Barbary, fought red Indians in the New World, sailed against the Spaniards on Sir Richard Grenville's final voyage in the "Remenge", and suffered torture and imprisonment by the Inquisition. He has travelled through the unexplored jungles of Darkest Africa and faced supernatural horrors more terrible than any living man has known and yet he lives to tell the tale. Now after long years of wandering, he comes home at last to the little town on the Devon coast and sits in the tavern, while the townspeople gather around him and tell him tales of his adventures. He asks about his Bess and learns she is dead and buried for the last seven years.

After a while, he tells of his meeting in Africa with a beautiful deathless queen who ruled a blood-thirsty City of the Mad. Kane thinks he is ready now to settle down and live out his remaining days in peace and quiet, but he hears a message on the raging wind from off the sea and is seized again with the wanderlust. He starts off into the moonlit night and away over the hills he goes in search of new adventures.

This poem is not included in SKULLFACE & OTHERS. But you can find it in the new Arkham House book, ALWAYS COMES EVENING, the collected poems of Robert E. Howard, edited by Glenn Lord, \$3.00. published in December 1957 in a very small limited edition, with a photograph of Robert E. Howard. This book includes nearly every poem he ever wrote - perhaps two or three are missing, no more than that. "Soloman Kane's Homecoming" is an excellent poem that can stand up under comparison with similar poems by Alfred Noyes and Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

And now perhaps you understand why most ERB fans are also Robert E. Howard fans! In many ways the two authors are very similar.

But there is still one more Soloman Kane story that Howard left in manuscript at his death that has never been published. It is different from the others in that it is not a fantasy but a straight cloak-and-dagger adventure tale, without supernatural elements. Here's hoping all six stories and the one poem eventually are published together in a book completely devoted to Soloman Kane - as they richly deserve. Get going there, Gnome Press!

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CONAN AND MYSELF continued.... work and a lot of exam cramming to do all the time, there havn't been many hours for writing. I hope this will be better by 1959, though, perhaps earlier.

Besides the items mentioned above, I am 189 centimetres tall 29 and unmarried and havn't ever, I am sorry to confess, visited an English speaking coutry. Languages, especially English, have been my great and all-consuming interest during my school years since the age of 13, when I began studying English. After about a year I begun reading books in English without a dictionary and it may interest you to know that the first one was Burroughs' A FIGHTING MAN OF MARS. Since then I have always had a nostalgic fondness for Burroughs, which partly explains my interest in the Conan series and related tales. I have a library of about 700 English books, not counting magazines and I regularly read five or six new books every week. Thats about all there is to tell about myself, but I must say I was really very flattered to find out that avid Robert E. Howard fans were interested in hearing about myself and my future plans for Conan and I promise not to let them down.



## UNDER SURVEILLANCE

At first glance at this book I thought I was going to be disappointed, because it is supposed to be an attempt to describe the outstanding journeys to the moon and the planets in the writings of storytellers from Lucian the Greek to C. S. Lewis and yet like so many books of this caliber they omit entirely any mention of the true sf authors as if they had never existed and concentrate on the usual stanbys Wells and Verne and the so-called contemporary authors who have probably only written one semi sf novel and that has been hailed as a classic, as if it were the first of its kind ever written. So it was in a sorry frame of mind when I picked up this book, but you can imagine my surprise when I found all of ERB's interplanetary novels reviewed in it.

Each chapter deals with either voyages to the moon or one of the planets and in the chapter devoted to Mars can be found a very lengthy description of the Barsoomian series. It is obvious that Mr Green has enjoyed rereading this series or he has a very good memory, in fact he admits that he could still take high honours in an examination set on the first dozen Tarzan and half that number of Martian. He mentions the influence Burroughs has had on others, naming the classic LORD OF THE RINGS in which Shelob is so like the Siths of the Barsoomian caves that an unconscious borrowing seems probable. Like many fans he considers the first three Martian stories to be the best in the series, with his next favorite being SWORDS OF MARS because John Carter is again the central hero; he hasn't much time for Ulysses Paxton whom he considers a "dreary counterfeit". However enthusiastic Mr Green seems about ERB he has to protect himself by saying, "he is the first author mentioned in this book whose works are almost unreadable by the adult who opens them for the first time" and "those of us who read him at the right age owe a debt of gratitude to Edgar Rice Burroughs, even though we must now revisit the Mars of John Carter, the jungles of which Tarzan was lord, or Pellucidar the land at the Earth's Core only with the aid of memory lest the bright enchantment fade quite away into the mists of past experience". He probably mentions this in case some of his colleagues from Oxford read the book and embarrass him by giving vent to the ape-call next time they meet him. Yet although Mr Green suggests that he has never read any of his books since his childhood, he has obviously gone out of his way to obtain the later books that have never been reprinted in this country.

The next chapter deals with the Moon and in this is a very accurate description of THE MOON MAID about which the author says, "Altogether the whole book, and particularly the last section with its picture of the new civilization struggling upwards, clinging to uncomprehended remnants of the old, is on a higher plane than any other book by Burroughs - and perhaps on account of this very difference



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-from the readers

Dear Pete:

Received ERBANIA the other day and was pleased to get it. This issue was very well produced, in fact the best so far. However, once again there were too many book reviews in comparison to articles. The feature article was really just a long book review, though very well done. As a matter of fact all four book review sections were well done and enjoyable. I feel Gechter should have told us more about Kline himself, plus more about the works of this author. I was very surprised to see reproductions of photos from the T movie and thought them very good, considering the limited methods of reproduction under which, I assume you are forced to labour. Lets have more when the occasion demands (such as another movie review). Jim's artwork was excellent and please convey my congratulations to him. Make sure he appears in every issue as his work gives ERBANIA the right flavor. The index to TA was also appreciated. Please write some more articles on British Burroughs' illustrators as I found those in issues 1 & 2 very interesting.

Just yesterday I was looking at a mag, called AMERICAN ARTIST, and I was surprised to see the cover signed HOGARTH. I little note inside mentioned that he owns and operates a school of art which specializes in teaching how to draw the human anatomy. It also mentioned that Hogarth had just authored a book on this particular subject and that he was better known to millions of people as the drawer of Tarzan in the funny papers. But I wonder how many people really do remember his work, it would be interesting to know. Incidentally, his cover drawing was that of the face of an old man; it was really just a sketch, but nicely done.

About a week ago I bought a small Whitman book titled TARZAN IN THE GOLDEN CITY which is copyrighted 1938. It only has 63 pages, with every other one being an illustration. The interior art appears to be by Rex Maxon, whereas the cover art looks like a rather simplified or early Hogarth style. It was made for distribution in Pan-American Gasoline Stations, as they advertise their product on the inside and backcovers with Tarzan illustrating the quality of their gasoline. The story appears to be a take off on THE RETURN OF TARZAN. I would like to know whether or not it is a condensation of a larger "Better Little Book". Best Wishes JEREMY BARRY (San Francisco 16, Calif.)

Glad to hear you enjoyed ERBANIA and that you were pleased with the new feature of using photographs, unfortunately the cover didn't come out as clear as I would have liked it to, but you are right when you

assumed that I am working under limited means of reproduction. However we are going to keep on trying and I hope the photo in thisish comes out a lot clearer. It is practically impossible to cover all of an author's life and work, especially such a prolific author as Kline, so the article in No 5 was only the first of a series written by Albert Gechter. Also in the next issue will be featured a very lengthy article by E. Hoffman Price who was a close friend of Kline's and collaborated with him on many stories. I think it is fitting to include in this issue's letter column a very interesting letter by Mr Price which relates how he came to write his "Book of the Dead" series of articles, of which his memorium to OAK is the latest.

Dear Peter:

I noted in the copy of URBANIA that you have a rep.in La. One of the most interesting and thoroughly rewarding experiences of my life is having lived in New Orleans six years, during which time I saw a little, all too little of rural Louisiana. I first began professional writing in New Orleans in 1932 - my studio-apartment was at 305 Royal St, in the Vieux Carre - the old city, now known as "the French Quarter." Later, I moved "up town" to what is called the "Garden District." Nine years later, when I had begun to be fairly established in an inconspicuous though satisfying measure, I returned to New Orleans, and during the first three months of 1941, wrote quite a bit of fiction - once again a studio in the Vieux Carre. At the end of this sojourn in one of the outstanding of my favorite cities, I headed west, for Portales, New Mexico. In those days Jack Williamson lived some thirty miles south of Portales, with his parents, in the "Sand Hills" area, where his father, Asa Williamson, was and still is in the cattle business. Although the country appeared to be utterly unsuited to sustain either man or beast, it was in fact very good for fattening beef cattle. Water was plentiful, provided that one drilled wells 300 ft deep, as all the settlers had done. Neither Indian nor Mexican had ever managed to live in that Sand Hill country. It was a sterile waste, a thirsty desert, until the "Anglos" came and drilled wells and set up windmills to pump the water. I shall always remember the family meals - man, man, how those people ate! - and the good conversation after supper. Then Jack and I would go to his studio cabin, several hundred yards from the house. A small generator drove a generator which furnished electricity for lights and radio. It was there that I got the idea of composing these sketches later published by W. Paul Cook in THE GHOST: my memories of Farnsworth Wright (who had died the year previous) of H.P. Lovecraft, of James Ferdinand Morton, HPL's amazing and scholarly kinsman and of Robert E. Howard (this article was featured in R.E.H.'s anthology SKULLFACE...ed.) With good company and a good bottle (which

(continued on page 23)



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 \* TARZAN'S FIGHT FOR LIFE \*  
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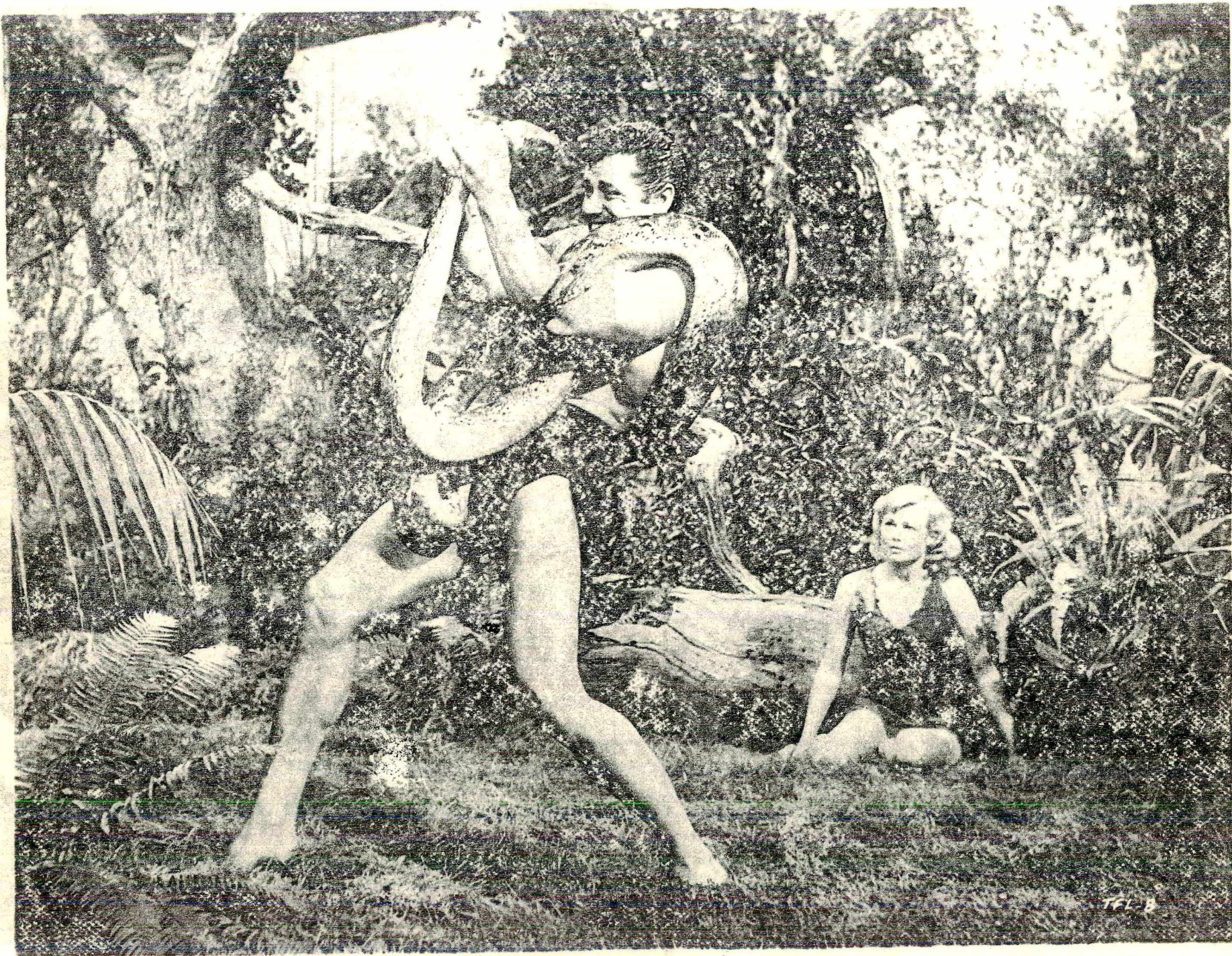
reviewed by Albert E. Gechter

Dr Sturdy and his daughter Anne are white medical missionaries of the Albert Schweitzer variety, doing research and ministering to the natives at their charity hospital on the jungle river at Randini. Years ago, they made friends with the chief of the Nausagu tribe, but the old chief dies and his son the boy chief, is too young to rule; so the council of lesser chiefs rules for him. Recently, this group became dominated by the wicked witch-doctor Futa and his warlike henchman Ramo, who are now busy stirring up plenty of trouble. The natives are wary of the scientific experiments to develop a serum that will cure jungle fevers and Futa plays on their natural superstitions for sinister reasons of his own.

Anne and a single native hospital attendant venture into the jungle to meet the incoming safari of her handsome young fiance Dr. Ken Warwick, who has just completed his medical studies in London and is now returning to Randini. No sooner have they met and greeted one another than the entire group is attacked by Ramo and a war party of Nausagu hostiles. It seems all is lost. To the surprise of the actors (but not to the audience who've been eagerly awaiting for this moment), the challenge-cry of the bull-ape rings out over all and Tarzan comes tree-swinging down to the rescue, easily routing the attackers barehanded with a little of his invincible judo and super-strength. He escorts the doctor and girl back to Randini and goes alone into the native village, where he talks to the tribe men, explaining the advantages of co-operating with the white medicine men and the dangers in following the leadership of the witch-doctor Futa. A scream comes from the river; a crocodile has bitten a native woman bathing in the stream. Tarzan dives in, scares away the crocs and pulls her out; despite Futa's protests, he carries her with him back to the hospital. Futa resolves to make sure that the patient dies and makes powerful voodoo in order to impress the tribe and discredit his white companions.

Tarzan returns to the jungle and is soon back home again at his tree-top house with his wife Jane and their legally-adopted foster son, the boy Tahtu and the chimpanzee Cheta. But there is trouble looming in their paradise and their idyllic happiness is shattered when Jane has an attack of appendicitis. Tarzan puts her in a dugout canoe and paddles downriver with her, Tahtu and Cheta. During a portage around a waterfall, Jane is menaced by a python, which Tarzan promptly wrestles and stabs with his knife. They reach the hospital and a successful emergency operation is performed.







While Jane convalesces, Futa is hatching new mischief.

The injured native woman has died of shock and loss of blood; her husband is one of the two native attendants at the hospital. Futa plays on the grief stricken man's superstition, hypnotizes him, conjures up a vision of his dead wife's face, hands him a serpentine strangling-cord, and orders him to kill Jane, "Tarzan's woman." Jane asks Tahtu and Cheta to bring her some fruit and they go into the jungle to pick it for her; passing close to the Randini village they see a shocking scene. A runner from the main village of Naugasu (up in the mountains) has been captured by Futa's men and is being tortured. Tahtu and Cheta are seen and chased by one of Futa's setries but get away and warn Tarzan who quickly rescues the victim and take him to the hospital for treatment. The suffering messenger tells them that the young chief is ill with jungle fever, but that Futa's men are guarding the passes and allow no one to enter or leave without his permission. Tarzan thinks of a plan to save the boy.

That night, Futa and Ramo burglarize the hospital and steal a jar of "White-man's magic" to cure the ailing chief, by mistake they take a jar of raw, untreated serum, which is a deadly poison. Realizing what their scheme is, Tarzan leaves at once and takes a difficult and dangerous alternate route to Naugasu to avoid the guards.

Next day, the grief-crazed hospital attendant tries to strangle Jane in her bed, but Tahtu gives the alarm and in the ensuing struggle the other hospital attendant accidentally kills the would-be murderer with Tahtu's spear.

Meanwhile, Tarzan journeys through the wilderness, vine-swinging across chasms, scaling cliffs and parleying with the dwarf-people (pygmies) for permission to go through their country. At last he arrives at the edge of Pasagu territory and scales a great water-slide to get over the mountains. (Just like John Ridd in R. D. Blackmore's novel, Lorna Doone.) Surprised and ambushed by alert Naugasu sentinels, Tarzan is hit over the head from behind, captured and taken prisoner to the village.

Futa is already there, making voodoo to save the young chief's life. He puts the raw serum into his wizard's brew and orders Ramo to kill a golden lion they have caged in a cave and bring him its hot, fresh, raw, bleeding heart to add the ingredients. Ramo suggests that he uses Tarzan's heart instead and Futa agrees.

In the cave Tarzan is bound but not quite helpless. He wriggles free one wrist and cuts the thongs that bind him with his knife. When Ramo and the guards come in he surprises them with his judo, and then turns the captive lion loose on them. While his enemies

are being devoured, Tarzan pulls the bars out of a window and escaped.

In the nick of time, Tarzan denounces Futa to the council of chiefs who force the witch-doctor to drink his own medicine before he gives it to the sick boy. Of course the wizard falls down dead. Tarzan persuades the council to let Dr. Sturdy come and treat their chief.

Yodeling the victory cry of the bull-ape, Tarzan swings down from the trees at Randini to rejoin his family and tell the doctors that peace is restored to the jungle and they are now wanted at Naugasu. Tarzan, Jane, Tahtu and Cheta depart for home.

This is not an outstandingly original plot, but it is a much better story and film than the last Tarzan movie which was spectacular but trite. This one is less spectacular but not so trite.

To make Gordon Scott look more the way we expect Tarzan to look, his curly brown hair has been died black and slightly straightened; and he doesn't smile quite so often and clown around quite so much; this time he wears a smartly-tailored loincloth. These changes in his appearance show up embarrassingly in African location scenes filmed three years ago and do not match well with studio footage photographed just recently. Miss Brent is entirely satisfactory as the ape-man's mate, though sometimes she seems a bit too cutie-pie school-girlish for the taste of ERB readers. As their new son, Rickie Sorenson is very similar to Johnny Sheffield as "Boy". Cheta does not steal the picture this time.

This is the last Tarzan film Sol Lesser will make; he has sold out his interest in the company, but Sol Lesser Productions will continue to make the series under different ownership and management - without Mr. Lesser. Sy Weintraub is the new president of the firm and Sandy Howard is the new vice-president in charge of production; the re-organized company plans to promote the series with a lot of advertising, exploitation and personal appearance tours by the star, who with a troupe of stunt-men will exhibit on stage a performance that includes weight-lifting, tumbling knife-throwing, and and acrobatics.

The idea is that the star will devote his full time to the Tarzan character and whenever he isn't making Tarzan movies he will be on the road, travelling around the world to help sell the pictures. Gordon Scott has refused to do this, insisting that he be allowed to make other films and play other characters for other companies. But the new regime has turned him down and plans to replace Scott with another actor who will do as they want. Such a tour has been arranged for the Mid-Western U. S., but its not known yet whether Scott will make this trip as planned. So this is pr-



obably the last of Gordon Scott's Tarzan movies. All plans to make a Tarzan TV series have been abandoned; the company will stick to theatrical pictures and try to raise the quality of the series; they believe they can make Tarzan films that will appeal to older people and non-fans by making them more mature, realistic and believable, and still keep the audience of children and Tarzan fans; this is a commendable ambition but we will have to wait for next year's Tarzan movie to see if they can do it. "Tarzan's Fight For Life" is good and Gordon Scott really swings, but he might as well have lost the fight, because this current picture is still definately in the strictly-for-kids-and-fans category.

Tarzan	Gordon Scott	* Director	Bruce Humberstone
Jane	Eve Brent	* Producer	Sol Lesser
Tahtu	Rickie Sorenson	Camera	William Snyder
Dr. Sturdy	Carl Benton Reid	* African photography	Miki Carter
Anne Sturdy	Jill Jarmyn	* Music	Aaron Stell
Dr. Ken Warwick	Harry Lauter	Screenplay	Thomas Hal Phillips
Futa	James Edwards	* Based on the characters created	
Ramo	Woody Strode	*	by Edgar Rice Burroughs

\* \* \* \* \*

Photograph reproduced by kind permission of Metro-Golwyn-Mayer Pictures, who released this film.

UNDER SURVEILLANCE cont.... of scope and greater depth of thought, seems to have been one of his few failures from the popular point of view: it soon went out of print in America and has never been published in England".

These are not his last words on ERB because in the chapter, "The Virgil Of Venus", he discusses the four Venus novels, but Carson Napier did not impress him as much as John Carter and he has this to say about him, "But in spite of the excellent start and promising early chapters among the tree dwellers, PIRATES OF VENUS and its sequels deteriorates very quickly into adventures that might well have befallen some subsidiary hero like Ulysses Paxton in a minor Martian romance.... To make Mars the planet of war suited well the abilities and limitations of the creator of Tarzan: John Carter the Warlord is credible, even a likeable figure. But Carson Napier on planet of love and beauty seems rather a cad when not being a minor John Carter, while Duare is a pretty doll with a set of pseudo-romantic reactions, even when compared with Dejah Thoris the Martian Princess of Helium".

Whether you agree with Mr Green or not, the book is well worth reading, as it contains some very interesting reviews of other well and lesser known books. (Abelard Schuman 16/-) D. Peter Ogden

## BURROUGHS CONFIDENTIAL

by Joseph W. Miller

DEAR EDITOR

"I agree with you that not many people read ERB today, but it can also be said that not many people read today period! As you say, T.V. is to blame for this. I often wonder what the future will be like- will reading be a forgotten art. Even now the majority of people switch on the TV set straight after dinner and remain with their eyes glued to it until they retire. But the amount of tripe that is on TV is a good deal simpler than any novel could be, so I don't believe it is a matter of comprehension that people do not read as much. I think it is actual laziness, they don't have the patience to pick up a book and use their own imagination when there is ready made entertainment at the turn of a switch." (D. P. Ogden to J. W. Miller, 10 May 1958)

When you say that not many people read today (period!) you have stated flatly the case for Burroughs. We need not fool ourselves with such a large generalization into thinking that reading itself has declined; intellectuals, those who really count when it comes to influencing important people for better or for worse, are reading as much as they ever did. But alas and alack!, it is those people who a generation ago would have sought an hour's entertainment in a Burroughs book, have forsaken the creative joy of reading for the passive pleasure of doting before a television screen.

Television is a good thing and as a vehicle for popular and artistic entertainment it is comparable in importance and influence to the Elizabethan stage. It will undoubtedly produce another Shakespeare. But unlike the theatre it is free (after you have initially sold your soul to buy a set) and available at all moments. Your common man has neither the intellect nor the strength of character to choose and select from the tremendous output of pre-digested pulp which is thrown at him. If he finds an idle moment at hand, a turn of the switch will consume it and he will be as contented as a baby with a nipple. You would think by killing time, one could affect eternity. Most men fear solitude; they have not learned to think and it is less effort to passively look and listen than re-create in one's mind, from the words of a book, an imaginary world.

When you say that it is not "a matter of comprehension that people do not read as much," but laziness, I would hesitate to agree. A man may be capable of great learning, but he must have an educable mind to begin with. Those with good minds can, must and do choose discriminately what what they will look at and what they will read. Those who seek to fill an idle moment with entertainment and are satisfied with pure amusement, will not read Burroughs with TV at hand. Those adults with better minds will neither be engulfed by the drugging effect of TV, nor read ERB to begin with (except for reasons I stated in my last column). Therefore,



the audience that was contemporaneous with the author has given way to a newer audience, looking for its pleasure in a different direction. Only saturation with the banalities of TV will set the audience reading, but then they will be conditioned to scoff at naive simplicity, so Burroughs may not profit.

As far as reading being a forgotten art, we need not fear that. However, there is little doubt that we are moving away from a verbal culture and into an audio-visual one. Cultured people today would rather look, listen and talk, than read. Before the invention of printing most knowledge and entertainment passed by word of mouth and was stored in the memory. Likewise people today are being educated by television, by the 'entertainment' of teachers (pedagogy is dead), receiving art from records and morality from movies and reading is quickly becoming unnecessary or at least obsolete. We could move into an era of oral culture, but books will be used, whether as almanacs, as encyclopedias, or as door stops.

The question is not whether books will be read, but what books will be read. The conclusion of my last column was that books as amusement are dying. Movies give a better representation of life as romance and adventure than a descriptive book can give. Literature is an affair of knowledge and psychological probing will remain the forte of the novel.

But in regard to TV and other mass tranquilizers a few of us do tire of this public entertainment, desire a private amusement and pick up a book. You should hope it is an ERB book.

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KAOR continued..... Jack had driven 30 miles to get!) I was encouraged to begin the task I had been pondering but without any action. In a narrow way of reckoning, my finally writing of Otis Kline, in response to your request, seconded by Elden Everett can be considered also as another of the "Book of the Dead" series, which had its origin in the Sand Hills of New Mexico.

Sincerely Yours, ED PRICE, Redwood City, Calif.)

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EDITORIAL continued..... due to the fact that they seem to be follow-even the minuteness detail of the book. Let us hope they continue to feature the rest of the series.

The latest news from Hollywood, since Al Gechter wrote his film review, is that Gordon Scott has signed a contract to continue the Tarzan role for another four years, with the option to play the hero in any other roles that are offered him. Rumour has it that M-G-M are to remake TARZAN THE APEMAN with college basketball star Dennis Miller as the Lord of the Jungle. Finally an odd note, in an article on Marlon Brando in the Picturgoer, it states that when he wishes to register at an hotel incognito he uses the name Lord Greystoke. Next we'll be having Chesty, sorry Gordon Scott studying The Method. D. Peter Ogden



