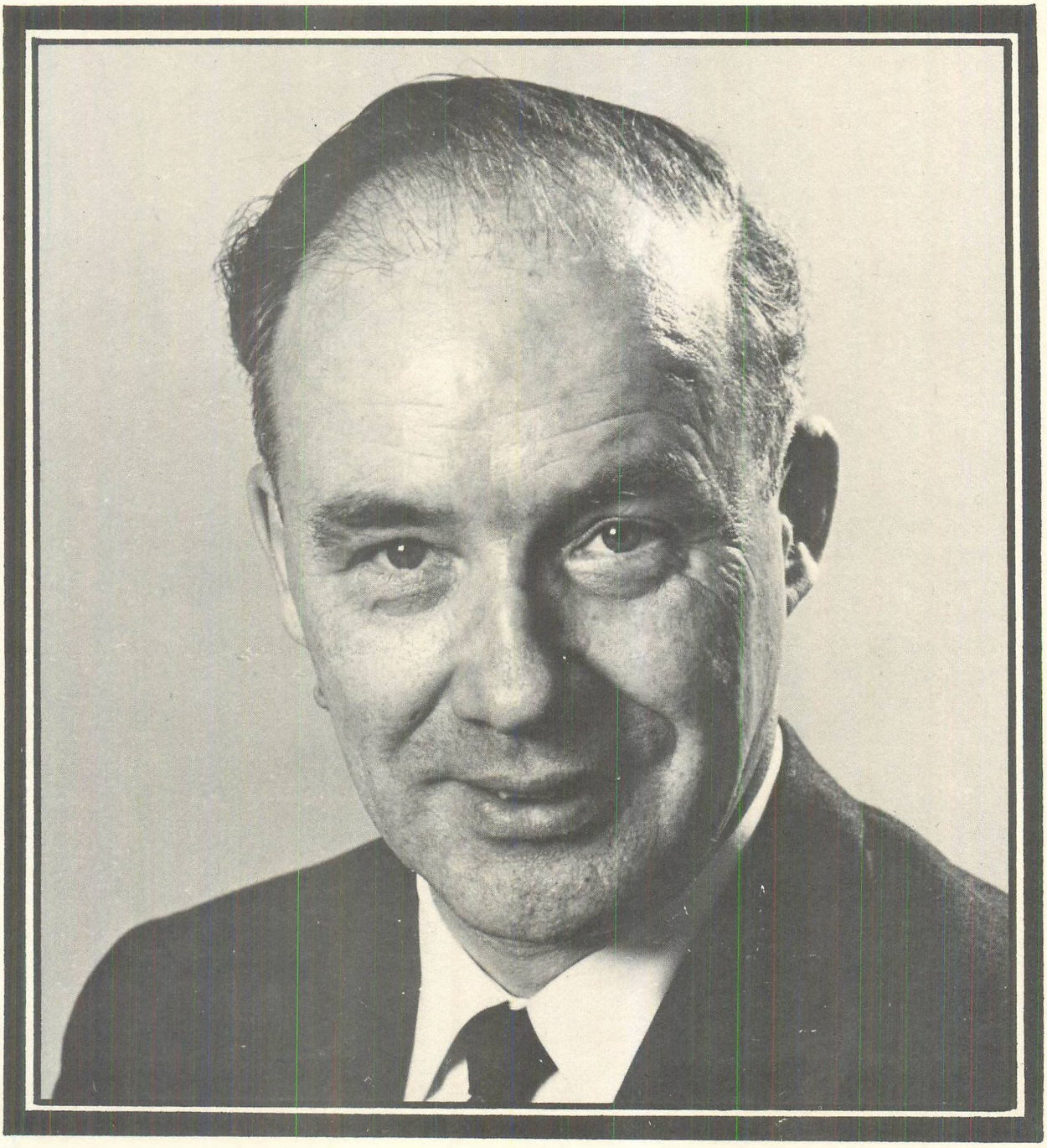
A Canticle for P. SCHUYLER MILLER



P. Schuyler Miller 1912 · 1974

By SAM MOSKOWITZ

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INTRODUCTION

When I was doing the series of articles for Amazing Stories that eventually were collected as Seekers of Tomorrow, I needed 30 days, involving most of my evenings and weekends, to do the research and write each piece, which averaged 5,000 words or so in length. The death of P. Schuyler Miller and the final deadline of the earliest issue of Analog that the biographical obituary could be fitted into, left me with one complete weekend to accomplish the job. I had been recommended to Ben Bova by L. Sprague de Camp, and the length limitation given me was 2,000 words. Working from the top of my head, I could have done it in four hours, but I felt that Miller deserved better.

I spent 26 hours over the weekend, researching, rereading his works, calling his sister on the phone and doing the writing. I had contacted his company a few days earlier and gotten whatever information they could feed me. I had to write with extreme care, because there would not be time to extensively rewrite or retype; the copy had to be good enough to go to the printer with hand corrections. The big problem was that, even slighting the tail end of Miller's writing career, I had a 5,500 word piece. Diane King, Associate Editor of Analog, made me a Xerox of my complete copy and I told Ben to cut it down to the 2,000 words needed, but with the understanding that I was going to later use the entire piece elsewhere.

It is my hope to eventually include the article in some future hardcover book, but for the present, I wanted to bring it out soon enough after the publication of the shorter version in Analog so that the entire thing had some relevance. To squeeze it into Analog's February 1975 issue at all, Ben had to substitute it for The Reference Library column, and the hidden cost to me was a rave review of my Doubleday book The Crystal Man which was discarded to make room for it.

There are fascinating aspects of Miller's association with science fiction that are little known, and I wanted to put them on record. His influence as both a writer and a fan of science fiction was greater than is generally realized. The emphasis here is entirely on his science fiction achievement. His contributions to archeology and natural history has not been covered, though so much of those interests are woven into his science fiction that it might prove fruitful to do so in a special study.

It is the continuing regret of any historian and literary critic that too often the people they write about, whom they like, are no longer around to read what was said about them. I regret it particularly in Miller's case, and accept it as an emotional price to be paid when writing about some of the people who play a role in the unfolding panorama of scientifictional events.

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By SAM MOSKOWITZ

The 21st World Science Fiction Convention in Washington, D.C., on September 1, 1963, gave Peter Schuyler Miller a Special Award for The Reference Library, his book review column in Analog Science Fact & Fiction, which he had run without a break since its October, 1951, issue. The award was acknowledgement that the column was the most respected and influential in the science fiction world. It also underscored the image the readers had of Miller as a critic, interpreter and reviewer of science fiction, ignoring his role in the early history of magazine science fiction and his fascinating involvement in the events that marked prelude to our modern era.

When he died of a heart attack at the Blennerhassett Island Site of the excavations of the West Virginia State Archeological Society on October 12, 1974, that limited view of Miller's achievements had been further reinforced by another 11 years of reviews. Miller was in attendance at the annual convention of that body in Parkersburg, West Virginia, when he died. Most of his adult life, archeology had been one of his fiercest passions and this interest was strongly reflected in much of his science fiction.

Somewhat ironically, the man who handed him the award for his outstanding work in The Reference Library was Isaac Asimov, who in 1974 would edit an autobiographical anthology Before the Golden Age, reprinting Miller's novelette Tetrahedra of Space as one of the 28 early stories that most influenced his writing career. Up until the early forties, P. Schuyler had been a "name" science fiction writer, with a rich style that sometimes, in his own words, "shouts on paper." Some of his stories are acknowledged classics of science fiction, and what he wrote and why he wrote the way he did will go a long way towards revealing his attitudes as a critic.

P. Schuyler Miller was born on a 100-year-old farm located between the towns of Melrose and Schaghticoke (He was buried in Schaghticoke, October 18, 1974), the east side of the Hudson River in upper Rensselaer County, New York, on February 21, 1912. His mother, Edith Figgis, was English, her parents having been born on the Isle of Guernsey, and his father, Philip Miller, was Dutch. They had met when the father was working as a chemist for the New York City Water Department and the mother teaching grade school in Brooklyn, N.Y. His father boasted a distinguished ancestry, having been decended from Major General Philip John Schuyler who defeated Burgoyne at Saratoga in the Revolutionary War, and Peter Schuyler, the earliest governor of the State of New York.

The first 12 years of his life was spent on the farm and since both his mother and his father were well educated there were a great many books around the house, including Jules Verne's Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, The Mysterious Island and Around the World in Eighty Days. H. Rider Haggard was represented by She, and the Tom Swift series was readily available. He was not a mixer, so reading became a great part of his entertainment.

The big breakthrough came in 1924, when his father had secured a job with General Electric at Schenectady, and the family was arranging to move to that city's suburb of Scotia. While in Schenectady with his father, who was making arrangements for the move, he was given 25 cents for lunch and, looking for a place to eat, he spotted the cover of the August 1924 issue of Science and Invention.

Mars was to approach within 34 million miles of Earth on August 22, 1924. The editor and publisher of Science and Invention was none other than Hugo Gernsback, who would issue the first science fiction magazine Amazing Stories with the date of April, 1926. On the cover, painted by Howard V. Brown, was a dramatic visualization of what has since come to be known as Gernsback 's Martian.

The Gernsback Martian had a human-shaped head, with an elephant-trunk nose, separating two prehensile eye stalks, bordered by gigantic furred ears, set atop a mammoth chest cage and held upright on pipestem legs. To add whip topping to the delicacy, there was a green ray gun in the Martian's hand, blasting a rock apart, flying saucers floating in position overhead and a spiral Martian building in the background. As if all this wasn't delectable enough, the cover was printed in gold!

The biological nomenclature of the Martian was explained in detail by Hugo Gernsback, himself, in a Frank R. Paul-illustrated "non-fiction" piece titled Evolution on Mars.

All this might have been conceded to be imaginatively educational, except that the eighth installment of a nine-part science fiction novel, The Man on the Meteor by Ray Cummings, was in progress. It concerned an earthman, named Nemo, who awakes to find himself on a meteor which is part of the rings of Saturn. He throws his lot in with one of the warring humanoid races, learns how to breathe under water and ride on the back of dolphins into battle. Cummings, the author of The Girl in the Golden Atom, was then one of the most popular of all science fiction authors. Additionally, there was a short story in the "Dr. Hackensaw's Secrets" series written by businessman Clement Fezandie, about a machine that would permit you to dream anything you wished, by playing a record of the "life" or "adventure" desired. In this one, Secret of the Dream Machine, the dreamer travels back into the past to 1776, visits Benjamin Franklin, but finds the old man unreceptive to the idea of the telegraph, radio or other electrical inventions. Just for kickers, there was an illustrated article on the scientific feasibility of death rays.

The magazine sold for 25 cents, and young Miller went hungry that day!

Showing early resourcefulness, he found that the Schenectady library had all the back issues of Science and Invention with the opening installments of The Man on the Meteor!

It wasn't long before he discovered Argosy All-Story Weekly at the house of a friend, and with the March 21, 1925 issue beginning Ralph Milne Farley's The Radio Beasts (second in a series of novels about the planet Venus written under a pen name by Roger Sherman Hoar, a man who would become the Senator from the State of Wisconsin), added that to his list of "must" reading, beginning weekly

purchase with the June 26, 1926, number starting The Radio Planet.

From Science and Invention, he learned that Hugo Gernsback was going to issue Amazing Stories, and was literally waiting for it when it was delivered to the newsstands. Weird Tales ran science fiction nearly every issue and he began to buy it at first sporadically and then regularly. It was a story in Weird Tales, The Atomic Invaders by Edmond Hamilton, in the February 1927 issue, that fired within him the desire to write.

He went straight at it, virtually plaigerizing the plot line of a civilization from an electron revolving around an atom in a grain of sand expanding up into our world, and not satisfied with that, expanding into the macro-universe of which ours is but an atom. The story, titled Visitors from Infinity, was never sold, but it was eventually published in Cosmology, the journal of the International Scientific Association, of which Miller was a member, with a lengthy confession of its derivative nature.

A brilliant student, he graduated high school in 1926 at the age of fifteen and a half, and was valedictorian of his class. The fact that other students were older than him made it difficult to create friendships. The only other child in the family was his sister Mary Elizabeth, who was seven years younger. Though she was bright, duplicating his achievement of becoming valedictorian at her high school graduating class when her time came, and they hit it off well, the difference in ages and interests left him a lonely boy.

He entered Union College in Schenectady, working toward a B.S. in chemistry. Part of his required college reading was Plato's Timaeus and Critias, presenting the fragmentary story of the existance and destruction of the mythical continent of Atlantis. The result was a long novelette titled Through the Vibrations, in which the theory of simultaneous existance of worlds on different vibrational levels is expounded, and the protagonists enter another plane where Atlantis exists in gigantic underground diggings. The vibrational theory was diffuse, but the long description of deserted, completely automated cities, operating though humans apparently no longer required them, was a distinct prelude to stories by Edwin Balmer and Philip Wylie, Don A. Stuart, Warner Van Lorne and Arthur C. Clarke, based on a similar premise, which would strike such a responsive chord in later readers. The story was submitted to the 78-year-old editor of Amazing Stories, T. O'Conor Sloane and accepted, but would not be published until the May 1931 issue (Sloane, who frequently kept stories up to five years before publishing them, edited Amazing Stories up until the age of 86). For that reason, a later story would beat it into print.

Hugo Gernsback, who had lost control of Amazing Stories in 1929, had started two other science fiction magazines, Science Wonder Stories and Air Wonder Stories. To create reader interest and encourage new writers, he created a cover story contest in the February 1930 issue of the latter. Artis Frank R. Paul had painted a scene on an obviously alien planet, showing dozens of strange looking "men" in anti-gravity flyers, emerging from dome-covered craters. In the background, a hovering vessel, shaped like a great pair of spectacles, lent a bizarre touch to a landscape that showed two "satellites," and a spiral-shaped building. There were four cash prizes, and the first prize was $150 in gold. The stories had to be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length, Gernsback bought all rights and entries had to be made by March 5, 1930.

Out of 500 submissions, P. Schuyler Miller's The Red Plague won first prize. Still at college, residing at 302 So. Ten Broeck St., Scotia, N.Y., Miller saw his first story in print in the July 1930 Wonder Stories (which had absorbed Air Wonder Stories), with the editorial comment that it was "one of the best stories we have received since the inception of our magazines." It was more of a well-written plot synopsis for a novel than a short story. The earth is attacked by a substance carried on a meteor which absorbs liquid, transforming the areas it covers into uninhabitable desert. If it spreads, it will destroy all life on Earth. Astronomers note that the Martian polar caps are expanding and feel that a race there has solved the problem. A space ship, constructed on a crash program, travels there and obtains the secret from the Martians in exchange for the atomically powered engines of the Earthmen.

The appearance of Miller's home address in Wonder Stories caused him to be contacted by the Science Correspondence Club, which had been launched in May, 1930, "for the furtherance of science and its dissemination among the layment of the world and the final betterment of humanity." One of the founders of the organization was Raymond A. Palmer, who had launched his professional career only one month earlier than Miller with The Time Ray of Jandra in the June 1930 Wonder Stories. He solicited from Miller for the August 1930 issue of the Science Correspondence Club Organ an article titled The Psychology of Fear, which asked the members to cooperate in contributing examples of situations that inspired the emotion of fear, as part of a study conducted by Dr. Ernest M. Lignon, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Union College.

The 18-year-old Miller was fascinated by the concept of science fiction fans joining forces to advance the cause of science, and became very active in the relatively new organization. Within a short time he was made its secretary and worked hard to solicit memberships and contributions for its publication. The name of the group was changed to the International Scientific Association and the title of its official organ to Cosmology. When, in late 1931, the association almost foundered due to its inability to collect dues, Miller bought a $17.50 life membership to give it enough finances to tide it over. In addition to his own articles and fiction, through the science fiction author R.F. Starzl, P. Schuyler Miller was instrumental in securing Willy Ley's first contributions to an American publication, a series of three articles on rocketry and the German Rocket Association appearing in Cosmology from December, 1931, to April, 1932, which achievement saw him shift from secretary to Foreign Director in March, 1932.

Miller made two particularly warm friendships with fellow members and correspondents: Aubrey M. MacDermott, who at different times had served as editor of Cosmology and as president of the East Bay Scientific Association in Oakland, Calif., and Walter L. Dennis, contributor to Cosmology, who, as a resident of Chicago, would in 1935 assist in the formation of the Chicago Science Fiction League Chapter and its official organ, The Fourteen Leaflet.

Miller's influence in the International Scientific Association grew in direct proportion to his success as an author. The second story of his to appear, Dust of Destruction in the February, 1931 Wonder Stories, was given the cover of the issue. It was a remarkably well written work. A ray from the moon is extirminating life on Earth. A space ship with atomic engines

powered by uranium (atomic energy was a foregone conclusion in almost all of the early Miller's works), takes a group of survivors to the moon, where they locate and destroy the ray projector. The plot was old even then, but the science, dialogue, pace of the story, the imaginative scenes described inside the moon (possibly inspired by H.G. Wells' First Men in the Moon), the characterization of the criminal "Red" Brockton and the nature of the self-sacrifice that saves the Earth, was a virtuoso performance for so young an author and would read well even today in reprinting.

The promise obvious in Dust of Destruction was realized almost immediately in a brilliant and poignant short story,"The Man From Mars," which appeared in the Summer 1931 Wonder Stories Quarterly. In the story, a seeming side-show freak billed as "The Man From Mars" turns out to be the real thing, waiting for an embryo to incubate in a concealed space ship, before she returns to Mars. Reprinted in the anthology From Off This World edited by Leo Margulies and Oscar J. Friend (Merlin, 1949), this is a true masterpiece.

By this time Miller's first sale had finally appeared in Amazing Stories, and a sequel, Cleon of Yzdral, presented in the July 1931 issue. Like its predecessor, it fairly exuded the stylistic essences of A. Merritt, one of P. Schuyler Miller's idols. So much so that editor Sloane made a point of mentioning it in his blurb. But this story presents the viewpoint of Cleon, King of Atlantis, and gives the facts about what has happened to the people of the deserted cities and ends with a note of hope that resonators, devices left behind by the "first" Earth scientists, may prove the salvation of their civilization. Essentially, Through the Vibrations and Cleon of Yzdral are the same story told from two different aspects, and the whole is greater than either of the parts.

Miller would follow it in the September 1931 Amazing Stories with The Arrhenius Horror. Clearly patterned after A. Merritt's The Metal Emperor which Miller had read in Science and Invention (October 1927 to August 1928), it told of life forms taking the shape of crystals, multiplying on radium and silica found on Earth, with their menacing spread finally checked by daring and imaginative explorers. The Tetrahedra of Space, which received the cover of the November 1931 Wonder Stories (the first issue to appear on slick paper), was a repetition of the same, with mountains of excess verbiage, but was partially redeemed by a system of communicating and rationalizing with an alien mind presented at the story's end, which clearly preceded some of the types of stories that John W. Campbell featured in Astounding Science Fiction during the fifties and sixties. By the time Miller had written Red Flame of Venus for the September 1932 Wonder Stories, editor David Lasser was giving him the "Kiss of Death" by opening the blurb with the lines, "The fans of A. Merritt, who repeatedly call for more of his stories, will glory in this colorful and exciting tale of Mr. Miller."

Yet, while Lasser was giving Miller the far-from-subtle "needle," he was guilty of backing away from a type of story submitted to him that was utterly daring for the pulps of the period. Pulp magazines eschewed sex, religion, race (except for the heathen Chinee and stereotyped Stephen Fetchit-type Negroes), politics, anything in opposition to the Christian ethic or morality, particularly the concept that the evildoer can emerge triumphant and the forces of law and order lose. In correspondence with his International Scientific Association friends, Aubrey McDermott and Walter L. Dennis, Miller had come up with a character to be called Black Lem Gulliver,

who, an up-and-coming space pilot, crashes a new ship for salvage and becomes, by choice, a vicious outlaw associating with the foulest rabble of three planets. In Red Spot on Jupiter, published in Wonder Stories, July 1931, under the pen name of Dennis McDermott (derived from the last names of Walter Dennis and Aubrey McDermott), Miller has Black Lem Gulliver, on his way to prison, kill an assortment of guards, even those kind to him, and make his escape in a police ship from the jungle area near the Red Spot on Jupiter, where the most debased criminals are left to be either destroyed by each other or their environment. With a heap of the ruthlessly killed littering the planets, the story ends: "...the lone eye of the great Red Spot winks applause to Lemuel Gulliver, Black Lem of Earth, who has met his world of giants and has won!"

A sequel, Duel on the Asteroid, appearing as a collaboration of P. Schuyler Miller and Dennis McDermott in Wonder Stories for January, 1932, brings one of Gulliver's criminal friends, Red Tonti of the moon, into the series with an episode on that lunar body reminiscent of Dust of Destruction. Gulliver, fleeing in a police ship, runs out of fuel, descends to an asteroid on which another ship has crashed, kills a Venusian occupant in a duel and is so badly rayed in the process that he sears off his own arm. He nurses back to health a girl he has mistakenly rayed down, then lures the patrol ship carrying Red Tonti as a prisoner down to the asteroid to rescue him. With Tonti he seizes control of the ship, drops the space patrol men down into the Jupiterian hell, and the story ends as the girl he has nursed back to health chooses to leap after them. Both Lem Gulliver stories are told in the second person, and the last one is by far the best.

The reaction was not long in coming and the biggest protest came from Raymond A. Palmer, whose letter led off the readers' column of the March 1932 Wonder Stories. "I think there are enough bad characters running around in real life without putting them in our fiction," he said. "I don't object to having them in fiction, but I would like to see them properly hanged when they have served their purpose in the story. Here are Lem Gulliver and Red Tonti again victorious over the forces of right. I thought the authors had received enough warning from the readers to cut it out."

David Lasser asked P. Schuyler Miller to whitewash Lem Gulliver in the next story, but was met with refusal. That ended the series excepting for a parting shot by Miller which appeared in Science Fiction Digest, one of the earliest of the science fiction fan magazines, edited by Mortimer Weisinger and Julius Schwartz who were later to end up as editors of Superman and Batman comics. In a page giving an outline of the career of Black Lem Gulliver in the September 1933 issue, Miller concluded: "Whatever may have been the motive that stained Lem Gulliver's hands with blood and made him the ruthless scourge of space, it is hidden by the evil he has wrought. Black Lem Gulliver must pay!"

But Gulliver was not all that Miller had been challenged on. Willy Ley was fed up with Miller's repetitive use of crystalline or silicon life forms, though he admittedly greatly enjoyed Tetrahedra From Space. He then presented scientific arguments as to the impossibility of life in silicon form in the January 1931 Wonder Stories, which were replied to by Miller in the next issue at considerable length.

Actually, that phase in Miller's writing life was nearing a close. His major

objective in intensive writing had been to pay for his M.S. in chemistry at Union College and he had achieved that. This was enough to get him a job, with the assistance of his father, in the research laboratory of General Electric.

The last flowering of this early period of his writing was the magnificently moving The Forgotten Man of Space in the April 1933 Wonder Stories. A prospector is abandoned on Mars by his companion, his life is saved by intelligent, rabbit-like creatures. For 20 years he lives a spartan life among them. Finally, other men come. It seems he may be rescued, but the men will destroy the Martian creatures and their food supply to secure precious ore. He blows up their ship and kills himself to prevent it. Revised with the title changed to Forgotten, August W. Derleth included this one in his anthology Strange Ports of Call (Pellegrini & Cudahy, 1948).

The next few years Miller's production was light and sometimes frivolous. He wrote an adroit humorous tale, Jeremiah Jones, Alchemist, for the May 1933 Amazing Stories, about a scientist that duplicated Dark Ages formulae with modern science; The Atom Smasher in the January 1934 Amazing Stories was a brief tale noteworthy for an anticipatory description of the actual appearance of early atomic explosions, so precise as to be uncanny; The Pool of Life, Amazing Stories, October, 1934, read like something that had been accepted years before, with its close resemblance to A. Merritt's famed novel The Moon Pool, only in Miller's story the pool itself is a living, intelligent entity. Otherwise, he seemed to contribute for the fun of it to the fan magazine Science Fiction Digest, including such things as the previously mentioned life of Black Lem Gulliver, an autobiographical sketch of himself, a long satirical frolic titled Alicia in Blunderland, under the pen name of Nihil (which ran in installments from June, 1933 to April, 1934), and utilizing the framework of Alice in Wonderland rang in scores of famous science fiction authors and pulp magazine characters from Jules Verne and H.G. Wells through to Hugo Gernsback, The Shadow and Buck Rogers.

One particularly interesting item was his short-short story Ultra-Violet, which led off the August 1933 Science Fiction Digest. Amazing Detective Tales, a Hugo Gernsback companion to Wonder Stories featuring science fiction detection stories, had sponsored a cover contest in its June 1930 issue. The cover by Jno Ruger showed a horrified woman holding a vial in one hand and dropping a hypodermic from the other. First prize for stories 500 words in length was $25.00 in gold. P. Schuyler Miller won first prize, though the magazine was sold and its policy changed to straight detective fare before the winners could be announced or published. In the story, a woman drug addict, seeking to obtain a dose of morphine, which she knows is in a blue-green container, injects herself with a dose of poison accidentally, for the laboratory is lit by ultra violet which has the effect of changing label colors. There was also a rather difficult short-short story titled The Wreck in Space, about the unpredictable collision of a space ship with floating debris of a comet that first deposited life spores on Earth milleniums before. This appeared in the June 1934 issue, with the name of the publication now changed to Fantasy Magazine.

Possibly his most unusual contribution to Fantasy Magazine was his participation in a round-robin story, 17 chapters long, written by 16 authors, each story complete in itself, yet carrying on the theme of the novel. Miller's chapter Number 14 was titled The Fate of the Neptunians and was bound in the August 1934 issue. It dealt with the launching of the fleet of the Neptunians to participate in a solar war, and the fatal adventures near the red spot of Jupiter for two ships of that fleet. The

entire novel was entitled Cosmos, and other contributors besides Miller were Ralph Milne Farley, David H. Keller, M.D., Arthur J. Burke, Bob Olsen, Francis Flagg, John W. Campbell, Jr., Rae Winters (pen name of Ray Palmer), Otis Adelbert Kline and E. Hoffman Price in collaboration, Abner J. Galela, Raymond A. Palmer under his own name, A. Merritt, J. Harvey Haggard, Edward E. Smith, L.A. Eshbach, Eando Binder and Edmund Hamilton.

All these appearances in the amateur publication were leading up to what many consider P. Schuyler Miller's greatest single contribution to science fiction, the short novel The Titan. Miller had written what may have been the first important work of science fiction told from the viewpoint of the Martian. His earlier work Cleon of Yzdral had been a preliminary attempt in this direction. The Titan was rejected by every science fiction market, but not because of its approach. The story described an exotic Martian civilization whose ruling class traveled in powered carts because their legs were so shriveled they could not walk on them. Through decadence and inbreeding the rulers were incapable of manufacturing enough blood to keep themselves alive. To survive, they hold in bondage a class of blood givers, who also do all the work. At birth, a tiny platinum valve is grafted into their throats and they carry with them a tiny pump, tube and sterilizer to provide blood to the masters at required intervals. Those women of aristocratic breeding who obtain blood from the lower race have no compunction in engaging in sexual relations with the male donors. These elements are what kept the story out of the science fiction magazines of the period.

The plot line involves Korul, head of the blood givers, who falls in love with one of the daughters of the masters. In the background of the story is the Star Beast, a monstrous creature that fell from the stars, who has been caged as an exhibit for the past forty equivalent Earth years. The Star Beast is actually an astronaut from Earth who crashed on Mars, and the circumstances whereby he becomes involved with the Martian lovers and joins the revolt against the planet's rulers are related with a flavor and richness rarely encountered in science fiction.

Unable to sell the story, Miller had given it to William H. Crawford in exchange for a life subscription to a proposed semi-professional publication to be titled Unusual Stories. A four-page circular announcing the magazine and printing the opening illustration and first page of The Titan went out in late 1933. An advance segment of Unusual Stories, featuring The Titan on the cover, but with no portion inside, was distributed with the date of March, 1934. Crawford then sidetracked Unusual Stories and began a new title, Marvel Tales, and The Titan was serialized there, beginning with the Winter 1934 number. Though the magazine had a circulation numbering only in the hundreds, the reaction was electrifying, and in fan magazines and by word of mouth, readers spread the merits of the story. The magazine collapsed with the issue of Summer 1935, with the final installment of The Titan unpublished. All sales had been by subscription, but in 1936 Crawford made an abortive attempt to get another issue of the magazine on the newsstands, even setting some of it in type, and failed. He circularized its projected publication as a $1.00 book under the auspices of The Visionary Publishing Company in 1939, but did not get enough advance orders to justify publication. It was not until L.A. Eshbach, whose work had also appeared in Crawford's magazine, issued a handsome, hardcover collection of Miller's work in 1952, under the imprint of Fantasy Press, with The Titan as the title story and a superlative book jacket by Hannes Bok, that the world finally got to read the ending of The Titan.

As the depression deepened, General Electric began to lay off men, and Miller received the Pink Slip because he did not have a Ph.D. Jobs for any type of chemists were scarce, so he did graduate work in public relations, physics, psycholigy and education at Columbia, New York City. This gave him the credentials to go to work for the school system of Schenectady in a public relations capacity, including work with the Schenectady Museum, which he doted on because of his interest in archeology.

The death of his father from cancer in 1936 made him, at the age of 24, the main support of his family. This responsibility, which saw his sister wed in 1941 to Richard V. Drake, obtained through to the death of his mother in 1948, and was one reason he never married.

The Crysalis was his first sale to Astounding Stories (April 1936), then edited by F. Orlin Tremaine. It was a very effective short story of amateur archeologists who find the body of a woman preserved in ancient clay, which turns out to be the coccoon out of which hatches some monstrous prehistoric insect. One year later in Sands of Time (Astounding Stories, April, 1937), a man travels 60 million years back in time to leave impressions and creatures for his archeologist friend to find. In a sequel, Coils of Time (Astounding Science-Fiction, May, 1939), John W. Campbell, now editor of the magazine, printed the doings of that same talented time-traveler friend 60 million years in the future! From that point until 1944, the bulk of Miller's material appeared in Astounding Science-Fiction or Unknown.

The most notable digression occurred when a friend of his, John D. Clark, Ph.D., with whom he had collaborated on A Probable Outline of Conan's Career (published in The Hyborean Age by Robert E. Howard, LANY Cooperative Publications, 1938), introduced him to L. Sprague de Camp. The two of them dreamt up an ingenious concoction titled Genus Homo about a busload of people trapped in a tunnel cave-in and awakening in the future when apes are the leading intelligent race on earth and human beings are little more than legends. They couldn't sell it to Campbell, and were delighted to settle for a half-cent a word from Fred Pohl's Super Science Stories, where it was published complete in its March 1941 number. However, Pierre Boulle, author of The Bridge Over the River Kwai, utilizing the identical theme in his 1963 book Planet of the Apes, parlayed it into success and sums beyond the dream of avarice.

Campbell used to like an occasional book review in Astounding, at first writing them himself, and then getting names as illustrious as Robert A. Heinlein, L. Sprague de Camp, Anthony Boucher and Willy Ley to contribute. When he received two of Vardish Fisher's books, The Golden Rooms and Darkness and the Deep, he gave them to P. Schuyler Miller to review because archeological implications were implicit in their themes. He liked the results so well that further reviews by Miller appeared as frequently as six issues a year up through October, 1951, when they became a monthly feature.

Miller talked of knuckling down to work on fiction again, but his new stories thereafter were few and infrequent. After his mother died, he no longer had particular ties in Scotia and in 1952 accepted a position as a technical writer for the Fisher Scientific Company in Pittsburgh, a company that manufactured and sold 50,000 products including clinical and industrial chemicals, laboratory furniture, and test tubes. Richard Haughton, director of advertising of that company, with whom he worked, characterized him as a "brilliant technical writer, who was repeatedly offered executive promotions to head a team of senior technical writers, and just as repeatedly refused." The precise care required in technical writing had an adverse affect on him. As far

back as 1961 he complained: "My reading speed has slowed down tremendously, with daily letter-by-letter technical proofreading of prices, catalog numbers and dimensions, and I'm hard put to get in the stuff for Campbell and do a little archeological reading besides."

His company and its employees honored him with a special service following his deat. His passing was undoubtedly the talk of the members of as many as a dozen archeological and natural history societies. But in science fiction he has achieved that special type of immortality which the field holds for those who have contributed to and helped create the history of a unique branch of literature.

Sam Moskowitz - 1975