

SCIENCE FICTION

NEWS LETTER

Christmas Book Issue

17 Book Reviews

Magazine Checklist

Full page of
Convention
photos

December 1950
10¢ copy

CONVENTIONS IN MAY AND SEPTEMBER

The 1951 science-fiction convention has been scheduled for the Labor Day week-end, September 1-2-3, in New Orleans. Harry B. Moore, spokesman for the New Orleans Science Fantasy Society, states that a part of the program will be given over to a "practical Dianetics session--straight from the shoulder as we have found it to be and as we have been able to make it work."

The Society has already begun work on the coming event, utilizing their own file of 2000 names plus the file turned over by the Portland, Oregon group. Although no guest of honor, or major speakers have been lined-up this early, several authors residing in the south are being contacted and the possibility is high that Top Man will be a Dixie product. A tentative program has been outlined, with E.E. Smith monitoring an open-house discussion panel, E.E. Evans speaking on the history of the fan movement, plus Jack Speer, Daniel McPhail and Stan Mullen participating in other events.

Membership in the convention society is \$1. (Moore: 2703 Camp St., New Orleans 13) Money is used to pay advance expenses, while membership entitles you to convention news bulletins, official program book, and admittance into the hall.

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Overseas, science-fiction will see its first universal gathering when the European International Convention meets on May 12-13-14, 1951, probably at Bloomsbury, London. A two-day warm-up by local fans precedes the convention proper, at the White Horse Inn (London), long a hangout for science fans.

Ted Carnell, editor of NEW WORLDS and many pre-war fan publications, is chairman. His committee include Walter Gillings, editor of SCIENCE-FANTASY, Ken Chapman, Audrey Lovett, Vincent Clarke, John Newman, Frank Cooper and Leslie Flood. This group plus others in London are meeting May 10th at the White Horse to complete convention plans. In addition to the usual convention program, the committee plans either a riverboat outing or a tour of the British Festival. (Ted Carnell: 17 Burwash Road, Plumstead, SE-18, London, England.)

News in Reverse:

STAR SCIENCE FICTION NOT TO APPEAR

Of the two remaining science fiction magazines scheduled for appearance this winter (Donald Wollheim's fantasy number and Gnome Press' semi-slick job), only the Wollheim publication is left in the running. Martin Greenberg of Gnome Press states that his proposed STAR Science Fiction has been cancelled.

The magazine, according to the would-be editors, was slanted well off the familiar path of s-f periodicals. Primarily, it was aimed at female readers and to capture the womens' audience the first issue was to use only fiction written by the ladies in the field: Shiras, Merrill, MacLean, etc. Book was intended as a 35¢ monthly, digest size. The covers were to be patterned in the New Yorker style -- sophisticated humor. As for instance, a dog in a spacesuit, mournfully eyeing a lamp post.

The Wollheim fantasy project was noted here last summer but immediately denied in New York. However, it is expected soon.

WORLDS BEYOND -- 3 issues and Kaput:

Damon Knight's new Hillman magazine which appeared dated December, is to last but two more issues. The company ran a spot-check on newsstand sales shortly after the initial issue appeared, and decided it wasn't selling. WORLDS BEYOND will have a January and February issue, with nothing beyond that unless sales make an unexpected leap.

The magazine was one of the better paying markets, averaging more than three cents a word on short stories, under their policy of flat hundred dollar payments. Knight aimed the periodical's appeal away from the usual science-fiction formulas.

BOOKS

THE HOUSE THAT STOOD STILL by A.E. van Vogt (Greenberg Publisher, New York, 1950, \$2.50)

This volume is a puzzle that calls for more than the usual review space. And this is van Vogt in the familiar pattern: immortality, mind-reading, and space ships. The title refers to a great marble mansion on a hill overlooking the Pacific, a mansion that bestows immortality on those who dwell within it because the walls are radioactive. The townspeople think the house is a hundred or so years old; the immortals know it to be over a thousand. But no one, including the immortals, know its exact age or who built it. Had van Vogt developed that theme, and that alone, I think the book would have been the better.

But in good old Null-A fashion van Vogt proceeds to confuse everyone by adding too many unrelated ingredients: two senseless murders, a robot, a spaceship, a pair of new elements, a threatened atomic attack on the USA, and electrified idols. I was forced to read the book twice because it was difficult to understand everything on just one reading-- and after the second trip I still say he left several loose ends dangling.

The rather cold-fish of a hero meets one of the immortals and falls in love, the meanwhile attempting to ferret out the secret of the house and their immortality. Not developed at all is the real meat of the story: how the 50 or 60 immortals from all corners of the world came there, discovered the house, and made themselves inconspicuous for a thousand years. Instead, the plot revolves around the hero's prying and their ineffectual attempts to sidetrack him. The heroine --an immortal the hero loves, wants children but the occupants of the house have sternly forbidden them. Yet, the vague ending finds the hero now an immortal, and the two of them planning children. Unexplained is his sudden immortality, and the possibility of her reproducing, after living in the radioactive house for hundreds of years. In spite of this criticism, try the book, for it makes fascinating reading. -BT

THE ISLAND OF CAPTAIN SPARROW by S. Fowler Wright. THE HUMANOIDS by Jack Williamson. THE WORLD OF NULL-A by A.E. van Vogt. FURY by Henry Kuttner. (All published by Grosset & Dunlap, New York City, 1950, at \$1 each.)

These four volumes constitute the beginning of Grosset's "Science Fiction Classics" library; three have new jackets while that for HUMANOIDS is a carryover. Groff Conklin is the editor.

SPARROW is more of a fantasy in that it chronicles the adventures of a shipwrecked man on an uncharted island, an island where dwell the descendants of a pirate crew on one hand, and a tiny, strange

old race of lost people on the other. The island is inhabited by satrys and the inevitable pretty French girl.

Strictly science is Jack Williamson's HUMANOIDS -- the humanoid robots who come to earth to save Man from himself. An old man and a child try to stop them, while they in turn are trying to stop war, the meanwhile taking over the universe in the process. It poses the problem of a free, if uncertain life or a safe and sane one under the thumb of the robots.

WORLD OF NULL-A is the tangled skein mentioned in the first review. In this, van Vogt creates a superbeing who has more lives than one, who tackles the ruling clique strangling the earth, and who in turn is not sure of his own identity. In his various lives he fights on Earth and Venus to save himself and his world.

Prize package for this reviewer is Henry Kuttner's FURY. It appeared in magazine form under the penname of Lawrence O'Donnell and is the story of the undersea Keeps on Venus. The rulers are immortal, their subjects ordinary humans, and the plot unfolds the tale of one human who fought them until he too discovered himself an immortal.

All in all, Conklin is to be congratulated on four worthwhile titles. -BT



SEVEN SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS OF H.G. WELLS (Dover Publications, 1780 Broadway, New York, NY. 1950 \$ 3.95)

Back in print again is this seven-decker volume, over a 1000 pages, in which is published the unabridged text of HG Wells' outstanding s-f novels: The First Men in the Moon, The Island of Dr. Moreau, The War of the Worlds, The Invisible Man, In the Days of the Comet, The Food of the Gods, and The Time Machine.

Two of these stories have been filmed, one created havoc when broadcast by Orson Welles, and the last is a classic read by thousands who don't know the meaning of s-f. It was Wells, not a pulp author, who first invented the atomic bomb; radio, television, planes, tanks and other modern developments first came from his pen fifty years ago. These novels embrace interplanetary flight, time travel, invisibility, evolution, artificial foods which produce giant children, transmutation, invasion, etc. -BT

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This publication does not sell books, nor take orders for the titles reviewed.

WHAT'S NEWS

Robert Peterson (1308 south Vine, Denver, Colo.) has published, at \$1, an index to the weird and fantasy magazines issued between 1923 and 1948. Magazines included are: Fantastic Adventures, Weird Tales, Oriental Stories, Unknown and Unknown Worlds, Strange Tales, Unusual Stories, Witch's Tales.

Robert Heinlein's THE MAN WHO SOLD THE MOON, originally published by Shasta, will be reprinted in February at 25¢ by Signet Books. The reprint will carry four of the original six stories in the volume.

Martin Alger (118 north Center, Royal Oak, Mich.) is selling sets of photos taken at the Portland, Oregon convention. The 40 pictures sell for \$2.

Jack Williamson's original novel, THE MAKER, will be published by Simon & Schuster this spring. Also from the same publisher, TIME QUARRY by Clifford Simak. As a serial, this ran in the first 3 issues of Galaxy.

William Austin (3317 west 67th, Seattle 7, Wash.) will publish in January a 3-way cross-index of all 1950 magazine science-fiction. Probable price, 75¢. Austin also is seeking information on 1950 fanzines and asks if anyone contemplates publishing an index or check-list of the amateur journals.

Meanwhile, in Washington DC, Bob Pavlat and William Evans are attempting to continue and bring up to date the Swisher Check-List of years ago, covering all the fanzines ever published. Assistance requested. (Pavlat: 6001 43rd ave, Hyattsville, Maryland.)

Martin Greenberg's JOURNEY TO INFINITY will be the next anthology from Gnome Press, due in January. The volume is a companion piece to his MEN AGAINST THE STARS, and will --by the selection of proper stories-- trace the history of Man through 3 million years. Also coming from Gnome within the next few months: Isaac Asimov's I, ROBOT, and Will Stewart's (Jack Williamson) SEETEE SHIP. Gnome Press have moved their offices to 80 east 11th st, New York City 3.

Funk & Wagnalls advise that a new word has been added to the dictionary: atomshik, Moscow's name for a fanatical advocate of atomic warfare.

Writers John and Dorothy DeCourcy have moved from Oregon to Taos, New Mexico. And meanwhile in Taos, Mack Reynolds has taken to raising goats.

The Editors Lunch Club, of New York, devoted one of their late October meetings to science fiction. Among the speakers were Groff Conklin, Fred Pohl, Martin Greenberg (of Gnome Press), Walter I. Bradbury (from Doubleday), and Orrin Keepnews (for Simon & Schuster). Several publishers present.

An original Seabury Quinn novel, ALIEN

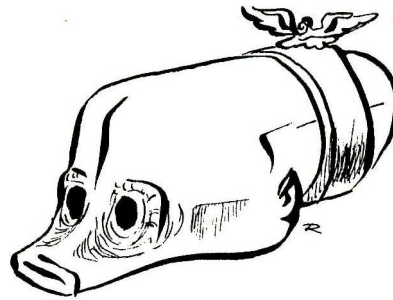
FLESH, will be published by Prime Press this spring. This is not one of the Jules de Grandon stories, but a snappy fantasy. Also coming from Prime: The BLIND SPOT by Austin Hall and Homer Eon Flint.

Anthony Boucher's new detective anthology, FOUR AND TWENTY BLOODHOUNDS has been published by Simon & Schuster, and already republished by Unicorn Mystery Book Club.

A new "Perma-Book" anthology of science-fiction is coming, edited by Groff Conklin.

L. Sprague deCamp has placed three original books: Prime Press will publish LOST CONTINENTS: THE ATLANTIS THEME IN HISTORY, SCIENCE AND LITERATURE (non-fiction), and a novel, THE GLORY THAT WAS. Coming from New York's Doubleday is ROYAL JELLY, which LSdeC describes as a love story. Meanwhile, FPCI in Los Angeles will publish one of his early Unknown novels, THE UNDESIRE PRINCESS.

Raymond F. Jones' THE TOYMAKER, a collection of his stories featuring the Imagino toys, plus several other shorts, has also been scheduled by FPCI.



The Gargoyle Press (1526 east 23rd st, Brooklyn NY) has published a small brochure, "The Ghoul and the Seraph" by Clark Ashton Smith, at 35¢. Autographed copies are available.

George O. Smith has not gone overseas, as he himself prematurely reported here last issue. Still working/writing in Philly.

Robert Spencer Carr's BEYOND INFINITY will be the first new-year novel from Fantasy Press. This volume contains 4 novelllettes totalling 100,000 words, two of which are new and two reprints from the Saturday Evening Post. Following this volume comes E.E. Smith's GRAY LENS MAN, and John Taine's SEEDS OF LIFE. All titles at \$3.

Walter Coslet's STEPCARD (Box 6, Helena, Montana), a weekly postcard of news, will publish semi-weekly as soon as subscriptions permit. Twenty issues for 50¢.

Donald Wollheim has another anthology scheduled for next month: SCIENCE FICTION FOR THE MILLIONS. From Fell, at \$2.95.

Magazine artists Calle, Miller, Stone, and writer Arthur J. Burks have gone back into the armed services.

Oliver Saari and Virginia Mae Haas were married in November. Now living in Chicago.

The Washington D.C. fan club will hold another eastern conference this spring.

1950 MAGAZINE CHECKLIST

These are the magazines published during the year. The figure in parenthesis is the number of issues each published bearing the 1950 date.

(Compiled by Sam Moskowitz)

Amazing Stories (12)
 Amazing Stories Quarterly (4)
 A. Merritt's Magazine of Fantasy (4)
 Astounding Science Fiction (12)
 Avon Fantasy Reader (3)
 Famous Fantastic Mysteries (5)
 Fantastic Adventures (12)
 Fantastic Adventures Quarterly (4)
 Fantastic Novels (6)
 Fantastic Story Quarterly (3)
 Fantasy Book (2)
 Fantasy Fiction (1) title changed to:
 Fantasy Stories (1)
 Future Combined with Science Fiction
 Stories (4)
 Galaxy Science Fiction (3)
 Galaxy Science Fiction Novel (2)
 Imagination (2)
 Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction,
 The (4)
 Marvel Science Stories (1)
 Other Worlds (7)
 Out of This World Adventures (2)
 Planet Stories (4)
 Startling Stories (6)
 Super Science Stories (6)
 Thrilling Wonder Stories (6)
 Two Complete Science-Adventure Books (1)
 Weird Tales (6)
 Wonder Stories Annual (1)
 Worlds Beyond (1)

Magazine News

Several of the Popular Publication string of magazines, including Famous Fantastic Mysteries, have changed size and format. The new job is slightly larger than digest size, has no inside illustrations, and carries a semi-slick tone. Priced at 25¢.

Another Popular title, A. Merritt's Magazine of Fantasy, has been discontinued. The October 1950 issue was the final one.

(The following has been reliably reported, but not directly confirmed:) Ray Palmer has sold his newest magazine, Imagination, to the Greenleaf Publishing Co. of Chicago. William Lawrence Hamling, until recently an editor on the Ziff-Davis staff, is said to be the Greenleaf Publishing Co.

Donald Wollheim's new fantasy magazine, due immediately, is titled 10 Story Fantasy. Priced at 25¢, and probably a bi-monthly.

Two Complete Science - Adventure Books, the 25¢ quarterly, has announced this lineup for coming issues:

Spring (#2): "The Star Kings" by Edmond Hamilton, and a new novel, "Seeker of the Sphinx" by Arthur C.

Clarke. Summer (#3): "Sword of Xota," a new one by James Blish, and "Durna Range" by Neil R. Jones. Fall (#4): "The House That Stood Still" by A.E. van Vogt, and a second novel not yet selected. Also purchased but not yet scheduled is "The Green Men of Grey-pec" by Festus Pragnell.

This magazine's policy is two books in each issue, with the second story being cut to about 30,000 words to fit the space.

CHECKLIST OF BRITISH POCKETBOOKS

The following list of 1950 pocketbooks, compiled by Stephen Takacs and Ken Slater, is believed to be complete. In this checklist, the pen name "Vargo Statten" belongs to John Russell Fearn, while "Astron del Martia" is believed also to be his.

Annihilation (Statten)
 A Princess of Mars (Burroughs)
 Beast From Beyond, The (Wellman)
 Carson of Venus (Burroughs)
 Earth Invasion, The (Denis Hughes)
 Human Bat, The (E.R. Home Gall)
 Micro Men, The (Statten)
 Monsters of Juntenheim, The (Hamilton)
 Murder by Telecopter (Hughes)
 Operation Venus (Fearn)
 Tarzan & The City of Gold (Burroughs)
 at The Earth's Core "
 & The Forbidden City "
 The Invincible "
 & The Leopard Men "
 & The Lion Man "
 Lord of the Jungle "
 & The Lost Empire "
 Quest "
 Triumphant "
 Tharkol, Lord of the Unknown (Hamilton)
 Two Thousand Years On (Statten)
 Trembling World, The (del Martia)
 Whispering Gorilla, The (David V. Reed)
 Worlds at War (anthology) (F.G. Rayer)

Any of these titles may be purchased in this country from either Stephen Takacs, 45 Fourth ave, New York City 3, or Phil Rasch, 567 Erskine Drive, Pacific Palisades, Cal. The cost is 1/6, about 30¢.

DEPT. OF CORRECTION:

We stated last issue that Mack Reynolds had ghost-written Harry Moore's speech at Portland, winning for him and New Orleans the 1951 convention bid. We now owe Moore an apology, freely given. He states that Reynolds did not write the paper but merely polished it, after completion. We bow deeply, three times, to the south.

LATE ADDITIONAL MAGAZINE NEWS:

Robert O. Erisman, editor of the newly revived Marvel Science Stories, will revive his other pre-war magazine, Dynamic Science Stories in January. These publications are said to be paying up to 5¢ a word for fic.



THE BIG BLOODSHOT EYE

The eye glances backward:

The year was a pistol in many respects. The first worthwhile science fiction film was screened, *DESTINATION MOON*, based on a book by popular writer Robert Heinlein. And jumping on that bandwagon, Hollywood studios snatched up fantasy stories by the score---scheduled for filming are Balmer and Wylie's "When Worlds Collide", Campbell's "Who Goes There?", Verne's "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" and "The Mysterious Island", Bates' "Farewell to the Master", Ehrlich's "The Big Eye", Latchford's "Prof. Hagge's Private Planet", and the following titles of which the author is unknown here: "The Lost Continent", "Prehistoric Women", "Flight To Mars", and a remake of oldtimer "Berkeley Square" under the new name, "Beyond Time and Space". Several fans and clubs assisted in advertising and promoting Heinlein's *MOON*.

An old Saturday-matinee serial or two was hastily re-edited and thrown upon the screens as interplanetary adventures; and a space epic entitled *ROCKETSHIP XM* made the rounds to delight the kiddies and confuse the oldsters --- the ship landed on Mars in the midst of a thunderstorm. The army's Wac Corporal was the movie star of the year.

Magazine publishing fared better but with equally astonishing results. The first pulp went on sale containing a "built-in comic section" for those who like pretty pictures with their science fiction. A new one went on sale which for the first time in a decade offered serious competition to the old leader --- while the leader itself wallowed in a series of parallel ruts and its editor embraced a "new science," taking the magazine along to the dismay of many readers.

Many new titles appeared, old ones were dusted off, one folded before it was born, and another quit after just three issues. On the other hand, book publishers had a field day and for the first time a science fiction novel (one classified as such) hit a book club. One lucky writer sold his novel to a book publisher, a book club, a pocket-book house, and a Hollywood studio. Another sold his to a book club and a magazine after the original book publication. A dozen big New York houses put titles into the field while the smaller fantasy houses continued to pour them out, good, indifferent, and bad --- far too many bad. Science fiction was definitely the thing, a trend most fans had dreamed of since 1930, and it all started because of the bazooka, the jet, and the A-Bomb. We now lack only time-travel.

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In November I attended the annual s-f conference sponsored by the Philadelphia

Science-Fantasy Society, my first such conference there since 1939, and the change in the intervening eleven years was startling. Eleven years ago the fans in attendance were there for purely personal reasons -- tooting their own horns and the horns of whatever movement they happened to be pushing at the time. They revolved about themselves and the outside world was strictly outside. In 1950 it was nearly the opposite.

Willy Ley opened the program, speaking on "Dragons in Amber," a book he's publishing within a month or two. His talk was a resume of that book's first and last chapters. Next followed a round-table discussion of the year's crop of s-f books, with L. Sprague de Camp, James Williams, Milton Rothman and myself expounding the good and the bad. After an intermission, the high spot of the afternoon was Irving Heyne, a math teacher and long-time reader, who spoke on "A Worm's Eye-view of Science Fiction." His thesis, based on personal experiences, were the foolish plots, foolish happenings, and foolish characterizations in s-f yarns. The average reader --the worm-- is forced to put up with an awful lot of trash, some of it appearing in otherwise good stories and written by the better known authors. His example were two characters, hero & villain, who duelled to the death with mathematical equations, hurling them at each other. The afternoon ended with the inevitable auction.



All that was a long way from 1939 and what fans thought of then. May I suggest you attend next year's conference if you're in the vicinity.

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I don't read all the magazines, can't find the time and positively do not have the inclination to wade through the bilge, but I do usually run down the contents page when a new issue appears on the stands. Only a few days ago in *Future Combined with Science Stories* (a useless, jawbreaking title!), the name of Richard S. Shaver met my eye. Tell me, has this been going on long? Still on magazines: sometime in the near future in some magazine will be a story by Frank Robinson, an Indiana fan newly-turned-writer who has recently made several good sales. Last summer I read the typescript of "Farewell, Columbus", and now I learn some editor has bought it. I'd like to recommend it.

- Bob Tucker

FANTASY ADVERTISER

1745 Kenneth Road
Glendale 1, California

SHOP TALK

In a boom year which brought out many new magazines, which made new names on the contents page as well as remaking old ones, which pushed several well-known names to the front, we think Ray Bradbury is 1950's top.

Bradbury's climb has been slow, and to him, surely disheartening. Fifteen or more years ago he was another one of the fans who hung around the Los Angeles clubhouse, contributing bits to their and other fan magazines, publishing four issues of his own. Finally he sold a story to *Weird Tales*, and then another, branching out to the other pulps where some of his most notable work appeared. He began making a name by his own peculiar style of writing, and presently that name began to appear in the slicks: *The American Mercury*, *Colliers*, *Mademoiselle*, *Harpers*, *Charm*, and of late, *Esquire*. The latter magazine is now reprinting his yarns which were first published by *Planet Stories* --- an odd record of some sort.

Arkham House, in 1947, brought out a collection of his better fantasy and weird tales, *DARK CARNIVAL*. Some critics thought the shortest story in that volume, a 450 word brief entitled "Interim" carried the wallop of a rocket's backfire. His next book was three years in coming, but Doubleday's *THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES* made the wait worthwhile. *CHRONICLES* presents Bradbury's ideas of mankind's colonization of Mars, and the aftermath. This volume will be reprinted as a pocketbook next year, while in London the firm of Hart-Davis will bring out a British edition of the original, under the new title of *THE SILVER LOCUSTS*.

Meanwhile, Bradbury has made use of 1950: the Ford Television Theater is filming his story, "To The Future," for nationwide t-v broadcast; and another t-v show, *Lights Out*, is preparing a second story, "Forever and the Earth" for future production.

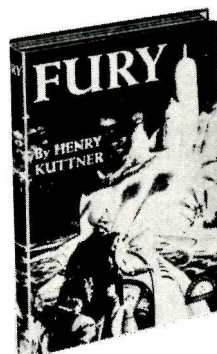
Rip van Ronkle (the adapter of Heinlein's *DESTINATION MOON*) is now adapting a film version of *MARTIAN CHRONICLES* which will be offered to the studios. And a contract has been signed with a Broadway play producer to write a musical drama based on his short, "Mars is Heaven."

His third book, *THE ILLUSTRATED MAN*, will be published by Doubleday in February; this volume contains eighteen of his yarns. He has a novel in the preparatory stage for future publication. And, although nothing definite has yet been decided, two studios are interested in his work and services.

Bradbury, still a citizen of Los Angeles, is thirty years old, married, and with the assistance of his wife is expecting a second child next May.

- Bob Tucker

Now Science Fiction's Famous Books only \$1



FURY by Henry Kuttner

Fury is a novel of violence. The earth is dead long since, blasted in a self-sustaining chain reaction. Remnants of the human race have settled on Venus. The rulers are Immortals, genetic mutations who live a thousand years or more. An important novel that you will enjoy.

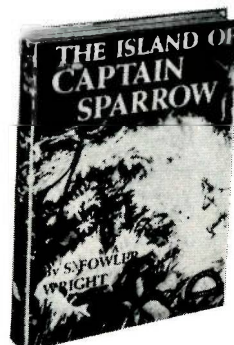
THE WORLD OF A by A. E. Van Vogt

A tale of the future evolution of the mind of man, a wild and free extrapolation from today's society—based on emotions and appetites rather than on mentality—to an inconceivably complex and exciting tomorrow, when man has finally learned how to dominate his environment and his own baser instincts.



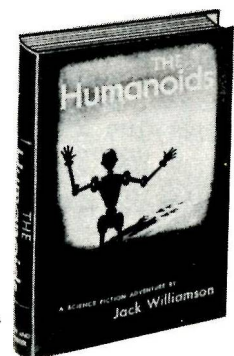
THE ISLAND OF CAPTAIN SPARROW by S. Fowler Wright

This enchanting science fantasy is the tale of two diametrically opposed types of civilization: one composed of the decadent descendants of a Nineteenth Century pirate crew, the other the remnants of a tiny, strangely advanced civilization.



THE HUMANOIDS by Jack Williamson

The unexpected solution of this galactic struggle of five or six individuals against hundreds of millions of robots is a strange, frightening and gripping story.



GROSSET & DUNLAP, 1107 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

BOOK REVIEWS

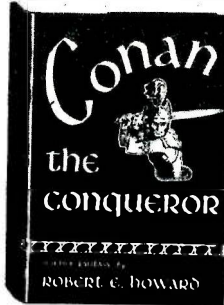
WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE and AFTER WORLDS COLLIDE by Philip Wylie and Edwin Balmer. (Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1950, \$2.95)

Two complete novels combined in one volume, originally published in 1932 and 1933, this is a bargain for anyone's library. The books are well-written, well-plotted, and do not suffer with age.

The first is the story of earth when it discovers the world is to be smashed by an invading planet--no tricks, no happy ending is pulled from the bag; the collision occurs but not until, by superhuman effort, a tiny segment of the population is shot away on a spaceship. The second novel takes it from there, detailing the arrival of this ship on a new world and the rebuilding of life. -BT

CONAN THE CONQUEROR by Robert E. Howard (Gnome Press, New York City, 1950, \$2.75)

You may remember Conan from the pages of Weird Tales, a bloodthirsty barbarian who lived in the Hyborean Age, relying on his wits and his sword---mostly the latter. This is the first volume in a series of five, dealing with Conan and the Age.



The book opens with the resurrection of a high priest, dead some three thousand years, and there follows the machinations of this Lazarus and his henchmen to possess nations, gold, and the "Heart of Ah-ri-man," a magic jewel. Conan happens to be one of the kings swept aside; the body of the book is his fight to regain his throne and the jewel. For Weird Tale fans. -MBW

AFTER 12,000 YEARS by Stanton A. Coblentz (F.P.C.I., Los Angeles, Cal. 1950, \$3)

Some novels stand reprinting after long absence, some do not. This one hangs on the borderline and the individual reader must take it or leave it. The story is fair today, was considered good in 1928, and can be enjoyed if you like the old-timers.

Henry Merwin, by means of a survival drug, awakens a hundred and twenty centuries in the future to find a world not unlike our own, despite the newer concepts and isms. He cannot have the girl he wants because of state regulations, he becomes involved in the usual wars science fiction authors believe constantly plague our future, and our little friends the insects stage a rebellion. Nothing new, but readable. -BT

THE GREEN MAN OF GRAYPEC by Festus Pragnell (Greenberg-Publisher, New York, 1950, \$2.50)

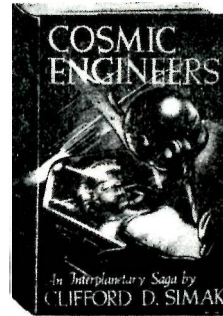
A nice dust jacket by Hannes Bok.

A GNOME THERE WAS by Lewis Padgett (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1950, \$2.50)

Here's a happy collection of Henry Kuttner's choice yarns which you shouldn't miss. You can have a lot of fun in this book, with a talking cat, hillbillies who have mastered the art of flying, a man turned into a gnome and another who complained of smelling dead flies, plus a radio that lit cigarettes and washed the dishes.

Probably the best known is Mimsy Were the Borogoves; in addition to that and the title story, the volume includes The Twonky, The Cure, Jestng Pilot, Exit the Professor, This is the House, Compliments of the Author and three other short stories. This is one collection that was long overdue! -BT

COSMIC ENGINEERS by Clifford D. Simak (Gnome Press, New York City, 1950, \$2.50)



We looked forward to this one, for it had remained a favorite since a shorter version appeared eleven years ago in Astounding. Happily, it wears well and few pulp traces remain.

Two newsmen, waiting near Pluto for an adventurer to push out into interstellar space, stumble across a dark, sealed floating prison. Opening it, they find a living woman banished there 1000 years ago on a trumped-up charge, a woman who had remained in suspended animation although her brain continued alive and active. On her report that she had become telepathic and that she had heard voices talking across space, a small group launch themselves into space, out towards the expanding rim of the universe, seeking the owners of the voices. -BT

New Pocketbooks

THE DYING EARTH by Jack Vance. (Hillman Periodicals, New York, 1950, 25¢.) Jack Vance is Henry Kuttner, and this is far-future stuff when the sun is going out, complete with wizards, magic and sex.

THE BIG EYE by Max Ehrlich (Popular Library, New York, 1950, 25¢.) An invading planet almost smashes the earth. Reviewed here in detail in issue number 13, October 1949.

WHAT MAD UNIVERSE by Fredric Brown (Bantam Books, New York, 1950, 25¢.) An hilarious satire of a universe run by fans. Read it. Reviewed here in Number 14, December 1949.

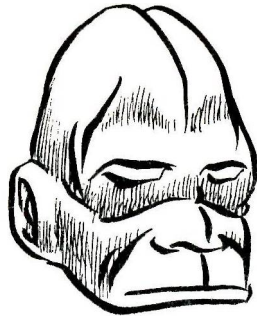
FIGHT FOR LIFE by Murray Leinster (Crestwood Publishing Co, New York, 1950, 25¢.) Atomic war opera, the lone scientist saves the U.S.

SINISTER BARRIER by Eric Frank Russell (Galaxy Science Fiction Novels, New York, 1950, 25¢.) The best novel Unknown ever printed! People are property, owned by beings above.

LETTERS

Ken Beale (Bronx, N.Y.): "A recommendation was passed at the Norwescon to set 'Green Hills of Earth' to music? Where have these guys been? 'Green Hills' was set to music away back and was broadcast on the 'Dimension X' radio show. Music was composed and probably also sung by Tom Glazer, well-known folksinger. Unfortunately, this version is not available to the public ... The composer (said that) for \$100 he'll record it for us and also give us full rights.

... Whoever gave you the dope on the ESFA-Hydra shindig, and resultant dispute, was very, very wrong. Some, but not all of the facts were supplied. May I venture to correct you on a few items? This is not second-hand info, I was there, right in the thick of it.



Sykora created a disturbance akin to a flea settling on a dog or a butterfly on a flower. In other words, practically none at all. He and his friends were quiet, orderly and well-behaved. ... It is true that his little brochure, "The Hornet's Nest," denounced Hydra, ESFA & company in no uncertain terms, but he himself was well behaved, gentlemanly and orderly. The only disturbance he was openly alleged to have caused was giving out literature while the speeches were going on--something at which Emily Post no doubt would have looked askance, but nothing really brutal.

... Will, in his published writings advocated boycotting the Hydracon, but his meaning was of course not to give it financial or other support. There was nothing wrong in attending, according to him, if you didn't pay anything. That was why he and a good many others in the New York area went. ... By the way, Sykora was not the only one who was threatened with the police. (Myself) having assisted in the distribution of said propaganda, because of personal feelings toward Will rather than a wholehearted support of his views, was asked to leave on the grounds that (I) had been distributing stuff after an announcement was made to stop. (I) proved that (my actions) were pure as the driven snow and was suffered to remain."

Norman Stanley (Rockland, Maine): "Hell hath no fury like a fan cheated of his ego-boo! In your remarks on Norwescon attendance you said: 'Longest-distance runner to Portland was a fan from Florida, next up was one from New York, and one from Toronto. Ohio sent five, Michigan six, Illinois four, New Orleans and New Mexico one each.'"
(next column, middle page)

PORTLAND CONVENTION PICTURES

All photographs on the opposite page except that for DESTINATION MOON were taken at the science fiction convention in Portland, Oregon, last Labor Day weekend. The people:

(1) Beatrice Mahaffey and friend, (2) Don Day, the chairman, (3) Anthony Boucher and friends, (4) Claude Degler, (5) Theodore Sturgeon, (6) Will Sykora, (7) Roger Phillips Graham, (8) Howard Browne, (9) Mack Reynolds and friend.

The theater photo, taken by Ray Adams, (courtesy of Shasta Publishers, Chicago) depicts the eight-story-high aluminum rocket erected at the Mayfair Theater, New York; the rocket is not a part of the billboard behind it, but stands out over the walk.

Now if I'm not mistaken, New York had at least two delegates, Sykora and Dietz. Washington DC had one, Frank Kerkhof. Philadelphia had one, Jean Bogert. Maine had one, me. ... I started my traveling from here, flying from Portland, Maine, to New York to Seattle to Portland, Oregon, ticking off as I figure it, about 2960 miles on this Z-shaped course. While out there I talked with the gentlefan from Florida, Charles Heisner, I believe, and each of us congratulated the other on having come the greatest distance.

That puts the two New York citizens in second place, Bogert in third, Kerkhof in fourth, and Millard of Toronto in a somewhat poor fifth. Though from what he told me, I guess Millard rates 1st place in the amount of trouble he had in making the pilgrimage. I trust that you will immediately publish a special issue to correct this error and thus save all fandom from being plunged into ghastly war."

(War is averted -- we were mistaken.))

SCIENCE FICTION

NEWS LETTER

Number 18 December, 1950 10¢

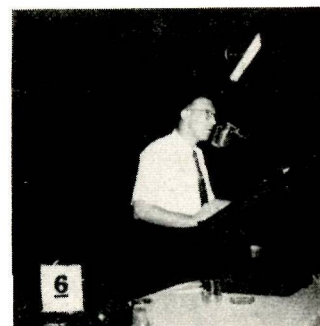
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