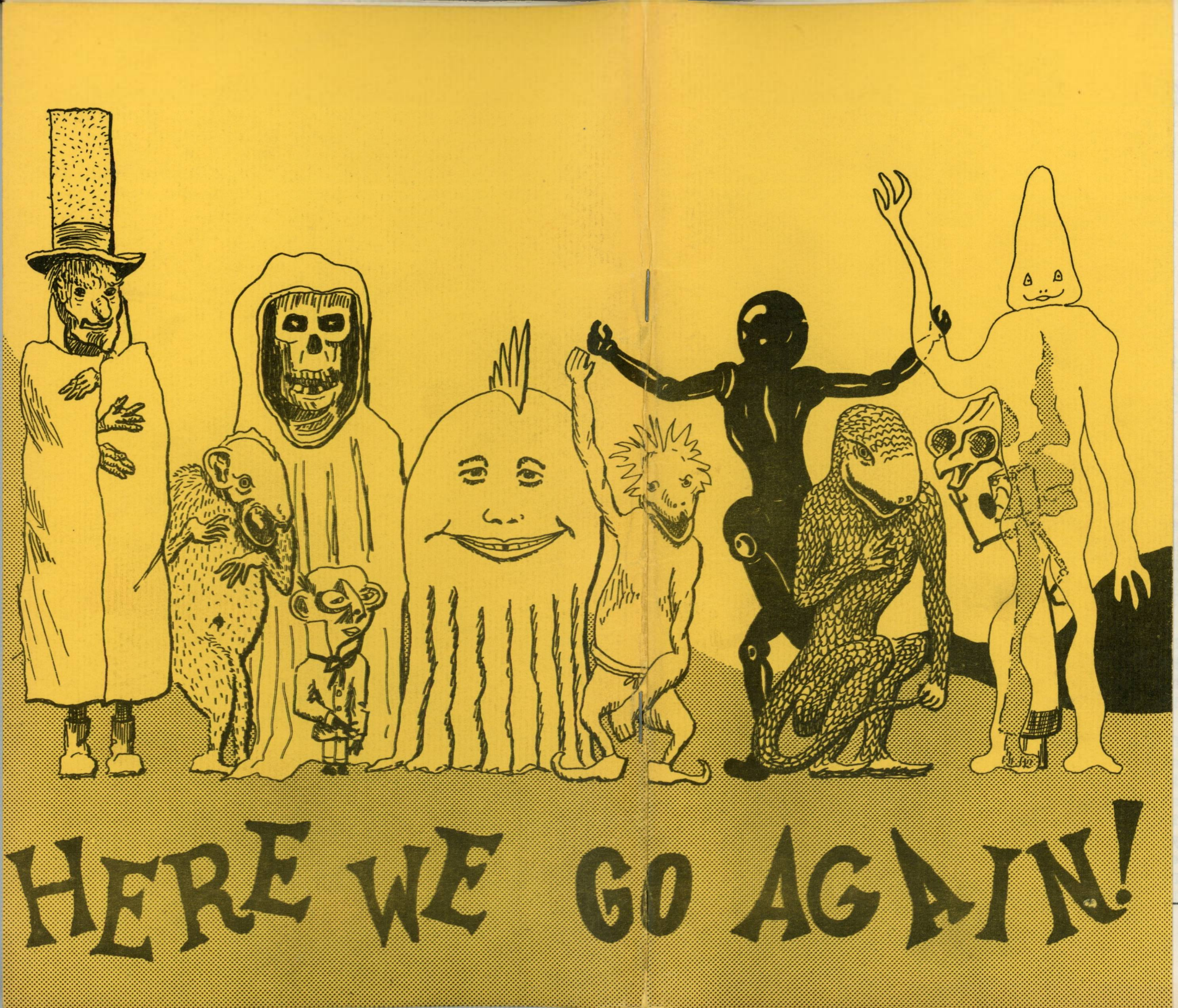

Rhodomagnetic Digest

JULY '62 25¢

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THE RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST

Being the Proceedings of
The Elves', Gnomes', and Little Men's
Science Fiction, Chowder and
Marching Society

Published at 1855 Woodland Avenue,
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THE LITTLE MEN

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REVIEW AND COMMENT EDITOR: Anthony More
ART AND LAYOUT EDITOR: Marv Bowen

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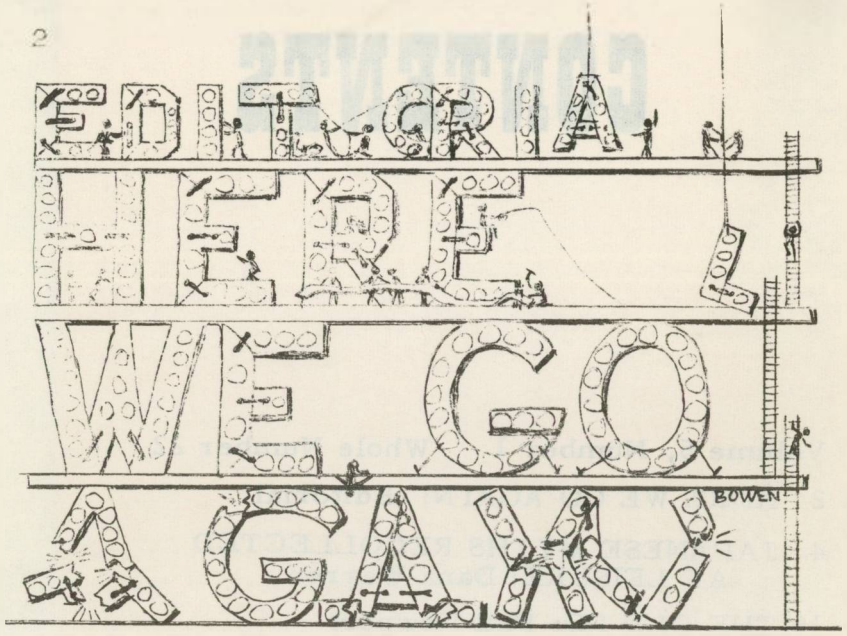


A first editorial should, I imagine, tell the reader something about the reasons for publishing a new magazine, and also give the reader an idea of what he can expect from it. Since this is the initial editorial for the revitalized Rhodomagnetic Digest, I won't disappoint you.

First of all, this magazine is published by The Elves', Gnomes', and Little Men's Science Fiction, Chowder, and Marching Society (hereafter known as The Little Men); I am only the editor. The magazine was first published from 1949 through 1952 by a small group of fans in the earlier incarnation of The Little Men (see Phil Newport's reminiscences in this issue). After the demise of Rhodo, The Little Men went into a sort of hibernation for a couple of years, brought on partly by the altercations arising over Rhodo. When I joined the Society in 1958, it was just reviving; in the past few years, it has grown into a large and lively group of science fiction fans and other interesting people.

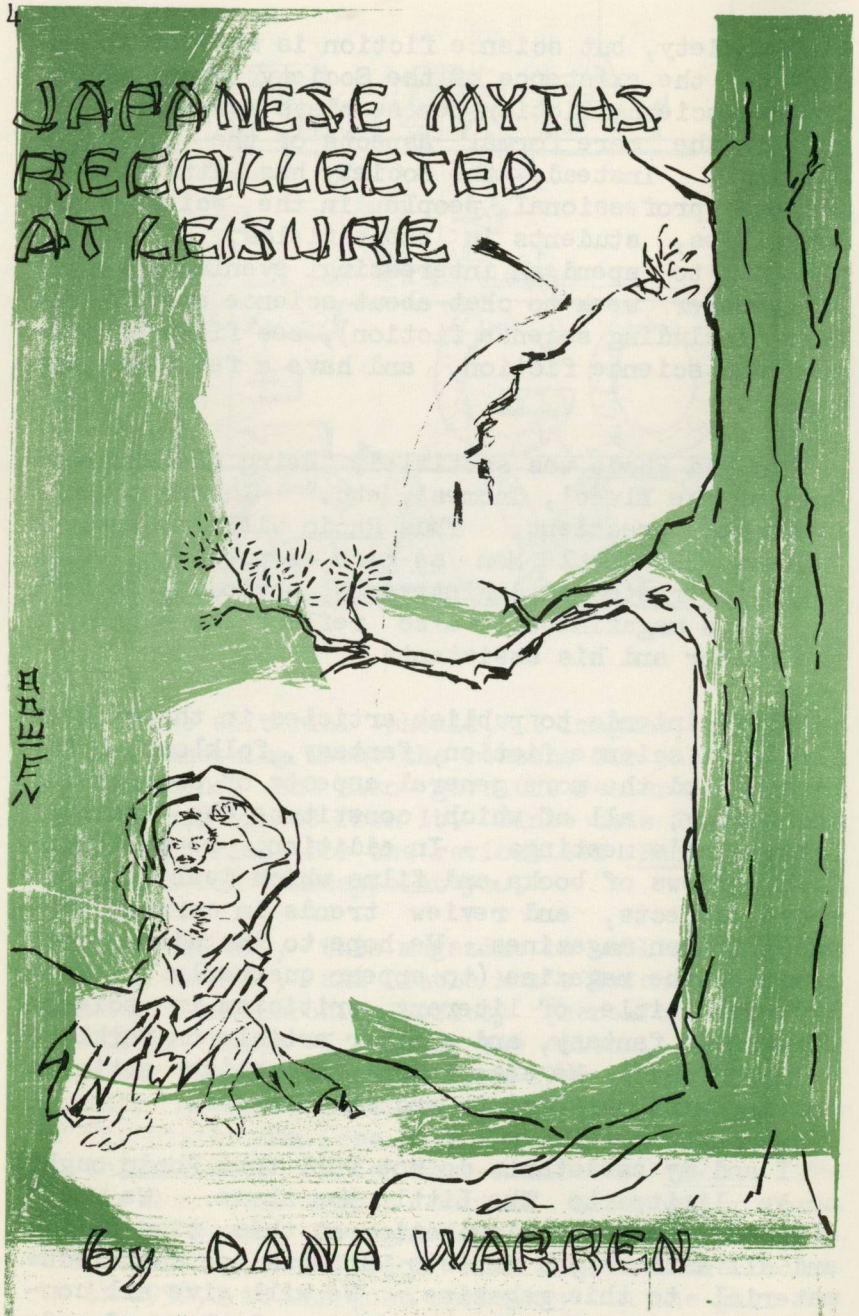
Ostensibly, The Little Men is a science fiction society, but science fiction is more of an excuse for the existence of the Society than a raison d'etra; science fiction per se plays a rather small role in the more formal aspects of the Society's meetings. Instead, the Society has attracted as members professional people in the sciences and humanities, students in these fields, and others who wish to spend an interesting evening together every other week to chat about science and literature (including science fiction), see films on science and science fiction, and have a few beers together.

The old Rhodo was subtitled "Being the Proceedings of the Elves', Gnomes', etc." I hope to continue this precedent. Thus Rhodo will attempt to reflect The Little Men as much as possible, with their interests and disinterests; obviously, however, this magazine will also reflect the biases of the editor and his assistants.

Rhodo intends to publish articles in the general fields of science fiction, fantasy, folklore, mythology, and the more general aspects of science and technology, all of which constitute the heart of Little Men's meetings. In addition, we will publish reviews of books and films which deal with the above subjects, and review trends in current science fiction magazines. We hope to include in each issue of the magazine (to appear quarterly initially) an article of literary criticism in science fiction or fantasy, and another article on folklore or mythology. We also intend to publish articles dealing with the Society and its members.

I and my assistants do not feel that Rhodo ought to be limited to The Little Men alone. We would like to extend our invitation at this time to any and all authors and artists who wish to contribute material to this magazine. We will give all contributed material a fair reading. Letters of sufficient interest will also be published.

So, here we go again.



Dana Warren holds a doctorate in physics and works at the University of California Radiation Laboratory in Livermore. Among his many hobbies is the collection and study of Japanese art and literature.

The Japanese phrase mukashi, mukashi, no ohmukashi ni means literally "in the great long ago of long, long ago," but it is best translated by the "once upon a time" that begins an English fairy-tale. This I learned years ago as a child in Japan. There I heard English fairy-tales from my parents and Japanese myths and fairy-tales from the servants or from guests. Of course I also heard the Biblical myths, but they always seemed different, since they were associated with "our" religion. After all, a missionary family is under a certain compulsion to insist on the uniqueness of its own religious beliefs. The Japanese myths were free of such pressures, and at first I did not distinguish them from fairy-tales, to which they are frequently very similar.

Consider as an example the earliest myth I can recall, the tale of the white hare of Inaba. The story is of a white hare who, stranded on the Island of Oki, adopted a strategem to get to the mainland of Cape Keta. He boasted to the sea-crocodiles of the numerous hare tribe, and persuaded the crocodiles to a competitive count of the two clans. The crocodiles were counted by being lined up, head to tail, from Oki to Cape Keta, while the hare ran across their backs counting. (Unhappily, the count is not known.) But as he reached the last crocodile, he could not resist a boastful sneer at the gullibility of the crocodiles. This so angered the last crocodile that he snapped at the hare, catching and peeling off his fur.

It was in this unhappy condition that the whimpering hare was found by eighty elder princes. They prescribed a salt-sea bath, followed by drying in the sun and wind, which naturally left his unprotected skin painfully chapped and cracked. In this state, he was found by the youngest prince, who lagged behind, loaded down with all the baggage of his elder brothers. Pitying the hare, he enquired and learned his story. By persuading him to bathe in fresh river water and dry by rolling in the pollen gathered from the sedges, he succeeded

in restoring the hare's fur to its original state. The rest is the typical fairy-tale ending—the youngest prince wins the Princess of Yakami in spite of the wooing of the eighty elder brothers.

Years later I learned that this youngest prince is one of the chief heroes of the cycle of Japanese myths associated with the west-coast district of Idzumo. Although we had lived for a while in Tottori, 40 to 80 miles east of Idzumo, I was too young at the time to have any sense of such a geographical relation. It was not till later than I read the full story of this youngest prince, and became confused by the multiplicity of his names, both in Japanese and English. (For instance, we may mention Oho-kini-mushi-no-kami, the Deity Master-of-the-Great-land; Oho-na-muji-no-kami, the Deity Great-Name-Possessor; and Ya-chi-hoko-no-kami, the Deity of Eight-Thousand Spears.) In spite of continued persecution by his brothers, he was successful, not only with the Princess of Yakami but with several other princesses as well. He became ruler of the country or some part of it, and his descendants are listed for many generations. It was his cooperation, together with that of his sons, that was necessary to permit the installation of the line of heavenly rulers.

Thus in spite of its fairy-tale flavor, the story of the white hare is actually a part of the accepted canon of Japanese mythology. It comes originally from the Kojiki or "Record of Ancient Matters." This was written during the winter of 711-712, and we know a good deal about its origin. Its compiler supplied a five-page preface in which he outlined its contents and ascribed its origin to two imperial decrees with fulsome praise for the sovereigns responsible. The first was the Emperor Temmu who ordered a "selection and recording of the old words,....falsehoods being erased and truth determined." But it was not till twenty-five years after his death that the project was carried out on the orders of the Empress Gemmyo. The long gap was bridged by the allegedly infallible memory of one

Hiyeda no Are, whose sex is somewhat uncertain, since the account which identifies her as a woman was written a millenium later. At any rate, it was from the lips of Are of Hiyeda that Futo no Yasumaro selected and recorded the Kojiki.

My interest in the Kojiki was inherited from my father, along with his copies in two editions. But long before his death, he had told me some of the Japanese myths. I recall in particular having a mental picture of the two heavenly dieties standing on the floating bridge of heaven and looking down on the waters that covered the earth. Their names are much easier to remember, partly because you get two names practically for the cost of one. They are named Izanagi (Male-Who-Invites, or Incites) no Mikoto and Izanami (Female-Who-Invites) no Mikoto. Looking for a place to land, Izanagi felt around with the jewel-spear he held, finding only water. But fortunately the drip from the spear "went curdle-curdle" and formed the island of Onogoro ("self-curdled"). Father preferred the translation "went curdle-curdle" to the more prosaic "coagulated." I cannot recall his mentioning the phallic symbolism of the jewel-spear, although the sequel shows its appropriateness to the task of "creating, consolidating, and giving birth to the land," as they had been directed by the convocation of heavenly deities.

There are several versions of the story of Izanagi and Izanami. For one thing, it is given not only in the Kojiki but also in the Nihongi, "The Chronicles of Japan." This follows the Kojiki by only eight years, since it also was presented to the Empress Gemmyo, then retired, in 720. Again Yasumaro of Futo was one of the authors, along with Prince Toneri. It differs, however, from the Kojiki in several important respects. For one thing, the Nihongi was written in Chinese, and this permitted a much smoother and more acceptable style, though it required the abandonment of "the old words," i.e., the Japanese language that the Emperor Temmu had wanted in the Kojiki. Largely as a

result of the improved style, the Nihongi was widely read, accepted, and admired directly from its presentation, while the Kojiki languished in manuscript in the hands of the priesthood. Another important difference is that the Nihongi makes a much greater effort to be inclusive. As a contribution to this effort, it includes a rather wide selection of variant accounts. Whether or not they were included in the original compilation, they now contribute a great deal to our picture of the state of Japanese mythology at that time. For the important account of the creation of the lands, meaning the Japanese islands, by Izanagi and Izanami, no less than ten variant accounts are appended to the principal story, each quoted from a separate source. This variation is in addition to the variety afforded by the different translators, Basil Hall Chamberlain for the Kojiki and W.G. Aston for the Nihongi.

Once they had curdled the Island of Onogoro, Izanagi and Izanami built a home there and set about producing the other islands of Japan. For this purpose, they had to discover, or invent, the whole process of marriage and reproduction, even including twinning, for the divine and human race. This turned out to have difficulties for the English translators as well as for the couple. The translators, working in the Victorian era, solved their problem by using Latin in certain passages. Izanagi and Izanami had more fundamental difficulties. In one version, they were at a loss as to how to proceed until they saw a pied wagtail striking his head and his tail together. In several versions, they got into trouble by the female speaking first, an error which led to such unacceptable offspring as the leech child and the Island of Awaji. They had to start over, meeting each other around a pillar, and the male greeting her first. Once these preliminaries were corrected, they had no more difficulties and generated the "Eight Great Islands" that were said to constitute Japan. Some half dozen lists of these eight are given, differing in selection of items as well as in order of seniority.

Brian Donohue is a young Bay-area artist who has been active in The Little Men in past years. He is especially interested in the silk-screen process, an example of which illustrates this article. Brian's silk-screen art will illustrate future articles on folklore and mythology.

The illustration on this page is taken from a large montage of six especially prepared for this article. A limited printing of 50 copies of this montage, signed by the artist and numbered, are available from The Editor, Rhodomagnetic Digest, 1855 Woodland Ave., Palo Alto, California, for $5 postpaid.

Collectors, please note. Any unsold copies (not likely!) will be destroyed in 6 months.

It is evident that the title was well established at this time, and all accounts were trimmed to fit.

The dampness of Tottori proved too hard on my lungs and we were transferred to Miyazaki on the east coast of the southernmost island, which is now known as Kyushu. The ancient name of the island was Tsukushi, and the transfer took us from the country of the Idzumo legendary cycle to that of the Tsukushi legendary cycle. We lived there long enough to let me develop and retain much more a sense of the relation of the country to its legends.

My father first called my attention to the fact that Miyazaki Prefecture, of which the city of Miyazaki is the capital, comprises the old province of Himuka, now pronounced Hyuga. He also pointed out that the significance of this name is "facing the sun," i.e. eastward, since the inhabitants of Hyuga think of it as the part of Kyushu that is most important in the early part of the Tsukushi legendary cycle. To them Hyuga forms a link between the heavenly gods of the first legends and their early descendants, the Japanese Imperial line. For it was on "the peak of Kuzhifuru which is Takachiho in Himuka in Tsukushi" that the grandson of the Sun Goddess descended from heaven. There is today a Takachihoyama (Mount Takachiho), but the landing place is more usually considered to be the extinct volcano Kirishimayama. I might note in passing that neither one lends itself at all well to rationalization as a landing place for an invasion by sea.

It is easier to think of this person as the Heavenly Grandchild or August Grandchild in preference to his name Ame-ni-gishi-kuni-nigishi-amatsu-hidaka-hiko-ho-no-ni-ni-gi-no-mikoto (His Augustness, Heaven-Plenty-Earth-Plenty-Heaven's-Sun-Height-Prince-Rice-Ear-Ruddy-Plenty), or any of its variants or abbreviations. However, the term Heavenly Grandchild requires caution, since it is also applied to this person's son. I have never learned to remem-

ber more than "....ninigi no Mikoto" in trying to identify the father. The father wandered around a little and then settled down on Cape Kasasa, which may perhaps be that Nagasaki which has since become widely known to Americans. Most of the information about him deals with his marriage and the legitimacy of his children. His wife settled the matter with an ordeal by fire, burning the parturition-hut as her triplet children were born. Hence they were named Fire-Shine, Fire-Climax, and finally "..Fire-Subside, another name for whom is His Augustness Heaven's -Sun-Height -Prince-Great-Rice-Ears -Lord-Ears" (Ama-tsu-hi-daka-hiko-ho-ho-de-mi-no-mikoto).

The flavor of fairy-tales adheres strongly to this generation of fire-children. Again it is the youngest who triumphs and is served by his eldest brother, carrying on the Imperial line. The altercation arose over the return of a fish-hook which Hiko-ho-ho-de-mi no Mikoto (or Fire-Subside) had borrowed from his brother, and lost in the sea. No other hook would do—Fire-Shine insisted on his own original. In this plight Ho-ho-de-mi no Mikoto was sent to seek help from the sea god, the Deity Ocean-Possessor in his palace at the bottom of the sea. He met the sea-princess by the well outside the gate, an accepted trysting place in many mythologies, though seldom located at the bottom of the sea. As in any fairy-tale, he married the princess. Later his father-in-law recovered the fish-hook from the mouth of the red tai, who had been suffering from it for some time.

In spite of his happiness with the goddess-princess, Prince Ho-ho-de-mi sighed for his previous life. So after three years his father-in-law sent him home on the head of a sea-crocodile one fathom long. But first he gave him a spell to keep the fish-hook from doing his brother any good, and two jewels by which he could control the tide to defend himself when his brother turned threatening. By this means he vanquished, indeed overwhelmed, his brother Fire-Shine. So the descendents of the latter became servants of the Imperial House, serving regularly as guards. However an occasional, here-

ditary duty was the presentation of a mime-dance, imitating the frantic attempts of their ancestor to escape the flooding tide raised by the tide-flowing jewel.

Regardless of how all this may sound to one brought up in Anglo-American cultural traditions, the story of the sea-king's palace is a widely-known fairy story. In Japan it is also told of Urashima Taro, a kind-hearted fisher boy. His release of a turtle being tormented by a group of boys earned him a ride on the back of a great sea turtle to the gate of the underwater palace. There he was met by the princess's retinue and conducted to the reception hall, where he was royally entertained. After what seemed like three years, he yearned to return home, and was sent back with a lacquered jewel box. But on land, everything was changed, by the passage of many years. Feeling that he had nothing left but the casket, he broke the injunction against opening it. The contents proved to be the many years of life he had escaped, and he died of old age.

The story of the sea-kings can be traced much farther back than the Kojiki and the Nihongi, however. The kings themselves are pictured as half human, half dragon, as their subjects are half human, half fish. They are descended, by way of the Dragon-Kings of Korean and Chinese fable, from the Naga Radja or Cobra-Kings of Indian myth. This is one of several bits of evidence that the Japanese myths are not as purely Japanese as the more ardently nationalistic of the Japanese would like to claim. In spite of their claims, it seems inescapable that the mythical account actually represents a version of the same imported story. Even where the details differ, they are not necessarily significant. For instance, one of the alternative accounts in the Nihongi mentions the prince's releasing a wild goose from a snare. The only reason for this mention seems to be an echo of the other form of the story.

It will be evident by now that much of the appeal of the Kojiki and the Nihongi to an American, man and boy, lies in the fascinating and fanciful stories. However, that was not at all the case with the original writers, nor with the devout Japanese who have read the books since that time. The original Imperial command from the Emperor Temmu read, in part, "I desire to have the chronicles of the emperors selected and recorded, and the old words examined and ascertained, falsehoods being erased and truth determined." The big reason for this effort to recapture the true past lay in the Japanese theory that political power is hereditary. That the hereditary claim to authority was subject to abuses had long been known. In 645, a full generation before Temmu's command, the Emperor Kotoku dispatched governors to the Eastern provinces, with instructions that read, in part: "If there be any persons who lay claim to a title, but who....unscrupulously draw up lying memorials, saying:—'From the time of our forefathers we have....ruled this district'—in such cases, ye, the governors, must not readily....acquiesce in such fictions, but must ascertain particularly the true facts before making your report." Even as far back as 415, the Emperor Ingyo had attempted to distinguish the truly inherited from the falsely claimed titles with a general ordeal by boiling water. The Nihongi notes: "Those who had falsified their titles were afraid and did not come forward. From this time forward the Houses and surnames were spontaneously ordered, and there was no longer any one who falsified them." The last statement is an obvious case of wishful thinking, but fits naturally enough in an official history.

By the time of the Kojiki and Nihongi, the political importance of hereditary titles was just as great as ever, but trial by ordeal had gone out of fashion. A more sophisticated way to control the matter was desired, and was sought in an official history. Hence the demand of the Emperor Temmu for "the old words, falsehoods being erased." And indeed a considerable part of the Kojiki is made up

of what its translator calls "dreary genealogies." The greatest emphasis is on the details of the Imperial line. Obviously the compiler of an official account at the Imperial command was under considerable pressure to interpret the choosing of the "old words" more according to their flattery of the Imperial line and support of its claims than according to what seem to us the more logical standards of truth. Nevertheless, the whole was intended to hang together as a true account of the history of the nation, its rulers, and its other gods. Similar conditions would seem to apply to the writing of the Nihongi, though its volume on genealogies of the Emperors is no longer extant.

Once written and accepted by the Empress Gemmyo, the texts of the Kojiki and Nihongi were in the position of being the official and authoritative account of all the native gods. Thus any devout Japanese was prepared to treat them as revealed truth. Some of them found the fairy stories harder to accept so naively as this. For instance, in the nineteenth century, Tachibana no Moribe decided that some of the uselessly miraculous incidents need not be believed in as revealed truth. He dismisses them as "child-like words," designed to fix the story in the minds of children. In my case, they would seem to have succeeded.

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The foregoing is based on the following books inherited from my father. They therefore date from some years ago, and have contributed to my sense of nostalgia.

Kojiki or "Records of Ancient Matters," as told to Futo no Yasumaro by Hiyeda no Are, presented 712 A.D. The standard English translation is that of Basil Hall Chamberlain, published ca. 1890 as supplement to vol. X, Asiatic Society of Japan, Translations (T.A.S.J.), reprinted 1906; 2nd edn., with

additional notes by W.G. Aston (Kobe, Japan, J.L. Thompson & Co., 1932). The additional notes are frequently rewarding. Other English translations have also been published.

Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan, attributed to Prince Toneri and Futo no Yasumaro, presented 720 A. D. The only complete English translation known to me is that of W.G. Aston (London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1896). Published as supplement 1, vol. I & II, to Japan Society, London, Trans. & Proc. Several line-cuts add to the interest, such as the pied wagtail in the frontispiece.

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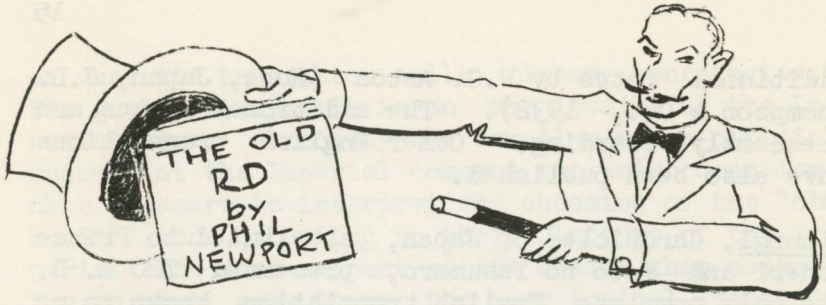
The silk-screen illustration on page 9 is one of six prepared by artist Brian Donahue for Dr. Warren's article. These can be obtained from Rhodomagnetic Digest. For information, lift up the illustration.



Having been a very minor production assistant on a few issues of the old RD, I naturally am an unqualified expert on it. The magazine started as a labor of love and ended as simply a labor for the Producer-Editor, Don Fabun. Apathy killed it. It became too much work for one man to do without the help of production assistants. (This, of course, is intended as a word of caution to the Little Men who may be asked to assist the present staff.) For almost everyone, the birth-pains tend to fade over the years, leaving the gems of what was produced to gladden the memory.

The first editor was George Blumenson. It was his, and the Little Men's, intent to produce a fan magazine on a very different level from the normal run of "Fanzines," as exemplified in "GHOSH-WHOW!! The Zine for Grown-Up Fen!" the parody in issue No. 19. ("Well, I guess you fen aren't reading this just to read what your old ed has to say!! Oh. no. So, here (sic) we go!!!! Ourown (sic) special review of the fanzines we got in the old offices.") The Little Men wanted a magazine with a more adult outlook. The emphasis was on literary commentary (both serious and tongue-in-cheek), reviews, activities of The Little Men, science articles, and articles on the fantasy field in general.

Represented were such articles and authors as: "Pseudonyms in Fantasy Fiction" by Tony Boucher; "On the Fogging of Photographic Film" by George Unigan; "The 'Irrelevant' Controversy" by Leland Spiro, "The Irrelevant" being a story by Campbell writing under the name of Karl von Kampen; "The 'Invisible Little Man' Award Dinner"; "On Communications with Extra-Terrestrials" by Dave Koblick;

"The Whiskey Drinking Mathematician" by Bill Murr, an article on logic which had everyone going around in circles for weeks; "Lunar Geopolitiks und Grossraumwirtschaft" by Dr Heinz Erich von Klapperschlange; "The Little Men and the Moon," Don Fabun's description of the publicity stunt of a few years ago; "The Little Men's Christmas Jolly" by Les Cole—excuse me for a moment, while I wipe away a few tears; "The Sex Life of Dimorphic Foraminifera and Other Fascinating Facets of Evolution" also by Les Cole; and many others.

About a year after the RD got underway, Rick's Bar in Oakland opened. Rick Thorne, being a Little Man—a big Little Man, reserved the back room at the saloon for the group. The EGLMSFCMS moved in. The conviviality of the surroundings (as at the various Jollys, with Rick supplying free spaghetti, etc.) affected the RD. Many of the contributors and production workers camped there. The magazine tended to be less stiff, less formal. The articles were more humorous; the illustrations freer. Then the format changed again. It became somewhat more serious in tone.

There were, in all, twenty-one issues of the old RD. (I don't want to do the same as Sam Moskowitz, in The Immortal Storm, who wrote millions of words about the terrible conflict in fandom between the Communists and the Anti-Communists, the backstabbings, the insults, the forcing of resignations from various fan magazines, the protest meetings, the Great Schism Threatening to Destroy Fandom, and on and on, only to reveal that there were a total of eleven people involved on both sides of the dispute.) A period of time did elapse between the first issue (July 1949) and the last (sometime in 1952—the last few issues were undated).

The third and final editor was Don Fabun. (The second had been Donald Baker Moore.) Don had some journalistic experience and he purchased a multilith. Both were highly important. With the development of experience in the "monster's" operation,

the format changed. The small size appeared. Color was added and photographs were used. All this entailed an enormous amount of work, and in the end Don had to do it almost entirely by himself.

The way the magazine was put together may be of interest. Any article that came in had to be edited, and then retyped for justified margins. This was done in various places by the staff. The reproducible copy was then typed on a Varityper. The Fabun's house is somewhat rambling and the varityping was done in a small room in what seemed to be a sub-sub-basement. The typed sheets were then photographed (I don't know where) and transferred to multilith masters. The drawings (if done in another color than black) also went through this process. So, finally, all of these plates were used to print the magazine. Every so often, of course, we'd dash out to the kitchen for another beer to ease the pain or to the living room (two stories tall with a magnificent view of the bay) for conversation. The gathering of the magazine was usually done at the Garden Library where whoever showed up would dash gaily around the tables grabbing pages.

Within a fairly short time, two groups within The Little Men clashed, causing one of them to leave the fold; and Rick's closed. A certain zest seemed to have left The Little Men about then, partly for these reasons, partly also because the membership of the group is somewhat transient in nature. (If my memory serves, Ben Stark and the Andersons are the only holdovers from the old days. Even they were not members the first few years.) The RD suffered. Soon there was no one to even help gather the magazine together for stapling.

The RD finally came to an end, killed by apathy. But so great was its fame that in its brief life it became a legend. Today, almost any one connected with science fiction knows the Rhodomagnetic Digest, even though he may never have held a copy in his hands--until now.

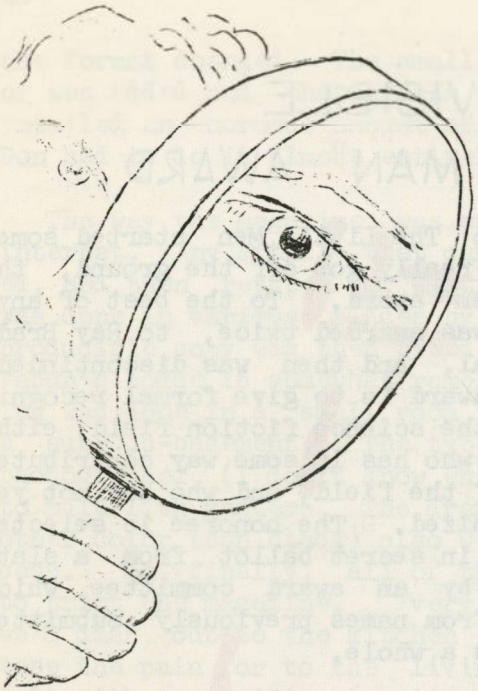
THE "INVISIBLE LITTLE MAN" AWARD

Several years ago The Little Men started something which never really got off the ground, the "Invisible Little Man" award. To the best of anyone's knowledge it was awarded twice, to Ray Bradbury and George Pal, and then was discontinued. The purpose of the award is to give formal recognition to someone in the science fiction field, either a fan or a pro, who has in some way contributed to the betterment of the field, and who has not yet been formally recognized. The honoree is selected by The Little Men in secret ballot from a slate presented to them by an award committee, which draws up the slate from names previously submitted by the membership as a whole.

Last year, then Chairman Al haLevy urged the revival of this award. It was subsequently presented to the lovely and charming editor of Amazing Stories and Fantastic Adventures, Cele Goldsmith, at the Fourteenth Annual Westercon in Oakland. In the opinion of The Little Men Miss Goldsmith had demonstrated her love for and faith in science fiction by her efforts in improving her two magazines.

The recipient of the 1962 award, to be presented at the Fifteenth Annual Westercon in Los Angeles June 30th, is one of the greatest of the modern science fiction writers, Hal Clement.

The Invisible Little Man trophy consists of a simple wooden pedestal about 5 inches high with a flat bronze plate topping it in which are the footprints of the "Invisible Little Man"--all that can be seen of him. The face of the trophy is covered with a gold plate, suitably inscribed. The awarding of this trophy, we hope, will become as traditional at Westercons as is the awarding of the Hugo at the World Conventions.



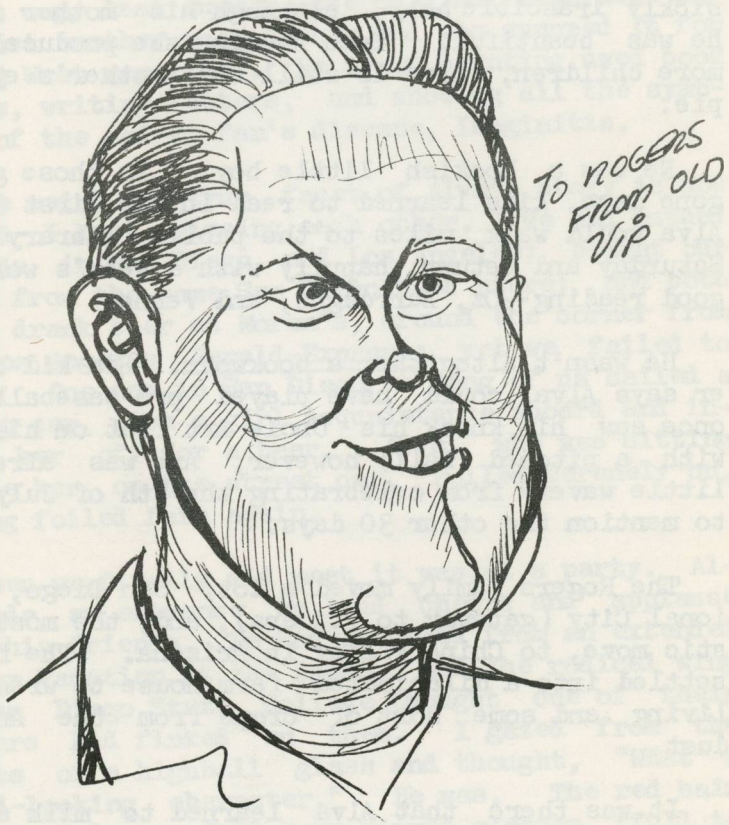
THE LITTLE MEN:

ALVA ROGERS

by SIDONIE ROGERS

Sidonie Rogers, former newspaper reporter, mother of three, and girl scout leader, is not a science fiction fan, but a fan of fans. She is active in The Little Men and the Golden Gate Futurians. Here is the first of a series of "biographies" of Little Men.

Once upon a time there was a red-headed young man named Alva. Ruddy face aglow with good spirits, bottled and otherwise, he wandered into (you might read this crashed) a local party. He promptly singled out a winsome blonde and asked her to



dance, she gave him an "On your way, sir," so he spent the balance of the evening peeping from behind the piano and making faces at her. One grimace must have captured her fancy because the happy redhead and the reluctant blonde married and became the parents of Alva Rogers Jr.

"Little Alvey," his family call-name, was a sickly irascible baby, although his mother claims he was beautiful. Even though she produced five more children, Alva is still his mother's eye-apple.

He was a bookish little boy. In those great, gone days, kids learned to read in the First Grade. Alva would walk miles to the public library every Saturday and return happily with a week's worth of good reading—Oz, Burroughs, and Verne.

He wasn't altogether a bookworm. His kid brother says Alva could have played pro baseball. I once saw him knock his Uncle Art flat on his back with a pitched ball; however, Art was already a little wavery from celebrating the 4th of July, not to mention the other 30 days.

The Rogers family moved a lot; San Diego, National City (gateway to Tijuana), and, the most drastic move, to Chino Valley in Arizona. The family settled into a dilapidated farm house to wrestle a living and some sort of crops from the Arizona dust.

It was there that Alva learned to milk a cow. He says the moment of truth in milking is to tackle a cow with a full bag, sore udders, and a flailing tail. He can still coax a reluctant stream of milk out of a croggled cow, but neither man nor beast looks like he is having any fun.

In Arizona he also played high school football and was tackled simultaneously by twins, one on each leg. The injury provoked his arthritis which got him out of the Air Force after six glorious

months—just in time to miss the North African campaign. To this day he refers to the pair who wracked him up for life as "nice guys."

He says he got hooked on magazine science-fiction when, during a sick spell, his mother bought him the August 1934 Astounding (the nucleus of his collection since Forry Ackerman presented him with a mint copy last summer—the original memorable mag was just another pulp to his Dad who swapped it for a Wild West magazine). He began haunting used book stores, writing letters, and showing all the symptoms of the sci-fi fan's disease, Imaginitis.

One weird but true facet of Alva's story is how he and I kept missing each other. We had mutual friends in San Diego and Los Angeles; bought our books from the same San Diego book store; and both of us drank beer at Moran's, around the corner from the Los Angeles Herald-Express; yet we failed to meet. One day in San Diego a gang of us hailed a street car with a girl acquaintance aboard and invited her off for a beer. Alva, who was sitting beside her on the street car, rolled serenely on, having foiled fate again.

When we finally did meet it was at a party. Alva made an entrance to loud cheers and applause from his friends. He had returned from an extended Easter vacation at the LASFS, and the radical wing at San Diego State College thought one of their leaders had finked on them. I gazed from the depths of a highball glass and thought, "What a weird-looking character." He was. The red hair Hollywood-long; full horn-rimmed glasses (full to the brim with beady blue eyes); his gold-rimmed jack-o-lantern grin; and his brother's sport shirt worn outside God knows whose pants. I had been advised by the friend who finally introduced us not to get involved, but that Alva would make a nice "platonic" friend. He did, but whatever happened to Plato?

At the time of our meeting, I thought science

fiction had to do with Popular Science. I had never even heard of a science fiction fan. Alva's and my group in San Diego were GI students and their elderly co-ed friends. Elderly—all of us were over drinking age.

My parents were separated when Alva and I decided to marry. The only time Alva met his prospective father-in-law prior to the wedding, was one night when Father breezed through the house, muttered "Fine boy," turned up the flame under our corned beef hash dinner and burned the hell out of it.

I met Alva's father in a friend's kitchen. I was ankle deep in dish water, soaked to the armpits and swearing a blue stream. The conversation went something like this: "God damn it to hell! How do you do, Mr. Rogers?"

My mother regarded Alva as a fanatically clean housewife would her first cockroach. Alva's mother was a lot kinder, but since the news of our engagement arrived from Los Angeles via Alva's sister Marjorie, instead of from the pair of us, she was a little bit miffed.

Our wedding in Los Angeles was my first introduction to fandom. Since most fans are notoriously shy about churches, many of them didn't appear until our reception at the Biltmore. Forry Ackerman, Elmer Perdue, Myrtle Douglas, Gus Wilmorth (whom I'd met but never seen standing up), Neissen Himmel, and other semi-legendaries startled the hell out of my mother's elderly lady friends, made good friends with my screwball aunt, and, in the manner of all true fans, ate and drank up everything in the place. One of the WL's complained that a bottle of Old Stagg had been filched from her bureau drawer. Knowing the old doll well, I would say that she drank it herself. Elmer turned art critic and went from room to room in the hotel suite solemnly turning all the pretty pictures to the wall and slanting them slightly.

We escaped from the afternoon festivities to pack and move into the Commodore Hotel for the "night of nights." Our whereabouts were to have been a secret, but since my good buddy matron of honor and her friend were staying there too, they didn't remain so.

The bridal bower was decorated with the same group of fans, augmented. They were everywhere but hanging from the ceiling. They were playing charades and poker. Elmer's current wife was huddled on the floor in a corner, clutching a full quart of beer and crying her heart out. The only means of getting rid of the group, after several complaining phone calls from the desk, was to start disrobing. When I stripped down to my half slip and heaved it at a friendly fannish head, they took the hint. Alone at last, short-sheeted, beds full of rice, toilet paper and towels carefully hidden.....afterwards the bride tottered to the phone and returned screaming. The flea bag hotel would not send up life-giving tomato juice. They did manage a bellboy with ice water. "Boy," he said, "there sure was a party on this floor last night. Did it bother you folks?" Two throbbing heads shook a negative.

We honeymooned in San Francisco and vowed at the time if we ever left San Diego it would be for the Bay Area. We stayed at the St. Francis, made North Beach, Top of the Mark, the bottom of Chinatown. With my local friends and Lou Goldstone as guides, it was a memorable week.

Oh hell, back to normalcy. Alva had devoted his final's time to courting me, so he was dismissed. He had no job, we had the remains of our honeymoon fund, my '46 Studebaker, and a child on the way.

Our first home, which Alva fondly remembered as a pre-war whore-house, was above a kosher delicatessan. Two rooms, bath, and two windows on an air shaft. But with paper drapes, remnant-covered pil-

lows, and a studio bed couch which stuck in mid-fold one AM and looked like the sinking Bismarck, it was home.

Alva enrolled, on the last of his GI Bill, at the Coronado School of Fine Arts, where he did some fine oil work. At the end of his GI he went to work for his father at his stucco factory, and for my father in his pharmacy. When the shuttle from cement dust to sedlitz powder got him down, father hired him full time.

Much of Alva's time, from the birth of our first son David till after the arrival of the second boy Bill, was occupied with what he refers to as "non-fannish" activity, i.e., working, helping me with the children, but avoiding all other house and garden chores.

Our only contact with the Los Angeles group was an occasional visit from Himmel, until Cleve Cartmill and his then wife moved to San Diego. We spent a lot of time together, discussing science fiction, the relative merits of cream sherry over dry sherry, and how to keep Stuart Palmer out of the clutches of Craig Rice.

One day Cleve noticed an ad in some pro-zine requesting sci-fans in the San Diego area to call Roger Nelson. Cleve did. When he introduced himself Roger, an Unknown fan, said "No kidding," and hung up. Cartmill the patient one waited a while and called back. During that while, Roger had found Cleve's name in the phone book and was smitting his head with chagrin. "Roger," said Cleve gently the second time, "this really is Cleve Cartmill."

"I know," gulped young Nelson.

Roger, his friend Bill Nolan (who is the self-same dirty old pro William F.), Alva, Stuart, and Cleve were the instigators of the San Diego Science Fantasy Society. The rest of the membership was a-

young group which appeared from out of the woodwork and left the same way.

They did manage one Con, but by that time the Rogers group was Fafia.

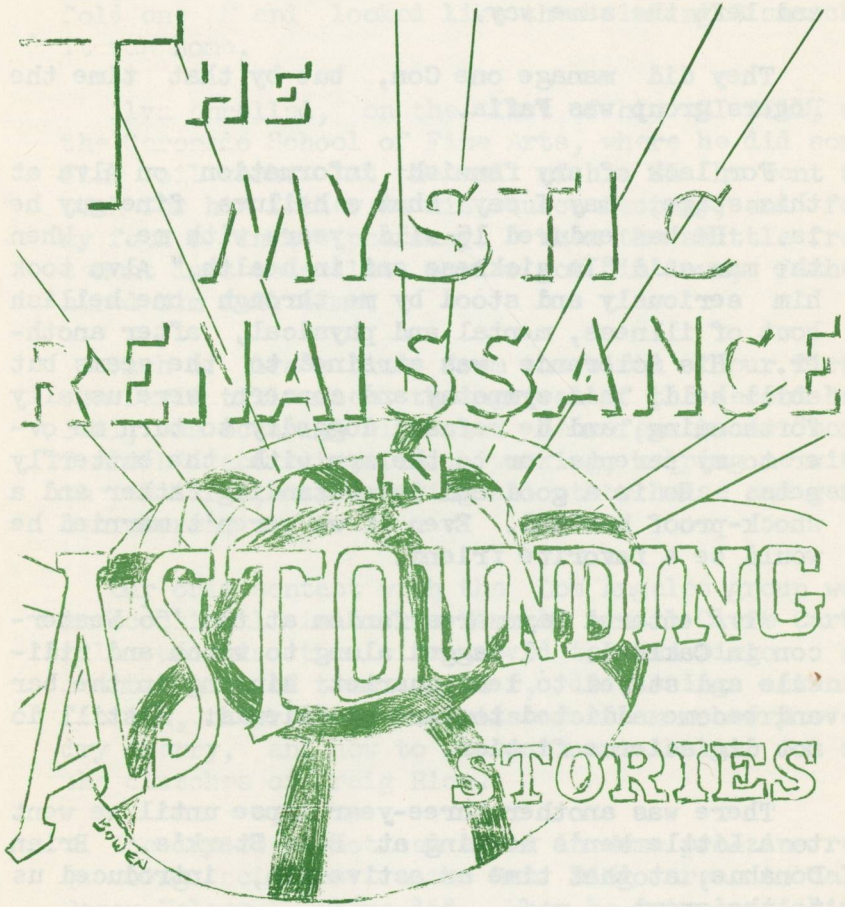
For lack of any fannish information on Alva at this stage, may I say what a helluva fine guy he is. He has endured 15 wild years with me. When the man said "In sickness and in health," Alva took him seriously and stood by me through one hellish bout of illness, mental and physical, after another. His tolerance was strained to the seams but still held, his sympathy and concern were usually forthcoming, and he refused doggedly to turn me over to my parents or to the men with the butterfly nets. He is a good and understanding father and a shock-proof husband. Even if we weren't married he would be a favorite friend.

Alva entered Bay Area fandom at the '56 Westercon in Oakland. I tagged along to watch and ridicule and stayed to lead quartet singing in the bar and become addicted to fans as friends. I still do not dig science fiction.

There was another three-year lapse until we went to a Little Men's meeting at Ben Stark's. Brian Donahue, at that time an active fan, introduced us to the group.

The rest is too recent to bear rehashing. Alva is currently Director of the Golden Gate Futurians and the secretary's amanuensis. I am the secretary. He is also secretary-treasurer of the Little Men.

At that 1956 Westercon 16-year-old Ron Ellik made the immortal remark: "Not THE Alva Rogers? The grand old man of science fiction fan art!" The grand old man, 33 at the time, is even grander now. This July, at Westercon XV in Los Angeles, sitting at the head table will be (Lord help him) the Fan Guest of Honor, Alva Rogers.



by LELAND SAPIRO

Lee Sapiro is a serious student of science fiction and teaches mathematics at Orange State College. This is an article from a forthcoming book on the early years of Astounding.

Without gross inaccuracy, we can designate April 1926 as the start for pulp science-fiction, this date marking the first isue of Amazing Stories, edited by its founder, Hugo Gernsbach. Despite the editor's intent to furnish scientific instruction, his magazine was anti-scientific throughout, its predominant theme being the scientist's impiety and his subsequent punishment for delving into things "not meant" for humans to know.

Several years later, Gernsbach lost his magazine when it was forced into bankruptcy by the physical culturist, Bernarr MacFadden. Thereafter, Amazing Stories was edited by T. O'Conor Sloane, during which early tenure (1929 to 1933), denoted as the "Mechanical Renaissance," the profane aspects of science were exploited by such writers as William Lemkin and John Taine.

Meanwhile, Gernsbach issued an entire series of science-fiction magazines, eventually coalescing into Wonder Stories; and the Clayton Magazine Company issued its own title, Astounding Stories of Super Science. This last magazine placed the emphasis on sex and sadism, and naturally became quite popular—its termination occurring only upon discontinuance of the entire group of Clayton magazines.

But the demise of the Clayton Magazine Company proved doubly fortunate, since it resulted in the purchase of Astounding Stories by Street and Smith, Publishers, who appointed F. Orlin Tremaine as its new editor. Tremaine was the first editor in his field to display a consistent awareness of literary merit; the time-interval October 1933 to December 1937 (during which he selected all items in the magazine) is called the "Mystic Renaissance," to distinguish it from O'Conor Sloane's more scientifically oriented "Mechanical Renaissance." In the following article are discussed certain mystical trends of thought which possibly were the most important conceptual aspect of Tremaine's magazine.

SECTION 1. A LESSON IN PACHYDERM PONDEROSITY

For the present, we can regard mysticism as a doctrine which asserts various things about the structure of the world; therefore we might ask: What does this doctrine assert? But before inquiring about what the mystic knows (or claims to know) we ought to ask: How does he know it?

In general, there are two ways in which anybody can know anything: conceptually or by direct acquaintance. We take "direct acquaintance" as referring to the experience of sense-data; any other knowledge we shall denote as "conceptual."

For example, a man who is totally deaf might obtain conceptual knowledge of music by learning the theory of counterpoint; but even if he writes a symphony, he never will be acquainted with music in the sense of experiencing an auditory sensation and being able to say: This is b-flat.

Conceptual knowledge, then, is knowledge <u>about</u> things; direct acquaintance is experience <u>of</u> things.

However, we must not deride conceptual knowledge because of its "second hand" character, since much of our knowledge is necessarily of this variety. For example, it is manifestly impossible for me to be acquainted with George Washington; so whatever I know about him must be classified as conceptual knowledge.

But when I specified direct acquaintance in terms of sense-data, I tacitly assumed this sense-data to be my own. The question now arises: Can I experience the sense-data of another individual? Suppose, for example, that I share a friend's attitude toward something; is it also possible for me to share it exactly, in the sense of acquiring the same complex of thoughts and feelings which led him

to this attitude?

Of course, I can imagine myself having someone else's perceptions—as when I say that I <u>sympathize</u> with that person—but the question is: Can I obtain knowledge by <u>intimate</u> acquaintance, in the sense of being able to think and feel exactly what somebody or something else thinks and feels? (1) (If such "intimate acquaintance" is possible, then it might very well comprise a new type of knowledge.)

Suppose, for example, I wish to study an elephant. To this end I repeat Sir Arthur Eddington's famous experiment, which consists in watching an elephant slide down a hill, and in the meantime writing down a series of pointer readings: "4000," to denote the animal's weight in pounds; "60," to denote the slope of the hill in degrees; "0.78," to denote the coefficient of friction between the elephant's hoofs and the grass. These data will furnish me with conceptual knowledge of the elephant.

But here somebody might object that I still do not <u>know</u> the elephant in the sense of direct acquaintance with his thoughts and kinesthetic sensations: an entire book devoted to this experiment still will not recreate for me the elephant's own sensations of <u>ponderosity</u>, the massive interaction of bone and sinew experienced by the elephant himself as he slides downward.

Indeed, there is only one way to obtain such knowledge, and that is to <u>be</u> an elephant: in the sense of intimate acquaintance, only an elephant "knows" what an elephant feels and thinks.

Now, it is <u>this</u> variety of knowledge that is esteemed by the mystic. The mystic disdains any knowledge which entails a distinction between the observer and observed: the mystic "knows" something not by observing it but by <u>becoming</u> it.

The most recent statement of this theory is Rob-

ert Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land (1961). (2) The Martian equivalent for the verb "to know" is "grok" where

> "Grok" means to understand so throughly that the observer becomes a part of the observed—to merge, blend, intermarry, lose identity in a group experience (p. 204).

Of course, the mystic is not concerned with elephants and other such gross objects; in fact the mystic would deny that there is an elephant, for he believes that the phenomenal world of grass and hills and elephants is "only an appearance." (3)

"Reality," we are told, "is beyond sense-perception" (4), or to quote from the Hindu mystical canon: "All living creatures are led astray as soon as they are born, by the delusion that this relative world is real." (5)

It is not necessary to discuss the precise meaning of the assertion that the perceived world is "unreal": we only note that a distrust of the senses—and a corresponding emphasis on the "spiritual" as opposed to the "material"—is fundamental to both the Eastern and Christian mystical traditions.

But, clearly, something must be real--therefore a basic notion of the mystical philosophy is that of a non-material something which underlies the world given by sense perception. This entity has received a variety of names; but under whatever title, this something is known not conceptually but by intimate acquaintance, whereby the knower becomes one with the known. To quote a recent advertisement of the Rosicrucian Society:

> ...man's mind can be attuned to the Infinite Wisdom for a flash of a second....Some Call this great experience a psychic phenomenon. But the ancients knew it....as Cosmic Consciousness--the merging of man's mind with the Universal Intelligence (6).

To summarize: The mystic believes that Reality (with a capital "R") must be spiritual in character, and therefore he posits the existence of a Cosmic Oversoul or Universal Intelligence that underlies the world perceived by the senses. This Oversoul is known through what we called intimate acquaintance, whereby the knower becomes one with the known.

This kind of mergence was described several times in Orlin Tremaine's Astounding, a typical instance being Clifton B. Kruse's story, "Fractional Ego" (February 1937). (7)

Here we witness some instantaneous exchanges of living bodies, these transpositions resulting from the experiments of a Dr William Eckert. A salesman, driving an automobile in North Dakota, is carried in an instant to Tibet; and the body of a "queerly garbed Oriental" later is found in the wreckage of the salesman's car. Some soldiers parading in front of Buckingham Palace are transformed into a platoon of pajama-clad schoolgirls, with the Coldstream Guards later being found asleep in the girls' dormitory.

Another transition is that of Cora Randolph, Dr Eckert's own secretary, who suddenly finds herself, razor in hand, staring at a mirror located in Columbus, Ohio. At the same time, an Emery Brundage, preparing to shave, finds himself in Kansas City, seated at a typewriter in the doctor's office.

Cora, retaining her composure, telephones her employer at once, and later flies back to Kansas City. There, she explains to Brundage that her employer has developed an "ultra-dimensional generator," through which he has been able to formulate "definite laws of consciousness."

However, before these laws can be elucidated Paulino, the doctor's secretary, enters the room,

carrying a tray of coffee. Without prior notice he is transformed into a "huge, shaggy ape." The beast is killed by a "searing red flame" originating in some undetermined fashion from Eckert's machine; but the doctor admits that if Paulino "went where that thing came from he's probably dead..."

But Paulino's death is not "in vain," pontificates the Doctor, for "it proves that consciousness is all inclusive."

> "I found that..the mind of man is a.....composition of fractional consciousness which he has taken...from the universal store...In other words, you and I are but organized assemblages of chance fractions of both physical and consciousness energies. Birth does not create consciousness any more than it creates matter. Instead, it merely organizes the free fractions of universal consciousness into a temporary unit which we call individuality."

Brundage is told that the exchange between himself and Cora was caused by the field of "consciousness energy," which shifted to correct the unbalance produced by the Doctor's experiments. "By mere chance that fractional assemblage of consciousness—which in your lifetime is the mind of Thory Brundage—happened to be in line with the shift. So was Miss Cora's..."

At the end of the story, Dr Eckert, reflecting on the mischief he has caused, feels himself drowning in "a...sense of misty nothingness" as his "organized mind" dissolves into the "common flow of universal consciousness."

Thus Mr Kruse conveys an invariant notion of the mystical philosophy, that of "a single and universal consciousness representing itself in limited minds and divided egos." (8)

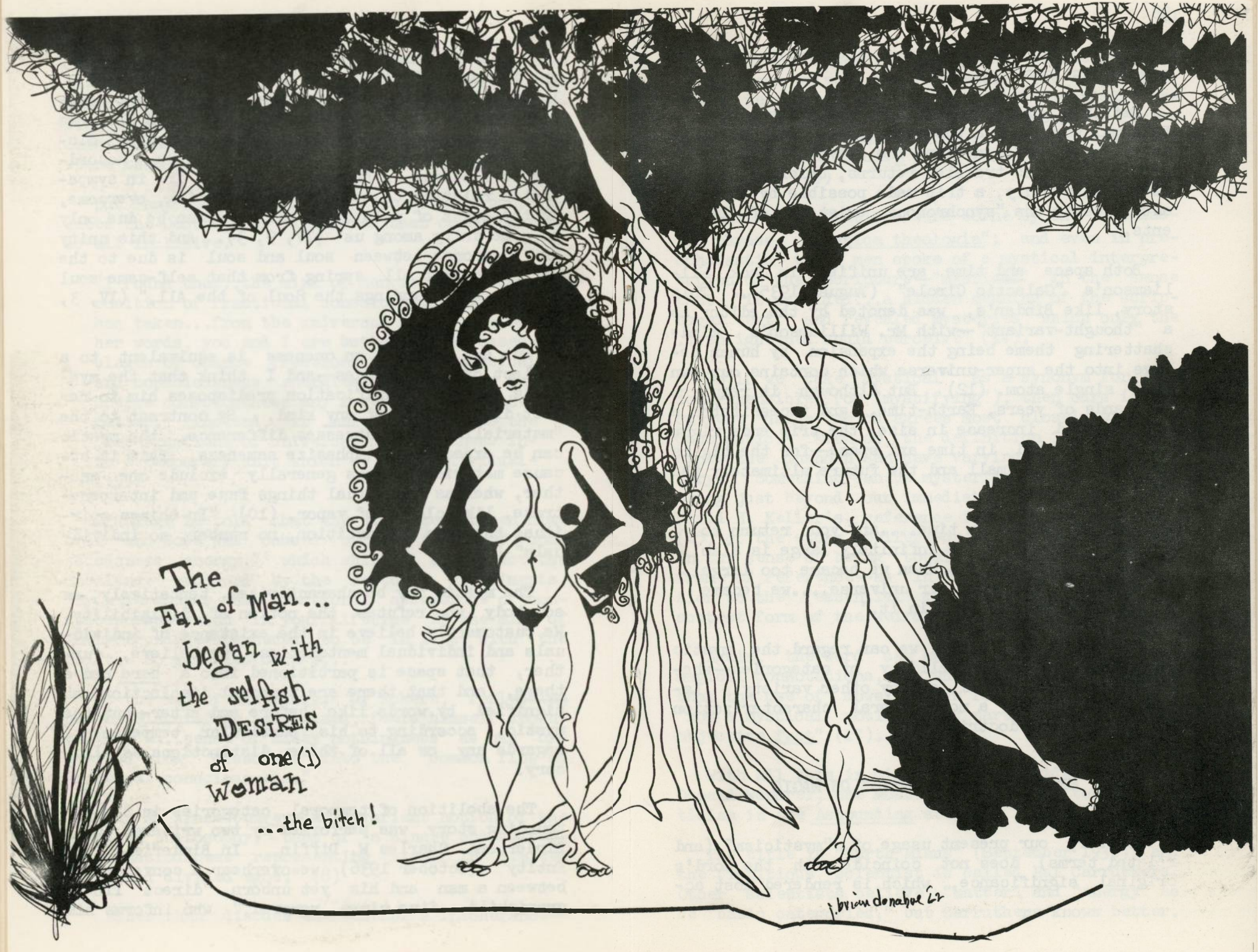
Rather than discuss the author's incoherence—

e.g., his failure to explain why physical bodies are transmitted along with psychic identities (9)—I note, instead, that if Kruse's "universal consciousness" is replaced by the All-Soul of Plotinus then it can be inferred from the "sympathy" discussed previously. "Reflection tells us," according to Plotinus in Ennaeds, "that we are in sympathetic relation to each other, suffering, overcome, at the sight of pain...and all this can be due only to some unity among us" (IV, 9, 3). And this unity or "response between soul and soul is due to the mere fact that all spring from that self-same soul ...from which springs the Soul of the All," (IV, 3, 8).

But an emphasis on oneness is equivalent to a neglect of differences—and I think that the mystic's spiritual unification predisposes him to reject distinctions of any kind. By contrast to the "materialist," who stresses difference, the mystic can be expected to emphasize sameness. This is because material things generally exclude one another, whereas spiritual things fuse and interpenetrate, like clouds of vapor. (10) "In things spiritual there is no partition, no number, no individuals" (11).

The mystic may be characterized, tentatively, as somebody who refutes the notion of divisibility. We customarily believe in the existence of individuals and individual mentalities; we believe, further, that space is partitioned into a here and a there, and that there are temporal distinctions as signified by words like before and after—but the mystic, according to his particular temperament, regards any or all of these distinctions as illusory.

The abolition of temporal categories in the Astounding story was performed by two writers: Otto Binder and Charles W. Diffin. In Binder's "Time Entity" (October 1936) we overhear a conversation between a man and his yet unborn "direct lineal grandchild, five times removed," who informs him


The Fall of Man...
began with the selfish DESIRES of one (1) woman
...the bitch!
j. brian donahue '62

that past, present, and future are "arbitrary...human conceptions" (p. 78).

Diffin's "Long Night" (May 1934) describes a temporal voyage of a thousand years, via suspended animation. After meeting the inevitable Gorgeous Female, the time-traveler returns, briefly, to the twentieth century, a trip made possible by what the author calls the "synchronous existence of all events."

Both space and time are unified in Jack Williamson's "Galactic Circle" (August 1935). This story, like Binder's, was denoted by the editor as a "thought-variant"—with Mr. Williamson's mind-shattering theme being the expansion by human beings into the super-universe which contains our own as a single atom. (12) But although it requires thousands of years, Earth-time, and necessitates a billion-fold increase in size, the trip ends right where it started in time and space—for the big is the same as the small and the future ultimately the same as the past:

> "Go far enough in time....and you return to where you were...the infinitely large is also the minutely small...When we became too large to exist larger in our universe....we became the smallest particle in it."

For the present, then, we can regard the mystic as one who denies the validity of categories—whether spatial, temporal, or any other variety. Later, we must give a more general characterization of the mystical doctrine.

SECTION 2. A TREATISE ON MAGIC

However, our present usage of "mysticism" (and related terms) does not coincide with the word's original significance, which is rendered most accurately by "esoteric," or "secret" in the sense of being known only to the initiated. The oldest testimony we possess that can be called "mystical" are the Hindu Upanishads, composed by anonymous forest seers sometime between 1000 and 500 B.C.—and the word "upanishad" means, among other things, "secret teachings." (13)

Similar connotations were borne by the Scholastic phrase, "mystica theologia"; and even in pre-Scholastic times men spoke of a mystical interpretation of the Scripture—"mystical" in the sense that "it unfolded...a hidden meaning of the scriptural text, and revealed mysteries which only the ...enlightened could perceive" (14).

So if we take "mystical" as a synonym for "incomprehensible" (or "mystifying"), then ours is the current usage which agrees most closely with the Scholastic. Even so, the definition is ambiguous, since the unknown can have varying degrees of mystery. Something can be mysterious in the sense of being just beyond our immediate cognizance—as in David H. Keller's reference to the "mystic words" (15) of the story teller—or it can be mysterious in the sense of being totally outside our rational frame of reference—as in H.P. Lovecraft's allusion to the "essential mysticism which marks the acutest form of the weird" (16).

Again, the word can have imbecilic as well as magical connotations, as when Mr Campbell remarks that the use of dowsing rods for pipe-locating is "not a mystical notion on my part," but a "hard, objective fact" (17).

With all this in mind, let us consider a work by Donald Wandrei, the most frequent expositor of mysticism in the Astounding story.

The title is "Earth Minus" (September 1935), and the fictitious scientist is called Hal Carruthers. Other scientists believe "matter" and "energy" to be "basic categories," but Carruthers knows better.

For in the beginning there existed only the monotron, that primordial something from which matter and energy finally have evolved.

It is Carruthers' intention to transform a steel cube back into its original monotronic state.

> "...I will subject it simultaneously to tremendous heat, pressure and bombardment. The heat will be....at least 1,000,000 degrees centigrade. The pressure will exceed 1000 tons.....The bombardment will come from (a) concentration of omega rays..."

The results of the experiment are experienced immediately; the scientist feels a "needle-point prickling" through his body; then he hears a crescendo of howls from cats and dogs, as the monotronic radiation diffuses through the neighborhood. Later, there is a sequence of gunpowder explosions and a strange luminescence penetrating "all things and substances."

> "You entertain the opinion....that these phenomena are a result of my experiment?"
>
> "I do....you were dangerously successful.... You hurled matter backward a billion years to the very birth of creation. There will be other phenomena. Violent, terrible phenomena."

We already have examined Clifton B. Kruse's unification of mind; a similar function is now performed by Donald Wandrei, via a universal blending of matter.

At sea, the captain of the good ship Princess watches the funnels turn to liquid and flow upon the deck; then (his own body melting) he sees the passengers turn into "convulsively squirming jelly." There is a liquefication of decks and funnels and people; finally "the whole ship flowed and blended into bubbling stuff."

In San Francisco, "the sky line flowed and the hills flowed, and the mountains marched down to the sea." Elsewhere,

> The Empire State Building tilted, flooded a block of lesser structures.
>
> The streets gummed, and stuff like tar poured into the harbor, and the harbor became one with the tar....Buildings and automobiles and bridges, stone and steel, streets and humanity and vegetation....all ran together in horrible communion....

Eventually there is the "metamorphosis of a world," with the continents and seas blending into one another and the Earth itself being converted into a "sphere of energy, a true oneness that has ...absorbed all else into its single state." (18)

In the present context we are justified in regarding "mystical" as a synonym for "mysterious"—mysterious, not in the sense of "unknown" but in the sense of "unknowable," for the events depicted here cannot be explained under any known scheme of physics.

Mr Wandrei's principal actor is the monotron, whose behavior, in another story, is explicated thus:

> ...the releasing of the force of the primary monotron—could not be checked, since the monotron was the base of all things, and the destruction of one monotron set off an enkindling and instantly contagious liberation of basic energy" ("Colossus Eternal," December 1934, p. 84).

Now, whatever the monotron can be, it is supposed to possess at least an ancestral relation to what we call "matter." But matter ordinarily is regarded as a source of causal relationships; and a causal relationship is finite, even when the magni-

tude seems out of proportion to its initial cause. Thus a forest fire can be started by a single match (or a chain reaction by "critical mass"), but at least the action stops when all flammable (or fissionable) mater has been consumed.

But no such finitude exists for Mr Wandrei, who specifies that the reduction of just one object to a monotron (or, in "Colossus Eternal," the destruction of the monotron itself) entails a like transformation for everything else in the world.

To explain the monotron we must recover an archaic mode of thought. The contemporary "scientific" universe is characterized by what can be called "temporal structure"; that is, its components are interrelated by cause and effect, with one always occurring before the other. Thus if I knock over the first in a row of appropriately spaced dominoes, the one at the other end does not fall immediately, but only after the kinetic energy of the first domino has been transmitted along the entire row. However,

> In the magic world view, all matter is governed by certain harmonies which may be expressed in letters, cyphers, numbers, designs, signatures....or stated correspondences. Everything in the Universe is so related to everything else that any change in one part immediately (not through a chain of causes and effects) implies changes in all parts. The most important of these correspondences is the one between macrocosmos (heaven, the zodiac, and the planets) and the microcosmos (the human body and its parts) (19).

Postponing consideration of the mystical "correspondences," we emphasize that matter under the occult viewpoint is regarded not as a source of causal relationships, but as a container of magic "virtues" which are transmitted by resonance or "sympathy" from one object to another—as in the

theory that a man's courage is magnified if he eats the heart of a lion or his jovial "humor" elicited if he is born in the ascension of Jupiter.

The medieval universe abounded in such "accredited marvels which are past all ordinary comprehension"--and in terms of these it is possible to explicate Mr Wandrei's story. The monotron, since it is the basis for everything, must contain all the occult "virtues"; i.e., it must be in "sympathy" with all things. Therefore, whatever happens to one monotron also must happen to each of its companions. "Like begets like," states the familiar magical principle--so that the reduction of one chunk of matter to a monotron entails a similar reduction for everything else.

But "Earth Minus" does not seem relevant to our previous discussion of mysticism; therefore we must put the story into a wider context.

SECTION 3. UNITY: SCIENTIFIC AND OTHERWISE

So far, we have used the term "sympathy" in two different ways: to denote a rapport between sentient beings (or between a finite intelligence and a Cosmic Oversoul) and to describe a relationship between objects with similar occult "virtues." But there also exists a physiological "rapport" between components of a single organism. To quote a 17th century text, there is a "sympathy between the kidneys and the stomach, as when persons diseased in the kidneys are troubled with stomach--sickness..." In its physiological sense, therefore, sympathy is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as a "relation between two bodily organs...such that....any condition of the one induces a corresponding condition on the other."

We therefore should not be surprised to find the mystical concept of organism represented in Orlin

Tremaine's Astounding Stories.

Thus Harl Vincent's "Cosmic Rhythm" (October 1934) tells how the planet Dovar was carried from Sirius into our own solar system, the trip being accomplished via a "new and inexplicable force." (20) This "force" is accompanied by a loud throbbing, analogous to a heartbeat, and it renders unconscious a party of human beings, who were obliged to land on Dovar when a "cosmic-ray stream" seized their rocket-ship.

Later, we learn the explanation:

"I like to think of the universe as a colossal organism....The rhythm of the cosmic-ray stream was the rhythm of a cosmic artery carrying its energies through space for the healing of a...injured cell. Dovar...was the sick cell in the vast organism we call the universe...

"First came the energy stream which swept Dovar from its orbit and...toward our own solar system. The stream carried...an anaesthetic to be used before the operation. This caused the...suspended animation of those....termed 'dead-alive.'"

Thus the mystical notion of organism can be rationalized in terms of periodicity: events recur in the external world just as they do inside a living organism, therefore the universe must be alive --with its components exhibiting that kind of sympathy which interrelates the parts of a human body.

There is one common flow, one common breathing, all things are in sympathy. The whole organism and each one of its parts are working in conjunction for the same purpose..(21)

Our results so far can be summarized in the statement that the mystic considers the universe as one—either through a direct fusion or through a

sympathetic interrelation between its components, with this "sympathy" being explained in terms of occult "virtues" or by analogy to a rapport between elements of the human body.

We must assume, at this point, that Orlin Tremaine's writers did not always understand the full implications of their own doctrines. To postulate an occult "sympathy," or to say with Mr Diffin that "tenses, past, present and future....are all one" (see page 38) or with Mr Binder that "past and future are man-made figments of the mind" (see page 37) is to destroy not just causality, but scientific inference as well.

Worse than this: the mystical doctrine implies the impossibility of conceptual thinking in general. Analytic judgment begins with the perception: This is not that—and such discriminations are precisely what the mystic rejects.

Nevertheless, mysticism sometimes is justified by an alleged similarity to science. Unity, it is argued, is desired by scientist and mystic alike, therefore the mystic and scientific way are essentially the same.

For example, Mr Wandrei's experimenter, Hal Carruthers, says this:

"Do you remember Plato's discussion of beauty? How the disciple of beauty advances step by step until he sees the final universal all-embracing beauty of which all things are part? That mystical doctrine is, after all, only a more poetic way of expressing the theory. And Lucretius, if I remember correctly, believed in a monistic universe, a cosmic oneness, so to speak, in which all things are inseparably interlinked."

Unfortunately, Carruthers does not "remember correctly," for the unity of Lucretius (like that of the modern physicist) is conceptual rather than

mystical. Things are "inseparably interlinked" in the Lucretian universe not by an occult "sympathy" but through the specification of their behavior by physical law, so that: "One thing known will light the way to all" (22).

The Lucretian representative in the Astounding story is not Carruthers, but Oscar, Stanley Weinbaum's supremely intelligent plant creature from Venus, who says:

> "I start with one fact and I reason from it. I build a picture of the universe. I start with another fact. I reason from it. I find the universe I picture is the same as the first. I know that the picture is true." ("The Lotus Eaters," April 1935)

Such is the scientific conception of unity. The physicist, like the ordinary person, believes in the existence of separate individuals; the unity he seeks is not in the world itself but in his description of the world. The scientific viewpoint, we can say, favors physical discreteness and conceptual unification; the mystical viewpoint, universal mergence and conceptual vacuity.

NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Cf. P.J. Farmer's Wogglebug, who says: "....we empathists can put ourselves into somebody else's nervous system and think and feel as they do." (The Lovers (New York, 1961), p. 155.)

2. Robert Heinlein, Stranger in a Strange Land (New York, 1961).

3. Christopher Isherwood, Vedanta for the Western World (New York, 1960), p. 1.

4. Ibid., p. 9.

5. Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, The Song of God: Bhagavad-Gita (New York, 1954), p. 73.

6. Horoscope, 27 (1961), 132.

7. Cf. Donald Wandrei's "The Man Who Never Lived" which depicts Professor von Allenstein's absorption into the "universal mind"; Wandrei's "Finality Unlimited"; and J. R. Fearn's "Dark Eternity."

8. Sri Aurobindo, quoted by Walter T. Stace, The Teachings of the Mystics (New York, 1960), p. 53.

9. Mr Kruse's notions of "matter" and "consciousness" seem to resemble those to which most of us naively subscribe; and one such belief is that these entities, whatever their character, are somehow different--as when Eckert himself distinguishes between physical and consciousness energies. Whatever comprises Mr Kruse's "consciousness energy," it is not the same kind of stuff as our familiar brute matter, and therefore cannot be expected to behave in the same way.

10. Cf. William Ralph Inge: "Mutual externality is the condition of things in the world of sense, as mutual inclusion on (sic) compenetration is the character of the spiritual world." (The Philosophy of Plotinus (London, 1948), 3rd eds., 1, 162)

11. R. A. Nicholson, trans. Rumi: Poet and Mystic (London, 1950), p. 134.

12. Cf. Donald Wandrei's "Colossus," Astounding Stories, January 1934.

13. Swami Prabhavananda and Frederick Manchester, trans. The Upanishads (New York, 1957), p. ix.

14. Rudolf Otto, Mysticism East and West (New York, 1957), p. 141.

15. Letter (signed "Jacobus Hubelaire"), Marvel Tales, 1 (1935), 234.

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17. John Campbell, "John Campbell Replies," Shangri-L'Affaires, October 1959, p. 8.

18. For a similar description of "mergence," see J.R. Fearn's "Dark Eternity," Astounding Stories, December 1937, p. 34.

19. Henry M. Pachter, Paracelsus: Magic Into Science (New York, 1961), 256.

20. Another example of "organism" was K. Raymond, "The Comet," Astounding Stories, February 1937.

21. "De Alimento," ascribed to Hippocrates, quoted by C.G. Jung, The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche, p. 101.

22. Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, trans. Sir Robert Allison (London, 1919), p. 41.

End of Part 1
Continued in Next Issue

Articles Scheduled for Future Issues:
Anderson: The Song of Gurre
Boucher: The S-F Books of 1962
Rogers: Charles Schneeman
haLevy: A Glossary of Middle-earth
Collins: The Legends of Cuchulain
Donoho: Analog: 1962

Next issue on sale October 1

HEALY ON FILM

Paul Healy is a mathematician with the Naval Ammunition Depot at Concord. He has presented numerous fantasy and science films to The Little Men, and is currently chairman of the Society. He will write a regular column on films for Rhodomagnetic Digest.

THE SAN FRANCISCO FILM FESTIVAL

The San Francisco International Film Festival is now receiving worldwide recognition as the only major film festival on the North American continent. Like all major film festivals, it suffers from last minute cancellations, often of the most important and eagerly awaited films. The Fifth Festival (November 2 to November 14, 1961) was no exception —two major films, A Taste of Honey from England (directed by Tony Richardson) and Devi from India (directed by Satyajit Ray) were withdrawn. To replace Devi the Festival's director, Irving Levin, showed the latest film by Jean Cocteau, Le Testament d'Orphee, which was not officially entered into the Festival.

Cocteau wrote: "As Le Sang d'un Poete was my first film, so Le Testament d'Orphee will be my farewell to the screen. Orphee, in actual fact, completed by film work. Le Testament d'Orphee will be rather like the handkerchief which one waves before the departing train or boat is out of sight.." Whether this is true in a literal sense or only in the sense of many of Paderewski's "final" concert tours, only time will tell. The film was completed in 1959, and had been in general release in England for more than a year before it was shown in San Francisco. Like any Cocteau film, it was well worth waiting for.

In many respects this film is a sequel to the

earlier Orphee (1949). Once more we meet the dead poet from Orphee, Cégeste (Edouard Dermit), who rises from the sea and offers Cocteau the Flower of Folly. The Princess and Heurtebise (Marie Cesarès and Francois Périer) have been elevated (?) to the mysterious tribunal which acted as their judges in Orphee. This tribunal, after a long and somewhat tedious philosophical discussion, condemns Cocteau to return to the outer world alive. This, they inform him, is their most terrible sentence. Possibly being placed on the tribunal was the punishment meted out to the Princess (Death) for allowing Orpheus to escape in the previous episode.

The film opens with Cocteau, attired as an eighteenth century dandy, trying to contact a scientist who has discovered the secret which will return Cocteau to the continuum; somehow he has lost his way in space and time. His first efforts are quite unsuccessful: he encounters the scientist as an infant, and frightens his nurse, who drops him on his head; then he encounters the scientist as a dying old man, too senile to remember the mechanism Cocteau needs; finally, he manages to arrive at the right moment, with the scientist in his prime. Cocteau is returned to the twentieth century as the scientist murders him. He now wanders through a wasteland, encountering a band of gypsies and some ominous living chessmen—men with horses' heads. He determines to offer to Minerva the Flower of Folly which Cégeste had given him. Seeking her, he wanders through a cathedral-like quarry (that of Les Baux, in Provence) where he finds his way blocked by a doorman (Yul Brynner) who finally permits him to pass and encounter the rogatory tribunal from Orphee. After the tribunal has condemned him to life he finally encounters Minerva, who rejects the proffered Flower and transfixes him with her spear. He is carried to his bier, where his death is mourned by his friends (among them, Pablo Picasso, Jacqueline Rogue, Francoise Christophe, Lucia Bosé, Henry Torrés, and Luis-Miguel Dominguin). But you can't keep a good man down—Cocteau returns to life almost immediately and wanders on

his way. He finds himself on a country road, where he encounters the Sphinx and blind Oedipus (it seems a pity to hide Jean Marais' pulchritude in this kind of make-up). Neither recognizes him, nor does he recognize them. He now hears the distant roar of approaching motorcycles, and stands stiffly in the center of the road waiting their approach.

At this point it would seem that some acquaintance with Orphee is essential for the audience. In that film the messengers of the Princess were uniformed motorcycle officers—caricatures of police, with massive black helmets, huge black-rimmed goggles and heavy jackboots. It is these messengers that Cocteau is expecting. But the cyclists are quite ordinary French police, who halt poor Cocteau and ask for his passport. One of them remarks, as he hands it over, "After all, any pedestrian is automatically suspect." But a passing motor car emits a blast of jazz from the radio, and the passport turns into the Flower of Folly and then vanishes. The officers are frustrated in their attempt to secure Cocteau's autograph when they turn and discover that he, too, has vanished--convinced at last that he does not belong to this world.

Part of the charm of a film of this kind is watching for the cameo appearances of great actors, artists, and intellectuals. Some, such as Yul Brynner, one could not miss if one tried--some, such as the whole gallery of mourners (Picasso, Torrés, Dominguin, et al) appear so fleetingly that one is barely aware of their presence before they have disappeared. Others, like Jean Marais, are hidden by make-up to such an extent that one must be aware of their identity in advance if he is to recognize them. But it is part of the game to see how many you can spot, just as it was in Around the World in Eighty Days or The Magic Box.

The film is filled with trick shots, for which Cocteau, now seventy, would allow no stand-ins. Since he appeared in nearly every scene this must have been quite a strain. In the scene in which

Cocteau rises from the dead (shot with the camera upside down, so that the film when righted would also be reversed) he was required to keep his body rigid and fall backward onto his bier from the three steps leading up to it. The first take was ruined when he bent his knees; the second, when the film jammed in the camera. Cocteau, wearing false eyes, stood patiently for ten minutes while the camera was reloaded. In the evening, still fresh, Cocteau went down into the valley to watch a little circus perform. Apparently his energy is inexhaustible.

Time and an acquaintance with Cocteau's other films help considerably in interpreting the symbolism found throughout the film. In particular, an acquaintance with Cocteau's Orphee seems essential to a complete understanding of this film. But it possesses the same kind of elfin charm as Cocteau's earlier successes, and should be equally successful at the box office.

The other fantasy entry in the Festival was the Italian Ghosts in Rome, directed by Antonio Pietrangeli. A pleasant enough ghost story, it dealt with a carefree aristocratic family which refuses to leave the palace that was their home in life. If you liked Rene Clair's The Ghost Goes West this is your cup of tea.

The previous San Francisco Film Festival (1960) had several fantasy entries—the best by far being the Mexican entry, Macario, directed by Robert Gavaldon, with a scenario by Bernard Traven. Macario is a poor woodcutter whose grudging charity is rewarded by Death with the power to heal the sick—provided Death has not set his seal upon them already. Macario achieves wealth and power until he arouses the suspicion of the local version of the Inquisition, and is forced to flee. He meets Death again, and is shown a cave in which millions of candles are burning, each representing a human life. His own has burned down almost to its base, but he snatches it up and runs away. The ending

contains a real surprise, if a rather ironic one. There are fine performances by Ignacio Lopez Tarso in the title role and Pina Pellicer as his wife. She is familiar to American audiences for her role as Brando's lover in One-Eyed Jacks.

Not so good as Macario, but still well above average was the German entry, Ein Mann Geht Durch die Wand (A Man Goes Through the Wall), directed by Ladislao Vajda. Herr Buchsbaum (splendidly played by Heinz Ruehmann) is a petty clerk in the German Revenue Office. His life is full of frustrations, and he feels he is "up against a wall," and says as much to his old professor. Then, suddenly, he finds he can walk through walls—and his life takes a sudden and unexpected turn for the better. By sticking his head through the wall of his tyrannical boss's office, Buchsbaum drives the petty Napoleon insane, and succeeds him as head of the office, since it turned out that his polite letters produced better results than the snarling ones which the boss ordered written. After some initial misunderstanding is cleared up he wins the young widow who has moved next door, and then loses his ability to walk through walls. Although this is billed as a German film, the director, Vajda, is a Hungarian and the script is based on a French tale by Marcel Aymé. The comedy has been made with a light, sure touch, and every actor and actress is right for his part. The technical effects are very competently done. If it ever gets shown in the U.S.A. again it is well worth seeing; many of the films shown at the Festival are never shown again in this country.

The remaining fantasy in 1960 was the Hong Kong entry, Chin Nu Yu Hun (The Enchanting Shadow), directed by Li Han-Hsiang, with Chao Lei and Betty Loh Tih. It is the story of a scholarly young man who spends a night in an old temple. In the moonlit garden he hears the sound of a lute and encounters a beautiful damsel.... The Japanese did it better in Ugetsu.

None of the San Francisco Film Festivals have had science fiction entries. Considering the really low level of most science fiction production here and abroad this is not too hard to understand —though one wonders why the excellent Czech film, The Deadly Invention (released generally as The Fabulous World of Jules Verne) was not included in its year of release.

CURRENT FILMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

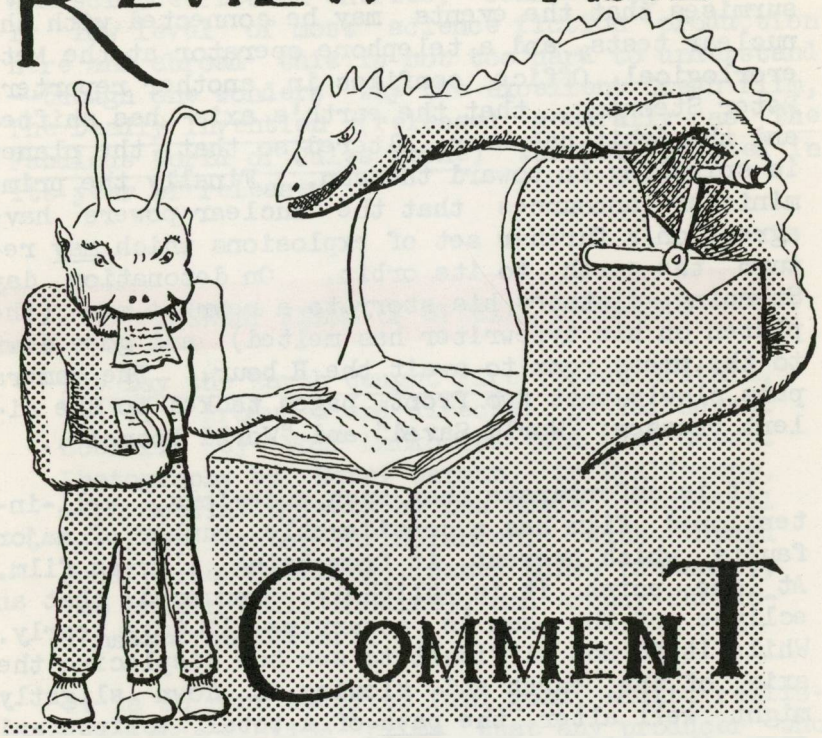
The Day the Earth Caught Fire (Great Britain, 1961). Produced and directed by Val Guest. Scenario by Wolf Mankowitz and Val Guest. Photography by Harry Warman, in Dyaliscope, with Special Effects by Les Bowie. Technical adviser, Arthur Christiansen. With Edward Judd (Peter Stenning), Janet Munro (Jeannie), Leo McKern (Bill McGuire), and Arthur Christiansen (The Editor).

It is so rare today to find good, adult, realistic science fiction films that any producer who seriously attempts one deserves some special praise. This film has many real merits—among them a newspaper office which is completely believable, with reporters and editors who are real people, not cardboard figures. Possibly the editor of the paper is so convincing because he was, until recently, the editor of the Daily Express, a London tabloid. The other actors are also thoroughly competent.

The story is based on a highly improbably premise, but this is a freely granted prerogative of any science fiction film. Two nuclear explosions (American and Russian, not British) set off simultaneously at the Poles have succeeded in tilting the earth's axis and also slightly altering its orbit. Numerous unscheduled meteorological phenomena are the immediate results, and official pronouncements are guarded and contradictory. Bill McGuire, science editor for a large London daily, surmises that the events may be connected with the nuclear tests, and a telephone operator at the Meteorological Office confides in another reporter, Peter Stenning, that the earth's axis has shifted and the orbit has been altered so that the planet is spiraling in toward the sun. Finally the prime minister announces that the nuclear powers have agreed on a further set of explosions which may return the earth to its orbit. On detonation day Stenning dictates his story to a rewrite man (the platen on his typewriter has melted) and goes down to the press room to await the H hour. The camera pans slowly past two front pages tacked to the silent presses: "World Saved" and "World Doomed"...

It is unfortunate that such a serious, well-intentioned film has a considerable number of major faults which prevent it from being a great film. At one point it is blithely announced that an eclipse of the sun is occurring 11 days early. While it is not difficult to see how displacing the axis of the earth and slowing it down slightly might well alter the path of a total eclipse and even the time—within minutes—it is incredible that any combination of events which had caused the moon to shift its position to a point nearly halfway around its orbit could also leave any human being alive to witness the eclipse. One almost wonders if the producer had the film rights to some eclipse shots, and shots of prominences on the sun, which he felt he just somehow had to work into this film. The shot of a dried-up Thames besides the House of Parliament looks precisely like a retouched still photograph—which no doubt it was. In fact, all of the special effects are most unimaginatively done, and fairly shriek "low budget." And the "adult" sex drama (the film has an "X" certificate in England), complete with the embrace between two nearly nude adults on a bed, seems insignificant and unnecessary when placed beside the major theme of the film. It is really too bad, for by exerting just a little extra effort a better-than-average film could have been a great one.

REVIEW AND COMMENT



Review and Comment will be just that. Only that which is for some particular reason worthy of notice will be discussed in these pages. In addition to reviews of individual titles, we will present from time to time more thorough discussions of special or general topics that fall within the purview of review and comment. For example, we have a truly significant article on Charles Schneeman in preparation by Alva Rogers; and we plan a series of articles on individual magazines—not issues, but the magazines themselves. For these purposes, we want material: critical (look up that word) reviews of books (up to 500 words) and serious comment on special subjects. On the latter, please query before going ahead. We'll give every review and query a close look.

—Anthony More, Review and Comment Editor

S-F BOOKS: 1961

Anthony Boucher

Tony Boucher really needs no introduction, but is a well-known reviewer, author, editor, and critic.

I have been trying for some time to understand why I, as a reviewer, am so much more resentful of uninspired routine books in science fiction than I am of similar publications in the mystery-suspense field. And I think I am beginning to see the reason.

To be sure, the current publishing standards are even lower for s-f-in-book-form than they are for mysteries. The very crudest sex-and-sadism private-eye paperbacks have a certain professional competence in keeping a story moving that is rare at any level of today's s-f, and the suspense field is certain to provide at least one intelligent, literate, original, creative novel in a week's reviewing load, while the s-f reviewer is lucky if he finds one over a span of months.

But why do I simply shrug and stop reading if a whodunit turns out to be weary and derivative, while I feel acutely embittered when I find the same qualities in s-f?

I see now that it is because s-f is a form which, more than almost any other, by its very nature demands creative originality. The detective story and even the more modern psychological crime novel are—like the western, the love story, the historical romance—fixed forms, in which the creative

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The following report was commissioned by Judith Merril, and will appear this fall in her 7th Annual of the Year's Best S-F (Simon & Schuster). It is pre-printed here by permission of Miss Merril.

challenge lies largely in seeing what the author can do within established boundaries. S-f is—or perhaps better, should and must be a literature of stimulus and fresh horizons.

Put it this way: You are not going to complain if a large number of sonnets sound, superficially, a good deal alike; you are fascinated by what each poet manages to do within the sonnet. But if all the free verse you read, from countless divers hands, sounds pretty much the same, you are justified in thinking that poetry is in a hell of a state.

A conventional, competent, uninspired murder novel or western is a perfectly reasonable commercial commodity. Conventional, competent, uninspired s-f has no reason for existing.

This is putting the case politely. As a matter of honest fact, most of 1961's s-f novels were conventional, uninspired...and incompetent. There were more novels in the field than in any previous year save one (1959); over half of them came from two publishers whose sole criterion of a novel seems to be a length of 50,000 words or less.

Among these many novels were at least a half dozen examples of what might be called the un-novel, composed of, say, two short stories, a novelet and a novella assembled from various magazines and presented as a novel. The practice is more advantageous to authors than to readers, though at its best it can result in, if not a novel, at least a memorable collection of stories, like Zenna Henderson's Pilgrimage, which presents at last in permanent form the chronicle of those interstellar castaways, the People.

The year 1961 was not totally devoid of good s-f novels. At least two were genuine Golden Age stuff —stimulating though fleshed in good fiction. A Fall of Moondust showed that Arthur C. Clarke, now writing mostly non-fiction, is still uniquely the

master of immediate day-after-tomorrow realism; and Daniel F. Galouye's Dark Universe brought off a virtuoso technical trick in writing plausibly of a culture which knew nothing of the sense of sight. Poul Anderson's Three Hearts and Three Lions, skilfully expanded from its 1953 magazine version, was a splendidly enjoyable fantasy-romance, in the tradition of Tolkien or T. H. White, with a gimmick or two that might possibly justify its publication as science fiction. Fritz Leiber's The Big Time, Andre Norton's Star Hunter, Brian Aldiss's The Primal Urge and especially John Wyndham's Trouble with Lichen had their welcome distinctions.

Philip José Farmer's The Lovers, sensationally controversial when it appeared in Startling a decade ago, proved somewhat disappointing in its long-awaited book form, largely because Farmer has, in the interval, done even better jobs of handling such provacative zeno-sexual-symbolic material. But the year's major disappointment was Robert A. Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land, in which Heinlein regrettably abandoned storytelling for sermonizing.

Particularly notable among books of short stories were Poul Anderson's Strangers from Earth, for the high quality of these hitherto unreprinted stories from Anderson's early days; Fredric Brown's Nightmares and Geezenstacks, for the technical brilliance of its under-1000-words vignettes; and Mildred Clingerman's A Cupful of Space, the first book by s-f's glowing prophetess of warmth and love. But these—like other good collections by Fritz Leiber, Richard Matheson and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.—were composed chiefly of stories published in magazines a number of years ago; the year's anthologies of brand-new short material reflected s-f's contemporary state of weariness.

A major event in non-scientific fantasy was the rediscovery, for the English-speaking, of Nikolai Leskov (1831-1895), whose Selected Tales, newly translated by David Magarshack, include the novel

The Enchanted Wanderer, as rich in inventive incident, at once as intensely Russian and as broadly human as a mob scene by Mussorgsky.

Fantasy anthologies notable for their intelligent patterning include Things with Claws, by Whit and Hallie Burnett, on the intimate and perilous relation of man and beast; Tales of Love and Horror, by Don Congdon, on the even more intimate and perilous relation of man and woman; and The Unexpected, by Leo Margulies, an interesting archeological dig in the era between the death of Unknown Worlds and the birth of F&SF, when Weird Tales was the only magazine market for fantasy.

Satan's Disciples by Robert Goldston; New York, Ballantine Books, Inc., 1962; 189 pp.; 50¢ (paper).

While this book is based largely on Jules Michelet's Satanism and Witchcraft, it is not written in Michelet's rambling style that goes on and on without saying very much. There is quite a bit of information in this book, but its accuracy is somewhat suspect. In the words of H. Allen Smith, she is carelessly wrote. For example, in attempting to show that most warlocks in the Middle Ages were not treated in the same fashion as witches, but were sometimes encouraged by the church, Goldston uses Roger Bacon as an example. Bacon actually spent a number of years in prison for practicing witchcraft and died there.

Goldston also includes a number of conversations as factual, when it is unlikely that such conversations were recorded. For example (p. 105):

> Sprenger [Inquisitor General appointed by Innocent III in 1484] yawned and decided that the best thing to do would be to order the insolent fellow to the torture. He was just about to do this when the young man suddenly slapped his forehead as if struck by a wonderful discovery.
>
> "Yes, yes! Now I remember!"

This occurs throughout the book. It is not what a "good" historian writing a strictly historical work would do. In other words, the book is somewhat fictional in character.

There are a number of good qualities in the book. It is quite thorough in scope, covering such things as the history of Satanism, the witch's Pharmacopoeia, persecutions, and spells. The author makes a few interesting points, such as that Satan had conquered the medieval church. Those churchmen who were not secret Satanists were in absolute terror of the Dark One. (A number of priests participated in the Black Mass, sometimes even in church!) The book also contains an excellent bibliography.

Goldston describes numerous orgies and tortures, to such an extent that this, perhaps, is indicative of the book's basic weakness. It seems to have been researched somewhat hurriedly and written for sensationalist rather than scholarly reasons. Nevertheless, the book's good points outweigh its faults and it can be profitably kept in your library for reference purposes.

---Marvin Bowen

The Bull From the Sea by Mary Renault; New York, Pantheon Books, 1962.

The Bull From the Sea is a sequel to The King Must Die and completes Mary Renault's historical reconstruction of the Theseus legend.

Unfortunately, the sequel is not nearly as good as its predecessor. The historical interpretation of the myth remains convincing, but the book is episodic and lacks a major unifying theme. There is nothing here to inspire awe as did the death of

the year king at Eleusis or to equal the color and glamour of decadent Crete and the thrill of its bull ring, events which kept the reader glued to the pages of the first novel. Nor are Hippolyta and Phaedra as strongly portrayed as the Queen of Eleusis and Ariadne of The King Must Die. Most important, there is no feeling of antiquity. Except perhaps for the rite of the Moon Maids, there seems little reason to go all the way back to Theseus to relate these adventures.

Theseus remains too much the young adventurer of the first novel. Miss Renault fails to do what Robert Graves did so ably in I, Claudius and Claudius the God; that is, to make the first book a study of a period, and the second the character study of a mature man. For Theseus does not mature here into the political genius and wise judge whom the later Greeks revered, the man of whom Thucydides said, "When Theseus died he left a great state behind him."

What Miss Renault does do, however, in prose as clear and direct as that of the classical Greek, is express in Theseus the spirit of the Greek people. Thucydides sums up for the Spartans what he considers typical of the Athenian character (Crawley translation): "The Athenians are addicted to innovation, and their designs are characterized alike in conception and execution. Again they are adventurous beyond their power and daring beyond their judgment, and in danger they are sanguine;....they are never at home....for they hope by their absence to extend their acquisitions. They are swift to follow up a success, and slow to recoil from a reverse. Their bodies they spend ungrudgingly in their country's cause; their intellect they jealously husband to be employed in her service. A scheme unexecuted is with them a positive loss, a successful enterprise a comparative failure. The deficiency created by the miscarriage of an undertaking is soon filled up by fresh hopes for they alone are enabled to call a thing hoped for a thing got, by the speed with which they act upon their

resolutions. Thus they toil on in trouble and danger all the days of their life with little opportunity for enjoying, being ever engaged in getting; their only idea of a holiday is to do what the occasion demands, and to them laborious occupation is less of a misfortune than the peace of a quiet life. To describe their character in a word, one might truly say that they were born into the world to take no rest themselves and to give none to others. Such is Athens, your antagonist."

And such is Miss Renault's Theseus. Yet in his love of beauty, in his regard for individual human life which made his greatest struggle that for the transition from animism to anthropomorphism, it can also be said of him that which an old Delphian decree said of Athens, that they "made gentle the life of the world."

—Jean MacKenzie

BLIND MAN'S BLUFF

Commentary by Anthony More

Elsewhere in this issue of the Rhodomagnetic Digest (see Anthony Boucher's summary of the year's s-f), much is made of the alleged merits of Daniel F. Galouye's Dark Universe. The novel generally has been extremely well received; Schuyler Miller has praised it highly in Analog and it has been frequently mentioned as a candidate for the Hugo Award as the best s-f novel of 1961.

To all of this I must take strong exception. The book has obvious and fatal flaws; and I am saddened that such a novel, which is indeed a hearkening back to the 1930's in every respect, should so fire the fans and readers. What this in fact says is that it doesn't take much any more to sound good; the level is too low.

Dark Universe is another variation on the post-atomic-war theme. The thesis is simple: a clan of human beings, calling themselves Survivors, live underground in eternal darkness, never having seen light, and using hearing as their primary sense.

So stated, it sounds promising. It also presents a challenge to the writer: how to avoid any reference to visual sensation in telling a long story about human beings.

Galouye's solution is simple, obvious, and wholly faulty. He substitutes a form of the verb "to hear" or "to listen" for what would ordinarily be a form of the verb "to see" or "to look." I list a few examples of this device, quoting directly from the text:

"'But radiation! It's pitch silent. I can't even hear where I'm going.'" (p. 1)

"'I don't hear where we gain anything through close association with you world.'" (p. 21)

"'It doesn't take much imagination to hear the advantages, does it?'" (p. 23)

"'I'll hear about that food.'" (p. 35)

"But he listened sharply at the girl." (p. 36)

"'....and listen ahead to that great period...'" (p. 36)

And a variation: "'It was a stupid position born of deaf superstition.'" (p. 55) Further: ".....so that he could keep an ear on her...." (p. 62)

Galouye gives away his device of transposition, in fact, on page 70: "'I don't hear—that is, I ziv why,'" says Jared masquerading as a zivver.

Much of this consists of literally altering a colloquialism or a figure of speech into the milieu of the lightless world. This would hardly be likely to occur; on what basis, for example, would the shift from "pitch black" to "pitch silent" be made? While it is perfectly reasonable that figures of speech might remain after losing their literal

meaning—we have many such in our own parlance—it is perfectly silly to assume that the transposition of figures from one domain of sensation to another could take place accidentally; that is, such transposition de facto implies a knowledge of what sight was to hearing vis-a-vis the old world and their world. Perhaps best of all in this respect is the example on page 103: "'A Zivver down here is the same as a one-eared man in the world of the deaf.'" How charming. And what an unlikely simile for a people depending on hearing only!

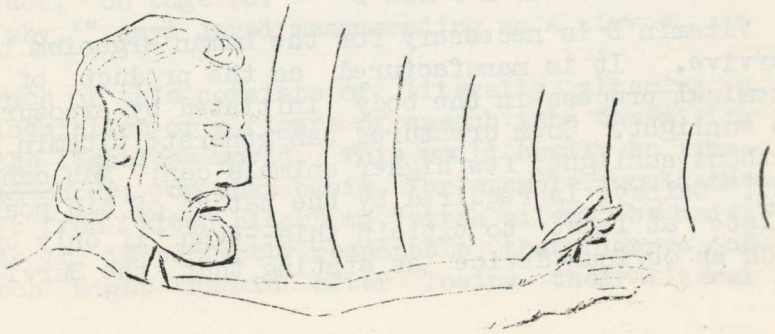
Now let us look at Galouye's science. First of all, let me point out that I am not a pedant on the matter of scientific content; I care not whether it be in fact science fiction or technological fiction or pure fantasy, or even—see Lee Sapiro's article elsewhere in this magazine—whether it be mysticism so long as it is good story-telling. But to tell a good story, an author must create a logical construct. When he makes a peculiar or special postulation, an author obliges himself to create a logical and consistent system within the implications of that postulate—scientific, technological, fantastic, mystical, or whatever. The requirement for this is demonstrably and beyond question applicable to all forms of narrative—examine the good ones and then some bad ones and you will see that consistency of internal logic is essential. It can even be a screwy logic (see some of Heinlein) but it must follow. In the case of Dark Universe, Galouye says these people live in the dark and do not know what light is. He must therefore have it be possible for them to live in the dark, and he must have them live in the dark. He does not do this.

Vitamin D is necessary for the human organism to survive. It is manufactured as the product of a chemical process in the body initiated by exposure to sunlight. Some creatures can generate vitamin D without sunlight; few higher animals can; Man cannot. Galouye is required by the nature of his postulate at least to explain this--even if only by such an obvious device as stating that the Survi-

vors have mutated. This he does not do. Therefore his people as he has described them could not be, by his own terms.

The eyeball is insensitive. Chimpanzees kept in total darkness from birth play with their eyes much as we, say, toy with our earlobes or chew our fingernails. There is no de facto awareness of the function of the eye. Further, creatures kept in darkness from birth have great difficulty adjusting to light, if they have in fact not already damaged their eyes beyond usefulness. And a blind person to whom sight has been restored does not know what the visual signals mean until he goes through a long process of learning. But listen to Galouye: "He [Jared seeing the outside world for the first time] was receiving detailed impressions of an infinite number of things at one time, without having to hear or smell them!" (p. 123) This is senseless. Jared had no reason to identify these painful sensations with "things"—"things" have to do with auditory sensations, and this would have to be a learned relationship. Later, on the same page: "He [Jared] threw his head back....Screaming at him in all its fury was a great, round, vicious....." Round? Who told him that the visual pattern (which with his eyes never before exposed to light he would not have been able to discern anyway) was the same as "round" (an auditory pattern)?

Some indication of what Galouye might have done can be gained by glancing at page 23 ("he heard a subjective quickening of her pulse"); or page 66 ("the firm, supple sound of thigh and calf muscles



working together"); or page 102 ("Jared listened to the swishing of large fish beneath the surface" of the water). What a scintillating world of auditory sensation would have been available to a man who was this sensitive to sound (assuming such sensitivity to have been explained)! But only rarely does such an implication appear. Galouye fails to develop it, probably because to have done so would have required considerable research and working out. It might have turned Dark Universe into an exciting novel.

There lies the heart of the matter: Galouye never takes the time to explore the ramifications of his postulate. Instead, he has recourse to the obvious and invalid device of verb transposition; and takes as a story line to present his postulate one of the oldest and laziest around, the curious rebel looking for the other world. Further, he is ultimately trapped by his failure to develop the postulate fully within the story itself; for he must fall back at last on the ancient device of the long explanatory dialogue between characters who know, to account for that which he has never had the narrative skill to make apparent to the reader.

Too many things are left totally unexplained. How long have the Survivors been stranded below ground? Long enough to have developed a culture of sorts (though one only ill-defined by the author) but not so long that their language has changed one bit in style or form (except, of course, for saying "hear" instead of "see"). On page 145, a rescuer says, "After a few generations you lost your ability to maintain those systems should anything happen." This implies a long span of time; and these two cultures, completely out of touch with each other and functioning in totally different environments simply could not have engaged in conversation as they do in the closing pages of the novel. Further, and apart from their silliness, the transposed figures of speech wouldn't have survived such a long time span. Remember, the words we read are in the mind of the protagonist, a Survivor.

This same scene introduces another and even more serious unanswered question. Caseman goes on: "And—well, the lights went off....Your people had to push farther into the complex...." And just how did these people survive in darkness, being totally unused to it? We as readers are entitled to at least a rationalization of this point.

Here are some more interesting transpositions. On page 4, "Stinking, Light-damned things from the bowels of radiation," and on page 43, "....that great period when we will be Reunited with Light Almight"--but why? God is still a part of the culture--see page 6. On page 7: "He didn't need them now--not with the sound of the thing's breathing as clear as the snorting of an angry bull." When did Jared—the viewpoint character—ever "hear" (sic) a bull? On page 6: "But it was audible that...." for "it was clear that," which is per se a faulty substitution, given the others. And on page 79: "He listened suspiciously at her." Why "at"? Why not "to"? Because Galouye simply made the obvious transposition and didn't bother to think it out.

Galouye also gets a bit carried away in spots: "unhearable" cricket noises (page 89) would be unheard even by Survivors; and somehow the exclamation, "Manna sauce!" (p. 90) is a little too much.

On page 96 Jared discovers an "artful echo-producing device"—whistling. One would expect this to have been discovered early in the life of the culture; and probably retained.

More—on page 104 Jared is receiving telepathic communication from the Survivor Leah. These include "roaring bursts of silent sound playing.... across walls which had been....a part of his childhood fantasies." Leah was closed-eyed (p. 88) so could not send visual images to start with; and Jared certainly could not yet identify the visual pattern of "walls" as such, much less correlate them with his childhood auditory memories.

These examples could be carried to arduous length, but the point is I think made: Dark Universe is carelessly written, not at all thought out, and lazily constructed. Galouye's postulate might conceivably have been developed into something memorable. It was not.

Ordinarily, I will not involve myself directly in Review and Comment. But so serious a misevaluation do I regard the careless acceptance of this second-rate s-f novel that I am impelled to call these considerations to your attention. You should have noticed. And lest you misread me, this comment has been directed less at Galouye for writing a bad novel than at you, his readers, for rewarding him for it. This is not the way to revive the standards of science fiction.

—Anthony More

BOOKS FOR SALE

Alhazred, Abdul. The Necronomican. Spain, 1647. Calf covers rubbed and some foxing, otherwise very nice condition. Many small woodcuts of mystic signs and symbols. Seems to be a treatise (in Latin) on Ritualistic Magis. Ex. lib. Stamp on front fly leaf states that the book has been withdrawn from Miskatonic University library. Best offer.

—Antiquarian Bookman
April 9, 1962

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ELVES', GNOMES', AND LITTLE MEN'S SCIENCE FICTION, CHOWDER AND MARCHING SOCIETY

Herewith is presented a brief and nonchronological account of some of the activities of The Little Men over the past half-year. Nonchronological because The Little Men have a fine disregard for formality in their proceedings and hence keep no records or minutes, so I have nothing to refer to but my faulty memory.

The Little Men meet on alternate Fridays, usually in Berkeley at Ben Stark's, or at the home of Poul and Karen Anderson in Orinda, and generally have programs of serious content: a discussion on the theory of sets by Ernest Schlessinger; a talk by Bob Buechley on "Arsenic, Cigarettes, and Lung Cancer," which was excerpted from his paper to be presented by him at a symposium in Moscow, USSR this summer; an extremely interesting talk delivered to us by Dr Leo Hollister, Chief of Research at the Palo Alto Veterans Administration Hospital, on "The Effect of Drugs on Mood in Normal Humans"; and a fascinating and controversial talk by Leland Sapiro on "The Mystic Renaissance in Astounding" (the first installment of which appears in this issue).

The Little Men are occasionally honored by visits from traveling BNF's in the science fiction field. One such was Sam Moscowitz who attended a

hurriedly called meeting on a nonmeeting night at Ben Stark's, and then was a guest at the meeting of The Golden Gate Futurians the following night. I was particularly excited by the visit paid us by Dr E. E. Smith, whom I revere as the author of the "Skylark" and "Lensmen" sagas. Doc got writer's cramp signing countless books and magazines for fans in Ben Stark's basement, and later he and Mrs Smith joined us in our traditional beer drinking and gab session at Brennan's, a congenial watering place to which most Little Men adjourn following the formal meeting.

Recently we had a stimulating program delivered by William Mandel, author, lecturer, and expert on the USSR, which consisted of a playing of a tape recording of a debate on the University of California campus between himself and Dr Fred C. Schwartz, head of the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, on the subject, "Resolved: Communists Should Not be Permitted to Teach in American Universities." The question and answer session following the tape was lively and interesting with Mr Mandel exhibiting all the poise of a seasoned lecturer in the way he fielded the questions thrown at him.

In order that we not get too mentally fatiqued from so much brain food as the foregoing, we relax in two ways--parties and films. Parties are parties, so I won't go into any details concerning them except to say that they are usually fun, with good booze, beer, and conversation flowing in about equal proportions. We have been fortunate in the general high quality of the films we've had the pleasure of seeing. The Man Who Could Work Miracles, Ed Emsh's Dance Chromatique, a couple of vintage silent versions of Poe's The Fall of the House of Usher, The Golem, The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, are just a few of the fine film programs obtained for us by Dr Paul Healy, who was elected Chairman of The Little Men in April. A few months ago The Little Men were invited by the distributor to be his guests at a private preview of the British film, The Day the Earth Caught Fire, which is re-

viewed by Healy elsewhere in these pages.

The two high points of the year of The Little Men are the annual spring picnic for which occasion Karen Anderson whips up a seething cauldron of honest-to-goodness clam chowder which is prepared on the spot and kept bubbling over an open fire, and which is consumed with relish along with pieces of fresh french bread ripped from whole loaves and gallons of good cold beer. The second event is more intellectual, but just as much fun—it's Tony Boucher's annual accounting given us in early January of the nature and quality of the original science fiction and fantasy books published during the preceeding year. We are fortunate to have for this first issue of the revived Rhodomagnetic Digest the substance of Tony's talk given us this year.

Anyone visiting the Bay Area and interested in attending Little Men functions can get details by contacting the editor of this magazine, or me at 5243 Rahlves Dr., Castro Valley, Calif., LUcern 2-4138. —Alva Rogers, Secretary-Treasurer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