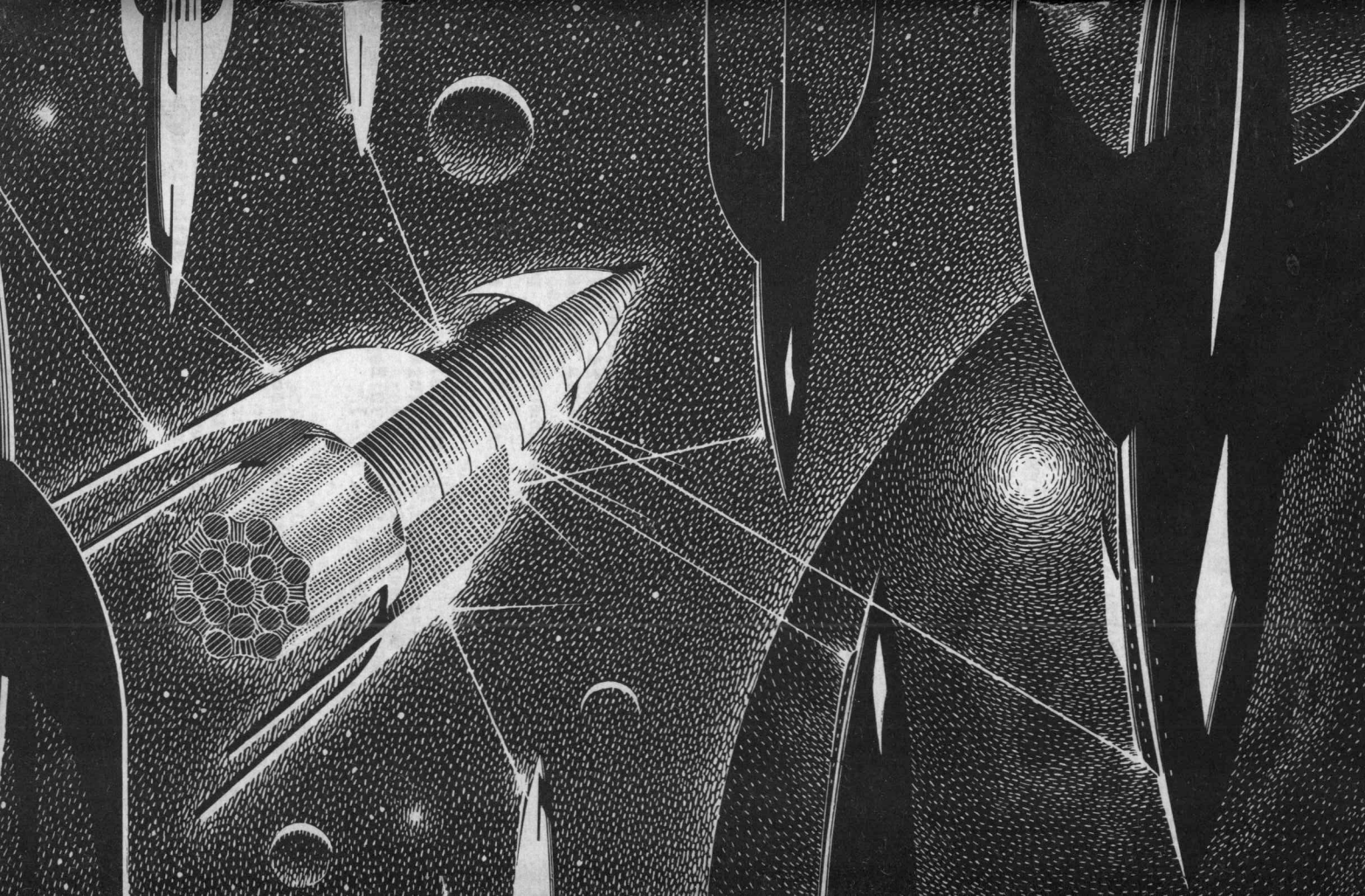

INSIDE NUMBER SIXTEEN (WHOLE NUMBER FIFTY): SEPTEMBER 1956

# inside this issue

Cover by van Dongen
(Originally intended for DIMENSIONS.)



Interior illustrations by Cindy (pages 3,23,61), Jack Gaughan (pages 4,6,8,10,12,32,43,48), Roy Hunt (page 25), Marvin Bryer (page 36), Dan Adkins (pages 49,55).

Cartoons by Miller (page 40), Jenrette (pages 47,73).



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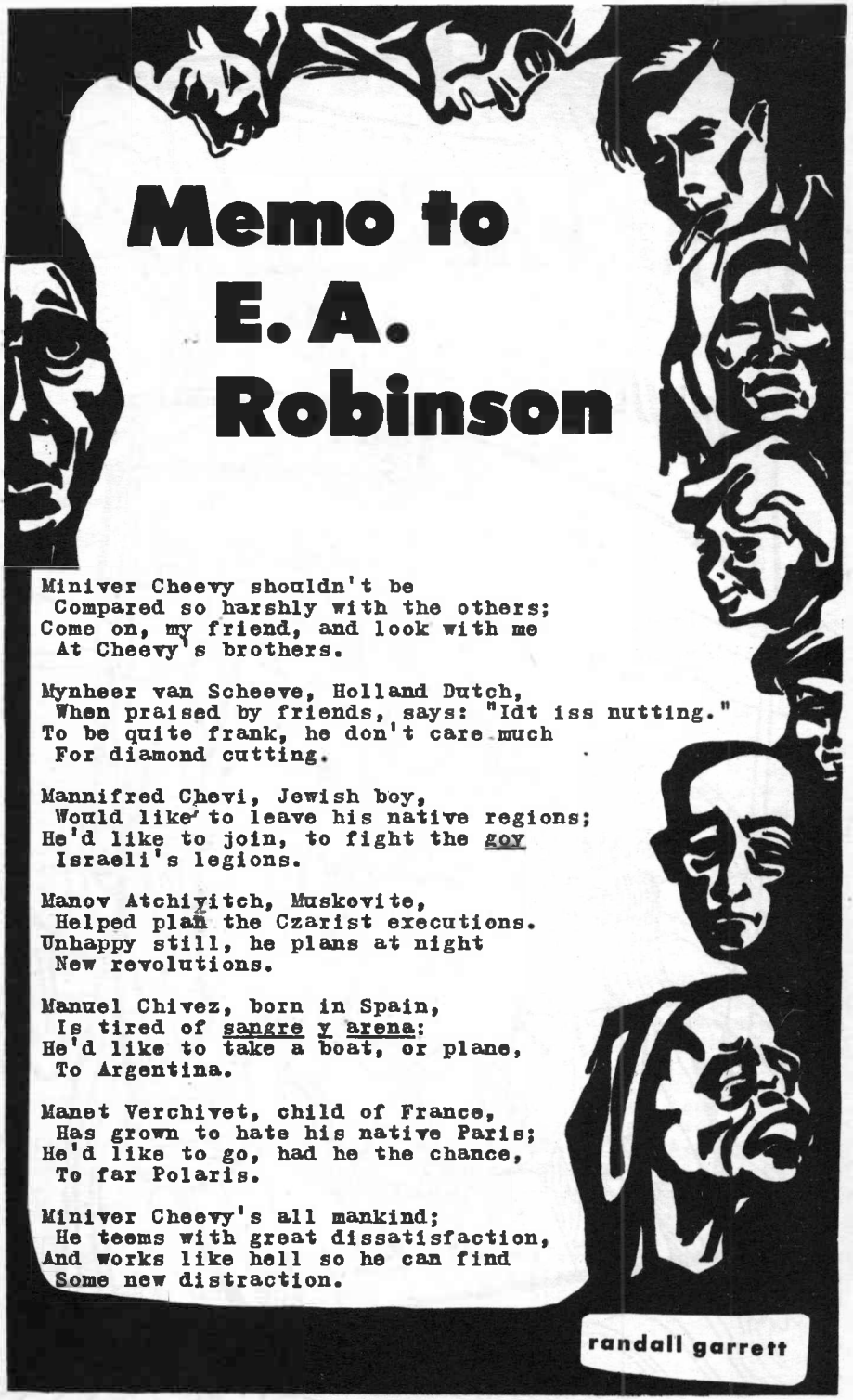


# Memo to E. A. Robinson

Miniver Cheevy shouldn't be
 Compared so harshly with the others;
Come on, my friend, and look with me
 At Cheevy's brothers.

Mynheer van Scheeve, Holland Dutch,
 When praised by friends, says: "Idt iss nutting."
To be quite frank, he don't care much
 For diamond cutting.

Mannifred Chevi, Jewish boy,
 Would like to leave his native regions;
He'd like to join, to fight the goy
 Israeli's legions.

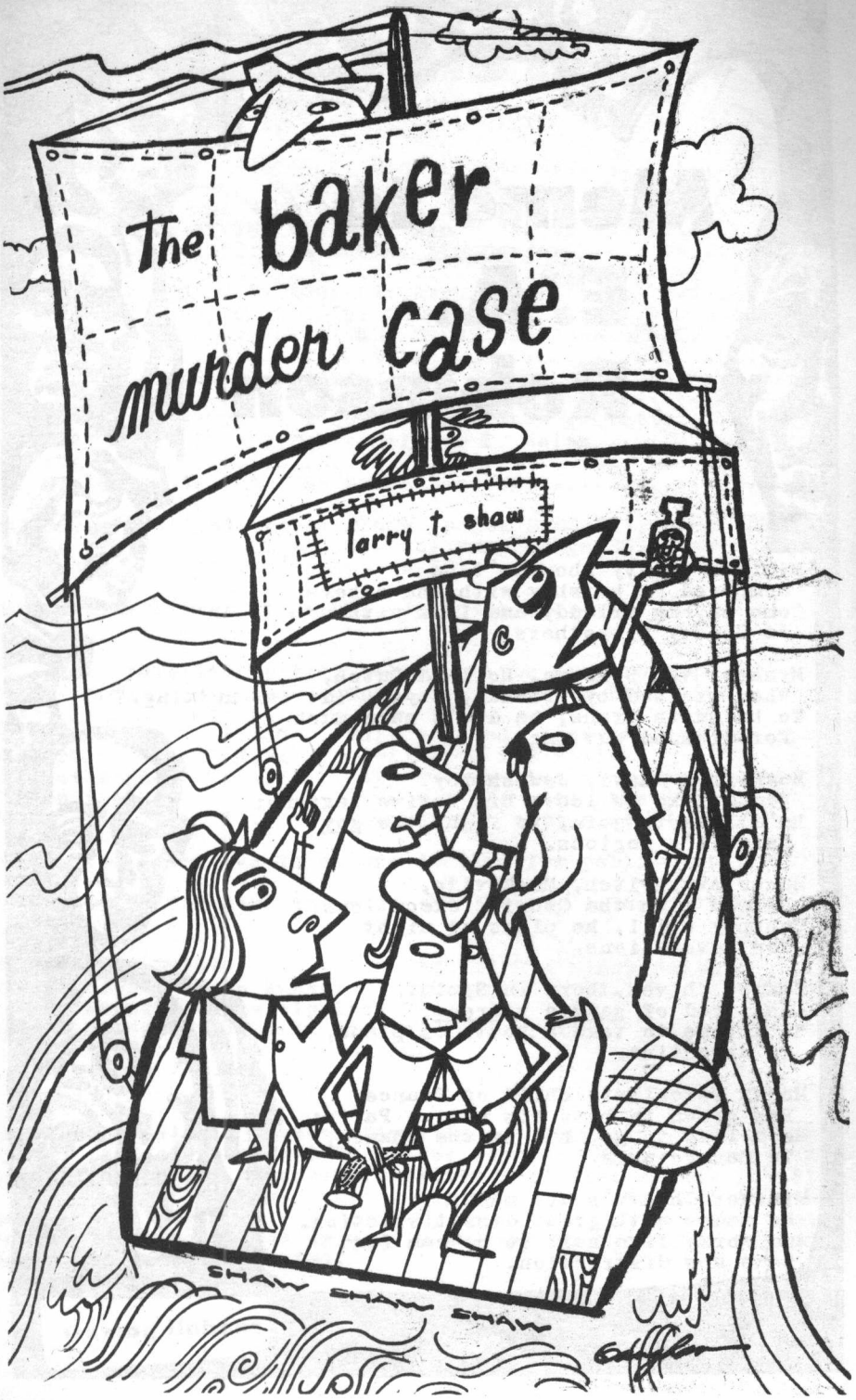
Manov Atchiyitch, Muskovite,
 Helped plan the Czarist executions.
Unhappy still, he plans at night
 New revolutions.

Manuel Chivez, born in Spain,
 Is tired of sangre y arena:
He'd like to take a boat, or plane,
 To Argentina.

Manet Verchivet, child of France,
 Has grown to hate his native Paris;
He'd like to go, had he the chance,
 To far Polaris.

Miniver Cheevy's all mankind;
 He teems with great dissatisfaction,
And works like hell so he can find
 Some new distraction.

randall garrett


The baker murder case
larry t. shaw
SHAW SHAW SHAW

# 1

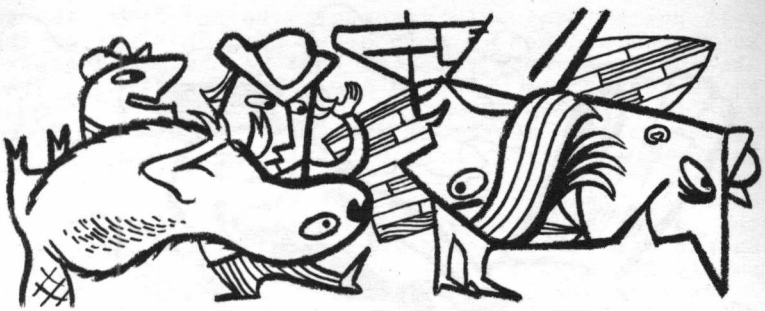
The Note Taker (with quick interest): What's a copper's nark?
The Bystander (inapt at definition): It's a—well, it's a copper's nark, as you might say.

—G. B. Shaw, Pygmalion

Or, to put it another way, a copper snark is a copper snark. And you not only might say this, you must say it. Clues to literary mysteries are found in odd places indeed, but it is perhaps understandable that I would look more closely than usual for them in the works of a man named Shaw; a casual reader of the above quotation might pass it by as a bit of stage-setting humor, but close examination reveals that Mr. Shaw was saying a great deal more than appears on the surface. Consider: why, even in a playscript designed to be read, would he insert that "inapt at definition" unless he particularly wanted to call attention to the definition's extreme aptness? Why the "as you might say" unless he wanted to hint at how much was being said? The literary detective learns to ask himself questions like these, and to keep searching until he finds the answers.

It is my intention to prove that Mr. Shaw, in the exceptionally astute and beautifully subtle manner you would expect of him, was deliberately providing a clue to the truth about one of the greatest literary jokes perpetrated on the reading public since the invention of the stone tablet. I refer, of course, to Lewis Carroll's epic poem, The Hunting of the Snark.*

*The gentle reader is advised to familiarize himself with this work, should he not have read it previously, before continuing with this extremely detailed and exhausting literary discussion.—RS



Well, there's the method of finding fresh ideas—turn the obvious upside down, inside out and hind-side fore.

—H. L. Gold

Mr. Gold is right, of course, and Carroll himself said the same thing. In Sylvie and Bruno Concluded, he caused a character to remark: "Unlimited wealth can be gained by doing things in the wrong way." In Hunting, he demonstrated how this could be accomplished.

To analyze a system, says Korzybski, you must go outside it; you cannot explain it fully using its own language exclusively. The statement can certainly be applied to poetry. On the level of primary elaboration, for instance, Carroll's poetic symbology is readily available to anyone with a middling-well developed sense of nonsense. Hunting is entirely logical once you grant its original premises, and those premises make for a nonsense extravaganza that is brilliant in both conception and execution. Carroll succeeded, by his masterful command of the nonsensical elements, in preventing the discovery by the casual reader of the level of secondary elaboration. Which, Carroll being what he was, is practically indisputable proof that that secondary level is there.

Going outside of the poem itself, then, to what other narrative form does The Hunting of the Snark have the greatest similarity? No, you don't have to devote years of research to finding the answer, as I did, because I'm going to tell you. It is simple and surprising. The story of the hunting is like nothing so much as a murder mystery, the kind which the reader is given a chance to solve—a "whodunit". The murder, the suspects, the clues, and the intricately tangled plot are all there. The main difference is that Carroll, as might have been expected, simply turned the whole thing hind-side-to: the murder which provides the mystery to be solved does not occur until the very end of the tale, with the aforementioned clues, suspects and other essentials coming first! (1) Careful examination, however, should provide us not only with further proof of this hypothesis, but also with information as to who the culprit must have been. Watson, the game is afoot!

## 3

And they went to sea in a sieve.

—Edward Lear

What, first of all, is the significance of the Snark itself? What, for that matter, do we actually know about the Snark? A search of the poem will avail you not at all. Car-

(1) A device to which popular writers have returned in alarming numbers in recent years.

roll was an admirable reporter: he put down the facts as he knew them and not a whit more. He didn't say anything about the Snark; he only reported what he had heard others say. And in this case his sources are—leave us face it—far from unusually reliable.

The Bellman describes the Snark as having a meagre and hollow but crisp taste, a habit of getting up late, a slowness in taking a jest, a fondness for bathing machines, and ambition. But the Bellman had only one notion for crossing the ocean or for anything else. (2) If all he knew about Snarks was what he learned from his bell, I think we can safely discount his statements.

For further proof of this, take his apparently confident idea that "common Snarks do no manner of harm" and compare it with his descriptions of "each particular batch" in the stanza just preceding. He is certainly discussing common Snarks, not Boojums, when he says that some have feathers and bite, while others have whiskers and scratch. Are scratching and biting "no manner of harm"? I think not. (3)

The Baker contributes the further information that Snarks may be served with greens and are handy for striking a light. But are we to rely on the memory of a man who couldn't even remember his own name, especially when his operating data are supposed to have been supplied by an uncle whose morals, motives, and very existence are—to say the least—suspect? Again, I think not.

It would also be useless to attempt to deduce anything about the Snark from the methods supposed to be used in capturing it. Their enumeration by the forgetful Baker, and hasty approval by the opportunistic Bellman, probably means nothing more than that they were the methods which happened to come immediately to hand. They sound like just about what such a ship would have carried as cargo, anyway.

There is one thing we can say about the Snark, however. It is fairly obvious, although most critics seem to believe exactly the opposite. Nowhere in the poem, be it noted, is it stated that anyone who met with the Boojum would softly and suddenly vanish away. In fact, the Bellman, and presumably the rest of the crew, were surprised and disconcerted to hear that such a fate would befall the poor Baker. No, it was the Baker, and the Baker only, who was in danger of vanishing. I remind you again that Carroll was a good reporter. When he said the Baker would vanish, he did not mean that the Boots or the Banker would; when he said "vanish" he meant just that —the Baker would not be eaten, as some mundane souls insist; he would simply disappear into thin air.

Granting this, and remembering the original premise, we must of course realize that the culprit in the case was not just a disinterested Boojum who happened to appear on the scene at the climax, but a Snark that could turn into a Boojum at will when the circumstances were favorable for his

(2) Anyone who doesn't know what that notion was should be reading the next article.

(3) Of course there is a distinct possibility, which will become apparent soon, that the Bellman was deliberately trying to mislead his crew. This, if true, would lend even greater significance to the suspiciously hasty way in which he glossed over the idea that the Snark was ambitious. Although the Bellman's other statements may have been wild ones, it is undoubtedly correct to attribute ambition to Snarks—even though that ambition is almost certainly a thoroughly degraded one.

contemplated murder of the Baker. That same Snark, our next deduction tells us, could also turn into someone or something that would be accepted as a normal member of the crew. (4) That is the only power that could have made it possible for him to accomplish his foul deed. And that, in the end, is what betrays him.

# 4

On clear days mountains of meaning are
seen
Heaped high on the horizon.
—W. R. Rodgers

One wonders why, in making up the list of the ship's crew, Carroll did not include a Butler. This would, after all, have been doubly appropriate. Not only is a Butler an almost essential character in every traditional whodunit; such a character would also have been an overwhelmingly logical addition to a group all of whose titles (certainly not by coincidence) begin with the letter B. Contrariwise, the omission serves a double purpose. It helps to conceal from the reader the true nature of the story, and (once the vital discovery has been made) it deprives him of that most natural of all suspects, thus making the mystery harder to unravel.

We are left, then, with a plethora of possible murderers, none of whom is a much more likely suspect than the others. All we can do is take each character—those we have the most information about first—and see if we can eliminate all but one.

Let us now consider the Bellman.

Had the Bellman a motive? Well:

"He came a Baker: but owned, when too late
And it drove the poor Bellman half-mad.
He could only bake Bride-cake—for which, I may
state,
No materials were to be had."

This passage points to another peculiar requisite of the whodunit: the blackmailer. The Baker, obviously, had in his possession certain incriminating documents concerning an early and indiscreet marriage of the Bellman's (which had been

(4) For absolute proof that there was a Snark on board, I offer the stanza:

"Then the bowsprit got mixed with the rudder
sometimes
A thing, as the Bellman remarked,
That frequently happens in tropical climes,
When a vessel is, so to speak, 'snarked.'"

Remember, the poem is rigorously logical in its details throughout, but this passage doesn't fit superficially. Do elephant hunters, when they fall afoul of bad luck, speak of themselves as being "elephanted"? No. The Bellman could only have meant that a Snark was actually present, all the time.

successfully annulled and hushed up at the time by his influential family), and this was his way of delivering a subtle threat. And although this was incidental, it also covered up the fact that he was not really a Baker at all, and had come on board the ship only to further his evil extortion scheme. It is highly improbable that a lack of baked goods alone could drive the Bellman, who must have been prepared to withstand an unparalleled number of mental and physical hardships (otherwise he hardly would have undertaken a trip like that at all), "half-mad."

The Bellman, however, did not really become desperate until the landing was made and the actual hunting was about to begin. At this point, the Baker (when he had already harassed the poor Bellman into a complete, and probably dangerous, state of confusion) decided to reveal the facts to everyone present, notwithstanding the hush-money he had been paid. This, of course, is why he interrupted the Baker's tale—actually only prefatory remarks—so often, and why he rushed the crew into the hunt without even finishing his own speech. (This is important, since in his speech, <u>if</u> he were the Snark, he would naturally try to mislead the crew into thinking that someone else—the Baker or another secret enemy—was the Snark.) Instead of finishing his speech, he decided he had to finish off the Baker.

However, he did not succeed—it wasn't necessary. Someone beat him to it. Read the two stanzas beginning, "'There is Thingumbob shouting!' the Bellman said." The Bellman couldn't have dunit; he was out of reach "On the top of a neighboring crag"—and he had plenty of witnesses to prove it.

## 5

Will somebody be coocoo then?
And if so, who?

—Carl Sandburg

Could the Butcher have been a Snark? Here we have, beyond any doubt, a highly suspicious character. Like the Baker, he came under false pretenses: he claimed to be a butcher in order to gain passage, but was afraid to have his abilities in this line put to any sort of test. (He was shocked, however, to find the Beaver already on board; he had an idea that the Beaver was a Scotland Yard man in disguise, and his statement about his limited talents in the butchering department was nicely calculated to leave him an opening in case he had to do the copper in.) When it was time for the hunt to begin, the Butcher "turned nervous"! Yet there is no question of his being <u>afraid</u> of the Snark: he had tried to separate himself from the rest of the company and had failed (and here it begins to appear to the discerning reader that the Beaver really is a Yard man on his trail), but when "A scream, shrill and high, rent the shuddering sky" warning them that "some danger was near," was he afraid that it was a Snark? No, he only "felt queer" because the sound reminded him of "A pencil that squeaks on a slate." And the circumstances become curiouser when he betrays an encyclopedic knowledge of the Jubjub. Snark country, obviously, is Jubjub country as well; a person who was a complete dunce in all other matters (to the point where he trembled at the memory of his schooling) would have learned these things only by living in that country for most of his life—that is, only if he were either a Snark or a Jubjub. And the Butcher was certainly not a Jubjub.

The Butcher could have been a Snark, then. The Butcher could have had any number of motives for the murder. But—the

Butcher was present on the crag with the Bellman when the Baker vanished. Albeit reluctantly, we must also eliminate him as a suspect.

## 6

Proposed: That logic is applicable only in fairyland.

—John W. Campbell, Jr.

What about that Beaver, now? The Bellman is the only one who seemed to know anything about him; but if he did know, he sure wasn't talking! He said that the Beaver had often saved them from wreck, but even he would not have made an excuse as transparent as that if he had not been so muddled by the Baker's demands. It is too much to accept; we are forced to the conclusion that he could have had no reason at all for being there—unless he was a Snark and on murder bent.

Further incriminating information is available to anyone conversant with the natural habits of Beavers:

1. All beavers utterly detest toasted-cheese.
2. The Baker's enemies called him "Toasted-Cheese."
3. The Beaver was the Baker's enemy.

A strong case for the prosecution, this! However, after the Beaver was instructed in Jubjubbery by the Butcher, the two became the best of friends, and "You could never meet either alone." In other words, it is implicit that the Beaver was present with the Bellman and the Butcher when the murder took place—and thus he too is safely removed from the scene of the crime.

## 7

Poltergeists make up the principle type of spontaneous material manifestation.

—Pup-Dog

The Banker is hardly a suspicious character at all; in fact, he is just the innocent type that usually turns out to be the villain in the end. He seemed to be attentive to, even preoccupied with, his business at all times. And that business was not even the Snark-hunt; it was banking. Also, he was supposedly left behind to his fate after being attacked by the Bandersnatch, while the others rushed on ahead. This would put him out of the way so thoroughly that no one could be surprised to have him turn up as the culprit.

His adventure was stranger than it appeared, however. And, while this is really of secondary importance, I would like once more to quote at length. This is what the Bellman and his crew discovered after the Banker's encounter with the frumious Bandersnatch:

"He was black in the face, and they scarcely could trace
The least likeness to what he had been:

While so great was his fright that his waistcoat
turned white—
A wonderful thing to be seen!

To the horror of all who were present that day,
He uprose in full evening dress,
And with senseless grimaces endeavoured to say
What his tongue could no longer express.

Down he sank in a chair—ran his hands through
his hair—
And chanted in mimsiest tones
Words whose utter inanity proved his insanity
While he rattled a couple of bones."

Which is more logical: that the Banker had undergone such a thorough metamorphosis, or that the Bandersnatch (whose habit of doing that very thing is responsible for his name) had carried the Banker away and left some less attractive prize there in his place? Yes, unexpectedly seeing a sample of his favorite diet in that ordinarily Banker-forsaken wilderness, the Bandersnatch deposited his original terror-striken victim. And that victim, when he saw the strange crew appear, decided that his bad dream was over, the audience was entering, and the minstrel show in which he was a blackface endman was about to go on. This explanation disposes of the Banker as a suspect, and it is by far the most logical explanation. (5) Otherwise, where did that chair come from?

## 8

It was as simple as that.

—A. E. van Vogt

The Barrister had gone back to sleep to see how his dream turned out, the maker of Bonnets and Hoods had gone off to try to obtain a patent on his "novel arrangement of bows," and the Billiard-marker had given up his hope of winning everybody's cash and had gone home. That takes care of them.

## 9

How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth?

—Sherlock Holmes

Yes, the Boots did it.

His motive? Return to Carroll's preface, and read the footnote. (6) The Banker constantly complained that his three pair of boots were insufficiently blacked. (7) The Boots, being a Snark, could not possibly be expected to pass this off

(5) The possibility that the Bandersnatch's original victim was actually the Other Professor, transplanted from Sylvie and Bruno, is interesting, but much too complicated to go into here.

(6) And where else—now that you know—would you have expected a man like Carroll to bury his most significant clue?

(7) It should be unnecessary to state that, on the Snark-ship, no materials were to be had for boot-blacking, either.

as a jest. Who can blame him for being annoyed?

The proof is found in the last few stanzas. It is only necessary to follow the action in order. First the Baker announced that he had found a Snark. "Then followed a torrent of laughter and cheers"—because he recognized the Snark as the Boots, who had been with the hunters all the time; it was a good joke on them and the Baker, at least, had a sense of humor. He started to say "It's a Boots!" But—"In the midst of the word he was trying to say In the midst of his laughter and glee"—it happened. And he never even knew that the Snark was a Boojum! It was "only a breeze that went by." With his last breath, the poor Baker gave his companions the only clue they needed, but because of the similarity of the words Boots and Boojum, they never even realized it.

The case is complete.

**10**

However, this is only reasoning.

—Charles Fort

The case is complete, and a very good case it is. The finger-bone of truth points unerringly at the only possible villain, proving once again that the weed of crime bears bitter fruit. Another weirdly complicated set of circumstances has been drained of its last drop of mystery and may now be placed on the shelf—though on the whodunit shelf where it belongs instead of the fantasy shelf where it has reposed until now. But—wait a bit. This whodunit, I hope you have not forgotten, is by Lewis Carroll, the master of the really unexpected Unexpected. Friends, go read the poem again. Notice how perfectly the Baker himself fits the Bellman's description of the Snark. The Bellman wasn't as dumb as he let on, you know, and naturally he would want to let the Baker know he had discovered his true identity. And if the Baker was the embryo Snark was the embryo Boojum, he—and only he—would softly and suddenly vanish away when Baker became Snark became Boojum, wouldn't he?

Hmmm?

(This article, originally intended for publication in DIMENSIONS, courtesy Harlan Ellison.)

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Minor premise: many fanzines occupy much space
Conclusion: MANY FANZINES FOR SALE CHEAP.....

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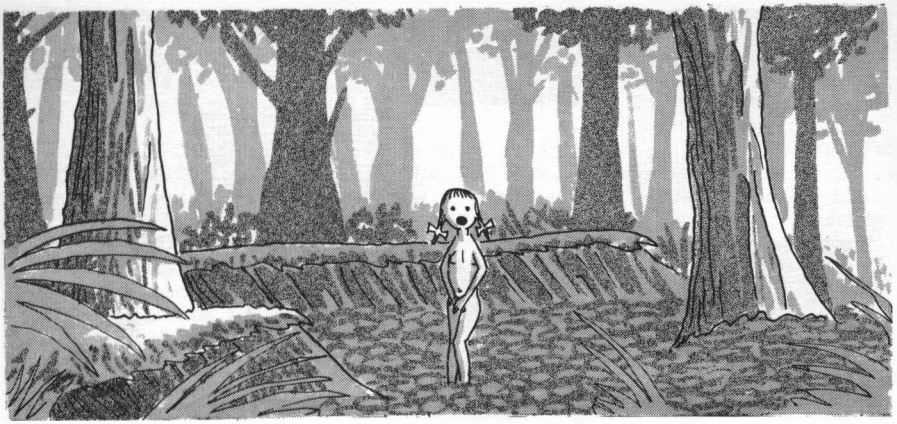
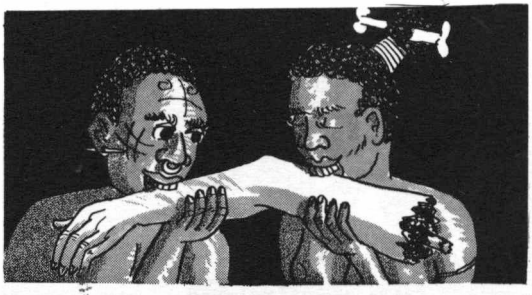


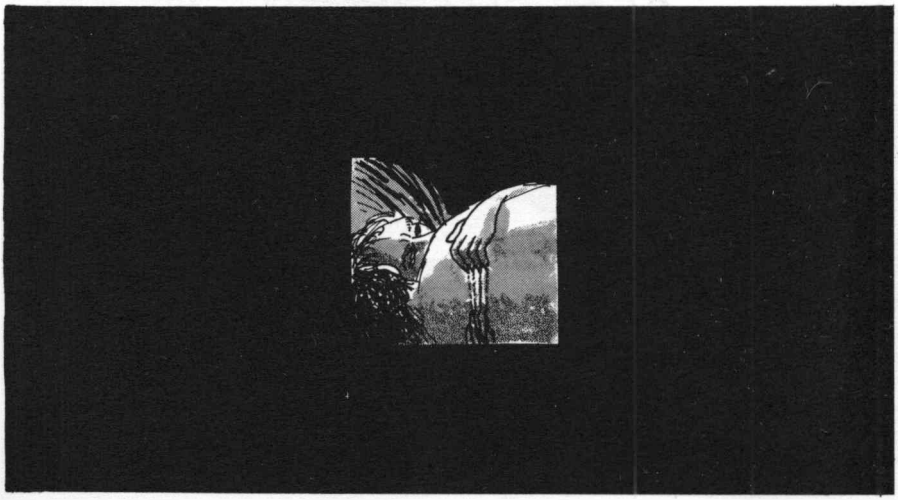
# PROLOGUE by CARL SANDHOG

carl sandhog

We are all members of one big happy family, you and I, me and thou, we work, we play, we live and die all together in a big happy happy family of which we are all members, you're a member, I'm a member, Abraham Lincoln was a member, we all go our way, joyous, joyous, toujours gai, toujours gai, happy, happy, happy, happy as Abraham Lincoln, we build, we destroy but we endure 'cause we're one big happy happy group, we're all happy, so happy, like Abraham Lincoln, full of life and family spirit and happiness and joy and good cheer and Abraham Lincoln.

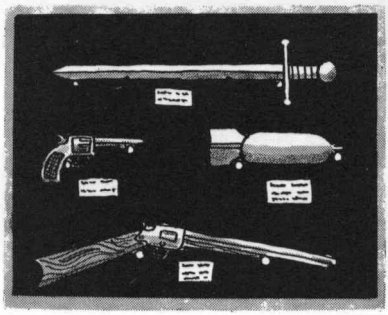
the noblest of base mankind's
emotions ~ the power that
moves mountains and builds
great cities ~ the quality
that oft' times lifts the
mortal clay to heights of
burning, transcendent glory
~ Hopi Indian Saying



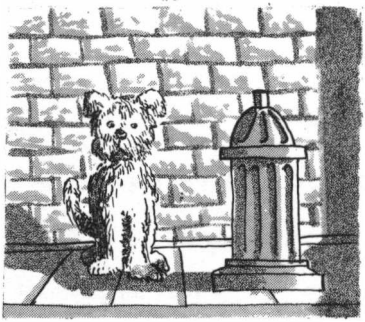


When I am a man, I shall be a mighty hunter ~ When I am a man, I shall be a mighty fisher ~ When I am a man, I shall be a mighty lover ~ Oh father, har, har, har de har.

~ Sir John Suckling

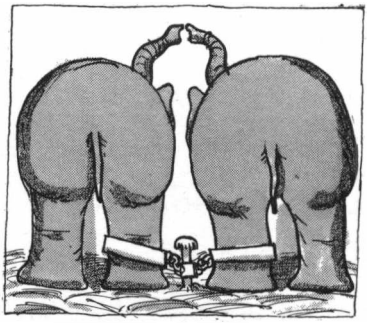


Two's a crowd ~ Aristophanes



Two's a crowd...

Two's a crowd...



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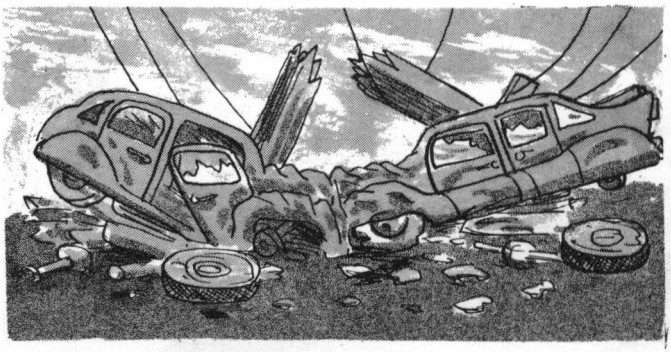


Two's a crowd...

Alone.....

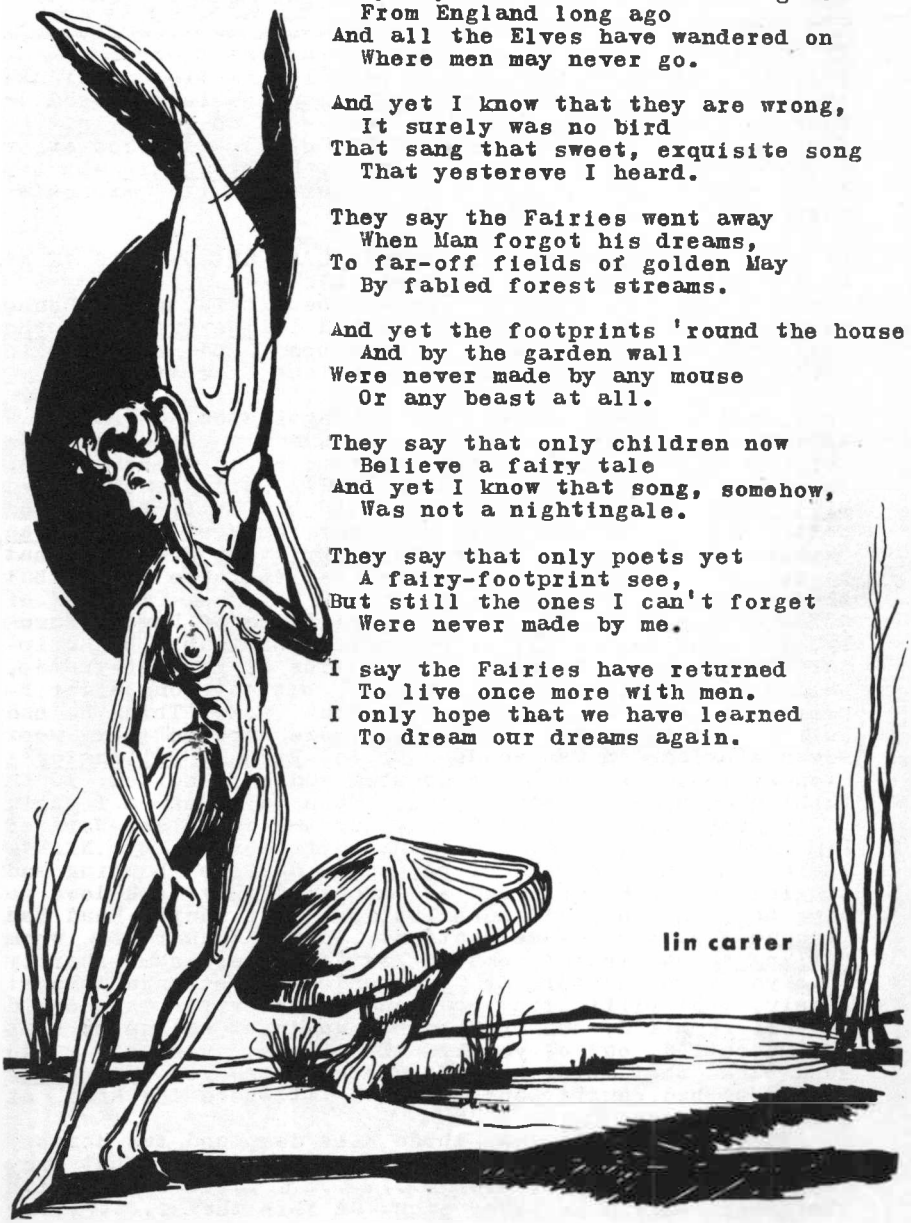
Mau ~ Mau Saying

**HOW** could there be choice, unless there was preference, and if there was preference there was no choice, for it was not possible to choose against the preferring nature which is our being, yet being consisted in choice ~ for only by choice is it possible to ascertain preference (by which is, of course, is meant choice), and only by preference is it possible to ascertain choice (by which is is, of course, is is is meant preference), and besides, I mean how can correct preference be determined, much less choice, unless in the choice there is clearly indicated some rule by which choice can be made, or preference, if you like, and then where are you ~ however, there is also the problem of preference, for how can correct choice be determined, much less preference, unless in the preference there is clearly indicated some rule by which preference can be made, or choice if you like, besides which als there is also the problem of t choice, for how can correct or preference be determined, muc

The flush of sweet and golden morn
Shines deep within their glowing eyes ~
A vision of the mortal dawn,
And of the promise in its skies.

Marquis de Sade

# the return of the fairies



They say the Fairies all were gone
  From England long ago
And all the Elves have wandered on
  Where men may never go.

And yet I know that they are wrong,
  It surely was no bird
That sang that sweet, exquisite song
  That yestereve I heard.

They say the Fairies went away
  When Man forgot his dreams,
To far-off fields of golden May
  By fabled forest streams.

And yet the footprints 'round the house
  And by the garden wall
Were never made by any mouse
  Or any beast at all.

They say that only children now
  Believe a fairy tale
And yet I know that song, somehow,
  Was not a nightingale.

They say that only poets yet
  A fairy-footprint see,
But still the ones I can't forget
  Were never made by me.

I say the Fairies have returned
  To live once more with men.
I only hope that we have learned
  To dream our dreams again.

lin carter

# h.p.lovecraft: the books: 3

33. NIGHT-GAUNTS, Edgar Hengist Gordon (Robert Bloch).
This is a novel by the writer of weird fiction mentioned in Bloch's short story, The Dark Demon. He is supposed to have written various short stories, such as Gargoyle. The Soul of Chaos (see 45. THE SOUL OF CHAOS) and three other books which were privately printed. Night-Gaunts was his first book, and was a failure because of its excessive morbidity.

34. OF EVILL SORCERIES DONE IN NEW-ENGLAND OF DAEMONS IN NO HUMANE SHAPE (Lovecraft and Derleth).
A manuscript discovered by Amrose Dewart in an old house north of Arkham, which is described in The Lurker at the Threshold as being "penned in a crabbed hand, and only in parts legible." We have some quotations from it:

"But, not to speak at too great Length upon so Horrid a matter, I will add onlie what is commonly reported concerning an Happening in New Dunnich, fifty years since, when Mr. Bradford was Governour. 'Tis said, one Richard Billington, being instructed partly by Evill Books, and partly by an antient Wonder-Worker amongst ye Indian Savages, so fell away from good Christian Practice that he not onlie lay'd claim to Immortality in ye flesh, but sett up in ye woods a great Ring of Stones, inside of which he say'd Prayers to ye Divell, Place of Dagon, Namely, and sung certain Rites of Magick abominable by Scripture. This being brought to ye Notice of ye Magistrates, he deny'd all Blasphemous Dealings; but not long after he privately shew'd great Fear about some Thing he had call'd out of ye Sky at Night. There were in that year seven slayings in ye woods near to Richard Billington's Stones, those slain being crushed and half-melted in a fashion outside all experience. Upon Talk of a Tryall, Billington dropt out of Sight, nor was any clear Word of him ever after heard. Two months from then, by Night, there was heard a Band of Wampanaug Savages howling and singing in ye Woods; and it appeared they took down ye Ring of Stones and did much besides. For their head Man Misquamacus, that same antient Wonder-Worker of whom Billington had learnt some of his Sorceries, came shortly into ye town and told Mr. Bradford some strange Things: Namely, that Billington had done worse Evill that cou'd be well repair'd, and that he was no doubt eat up by what he had call'd out of ye Sky. That there was no Way to send back that Thing he had summon'd, so ye Wampanaug wise Man had caught and prison'd it where the Ring of Stones had been.

"They had digg'd down three Ells deep and two across, and had Thither charmed ye Daemon with Spells that they knew; covering it over with ..... ..... ..... carved with what they call'd ye Elder Sign. On this they ..... .....


NECRONOMICON

..... digg'd from ye Pit. The old Savage affirm'd this place was on no Account to be disturb'd, lest ye Daemon come loose again which it woul'd if ye flatt Stone with ye Elder Sign shou'd get out of Place. On being ask'd what ye Daemon look'd like, Misquamacus covered his Face so that onlie ye Eyes look'd out, and then gave a very curious and Circumstantiall Relation, saying it was sometimes small and solid, like a great Toad ye Bigness of many Ground-Hogs, but sometimes big and cloudy, with no Shape, though with a Face which had Serpents grown from it.

"It had ye Name Ossadagowah, which signifys ye child of Sadogowah, ye which is held to be a Frightfull Spirit spoke of by antients as come down from ye Stars and being formerly worshipt in Lands to ye North. Ye Wampanaugs and ye Nansets and Nahrigansets knew how to draw It out of ye Heavens but never did so because of ye exceeding great Evilness of It. They knew also how to catch and prison It, tho' they cou'd not send It back whence It came. It was declar'd that ye old Tribes of Lamah, who dwelt under ye Great Bear and were antiently destroy'd for their Wickedness, knew how to manage It in all Ways. Many upstart Men pretended to a Knowledge of such and divers other Outer Secrets, but none in these Parts cou'd give any Proof of truly having ye aforesaid Knowledge. It was said by some that Ossadogowah often went back to ye Sky from choice without any sending, but that he cou'd not come back unless Summon'd.

"This much ye antient Wizard Misquamacus told to Mr. Bradford, and ever after, a great Mound in ye Woods near ye Pond southwest of New Dunnich hath been straitly lett alone. Ye Tall Stone is these Twenty yrs. gone, but ye Mound is mark'd by ye Circumstance, that nothing, neither grass nor brush, will grow upon it. Grave men doubt that ye evill Billington was eat up as ye Savages believe, by what he call'd out of Heaven, notwithstanding certain Reports of ye idle, of his being since seen in divers places. Ye Wonder-Worker Misquamacus told that he mistrusted not but that Billington had been taken; he wou'd not say that he had been eat up by It, as others among ye Savages believ'd, but he affirm'd that Billington was no longer on this Earth, whereat God be prais'd."

35. OCCULTUS, Heiriarchus (Bloch).
This book was referred to only in Bloch's The Secret in the Tomb, and apparantly does not exist.

36. PEOPLE OF THE MONOLITH, Justin Geoffrey (Robert E. Howard).
The mad poet Justin Geoffrey, a friend of another poet—Edward Derby, who wrote Azathoth and Other Horrors—visited Hungary and examined the Black Stone, that curious monolith among the mountains of Hungary. (see 39. REMNANTS OF LOST EMPIRES) He wrote a book of verse and died screaming in a madhouse in 1926. His history is given in more detail in Howard's The Black Stone, from which we quote the following verse from People of the Monolith.

"They say foul things of Old Times still lurk
In dark forgotten corners of the world,
And gates still gape to loose, on certain nights,
Shapes pent in hell..."

37. THE PNAKOTIC MANUSCRIPTS (Lovecraft).
This rare and esoteric work is the oldest book mentioned in the Mythos, as it is believed "of pre-Pleistocene"

origin (according to Lovecraft, who says in The Shadow out of Time that it is a relic of the Great Race who ruled the Earth some fifty million years before man). We know little about its contents: Tsathoggua is mentioned in it, and the curious "Pnakotic Pentagram" spoken of in Kuttner's The Invaders is probably from it; and in The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath we are told of the "Other Gods from Outside who set their seal upon Earth's primal granite" according to a drawing in "those parts of the Pnakotic Manuscript too old to be read".

A copy is preserved in the Library of the Miskatonic University in Arkham, Mass., one in the collection of Dr. Jean-Francois Charriere of Providence, another in the ruined church on Federal Hill, also in Providence, and a fourth is kept in the Temple of the Elder Ones in Ulthar —the so-called "last copy" which was made by men in the forgotten boreal kingdoms of this world, and carried into the Dreamworld by them when the hairy, cannibal Gnophkehs overcame Olathoe and slew the men of Lomar.

38. POLIGRAPHIA, Johannes Trithemius.
Trithemius was born at Tritenheim, Trier, Germany, in 1462, and became a Benedictine Abbot at the age of 22. He collected a library of two thousand manuscripts and volumes, a record for his era, and was so famous that his erudition was proverbial and he was consulted by Emperors and Queens. He died in 1516 at the abbey of St. James, Wurzburg, where he is buried.

Although most of his works are of an ecclesiastical nature, he wrote many books on alchemy and magic, which influenced Paracelsus and Cornelius Agrippa, and on the Kabballah. His Polygraphie et Universelle Escriture Caballistique, which is mentioned in The Dunwich Horror as Poligraphia, was published at Paris in 1651.

39. REMNANTS OF LOST EMPIRES, Otto Dostmann, Der Drachenhaus Press, Berlin, 1809 (Robert E. Howard).
This mythical book, published by an equally fictitious "Dragon's House" press, is mentioned in The Black Stone as refering to that curious monolith in Hungary of which Justin Geoffrey wrote. (see 29. MAGYAR FOLKLORE and 36. PEOPLE OF THE MONOLITH)

40. THE R'LYEH TEXT (Lovecraft).
The R'lyeh Text is probably a book concerned with the worship of Cthulhu, since that leader of the Great Old Ones lies "sleeping" in the submerged half-cosmic city of R'lyeh, which, we are told in Derleth's The Trail of Cthulhu, is under the Pacific Ocean off New Zealand and south of the East Indies at S. Lat. 49° 51', W. Long. 128° 34'. A swift glance at the map tells us that this is quite a ways "off" New Zealand indeed, as it is in the middle of the South Pacific not far from Antartica and midway between Australia and Chile. From another source, Derleth's The Black Island, we are told it is "off" Ponape, which it is, to the extent of about four thousand miles, if we accept the latitude and longitude above as correct. There Cthulhu lies in his enchanted sleep, served by the "batrachian" Deep Ones who await the time the Elder Sign shall no longer bind him and he shall awake.

The Text is probably written in the pre-human language of R'lyehian. Copies are preserved at the Miskatonic, and in private collections. We have two quotations from it. The first is from The Trail of Cthulhu, and is also par-

tially quoted in The Watcher in the Sky.

"Ubbo-Sathla is the source, the unforgotten beginning from whom came those who dared set themselves against the Elder Gods who ruled from Betelgueze, those who warred upon the Elder Gods, the Great Old Ones led by the blind idiot god, Azathoth, and Yog-Sothoth, who is All-in-One and One-in-All, and upon whom are no strictures of time or space, and whose agents are 'Umr At-Tawil and the Ancient Ones, who dream forever of the time when once again they shall rule to whom rightfully belong Earth and the entire universe of which it is a part ..... Great Cthulhu shall rise from R'lyeh, Hastur the Unspeakable shall return from the dark star which is in the Hyades near Aldebaran, the red eye of the bull, Nyarlathotep shall howl forever in the darkness where he abideth, Shub-Niggurath shall spawn in turn and shall take dominion over all wood nymphs, satyrs, leprechauns, and the Little People, Lloigor, Zhar, and Ithaqua shall ride the spaces among the stars, and those who serve them, the Tcho-Tcho, shall be ennobled, Cthugha shall encompass his dominion from Fomalhaut, and Tsathoggua shall come from N'kai ..... They wait by the gate, for the time draws near, the hour is soon at hand, and the Elder Gods sleep, dreaming, and there are those who know the spells put upon the Great Old Ones by the Elder Gods, as there are those who shall learn how to break them, as already they know how to command the servants of those who wait beyond the door from Outside."

The final quote is from The Return of Hastur, by Derleth. Apparantly in the original R'lyehian, we have an English translation of it.

"Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn." reads, "In his house at R'lyeh dead Cthulhu waits dreaming."

41. SADUCISMUS TRIUMPHATUS, Joseph Glanvil, 1681.
In The Festival. Lovecraft refers to "the shocking Saducismus Triumphatus" and gives us the above data on author and date. It is all correct—except, perhaps, for the "shocking" part—and a revised edition of the work was published in London in 1681. Glanvil, whom Seligmann has called the last great defender of belief in witches in Britain, originally published the book in 1668 under the title of Blow at Modern Sadduceeism.

42. THE SAURIAN AGE, Banfort.
This book was mentioned only once (in The Survivor by Lovecraft and Derleth), and I have been unable to discover if it exists or not. I should say it does, however, as it is listed among the collection of Dr. Charriere along with other books which actually exist.

43. THE SEVEN CRYPTICAL BOOKS OF HSAN (Lovecraft).
Here HPL wasted a marvelous title, having never made effective use of it. A copy is in the Miskatonic, according to The Lurker at the Threshold, but unhappily we have no further data. It may be a book of prophecy; the title is similar to The Nine Books of the Cumaean Sibyl.

44. THE SEVENTH BOOK OF MOSES.
August Derleth mentions this in The House in the Valley as being "notorious". It is a cheap and imitative hex-book like The Long-Lost Friend, and purports to be a lost book of the Bible. The copy in my collection is in the Lewis de Claremont edition, still in print at a dollar or so. A pretty sloppy literary forgery, pretending to have been written by Moses, it mentions Christ, the Disciples, and the Four Evangelists.

45. THE SOUL OF CHAOS, Edgar Hengist Gordon (Bloch).
This was the first of four privately-printed books by the noted supernaturalist, author of Night-Gaunts. From Bloch's The Dark Demon, we have one quotation.

"This world is but a tiny island in the dark sea of Infinity, and there are horrors swirling all around us. Around us? Rather let us say amongst us. I know, for I have seen them in my dreams, and there are more things in this world than sanity can ever see."

46. THE SUSSEX MANUSCRIPT (Derleth).
This is merely mentioned in The Testament of Claibourne Boyd without any indication of what it was supposed to be. A parchment manuscript dug up in Sussex from druidic or Saxon times, perhaps.

47. THAUMATURGICAL PRODIGIES IN THE NEW-ENGLISH CANAAN, Rev. Ward Phillips, Boston, 1801 (Lovecraft).
Invented by Lovecraft, most of our information on this fascinating book comes from the posthumous collaboration, The Lurker at the Threshold. Rev. Phillips (the name is another HPL pun on his own) was a pastor of the Second Church in Arkham during colonial times. The book in question, obviously based on Cotton Mather, is a reprint bound in worn leather in imitation black letter. Our quotation comes from about two-thirds through the book.

"evill of consorting with Daemons, Familiars, and such ilk." "But in respect of Generall Infamy, no Report more

terrible hath come to Notice, than of what Goodwife Doten. Relict of John Doten of Duxbury in the Old Colonies, brought out of the Woods near Candlemas of 1787. She affirm'd, and her good neighbours likewise, that it had been borne to her, and took oath that she did not know by what manner it had come upon her, for it was neither Beast nor Man but like to a monstrous Bat with human face. It made no sound but look'd at all and sundry with baleful eyes. There were those who swore that it bore a frightful resemblance to the Face of one long dead, one Richard Bellingham or Bollinhan who is affirm'd to have vanished utterly after consort with Daemons in the New Dunnich. The horrible Beast-Man was examined by the Court of Azzizes and the which then burnt by Order of the High-Sherif on the 5th of June in the year 1788."
Later in the same book, we are told that Phillips tried to gather up all copies of the Thaumaturgical Prodigies and burn them.

48. THESAURUS CHEMICUS, Roger Bacon.
Friar Bacon (1214-1294) was a Franciscan who was imprisoned in England for ten years for his unorthodoxy, and died two years after his release. This is called one of the greatest crimes in history, as Bacon was one of the supreme intellects of his, or, indeed, any other time. He was possessed of a superb imagination, and predicted poison gas, diving suits, airplanes, etc. He invented gunpowder independently, and experimented with telescopes and lenses.
The Thesaurus Chemicus does not exist, but may be based on his Mirror of Alchemy, in combination with an extant work by another writer, the Theatrum Chemicum.

49. TRAITE DES CHIFFRES, De Vigenere.
This book is listed in The Dunwich Horror. Jack Gill informs me that a Traicte de Chifferes ou Secretes D'Escrire by Floise de Vigenere exists, published at Paris in 1586. It appears to be a book on cryptography and alphabets, however, rather than demonaic arcana.

50. THE TURBA PHILOSOPHARUM.
Mentioned in Charles Dexter Ward, this book also exists and is on alchemy.

51. UNAUSPRECHLICHEN KULTEN, Von Junzt, Dusseldorf, 1839 (Robert E. Howard).
This is perhaps Howard's greatest addition to the Mythos. Von Junzt was a German who traveled all over the world and gained entrance into various secret societies and cults. Born in 1795, he died mysteriously in a locked room shortly after the original Dusseldorf edition was printed in 1840. The first edition was bound in leather with iron hasps, and only a half dozen copies are extant. The so-called "Black Book"—the title really means "Nameless Cults"—was pirated in a cheap, faulty edition, a translation into English, published by Bridewell in 1845; an expurgated edition was published by the Golden Goblin Press of New York City in 1909.
The only quotation we have from it is brief and apocryphal. Philip Duschnes, in his tongue-in-cheek fake "ad" for The Necronomicon, reprinted in The Arkham Sampler, No. 1, 1948, says that Von Junzt, discussing the madness of Alhazred, says on page ix, "es steht ausser Sweifel, dass dieses Buch ist die Grundlage der Okkulteliteratur."

52. THE WITCH-CULT IN WESTERN EUROPE, Murray.
This work is mentioned frequently by Lovecraft, and is another book that actually exists. Dr. Murray is an English scholar, and the above book was first published in Oxford, 1921. A later work, The God of the Witches, would have suited Lovecraft's purpose far more. Dr. Murray's theory that the witch-covens of Medieval times were not just a cult of perverted Satan-worshippers, but represented the survival of a primitive religion which was in competition with the Catholic Church and thus persecuted and condemned, is taken seriously in her field.

53. THE ZOHAR.
There is only one reference to "the cabalistic Zohar" in the Mythos, but Lovecraft could have put it to further use. It is not really one book but a compilation of books, fragments, biblical commentaries and Kabballah, which was compiled and published in Spain during the late 13th Century by Moses de Leon, who attributed most of it to the Rabbi Simon bar Yohai, of Second Century Palestine. This is the one great work in the Kabballah, which seeks to unravel the secret magical arcana given to Moses on Sinai and hidden by him in code throughout the Pentateuch, the first four books of the Bible. By adding up the numerical value of Hebrew letters in the books, the Kabbalists derived new numbers from which, translated back into letters, they created the "Most Holy and Potent" Names of God, which form the foundation of much of magical lore since them.

A slim volume called Selections from The Zohar was edited by Gershom G. Scholem and published in New York in 1947.

FINIS

ANY OMITTED DATA OR INCORRECTLY-GIVEN INFORMATION IN THIS ESSAY WILL BE PUBLISHED IN A SECTION OF ERATA AND OMISSIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

# SOME NOTES ON HPL

1.

Everything that John Brunner says against Lovecraft in "Rusty Chains" is true, at least to the extent that his criticism can be buttressed by many examples from Lovecraft's fiction. Yet his entire argument becomes meaningless when by his own admission we find that he has read very little of Lovecraft. (I twice tried to get through "At the Mountains of Madness" and twice came to a crashing halt about one-third of the way through. First, when it originally appeared in Astounding in 1936 and I was sixteen. The second time when it was reprinted in STRANGE PORTS OF CALL in 1948 and I was more mature.) This limitation has resulted in his making two serious blunders. First, judging Lovecraft by his worst instead of his best material. Second, entirely misinterpreting Lovecraft's contribution to the field.

"The Dunwich Horror" was no failure. It has weaknesses, but taken in its entirity, it is, relative to other tales of its type, a literary masterpiece. That it is a narrative with real story interest is testified by the fact that it was successfully adapted to a major radio dramatization and the leading role enacted by Ronald Coleman.

"The Dunwich Horror" also epitimizes Lovecraft's major contribution to the literary fantasy scene—the adaptation of science fiction material to the weird and supernatural tale. In this story, and in many of his more successful stories, such as "The Shadow out of Time," "The Whisperer in the Darkness," "The Call of Cthulhu," "The Temple," etc., he attempted to write tales of horror with a background of plausible science.

To this end Lovecraft was peculiarly well fitted, since he had had an overwhelming interest in science from his youngest days, his first amateur publication being an astronomical journal. His notebooks with scientific calculations in this regard are owned by Dr. David H. Keller.

Lovecraft's library had probably more scientific texts than any other single category of books.

Probably the best essay on Lovecraft's mingling of scientific with horrific themes was written by Fritz Leiber, Jr., in his fine article "The Works of H.P. Lovecraft: Suggestions for a Critical Appraisal" and appeared in the Fall 1944 issue of The Acolyte.

Lovecraft was far from alone in this school of writing. He

was joined by such able compatriots as Clark Ashton Smith, Nictzin Dyhalis, C.L. Moore and others. This school of writers was greatly encouraged by Farnsworth Wright, late editor of the also late Weird Tales, who was faced with a constant war between readers of his magazine who desired stories either more weird or more scientific. He welcomed the Lovecraft approach as a solution that satisfied both.

I completely and utterly disagree with Mr. Brunner that Weinbaum's "The Martian Odyssey" has suffered at all from the effects of time. I have reread it on the average of once every three years, sometimes aloud, and this, like a good portion of his other works, still has the polish of a jewel. You may weep for some of the others, but not for Weinbaum.

The other examples given, such as Campbell's and Heinlein's, suffer from the same fault as Lovecraft's. You are judging those men from some of their worst examples, not their best.

While I consider Lovecraft's mingling of science and horhor to be particularly fine in "The Dunwich Horror" and "The Temple", sometimes he was superb in pure fantasy.

I refer to stories like "The Strange High House in the Mist" and "The Quest of Iranon". The realism engendered by "The Shadow over Innsmouth" in the remarkable discription of the decadent New England countryside, industry, social life and philosophy was truly memorable.

Like Mr. Brunner, I have never been able to finish "At the Mountains of Madness". I think "Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath" is absurd, that many of Lovecraft's minor prose pastels are not exceptional, but again, a man does not pin his reputation upon his worst work but upon his best. Ernest Hemingway was roundly panned for ACROSS THE RIVER AND INTO THE TREES which appeared in 1950. In 1953, however, he received the Pulitzer Prize for THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA. In the history of literature he will be judged by the latter.

Lovecraft was not an important poet, but he definitely was an eminently readable and entertaining one in the weird vein.

—Sam Moskowitz

2.

People being given a big build-up about Lovecraft and then finding themselves sharply disappointed by his writings is an old story, and an understandable one, and one that gets itself told about other big names in fantasy and science fiction. Take Stapledon, for instance:

A newcomer to the field hears that LAST AND FIRST MEN is the great work of modern science fiction, the seminal epic. He is led to expect something along the lines of BRAVE NEW WORLD, 1984, MEN LIKE GODS, a kind of science fiction WAR AND PEACE. Finally he gets his hands on the book and what does he find? Something halfway between an encyclopedia entry and an article in The New Republic. A large and cumbersome book without dialogue, deep psychology, meaty characters, or more than three or four vivid metaphors or pictures. And with a lot of banal stuff, such as (ye gods!) giant brains and gelatinous Martians. No wonder he is disillusioned. It will be some time (if ever) before he grasps the importance, in its own right and to science fiction, of that "essay in myth creation."

Same thing goes for such a gorgeous and measured melodrama as Eddison's THE WORM OUROBOROS or such a crabbedly endearing legend as Tolkien's THE LORD OF THE RINGS. Great expectations rudely let down. Rather childish imaginary countries and rather pompous wars that are old-fashioned both in technique and spirit. Poems by John Donne and phrases from THE DUCHESS OF MALFI. A lot of nonsense in High Elvish and Low Dwarvish.

Black-and-white moral values. And the books are even (worst of crimes today!) "very slow reading".

And the same goes double for Lovecraft. Stirred by phrases such as "modern master of the macabre" and "inventor of the Cthulhu mythos," the neophyte comes to expect a super-Poe, a profound John Collier, a William Hope Hodgson with style and sophistication, a Charles Williams without the religious trappings, a writer who has gone many steps further than Arthur Machen in naming nameless horrors. Finally he tackles the real Lovecraft and has a rough awakening. He finds masses of long paragraphs without dialogue or titillating modern tricks; a style halfway between that of a gloomy, florid poet and an unworldly scholar painstakingly writing up an experience; a man in love with several periods of the past, who rejects modern sophistication because it is tawdry and unmannerly, and sentimentality because it is contrary to scientific materialism; a writer who claims little for his stories and persistently thinks of himself as an amateur.

The disappointment is understandable; it may even go so far, as in the case of John Brunner, to make the reader decide, in a burst of irritation, that here is a writer with "nothing whatever to recommend him." But it renders the reader at least temporarily blind to Lovecraft's genuine artistic creations, his wide and deep education, his devising of a legend of the supernatural suitable to scientific materialism. Above all, it is an expression of the rather pampered modern distaste for any writing that is slow or difficult, that has not been carefully pruned and speeded up by clever, up-to-the-minute editing.

I am thoroughly in sympathy with modern psychiatry and humanist ethics, but I do not believe, as Brunner seems to, that they have banished the irrational from life or caused us and our terrors to live wholly on the conscious level. The horrors evoked by Poe and Lovecraft had elements of class attitude, but these are not their chief explanation. Freud has complicated but in no way solved the writer's problems. "Haunted burrowing through the recesses of our minds" is still inevitable and more necessary than ever. There are demons that still walk in darkness.

—Fritz Leiber

3.

While a critic has a right to his opinion about the merits of any one's particular story, I should think that before dismissing the entire output of an author, the critic so doing should read more than a smattering of that author.

It seems to add up to:

1. John Brunner has read some of Lovecraft's poems and part of "At the Mountains of Madness".
2. John Brunner does not like Lovecraft.
3. Lovecraft is over-rated.

Regardless of Mr. Brunner's education, certificates and all, I cannot see the above as being a syllogism. He is at liberty to like or not like anyone he wishes. We are all at liberty to do the same.

There are some Lovecraft stories I don't like. There are many that I do like. Anyone who has a reasonable critique of Lovecraft's works will find a willing and eager reader in this person.

Almost everyone who has a reputation is over-rated at times. This is more often the fault of the over-rater than of the over-ratee. Also too many people seem to forget that science fiction and fantasy are read for extra literary values. Thought, logic, concept, etc., play a major part in the

Cthulhu Mythos. This is more than I am able to say for 99% of the material that saturated the field in the last five to six years.

Lovecraft was content to live his life as he wanted to, writing those things he wanted to write, indulging in certain harmless eccentricities as do most of us, harming no one.

If all the so-called writers, authors, what-have-you, that have debased, commercialized, corrupted science fiction and fantasy over the last three decades were to be eliminated from our midst, there would be the names of a few that have honored our field. They did it for love, not for money. Among that small but glorious group would be the name of Howard Phillips Lovecraft.

—Edward Wood

4.

As to the letters you were kind enough to pass on, I don't think I ought to waste your valuable space by attempting a point-by-point counter attack; I'll just say a few things.

Moskowitz's letter I think is excellent, but does not call for reply particularly; he's made new statements rather than countering mine. (I'm interested by his reaction to A MARTIAN ODYSSEY; I've never got beyond page three of it, though I used my standard break-in trick of looking for a situation in the middle which would whet my appetite and make me want to see how the author got to it. THE BLACK FLAME is the only Weinbaum I've really enjoyed.)

I remember when I was at school and getting the Derleth anthologies through a postal s. f. library, I always used to turn up the Leiber stories first; I knew they would lead the pack. It seems odd to be standing up against a past master of s.f., whom I've admired so long and consider one of the top half-dozen in the field, when I'm a neophite at the same trade. But I must.

LAST AND FIRST MEN I have read—twice, and with enjoyment—and I've re-read excerpts more than that. Since I also like Donne, and think THE DUCHESS OF MALFI a greater work than several of Shakespeare's plays, I can't quite appreciate some of the comparisons he uses to illustrate coming to HPL for the first time. The best parallel, I think, would be David Lindsay's VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS, which I read on a personal tip from C.S. Lewis; a compulsively brilliant but thoroughly poisonous work, by a man with no status as a writer—only a commandingly powerful imagination. Imagination, however, does not redeem either the style or the theme.

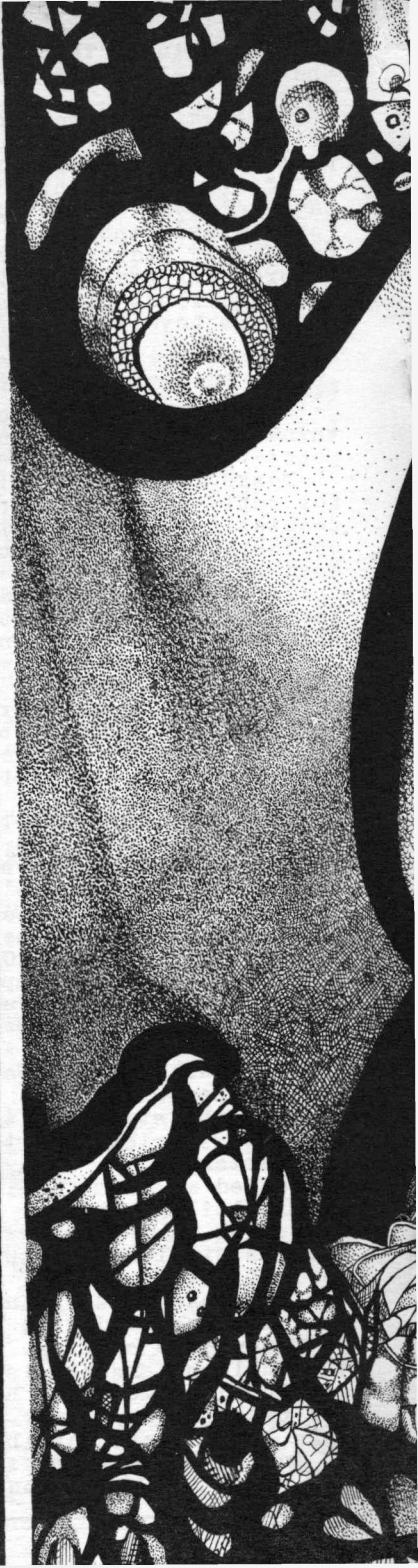
I'll just say to Wood in passing that his "sillygism" (bless Lewis Carroll for that one!) isn't acceptable to me, either; the statement that I had tried to read many of Lovecraft's stories is literal. Out of the twenty or thirty I have attempted to enjoy, surely only a malign fate could have prevented me from finding something great if it was there?

Mr. Leiber, though: he has done me the great service of accepting that I am aware of and appreciate Hodgson, Collier, Charles Williams and the rest; it wasn't, however, in a "burst of irritation" that I made my sweeping statement—it was after prolonged disappointment that I referred to it. Now I am not, I swear, addicted to impatience because of lack of up-to-the-minute editing. On the contrary, I firmly believe that the English language is the finest tool of communication ever developed by man. It has twice the resources, literally, of the nearest competitor. Therefore, it behoves a writer to make the fullest possible use of it.

But as an instrument of communication.

(continued on page 57)

# weird tales in retrospect



august derleth

Looking back upon its thirty-one and one-half years (March 1923-September 1954), it seems to me an inescapable conclusion that Weird Tales stands out, head and shoulders, above any other magazine in the domain of fantasy—which includes, of course, the science fiction magazines which came after it—for the overall literary quality of the stories which appeared in its pages. No other magazine in the genre can boast of having published consistently, after largely discovering them, four authors of the solid literary merit of H.P. Lovecraft, Henry S. Whitehead, Clark Ashton Smith and Ray Bradbury, to say nothing of a respectable number of lesser writers who were not nearly so productive, and who failed to establish such lasting reputations.

Weird Tales was, of course, primarily a vehicle for supernatural tales, and I would judge—without recourse at the moment to my file—that the majority of the stories published in it came under that classification—contes cruel, science fiction, horror stories, whimsical tales, dawn age narratives, etc., notwithstanding. It came into being as the brain-child of the publisher of a highly successful whodunit magazine, Detective Tales, which was edited by Edwin Baird, who was also Weird Tales' first editor. From the beginning it carried its subtitle, "The Unique Magazine", and the first issue set forth its reason for being in "The Eyrie":

"WEIRD TALES is not merely 'another new magazine.' It's a brand new type of new magazine—a sensational variation from the established rules that are supposed to govern magazine publishing. WEIRD TALES, in a word, is unique. In no other publication will you find the sort of stories that WEIRD TALES offers in this issue—and will continue to offer in the issues to come. Such stories are tabooed elsewhere. We do not know why. People like to read this kind of fiction. There's no gainsaying that. Nor does the moral question of 'good taste' present an obstacle. At any rate, the stories in this issue of WEIRD TALES will not offend one's moral sense, nor will the stories we've booked for subsequent issues. ....We can emphatically promise you this: you will not be bored!"

The contributors to the first issue included a number of names then well-known in the pulp magazines, though most if not all of them are unknown today: Julian Kilman, Bryan Irvine, Merlin Moore Taylor, R.T.M. Scott, George Warburton Lewis, Willard E. Hawkins, Anthony M. Rud and Hamilton Craigie. Almost incredible by today's standards, there were no less than twenty-five short stories and part of a novel in this single issue of 192 pages, standard pulp magazine size, which was abandoned after two issues for the larger size in which its companion magazine was printed, a size maintained until the issue for November 1924, when, following an hiatus after the giant "anniversary" issue of May-June-July 1924, the magazine passed from the control of the Rural Publishing Corporation to that of Popular Fiction Publishing Company, and to the editorial guidance of Farnsworth Wright.

The magazine was at first handled dubiously by the distributors. The first issue never appeared on many newsstands at all. My attention was called to the issue for April 1923 by the local druggist who reasoned quite correctly that my addiction to the adventures of Old and Young King Brady in Secret Service made me a logical reader of Weird Tales. That issue was the only one on local stands, and for some time thereafter the magazine came in singly, though later in its first year of publication, Weird Tales was firmly established on the stands. But it was never in any sense a widely popular magazine. It was received enthusiastically by devotees of the macabre, and readers immediately—as all through its existence

—fixed on selections as "best" and "worst" in each issue, betraying a wide variety of tastes, as is certainly to be expected.

Yet the stories chosen by readers as the most popular during the relatively brief aegis of Edwin Baird were often the "best" stories as well: "Ooze" by Anthony M. Rud, "Beyond the Door" by Paul Suter, "The Bodymaster" by Harold Ward, "A Square of Canvas" by Anthony M. Rud, "The Whispering Thing" by Laurie McClintock and Culpeper Chunn, "The Moon Terror" by A.G. Birch (later published in book form by the Company), "The Floor Above" by M. L. Humphreys, "The Guard of Honor" by Paul Suter, "Sunfire" by Francis Stevens, "People of the Comet" by Austin Hall, "The Old Burying Ground" by E. L. Hampton, "The Phantom Farmhouse" by Seabury Quinn, "Dagon," "The Picture in the House," "The Hound," "The White Ape" ("Arthur Jermyn") and "The Rats in the Walls" by H. P. Lovecraft, "The Loved Dead" by C. M. Eddy, Jr., "Tea Leaves" by H.S. Whitehead, and "The Sunken Land" by G. W. Bayly. With the third issue, Weird Tales began to reprint classic macabre tales, one per issue.

The magazine, as luck would have it, made its appearance at just the right time. The Thrill Book had ceased publication almost four years before, just long enough to whet the appetite of readers who had made its acquaintance, and not so long as to dim memory. Book-lists of the early twenties were starred with titles—anthologies, novels, short story collections—related to the lore of the supernatural. In short, the atmosphere was right; a place had been prepared for Weird Tales. just as time and circumstances—including Weird Tales itself—were shaping events for the flowering of modern science fiction, a division of fantasy almost as old as the supernatural.

The kind of controversy which was to continue throughout the existence of the magazine made its appearance almost at once. There were the chronic objectors to stories "too horrible" or "gruesome" to be printed, the timid souls who shied away from the covers but could not resist the temptation to buy the magazine nevertheless; these objectors reached their peak in vituperation against C. M. Eddy's "The Loved Dead", which actually caused Weird Tales to be banned from newsstands in some cities because censors believed that the story of a ghoul was not a fit subject for American eyes. These prurient or timid souls raised their voices from time to time throughout the history of Weird Tales. but they were not the only objectors.

There were at least two other running battles. The first began under Baird's editorship, when readers objected to "funny" supernatural stories, centering their fire on a serial, "The Transparent Ghost," by Isabelle Manzer, a story supposedly written by a teen-age lass. Objectors to comic weird tales—of which, truth to tell, there are relatively few successful ones, notable among them being Oscar Wilde's "The Canterville Ghost," which is only secondarily a ghost story, and primarily a satire—showed their hands from time to time, but never with the chorus of objections that greeted Farnsworth Wright when he published J.U. Giesy's "The Wicked Flea", in the issue for October 1925. The other running battle cropped up early in 1925 between opponents and proponents of science fiction. The bulk of Weird Tales' audience enjoyed any good story, regardless of its sub-classification, but there were vociferous minorities who wanted only science fiction, or who wanted no science fiction at all. This controversy continued for years, until the emergence of the science fiction magazines took the edge off of it, and at the same time diminished the number of such stories appearing in Weird

Tales.

There were other controversies, of course, notably the debate about the use of Mrs. Brundage's buxom females as cover decorations in the thirties. But most of the others grew out of the readers' natural lack of understanding of the problems peculiar to editing and publishing. Unless one has been an editor and a publisher himself, it is often difficult to understand why a magazine cannot carry all literary masterpieces. In the last years of Weird Tales—before the inauguration of that unhappy policy of reprinting so generously from the earlier issues, a policy dictated by the urgent need to lower costs—I was often irritated by the oft-repeated judgment that the magazine had deteriorated, and by repeated references to "the good old days" of Weird Tales under Wright. It was ironic that in the days of Wright, old-time readers of the magazine were bemoaning the loss of "the good old days" under Baird.

Actually, of course, there was little change in Weird Tales from first issue to last. Each of the three editors—Edwin Baird, Farnsworth Wright, Dorothy McIlwraith—had good issues, and each had bad issues; each had a respectable group of outstanding stories, and each was responsible for printing some of the worst tripe ever seen in Weird Tales or any other magazine. But by and large a decent level of entertainment was steadily maintained, all critics to the contrary. What the critics failed to realize was that it was not Weird Tales which had changed, but they themselves; the first stories they had read in the genre opened up a new world to most of them; then, as they matured, and continued to read in the field, their frame of reference was enlarged, and they became

more selective and thus less easily satisfied with each succeeding issue—as they would have been less readily pleased with the earlier issues if they had gone back to re-read them from the perspective of the new frame of reference—but, failing to realize this, assumed instead that the magazine had deteriorated, as every man fails for a long time to understand that it is not the world that changes so much as it is he. The moon is no less beautiful today than it was thirty years ago, but the vision of a man of fifty is not quite the same as that of a boy of twenty.

Farnsworth Wright and William Sprenger alone controlled Weird Tales from mid-1924 until W.J. Delaney bought the magazine in 1938 to add to his Short Stories; then Wright continued to edit it until Dorothy McIlwraith took over in 1940, aided at first by Henry Perkins, then by Lamont Buchanan. Wright had never been in good health, and the magazine's move to New York plus the need of his own hospitalization made it difficult for him to continue as editor. Chicago had always been Wright's favorite city; he wrote as much to me several times, and rejoiced when the magazine, begun and for some time published in Indianapolis, could move at last to Chicago, where for many years it was published from 840 North Michigan Avenue. The move to New York had not been his choice, and he did not long survive it.

Miss McIlwraith had had comparatively little experience in the genre of the supernatural, though she had published stories of the kind during her long and able editorial guidance of Short Stories. She tackled the problem and challenge of the magazine with the same confidence which had seen her through the senior magazine's years. She asked one of the most popular contributors to Short Stories to examine several issues of Weird Tales with a view to contributing to it; he reported that he thought most of Weird Tales' contributors might be somewhat deranged, but agreed to contribute nevertheless. The experiment of enlisting Short Stories' stable of authors for Weird Tales was not successful; the unique magazine required a special approach which the writers of adventure stories largely lacked. Yet Miss McIlwraith was more flexible as an editor and more amenable to suggestions than Farnsworth Wright had been.

Actually, for all the praise bestowed upon Wright, he had major faults as an editor. Whenever he had to make a decision between a superlatively fine story of literary merit and a mediocre one, he invariably chose the mediocre tale—not because he failed to recognize the literary merit most of the time, but because he had to make his decisions with one finger on the pulse of the reading public who was buying the magazine, and who was in the main not at all interested in literary merit, but only in chills and thrills. That he may have done his readers an injustice is indicated by the fact that H. P. Lovecraft, a literary craftsman, was as popular with readers as Seabury Quinn and Robert E. Howard were, though neither of these, save in exceptional cases, was a literary craftsman. Yet Wright steadily rejected fine stories; he turned down Lovecraft's "The Colour out of Space," "In the Vault," "The Shadow out of Time," etc., though he accepted certain previously rejected Lovecraft tales when Donald Wandrei or I retyped and re-submitted them later; and, after Lovecraft's death, he bought all the unpublished stories that we could turn up. Wright also rejected my own "The Panelled Room", a story since anthologized several times. If he did so with Lovecraft, Whitehead and Smith, he did so with others. And it is worth noting that Lovecraft, Whitehead and Smith were all Baird discoveries, appearing in Weird Tales before

Wright took over; and Ray Bradbury was a discovery of Dorothy McIlwraith's.

So much for the "good old days". Weird Tales went to digest size in 1953, in an effort to stave off suspension. Even before that, a disastrous policy of reprinting too many tales from earlier issues of the magazine had been inaugurated, together with the reprinting of covers. Going to digest size compounded error in that at the same time advertising—a vital part of the revenue of the magazine—was discontinued save for an occasional Arkham House inner cover. The last issue of the magazine was dated September 1954; it fell as a result of proceedings against it by its creditors, forcing the Company into bankruptcy, over which litigation still continues. But in a larger sense, Weird Tales was a victim of that decline and fall which came upon fantasy in 1953 and has continued ever since, hitting the science fiction division particularly hard. It cannot be denied, either, that the competition of such an excellent magazine as The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction struck a telling blow against Weird Tales, which had remained impervious to the competition of Unknown, fine (if uneven) as that magazine was, and of the later Beyond, which was as uneven as Weird Tales at its worst.

In its three decades plus, Weird Tales published a majority of the classic tales of the supernatural and macabre to appear in America in the present century. If it had published but one excellent story for each year of its existence, it would have offered a good case for justifying its being; but actually, it published a respectable number more than that. It is impossible to list them all here, but what other magazine has published such memorable tales as: "The Rats in the Walls," "The Whisperer in Darkness," "The Dunwich Horror"—to name but three by Lovecraft; "The Shadows," "Passing of a God" and "Mrs. Lorriquer" by H. S. Whitehead; "A Rendezvous in Averoigne," "A Night in Malneant" and "The Dark Eidolon" by Clark Ashton Smith; "A Visitor from Egypt" and "The Hounds of Tindalos" by Frank Belknap Long; "The Red Brain" by Donald Wandrei; "Deaf, Dumb and Blind" by C.M. Eddy, Jr.; "The Wind That Tramps the World" by Frank Owen; "The Stranger from Kurdistan" by E. Hoffmann Price; "Lukundoc" by Edward Lucas White; "The Ghosts of Steamboat Coulee" by Arthur J. Burks; "The Woman of the Wood" by A. Merritt; "The Tsantsa of Professor von Rothapfel" by Alanson Skinner; "The Night Wire" by H. F. Arnold; "The Three Marked Pennies" by Mary Elizabeth Counselman; "In Amundsen's Tent" by John Martin Leahy; "The Lake" by Ray Bradbury; "Two Black Bottles" by Wilfred Blanch Talman; "The Cane" and "Revelations in Black" by Carl Jacobi; "The Hand of the O'Mecca" by Howard Wandrei; "The Mannikin" by Robert Bloch; "The Horror in the Burying Ground" by Hazel Heald; "The Black Stone" by Robert E. Howard?—but there is not adequate space to go on.

Add to these such deservedly popular stories as "When the Green Star Waned" by Nictzen Dyalhis, "Invaders from Outside" by J. Schlossel, "Invaders from the Dark" by Greye La Spina; Arthur J. Burks' stories of Haiti and Seabury Quinn's accounts of the Salem madness—and the number of classic, near-classic, or just excellent-reading stories mounts toward a percentage seldom achieved by any other magazine passing as a "pulp". While it is true that the vast bulk of stories in Weird Tales —and that includes the extremely popular Conan stories by R. E. Howard and the de Grandin tales by Seabury Quinn—were of little literary merit, those considerable tales which were distinguished above the average richly justified the existence of Weird Tales.

Its passing has left a vacuum no other magazine has filled.

This ad is a fright reaction to the thought of the whelming (an advertiser more given to use of superlatives might have said "overwhelming") task of moving that faces me. I have chosen prices that I think will sell everything that's being offered. Because I suspect that there may be many offers for some items, I am requesting that each order be accompanied by an addressed, stamped envelope (it need not be "self-addressed"-- few envelopes are so talented).

Where condition is not described, items are "as new", "mint", "perfect"-- pick your own term and return for refund if dissatisfied.

Note that there are no book club editions among these-- the Doubledays, etc., are authentic publishers' first editions. Prices given in parentheses are publishers' prices.

8 Ace Double Novels-- fine condition or better. The lot, $1

6 1954-55 paperback novels, Ace, First Ed., And PB-- good to fine, Asimov, Finney, etc. 50¢

Lovecraft, WEIRD SHADOW OVER INNSMOUTH, paperback-- as new, pages white and crisp, $1.50

AVON FANTASY READER, Nos. 1 & 2 -- very slightly yellowed at edges, otherwise as new, both $1

Merritt, Murder Mystery Monthly editions: THE MOON POOL, THE FACE IN THE ABYSS, THE METAL MONSTER, condition as the above Avon FRs, each 50¢

NOVELS, HARDBOUND

Bell, IN REALMS UNKNOWN, 1954 (3.00) .75
Dye, PRISONER IN THE SKULL, fine, 1952 (2.50) .50
Gatch, KING JULIAN, fine, 1954 (2.75) .75
E. Mayne Hull, PLANETS FOR SALE, 1954 (2.75) $1.0
Sam Merwin, THE WHITE WIDOWS, fine,(1st ed, remember) 1.00
Maine, TIMELINER, 1955 1.00
MacDonald, WINE OF THE DREAMERS, 1951, fine .75
MacDonald, BALLROOM OF THE SKIES 1952, fine .75
Sohl, THE ALTERED EGO, 1954 .75
Wells (Basil) DOORWAYS TO SPACE, (short stories) 1951. 1.00

S. Fowler Wright, SPIDERS' WAR, 1954 (2.75), fine .75
Wilding, SPACEFLIGHT-VENUS, 1955 jacket frayed, o'wise fine .50

NON-FICTION, Astronautics and allied subjects

Caidin, WORLDS IN SPACE, 64 illustrations by Fred Wolff, Holt, 1954, (4.95) $1.50

Duke and Lanchbery, SOUND BARRIER 2nd ed., 1955, photos of supersonic aircraft (4.95) $1

MacPherson, GUIDE TO THE STARS, observational astronomy, with plates and maps, 1955, (2.75) $1

Parson, GUIDED MISSILES IN WAR AND PEACE. Many photos, pub'd by Harvard (3.50) 1.50

Gatland, DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDED MISSILE, revised ed., 1954. Fairly technical, with many tables of data (4.75). 2.00

Heinz Haber, MAN IN SPACE, fine. 1st ed., 1953 (3.75) 1.50

John W. Campbell, THE ATOMIC STORY fine (3.00) $1

ROCKET SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH INTERPLANETARY SOCIETY:- June '47; Sept '48; May, July, Sept, Nov '49; Jan, March '50. Also BULLETIN of the BIS:- Nov '46 & Feb '47. As new copies of very well-printed and edited magazines, per copy 25¢

R.A. Squires
1745 Kenneth Rd.
Glendale 1, Calif.

# TIME-TRAVELLING IN OHIO

edmond hamilton

You have time-travelled. Everybody has. Every time you remember something—remember it so vividly that the present drops away from around you—you're time-travelling. Proust brilliantly described the process in the first fifty pages of "Recherche du Temps Perdu".

And I did it recently. I did it on a June night, in Bellefontaine, when I went over part of Dr. C.L. Barrett's famous magazine collection. With never-to-be-forgotten kindness, Doc left good company late at night to drive me out to the farmhouse that contains part of his collection.

We climbed to a big, silent attic. All around it stood

solidly built, closed wooden cupboards. I opened one and looked at the neat stacks of magazines, and reached and took one out. After almost forty years, the colors of an always-remembered cover picture flared bravely, and beneath them was the title that had been to me like a sound of bugles—"The Planeteer"!

And of a sudden it all fell away from around me, the voices of Doc and Briney and Sam, the old farmhouse, Ohio, the year 1955—it was all gone and I was back in a small Pennsylvania town in the bitter winter of 1917-18, and I a muffled-up small boy bucking the freezing winds along Long Avenue to burst into the newsstand and ask, "Is it in yet? Is the new Allstory in yet?"

And it was in, and I ran and skidded on the ice to get home fast with it, the titanic story by Homer Eon Flint that had been announced a week before. And now, holding the same magazine in my hands, I felt across all those years the same thrill and jump I felt that night. For never before then had I read of or imagined a planet, of our Earth, being laid hands upon by men and moved from its orbit. And how that haunted my imagination is evident enough in all the sagas of world-moving and star-stealing and universe-wrecking that I wrote a decade later.

And here in the cupboards were all the other stories in the Allstory and Argosy weeklies that I had begun to read in 1917—two magazines every week, and each of them, particularly the first, rich in stories of fantastic adventure. Here was "No Man's Air", which I read when spruce-and canvas Spads and Taubes were battling it out over France, but which unrolled a stunning picture of war in the air to come, of great airplane-battleships carrying scores of men across the oceans. Here was "The Mind Machine", with its nightmare story of a mechanical mind that craftily gained dominance over machines and so shattered the rule of man. And Flint's "King of Conserve Island", that had its tragic climax in the great fern forests of Jupiter, the solemn, dripping, foggy forests

through which the last of the doomed, strange Jovians fled. And his "Lord of Fear", with the brooding, oppressive spell of the long-dead city on Mercury whose secret four Earthmen found. And Merritt...

I picked out the Allstory with the first part of "Conquest of the Moon Pool", the cover with the fiery, frightful thing of light that encircled a captive woman, and that was another jump, another leap in time. For that was a winter evening too, but World War I was over then, and the first returned soldiers were parading that night. My father, back from the Army only two days before, was there too—but what did all that mean to me when I looked in a newsstand window and saw that the magazine was there, the magazine that would begin the long-awaited sequel to "The Moon Pool"?

And Burroughs, and John Carter and the dead cities of Mars, that were to me so much more fascinating than Tarzan. But these earliest Burroughs stories that I now held in my hands, that went clear back to 1912, I had never encountered in this original magazine form. And here too was many another story that had been published just a year, or a few months, before I began reading the magazines, so that I was maddeningly familiar with their titles as mentioned in the letter-columns, yet was never able to secure the stories.

There was "The Draft of Eternity" by Victor Rousseau, of which I read the last installment but could never find the others, and so was doomed to carry in my head for years a memory of a titantic climax, of great alien armies battling for the fate of a world, yet could never know what gorgeous events had led to this flaming conclusion. Yet here it was in the endless files—and here too were Rousseau's "The Sea Demons" and "The Ice Demons", of which I knew only the titles and must try to imagine or visualize what fantastic story they related.

Were these old stories science fiction? Not, most of them, in the modern sense of the word. I think of them rather as imaginative adventure stories. And, to my mind, the dozen years between 1912 and 1924 were the golden age of the imaginative adventure story, not only in Argosy and Allstory, but also in the Thrill Book and Popular and many another, particularly in that greatest of all the old fiction magazines, the old Adventure.

I wonder if any of us who saw the endless process of twice and thrice-monthly Adventure covers, from 1915 to almost 1930, will ever forget them? All those years it went on, that wonderful pageant of harpooners striking whales, grim Solomon Islanders paddling in the surf, conquistadors in steel and Romans in bronze and Indians in warpaint, clipper-ships and galleons and kayaks, all the color and romance of the world, and appealing to men all over the world without any need of a big-bosomed wench to lure them into buying.

And here were those old Adventures too, for, inevitably, Doc had them—a great storehouse of some of the finest story-telling in the world. John Buchan's "Path of a King", and Arthur Howden-Smith's "Gray Maiden" that followed a sword down all the ages, and the great novels by Hugh Pendexter that ranged the adventure of American history from Tidewater, Virginia of the 17th Century, to the wild gold days in Idaho, made fascinatingly vivid by a fine writer and researcher—and who knows them now, in these days when historical novels of infinitely inferior worth sell millions? And here, too, Harold Lamb's stirring tales of Kirdy, the White Falcon of Central Asia, of the dreaded "Mongol Swoop", of the grim riders whom Genghis Khan sent forth to ride down a king, of Crusaders and lost Syrian strongholds and battles long ago.

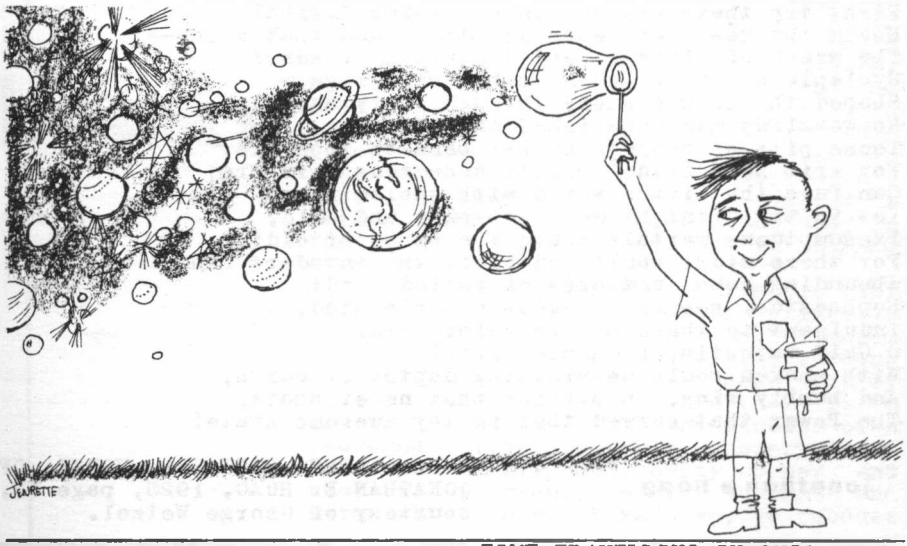
Pedants, I can well imagine, would object that these stories were not literature. Leaving aside the question of exactly what is literature—a question over which critics from Longinus to T. S. Eliot have disputed—leaving that aside, is it then nothing that these were great stories by superb storytellers? Is storytelling, which long antedated formal literature in every race, every language, so trivial a thing as to be unworthy of serious notice? I can't believe it. As Chesterton said, our formal fiction has ceased to be truly fictitious, but in the popular literature, mankind still drives its dark trade in demi-gods and heroes.

It is an easy enough thing to collect first editions of all the "right" authors; to gather lushly-printed private press editions of the classics; to specialize in fine bindings by Zaehnsdorf and by Sangorski and Sutcliffe, and go in for all the paraphernalia of solander cases. That is what the herd of "rare book" collectors do, and yet every book on their shelves is available, in one or another printed form, in any good public library. They are not collecting anything really rare, they are collecting a specialized and artificially rare form of something quite common.

But a collection like Dr. Barrett's—and I know of no other quite like it at all—gathers together things that are truly rare, indeed almost unprocurable, the wealth of a whole generation's finest adventure fiction and romance. And I can well imagine that in years to come, these shelves of yellowing magazines, so ephemeral, so easily scattered and lost, will be a far rarer possession than any first editions of Thomas Mann or Jean Cocteau. You can, after two centuries, find a first edition of Pope's Homer by simply writing to London. But try to find a popular, half-penny 18th Century chapbook!

But all these are afterthoughts. It was the jump back across time, the sudden transference back to years when a story could be the most important thing on earth, that was the thrill. I wonder if any of the youngsters today will feel that way about stories, when it comes 1975 or so? If they don't, I feel sorry for them. They've missed something.

(This article, originally intended for publication in DIMENSIONS, courtesy H. Ellison. Illus. courtesy Franklin Dietz.)



# TO THE GRAND CANYON OF THE COLORADO

Plutonic gulf! whose deeps unfathomed hold
The lore of earth, incalculably old;
Whose walls, precipitous, sublimely rise
From Stygian depths to greet the southern skies:
Thy yawning brink forgotten days hath known—
Remote arcana of the cryptic stone—
And thy huge soul (if soul indeed thou hast)
Keepeth the secrets of the boundless past.
Within those caverns chilly, dark, and dead,
Unstirred by feathered flight or mortal tread,
Where even the bat forbears to take retreat,
Vast nameless satyrs dance with noiseless feet;
Amidst the gloom Pan's weirdest pipings pour,
And blend with Colorado's ceaseless roar.
In cave and cliff the curious eye can trace
The faint memorials of a vanished race;
Here ancient bones the shadowed region strew,
And grewsome skulls the timid sight may view;
What men were these, and what primordial world
Was to their simple vision once unfurled?
Speak, great abyss! in vocal tones unbind
Thy hoary legends to the suppliant mind.
Say if some Titan, born of mist and haze,
Ripped thy rough rocks 'neath Dian's earliest rays!
Beheld thine eyes the nascent orbs of night
First try their pinions in celestial flight?
Heard thy keen ears each dreaded sound that stuns—
The wreck of planets, and the crash of suns?
Cyclopic stithies, burning hot with rage,
Shaped thy dark history through every age;
No weakling man unpunished may defy
Those pits of vengeance that beneath thee lie:
For grim Hephaestus' might, once rous'd in ire,
Can fuse the living world with sacred fire!
Yet in thy midnight deeps obscure and cold,
Presumptuous mortals brave the curse of old;
For there midst vault and cleft th' invaders find
Abounding gems, and ores of varied kind:
Hephaestus, seeing, shaketh not his head,
Indulgent to the quest by valor bred.
O Gulf majestic, of azoic birth!
With shaken souls we view thy depths of earth,
And humbly sing, in strains that ne'er abate,
The Power that carved thee in thy awesome state!

**jonathan e hoag**

—from THE POETICAL WORKS OF JONATHAN E. HOAG, 1923, page 37, courtesy of George Wetzel.

# inside books

NERVES, Lester del Rey (Novel); Ballantine, 153 pp., 35¢.

In what I believe is his first novel, Mr. del Rey has completely re-written and expanded his memorable novelet of the same title into a tight, smooth, expertly polished suspense-piece, which combines top-quality characterization and fine plotting with well-paced action and unrelenting excitement to produce a total effect of what can only be called overwhelming fiction.

An ambitious and rabble-rousing newspaper chain exploits the uneducated public's fear of atomic energy plants in the U. S. of the near future, raising it to the point where a bill is under consideration by Congress to move all such establishments to desert areas, wildernesses and such. While host to a Congressional investigative party, one such plant suffers a disastrous accident: emergency research within insufficiently explored fields produces by accident a terrifically dangerous artificial isotope, "R", which in time turns into an


unstable psuedo-element that could erupt, leaving a crater as big as a state. Desperately struggling against time, the plant executives and research engineers struggle to render Isotope R harmless, but they are seriously—perhaps fatally—hampered since the one man who knows the most about the process, Jorgensen, was badly injured in the accident and lies near death. Since the story is told through the eyes of Doc, the plant surgeon, the reader has a front-row seat in the twin battles, to save Jorgensen's life long enough for him to suggest a method, and to save the plant and, in fact, the continent from the threatened blowup.

With such an inherently dramatic plot it would take a very weak writer to louse it up; any competent author could hardly help but make it exciting reading—and, since del Rey is considerably better than competent, the book is a rouser. With the skill and finesse of a seasoned writer, he exploits every twist and turn of his plot, every corner and nook of his scene, every weakness and strength of his characters, to produce

the utmost tension and suspense possible. Through the boiling chaos he moves his taut, desperate, terrified men; the atmosphere is supercharged, electric; the characterization is consistent, and his people under pressure turn into life-like heroes, fools and men.

It's a first-rate job. Only a flaw or two stands out: his plot demands that no accident, however minor, appear during the Congressional tour—the alternative is obviously the passing of the bill. But, although the accident is major with a capital "M", we are left with the impression that, somehow, the bill will not be passed after all, and Everybody Lives Happily Ever Etc. Secondly, the gimmick of having Jorgensen conk out after all, while the new orderly, Jenkins, turns out to actually be a stepson of the great nuclear pioneer, Kellar, and possess all the requisite know-how to save the day, is rather extreme and certainly stretching coincidence painfully.

—Lin Carter

TIMELINER, Charles Eric Maine (Novel); Bantam, 182 pp., 35¢.

Here is an intricate, imaginative and absorbing novel of complex plot and brilliant concept. Accidentally wrenched from his own body and era, scientist Hugh Macklin is hurled ahead eighty years to inhabit the body of a man mining uranium on the Moon. This, however, is only the first step. Suicide does not free him from life, for he finds himself inhabiting another body in an even further-advanced era.

On he goes through time, undying, the death of each host-body catapulting him forward centuries. The amazing solution to his problem is unexpected and dazzlingly clever.

One is tempted to compare this novel to some of the finer writings of van Vogt. We have the same breath-taking concepts, the vivid writing, the unconventional plotting that zooms ahead, leaving the reader to flounder in its wake. This is exactly the sort of thing that Astounding produced in the Golden Forties, and its like a breath of fresh air in these days of second rate imitations of Pohl and Kornbluth, warmed-over-magazine-series-integrated-into-novels and Tales of What Happens After the Atomic Doom.

LC

AGENT OF THE UNKNOWN and THE WORLD JONES MADE, Margaret St. Clair & Philip K. Dick (Novels); Ace Double, 320 pp., 35¢.

This book carries on in the good old Ace tradition of teaming a good novel with a poor one—rather like double-feature movies or the two-side phonograph record. The St. Clair effort is a reprint, apparently complete, of her five-year-old Startling novel, VULCAN'S DOLLS. I was glad of the chance to re-read it, for I recall with what wild applause it was greeted when first printed. At the time I was disappointed in it, and failed to see why so many fans liked it. Sad to say, on second reading it seems even worse. A turgid, murky and confused chase-suspense story, it seems dated now and, as before, badly plotted and wildly over-written, with some of the purplist prose since Kuttner's pastiches of Merritt.

Bound to it in the fashion printers call bas-a-bas is an original, and a honey of a story, by Philip K. Dick, who gave us his memorable first novel, SOLAR LOTTERY, last year. THE WORLD JONES MADE is the story of a carnival fakir with an ESP talent which allows him simultaneously to view the future superimposed on the present. With this wild talent he conquers the world, unhampered by the efforts of security agent Cussick who first discovered his power. Featuring some fine extrapolation ("Fedgov," "Secpol," the "Drifters," etc.), taut plot-

ting and good, round characterization, it is perhaps even better than his 1955 novel. It has something of the utter inevitability of Greek tragedy: with such a talent, and barring the unforseen accident, such a person could not help but conquer the world. Good work, too, in the person of Jones—although he gains the whole world it is worthless to him, for he is in constant torment, living in two worlds at once—and knowing when he is to die!

Well worth your attention. LC

DOUBLE STAR, Robert A. Heinlein (Novel) Doubleday, 186 pp., $2.95.

Heinlein's new novel—his first one for adults since THE PUPPET MASTERS of 1951—is one of his finest productions to date. Rather weak on story, perhaps, but it contains some of the most superb characterization and just plain good writing that has ever been produced in our field.

When a down-on-his-luck ham actor, the Great Lorenzo, is hired to impersonate a missing statesman at an important ceremony, he is caught up in plot ramifications galore. For political reasons Bonforte must be present to be adopted into the Martian "nest", but his enemies have kidnapped him, knowing that his failure to appear for the honor will, according to the Martian code of ethics, be an insult demanding interplanetary war. Lorenzo puts on a good show, but discovers he must keep it up—for Bonforte is released, physically and mentally injured, and the impersonation must continue until the damage can be repaired.

The impersonation lasts much longer than Lorenzo expects.

The story is not the important point. It is the character of Lorenzo, the ego-inflated ham, who slowly changes as he is brought into contact with Bonforte's ideals, and with political and economic conditions which had previously bored him. Essentially a study in character, you watch his personality develop, his scope widen, his character mature—and it's all done through his own words.

It is sheer technical wizardry. I have never seen anything like it before in science fiction, and I am admittedly impressed. There have been memorable characters before—Giles Habibula, Hawk Carse, Northwest Smith, Adam Link, Captain Nemo—but they were essentially exaggerations, outstanding because they were so different, so original, so definite. Lorenzo is an outstanding character because he is not a characature with sharply defined and memorable mannerisms. He is a mediocresy to all outward appearances; his personality is given through subtle, delicate shadings, rather than bold and heavy strokes. And the development of his character is so gradual that you cannot mark its turning points, and so inevitable, so real.

Story-wise, DOUBLE STAR is minor in comparison with METHUSULAH'S CHILDREN or SIXTH COLUMN, but for subtle writing, characterization, and delicate balance it is the finest novel Heinlein has ever written.

The Old Master's talents are not waning, but improving. And he still retains his crown as the finest science fiction writer alive, bar none, to which DOUBLE STAR adds an extra luster. LC

LUCKY STARR AND THE BIG SUN OF MERCURY, Paul French (Juvenile); Doubleday, 191 pp., $2.50.

David "Lucky" Starr, ace trouble-shooter for the Council of Science, is the lean, keen-eyed, clean-livin' heroic type,

see. His pal, Bigman, a plucky little Martian midget, is the fiery, loyal-but-stoopid type. Well, sir, all hell is a-breakin' loose on Mercury. See, somebody is sabotagin' Earth's top-priority Project Light—and it's Lucky Starr out to save th' System agin!

And, oh boy, do things happen. I mean! Lucky tangles with a Mad Robot out on the Sunside, see. Only his clear, level-headed scientific mind saves him. And his plucky little Martian pal gets trapped in the deserted caverns under the Dome, see, helpless in the tentacles of a Living-Rock-Thing. Boy! And there's a Mad (well, Deranged) Scientist, and a beetle-browed, blue-chinned Bully who is really a Spy for nasty ole Senator Swenson, and Alien Spies from Sirius, and all sortsa stuff. Wow!

This is the most clumsy, inept, poorly plotted, hastily written, downright idiotic piece of hackwork that has come my way since Philip Wilding's SPACEFLIGHT VENUS. Weak, improbable, crude, it is a low-grade melodrama with stock characters cut from the familiar pattern. I can hardly believe that Dr. Asimov wrote it, remembering his superb work in "The Mule" and PEBBLE IN THE SKY.

The trouble is, of course, that the Heinleins and Nortons spoil us. We are used to good, tight, well-textured juveniles that can be more fully appreciated by the adults. When we encounter a juvenile that is REALLY written for the kids... well, words fail us.

Miss this one, if you can. LC

TIME X, Wilson Tucker (Collection); Bantam, 140 pp., 25¢.

This is the pocket book reprint of Bob's SCIENCE FICTION SUB-TREASURY (Rinehart, 1954), a collection of his short stories from here and there, including two fanzine-published items.

I'm afraid Bob's at his best in novel form, for these are almost without exception rather tired (and tiresome) tales: stale, dry and colorless. His peculiar style of brusque, terse prose, with its coloquial and conversational vocabulary is palatable in fuller length, but palls in shorter form.

A couple of them are good, however. "MCMLV" is completely delightful, and "My Brother's Wife" is as quietly terrifying a story as I can recall in years. LC

A WAY HOME, Theodore Sturgeon (Collection); Pyramid, 192 pp., 35¢.

This paper-back reprint of the book contains nine shorts and a good introduction by Groff Conklin. It's a uniformly good collection, with a higher-than-average quality level—most of Sturgeon's previous collections have been marred seriously by the inclusion of bad early stories with top-flight recent work, the dichtomy leaving a bad taste in most reader's mouths.

Sturgeon is an over-rated writer, perhaps the most over-rated writer in our field if you exclude Bradbury; a rather self-consciously arty writer with very little to say but a devastatingly clever way of saying it, which seems to be enough for most readers. But, anyway, this well-chosen selection of his best is well worth the reading. LC

I, ROBOT, Isaac Asimov (Collection); Signet, 192 pp., 35¢.

The "positronic robot" stories of Mr. Asimov have had a long and varied history. First appearing seperately in Super

Science. Astounding and other magazines, they came out as a dual hard-and-paper-cover edition from Gnome in 1950; now they are in print again as a pocket-book.

Few series in science fiction deserve such wide publishing histories. The stories form one of the finest connected-series in modern s. f., and probably contain most of Asimov's best short work. Here they are inter-connected and almost woven into a novel, and, perhaps, read better that way.

Although the series, as a series, possibly does not reach the height of quality and breadth of imaginative concept that the Foundation stories do, they are among the best in our field, and I am happy to see them in print again. LC

COROMANDEL!, John Masters (Novel); Bantam, 295 pp., 50¢.

John Masters is one of the more important contemporary English novelists, and his series of novels relating the effects of the British on India have earned him comparison with Kipling. His previous novels—BHOWANI JUNCTION, THE DECEIVERS, NIGHTRUNNERS OF BENGAL—have been concerned with purely mainstream matters, but this, his latest, is firmly in our field.

Against a rich historical tapestry of 17th Century India, Mr. Masters has spun an allegorical fantasy of a young and naive Englishman, Jason Savage, and his quest for the fabulous treasure of the legendary Mount Meru. In England he was sold a gorgeous map of this mythic mountain, and we follow him across the seas until he jumps ship and wades ashore on the Pearl Coast with a dubious map in his pocket and a legend in his heart. We follow him as he searches single-mindedly for Meru; we watch him as greed and luxury delay him, as love weaves its coils about him, but at last we see him break free and reach his goal.

It is a historical fantasy of the old school, a richly-colored, vividly-told, thoroughly exciting story of travel, adventure, love, treasure and derring-do. Read merely as an adventure novel, it is thrilling and colorful; read more deeply as an allegory, it is stimulating and thought-provoking; but read as a fantasy, it conjures dreams of the lost age when "Cofomandel!" was the cry of adventure, the call of romance that drew Elizabethan explorers to uncover and win the pomp and splendour of Golden Ind. LC

ATLANTIS: THE MYSTERY UNRAVELLED, Jurgen Spanuth (Non-fiction); Citadel, 207 pp., 36 illus., $4.00.

I had not thought that, after de Camp's magnificent debunking of the Atlantis legend in his LOST CONTINENTS, there would be any more non-fiction books purporting to prove the actual historical existence of the Lost Land. De Camp examined the story exhaustively, from every conceivable angle, and rationally and objectively proceeded to completely demolish every theory yet brought forth concerning the possible existence of Plato's fairyland.

But now a Mr. Jurgen Spanuth has come forward with the Answer to the Riddle of The Ages. He goes his predecessors one better. Not content with making the usual number of astonishing claims (i.e., he says the Atlanteans are identical with the Biblical Philistines and Homer's Phaeacians, that the Atlantean metal, orichalcum, is nothing more than amber, that Atlantis is one and the same with Hyperborea, Avalon and Biblical Caphtor), he claims actually to have visited it via diver's suit in its underwater tomb.

Unfortunately, the water was too muddy for photographs.

To give Mr. Spanuth his due, however, he has written a

calm, literate, seemingly-scientific and certainly well-written book. He marshalls an impressive array of proofs and theories, displays an amazing erudition, and shows a thorough grasp of many scientific and mythic schools. Unlike the Churchwards and Scot-Elliotts, with their rambling, disjointed, confused and impossible ravings, his book is sane and articulate.

In a nutshell, he accepts without argument the old story that Solon, visiting in Egypt, heard the story of the nine-thousand year old Athenian-Atlantean war from priests of Isis at Sais on the Nile Delta, made notes as the basis of a projected epic, which were handed down after his death by his descendents and related by one of them at a feast to Socrates, which Plato, also present, recorded for history in two of his Socratic dialogues. He claims (and presents impressive historical, geological and literary proof) that the island we remember as Atlantis was situated in Scandanavian waters off Heligoland.

Unhappily, however, he makes the same basic error as have so many other writers upon Atlantiology: that the story was recorded by Plato while present at a feast with Socrates. Now this is manifestly impossible, due to the discrepencies in their ages. At the dates upon which the two Socratic dialogues are supposed to have occured, Plato would have been about six years old, hardly old enough (even in classic Greece) to have been present and taken part in philosophical discussions. The trouble is that so many persons appear to consider philosophical dialogues such as Plato's as a sort of stenographic record of word-for-word fidelity, when actually this sort of thing was a common literary form in such times, permitting the author to give several sides of a controversial question without placing himself on either side. Consider it as a sort of play, all dialogue and no action, but for heaven's sake don't think Plato was there, doll in one hand, short-hand pad in the other, taking down every pearl that dropped from Socrates' lips.

Why make such a point about the actuality of Plato's two dialogues? Because the Atlantis story first appears in history through them, and no where else. There are no other mentions of Atlantis or anything vaguely like Atlantis anywhere in ancient literature, before the time of Plato. All later Atlantis-stories stem from the two dialogues. And, since the very root and womb of the Atlantis legend was in a form of creative literature, we can hardly credit the legend itself as actual history.

All this aside, Mr. Spanuth has written an intelligent book—one that can be very entertaining, if you don't take it very seriously. LC

THE STORY OF MAN AND THE STARS, Patrick Moore (Non-fiction); Norton, 242 pp., $3.95.

A popular guide to astronomy, written in a clear, lively style, tracing the history of astronomy from the days of the cave men onward, with side discursions on the flying saucers, Atlantis, science fiction from Lucian to Wells, space satellites, and similar things. The work is on a juvenile level; anyone who's read half a dozen Willy Ley articles will know all that MAN AND THE STARS can tell him. —Bob Silverberg

THE CLEAN DYING and other poems, Kenneth H. Ford (267 Crocker, Pacific Grove, Calif.); Villiers Pub. (Brit.), 46 pp., $2.00.

This slim volume is an astonishing achievement. Kenneth

Ford—an occasional contributor to INSIDE, but otherwise unknown to me—has come up with the first science fiction poetry of genuine merit ever written, so far as I'm concerned. Not the endless iamb-and-anapest jingles dashed out with such ease by the people who write fanmag fillers, but indisputable poetry of sharp insight and considerable technical ability.

Ford works in free verse, and he owes a good deal to Eliot and Cummings, but his voice seems clearly his own even in this maiden collection. His style is epigrammatic and pointed, and his insights into future happenings seem disquieting and clear of focus. Not all the 35 poems are science fiction, but even the more conventional ones bear the mark of Mr. Ford's distinctive style. I'd like to see him try his hand at some science fiction prose, now; there's no guaranteeing it, but he might very well turn into a major s.f. writer. BS

REACH FOR TOMORROW, Arthur C. Clarke (Collection); Ballantine, 166 pp., $2.00, 35¢ (paper).

A startlingly original and somewhat absurd cover layout is the highlight of this second Ballantine volume of Clarke short stories. Within are twelve stories, ranging from "Rescue Party", Clarke's first published story, to several items of 1953 vintage.

Since eleven of Clarke's short stories have already appeared in an earlier Ballantine Book, and since he has not written a great many short stories, it's not surprising that some of the ones in this new collection should be mere barrel-scrapings—and they are. This includes a number of one-punch short-shorts published in 1952-53.

But the book also includes some worthy items in between the potboilers. "Rescue Party", which seems to be thematically related to Clarke's first novel, AGAINST THE FALL OF NIGHT, is a superb picture of Earth's future; "Jupiter Five", from If, is strictly routine but notable for some ingenious plotting. The other stories—most of which appeared in the lesser magazines—range from good to utterly unspeakable, with gradations in between. This volume is no great credit to Clarke. BS


ROCKETS AND GUIDED MISSILES, John Humphries; Macmillan, 224 pp., illus., $6.00.

This is definitely not a "popular" exposition on the subject of rockets. The fly-leaf states that it is "intended in the main for engineers and technicians", but this is true only with some qualifications. It is certainly not an engineer's treatise, but on the other hand expressions like "convergent-divergent nozzle" which are not elucidated in the text might be mysterious to the uninitiate. Also, although the mathematics are largely restricted to algebraic equations and graphs, the derivation, and sometimes even the meaning, is a trifle obscure.

There is a very good description of the fantastic "integrating accelerometers" devised by the Germans for the A-4 (V-2).

The chapter on space travel is too short (in the opinion of an astro-nautics enthusiast!) and not too optimistic about the near future.

Working for an aviation firm, I have reason to believe some of the missile information to be dated, but undoubtedly

security accounts for this.

On the whole, however, this is a worthwhile book for those who would like to acquire a deeper feel for the subject of rocketry than one is likely to get from easier works.

—Charles Freudenthal

**published**

ANIMAL FARM, George Orwell; New Amer. Lib., 128 pp., $.25.
ANSWER, THE, Philip Wylie; Rinehart, 63 pp., $1.50.
AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS, Jules Verne; Dodd, Mead, 254 pp., $3.25. (illus. with intro. by Anthony Boucher)
AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS, Jules Verne; Lion, 189 pp., $.35.
AS I REMEMBER IT, James Cabell; McBride, 243 pp., $3.75.
BALD IGGLE, Al Capp; Simon & Schuster, $1.00.
BEGINNING, THE, Maria Leach (Juv.); Funk & Wagnalls, 256 pp., $3.50.
BIG BALL OF WAX, THE, Shepheard Mead; Ballantine, $.35.
BOYS' BOOK OF SPACE, THE, Patrick Moore (Juv.); Roy, 144 pp., $2.75.
CHALLENGE OF MAN'S FUTURE, THE, Harrison Brown; Viking, 302 pp., $1.25.
CHANGING UNIVERSE, John Pfeiffer; Random, 243 pp., $4.75.
CLOUD-CATCHER, THE, Eda & Richard Crist (Juv.); Abelard-Schuman, 143 pp., $2.50.
COLD WAR IN HELL, Harry Blamires; Longmans, 207 pp., $2.50.
DICTIONARY OF MAGIC, Harry Wedeck; Philosophical Lib., 113 pp., $3.00.
DOUBLE EXPOSURE, Theo Fleischman; Vanguard, 249 pp., $3.50.
ENORMOUS EGG, THE, Oliver Butterworth (Juv.); Little, Brown, 187 pp., $2.95.
EXPLORATION OF MARS, THE, Willy Ley & Wernher von Braun; Viking, 186 pp., $4.95.
FABULOUS FUTURE, THE, David Sarnoff; Dutton, 206 pp., $3.50.
FANTASY DRAWINGS, Ghaim Gross; Beechhurst, 116 pp., $10.00.
FLIGHT TO THE MISTY PLANET, Mary Patchett (Juv.); Bobbs-Merrill, 236 pp., $2.75.
FLYING SAUCERS AND COMMON SENSE, Waveney Girvan; Citadel, 157 pp., $3.50.
FORGOTTEN MYSTERIES, R. DeWitt Miller; Citadel, 208 pp., $3.
GADGET MAKER, THE, Maxwell Griffith; Pocket, 353 pp., $.35.
HEAVEN AND HELL, Aldous Huxley; Harper, 103 pp., $2.00.
HIGHWAYS IN HIDING, George O. Smith; Gnome, 223 pp., $3.00.
HYPNOTISM AND REINCARNATION, Sigmund Leopold; Avon, $.35.
I'M FOR ME FIRST, Roger Price; Ballantine, 135 pp., $.35.
INTERPLANETARY HUNTER, Arthur K. Barnes; Gnome, 231 pp., $3.
LIFE ON OTHER WORLDS, Sir Harold Jones; New Amer. Lib., $.50.
MANKIND ON THE RUN & THE CROSSROADS OF TIME, Gordon Dickson & Andre Norton; Ace Double, 320 pp., $.35.
MARS, THE NEW FRONTIER, Wells Webb; Fearon, 141 pp., $5.00.
MEN BEHIND THE SPACE ROCKETS, THE, Heinz Gartmann; McKay, 185 pp., $3.95.
MISSION TO THE MOON, Lester del Rey (Juv.); Winston, 218 pp., $2.00.
MOTIF-INDEX OF FOLK-LITERATURE, Stith Thompson; Bloomington Univ. Press, 517 pp., $13.50.
NELLIE AND HER FLYING CROCODILE, Chad Walsh (Juv.); Harper, 128 pp., $2.50.
NEW WORLDS OF MODERN SCIENCE, Leonard Engel ed.; Dell, 383 pp., $.35.
1999: OUR HOPEFUL FUTURE, Victor Cohn; Bobbs-Merrill, 205 pp., $3.75.
ONDINE, Jean Giraudoux; S. French pap., 96 pp., $.90.
OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET, C.S. Lewis; Avon, $.35.

PLAGUE SHIP, Andrew North; Gnome, 192 pp., $2.75.
POGO SUNDAY BOOK, THE, Walt Kelly; Simon & Schuster, 132 pp., $1.00.
POWER, THE, Frank Robinson; Lippincott, 218 pp., $3.00.
ROBOT ERA, THE, Philip Cleator; Crowell, 172 pp., $3.75.
SATIRIC ALLEGORY: MIRROR OF MAN, Ellen Leyburn; Yale, 149 pp., $3.00.
SCIENTIFIC REPORT ON "THE SEARCH FOR BRIDEY MURPHY", A, Dr. Milton Kline ed.; Julian, 245 pp., $3.50.
SCREAMING GHOST AND OTHER STORIES, THE, Carl Carmer; Knopf, 146 pp., $3.00.
SEVEN STARS FOR CATFISH BEND, Lucien Burman; Funk & Wagnalls, 133 pp., $2.75.
SHRINKING MAN, THE, Richard Matheson; Gold Medal, 192 pp., $.35.
SNAPDRAGON, Mervyn Savill ed.; Associated Booksellers, 235 pp., $3.00.
STARBOY, Carl Biemiller (Juv.); Holt, 158 pp., $2.50.
THEY KNEW TOO MUCH ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS, Gray Barker; Univ. Books, 256 pp., $3.50.
TIME BOMB, Wilson Tucker; Rinehart, 256 pp., $2.75.
TRUTH ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS, THE, Aime Michel; Criterion, 255 pp., $3.95.
UFO AND THE BIBLE, M.K. Jessup; Citadel, 126 pp., $2.50.
UFO ANNUAL, THE, M.K. Jessup; Citadel, 379 pp., $4.95.
UNKNOWN—IS IT NEARER?, THE, Eric Dingwall & John Langdon-Davies; New Amer. Lib., 160pp., $.35.
WELL, THE, Golden Englis; Champman & Grimes, 123 pp., $2.50.
ZIP-ZIP AND HIS FLYING SAUCER, John Schealer (Juv.); Dutton, 118 pp., $2.50.

(continued from page 35)

There is probably only one work in English which can afford to stand up and just be beautiful—Kubla Khan—because its function disappeared with the remainder of it on the arrival of the Person from Porlock. I know of only one novelist currently who has achieved the perfect fusion of beautiful prose and a maximum level of communication, and that's George R. Stewart, a man who seems to be so much in love with English that his most casual statements achieve the functional beauty of good engineering, while his passages of description produce an interplay of image and event without the slightest veil of verbal confusion to mask the effect.

(While I think of it: perhaps someone would oblige me by explaining why the arrant rationalist HPL was so fascinated by the horror story.)

Alan Paton and Stuart Cloete, at his best, run in Stewart's company. Their use of language is so—efficient, if you like—because they are never preoccupied by confusing word with image or concept.

However, I have a feeling that this argument will in the end wind up where all critical arguments seem to—among personal prejudices. I do suspect that since the most ardent Lovecraftians belong to the generation before me, they may have produced a reaction by over-rating him; I admit, too, that I'm just naturally against euphuistic English. Frank Arnold (Wings Across Time—remember the guy?) has promised to look me up some HPL I haven't read, which he recommends, and those kind people who took up the cudgels in defence of him can know I do try and see their point of view.

—John Brunner

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fan of the golden age

card player

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man asked to say a few words


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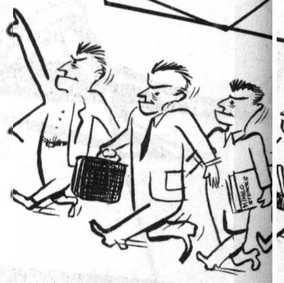
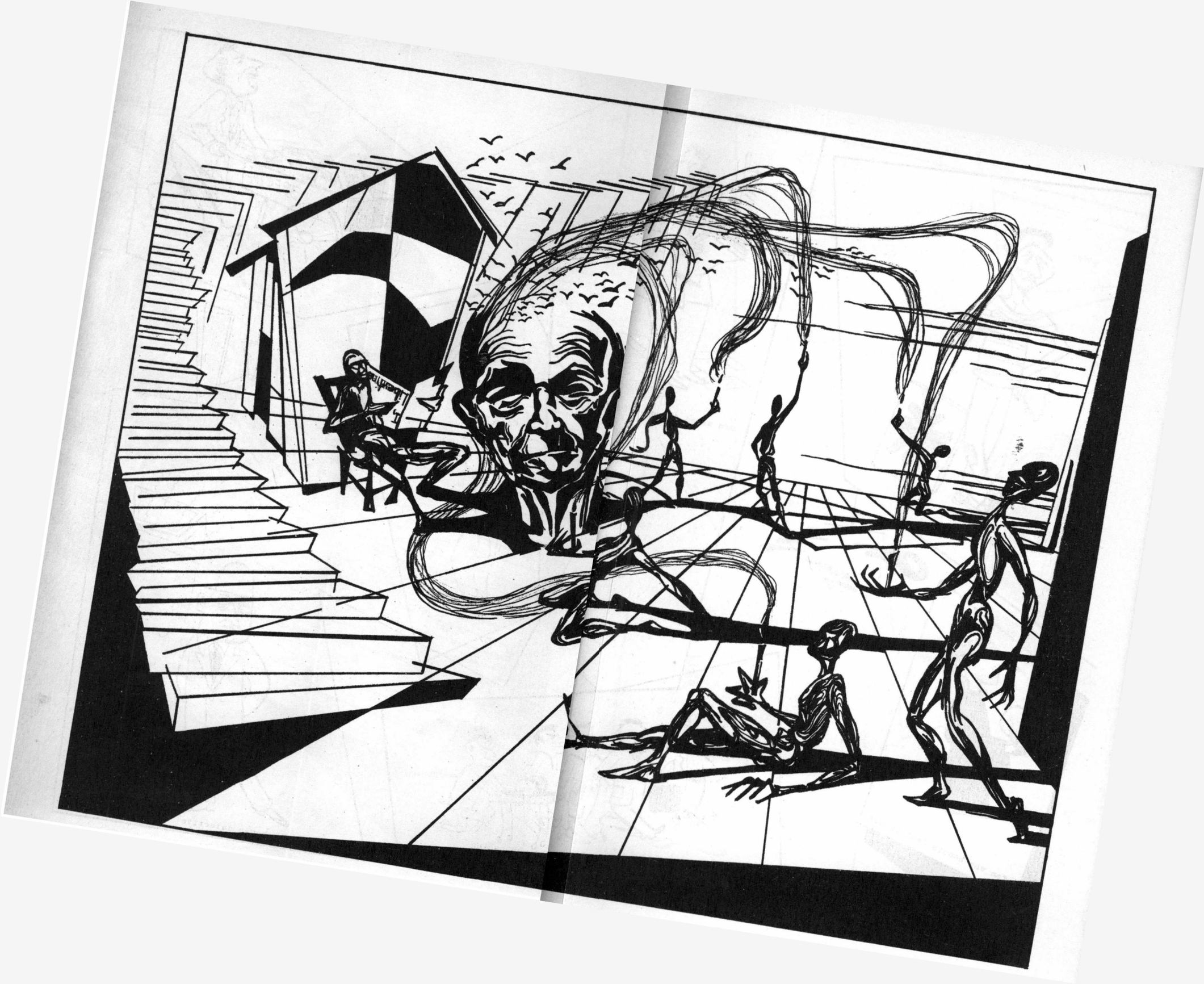


fans about to make history by publishing fanzine during convention

house detective



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Elsie Twaddle
Violet Tubb
Clinton Youngbear
Byron Cluckey
Barbera Tingley
Sophie Bologna
Mildred Crouch
Arthur Croak
Mona Cronk
Betty Booze
Helen Blupers
Cungee Arena
Virginia Ping
Olga Tunkel
Merlyn Dille
Bessie Butterbaugh
Emma Bledsoe
Leslie Bone
Vertie Cheatam
Cloyteal Crabtree
Gertrude Wheelhouse
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Elsworth Molder
Exie Moneylon
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Shirley Shanks
Rose Roach
Girlie Sampson
Pershing Threewit
Crystal Dinkel
Willemina Damme
Apollonia Feather
Tillie Tossleberry
Gladys Klug
Emmalou Lemmor
Clifford Siggfoos

Note: These individuals were not included in the original play in minor rolls.

Presenting:

# Dark Souls in Jeopardy

A Modernistic Focus-Play
in Three Acts
and An Epilogue

NOTE: In presenting an experimental play such as this the playwright, by the very nature of his presentation, is put solidly on the defensive. He is accused of avant-gardism, of extreme ambiguity, of theatrical sensationalism, of "artiness" and creative sham. I shall not attempt to defend my play at this point. In my Notes and Addenda following the play itself, I have tried to clarify a few key issues, but, in the main, a work of art must speak for itself. My play is not science fiction in the strictest sense of the term (but then it is generally agreed that the term itself is essentially meaningless) nor is it an allegory, though one can certainly find allegorical manifestations throughout. It is also not a fantasy, even when one considers that fantasy is a dominant element, underkeyed to provide a delicate sense of counterbalance. Lacking these the play loses body and form. Hence, DARK SOULS is, therefore, a study in stress, a play in backward-forward motion, which moves with rather than because of. But, I have said too much here. On with the show!

**william f nolan**

ACT ONE

(The curtain rises slowly to a muted clitter of soft castanets in the off-stage middle distance. It is evening and the proud sun has retired, trailing his regal robes of golden fire down the blooded sky; it is the hour the people of Italy call "prima sera"—the beginning of dusk. We see a patch of ravaged French-Colonial countryside, obviously sterile and rootless. A husky-lunged bambino cries like a lost bird off-stage and a single pink rose petal descends, in lazy feather-driftings, to settle upon the roof of a brown-shake house, center-stage front. In cut-away view, we see our lead inside the structure, seated. He is Prof. Milton Suggs, a man of eighty, bowed, white-haired, unshaven and repulsive. He coughs wetly over an evening paper which we see he is holding upside down. The shadow of what must be considered a really gigantic black bat passes over the brown-shake house as the castanets fade into a glissandi of rising drumbeats. The Prof. coughs again, a crackly-soft sound suggesting incurable disease, and lowers his paper. He peers into the outer darkness.)

PROF. SUGGS (warily): Who is—out there?

(Instantly, at least one hundred blackbirds are released back-stage and they scatter, shreiking, up a tall, shadowed stair-way, front-stage left, into grayness. A single gong sounds, remote and lonely. The Children enter. They bear large black candles in their frail hands. They are chanting.

BETTY and ANNIE and TINY and LUCY and BOBBIE and TIMMIE and TEENY and TOMMY and FORRIE and MORRIE:

Ole Prof. Suggs, he gives us pains.
We hope he gets his when it rains.

(Over and over and over. When the audience cannot tolerate it another second the Prof.'s pretty young comic-type wife enters from the false balcony, center-stage middle right. She is patently hysterical. Her fingers fly over the sweater she has been knitting for her husband. She screams, falls to the carpet, twitches once, and lies still. The Prof. is seen, in silhouette, fingering one of her damp raincoats as the curtain descends to the laughing cry of the night-children. The houselights go up in a downpour of artificial snow, ending the first act.)

ACT TWO

(The second-act curtain rises to the soft yammer of young puppies as we see the Children emerge from the false orchestra pit. Each child carries a yapping pup. Prof. Suggs is still fingering his wife's clothing. By now a sizable amount of fingered garments has mounded about his legs.)

PROF. SUGGS (obviously angry): NOW, you've done it, by God! Impudent young puppies!

(The Children react to the Prof.'s abuse with wild barks, whoops, hoots and catcalls.)

TEENY: Yaw, yaw, Suggs! Yaw, yaw.

(The We-Are-Property Theme, keynoting the play, enters at this point and never quite leaves us throughout the remaining acts. The puppies, in silhouette, appear to be done-away-with before the still-damp mound of Prof. Suggs' wife's clothing.

Ten Litter Bearers appear to carry out the pseudo-dead pups. A huge, solemn Black Man, bearing across his shoulders the body of a white Woman Jazzsinger runs, shrieking, up the Main aisle to the damp stage. On his glistening back a large placard reads:

SHABUNDA: THUNDERBIRD

An Austin-Healey Le Mans Sports Roadster accelerates, with a loud splottering, back-stage and we see its lights arc across the Negro's face. The Black Warrior lowers the Jazzwoman to the rug and, facing the audience, begins a strange and melodic chant.)

BLACK MAN: Wambi, Wambi, B'wani WAMBA!

(The Children rush into the wings, shrieking. Hair-lice are released into the audience. The houselights lighten, dim, lighten, dim. A sound like a gigantic piece of black bat-wing tearing is heard off-stage and the audience is made to realize that the ROCKET which the ailing Prof. Suggs has been expecting, has arrived. A greenish outre-type light floats out of the second balcony and settles center-stage forward. Silently, the Children rush in and hasten away with the body of Prof. Suggs' stricken wife (or Frau). A totally nude girl, wearing only a trenchcoat loose about the neck, emerges from a false door in the orchestra pit and picks up one of the smaller children (not engaged in carrying and/or packing the Prof.'s wife.) At this point, a veritable horde of uniformed patrolmen stream onstage from the Main aisle. They are chanting, their voices high and somehow unreal.)

UNIFORMED PATROLMEN (lustily):

We come to do a job that's nice.
We're here to sop up all the vice!

(The Patrolmen pick up the trenchcoated nude and rush her up the false stairway into utter blackness. A remote gong booms out the hour as the curtain slowly descends to a rising glissandi of the We-Are-Property Theme, ending the second act.)

ACT THREE

(The audience does not notice the curtain rise because of the explosion. When the smoke and debris have been cleared from the stage, center-forward, then ten Litter Bearers rush in from the wings to remove and/or tote away the wounded and dying members of the original cast. The audience does not realize that this is all part and parcel of the play, and thus surprise is easily achieved. Several cages of sewer rats are released to scamper through the theatre darkness to the cheeze-aroma rear door. A strident clatter of harpstrings heralds the return of the Litter Bearers. Led by a drugged Suggs, they walk slowly into the brown-shake house, carrying five black caskets, decorated with rather lavish silver scroll work, which are transparent. Inside these caskets we see that the occupants are alive. Mouths, wrists and ankles have been taped. This is not a part of the actual play itself, though most of the audience thinks it is. Obviously, the Bearers are carrying and/or packing back errent members of the theatre audience who attempted, unsuccessfully, to leave after the second act through the false doors set up to mislead strays during the earlier portion of onstage activity. Sound of mail-plane dropping envelope onstage. Audience reacts to downpour of simulated hailstones. Letter-addressee

name magnified on white pseudo-Greek Temple backdrop. Letter to:

MARVIN FUDGE, c/o THE DOG)

TEENY: Yaw, yaw, Suggs!

(At this juncture demented usher sets onstage curtains ablaze to scene of violent confusion, resulting in second explosion, clearing loges. The Dog appears. He is shaggy, ill-tempered and fraught with dark tides.)

TINY (testily): He sure is a smart Dog. Too bad he's such a mean son-of-a-bitch!

(Shrieking Russian Ushers rush in shushing lushes. Loges refill. Smoke from very small Cobalt Bomb settles to stage in blue hush. Exposition (by Suggs, now fully recovered) on scene of quiet, for balance. Suggs wears an expression clearly indicating that this silent portion is a part of the play itself. Curtain descends to glassy sound of off-stage flutes, ending the third act.)

EPILOGUE

(Curtain is briefly up on final scene to We-Are-Interplanetary Theme music. Fade-in, left front-center, with blue arc-lamp. Russian Usher (one) onstage.)

THE DOG: I guess this is it.

(Theatre rotates on Timkin Rollerbearings, dumping Foyer Critics.)

TEENY (waspishly): I may be a white-faced baby, but I know one thing. You bitch too much! That was it.

(Play ends with castanet pickup. Theme tempo.)

NOTES AND ADDENDA

A modernistic focus-play such as mine is not an easy vehicle for the unseasoned young artist to handle. If ineptly constructed too many loose ends appear, too many questions are left unanswered. In DARK SOULS I tried, and, I am told, I succeeded, in bringing to a sharper focal point, outwardly unrealistic elements—thereby circumnavigating most of the pitfalls awaiting the over-zealous. This is no simple task! I feel that a playwright, if he is worth his salt, owes one thing to an audience. If he can also inject a sense of depth and meaning into their lives, fine. Well and good. Too many times, however, the blundering young playwright tends to place personal goals above story. And, let me stress, story, in whatever form the creative mind may wish to include it, must. of necessity, be present if the work at hand is to have any real or lasting theatrical significance. A successful play, by its very nature, must be a simple play. To acheive the not-always-easy basic simplicity I have always, for myself, hewn to the playwright's Golden Rule: The organic chemistry of a play is in direct relation to the very essence of its intrinsic structure and form and cannot, at any time, be otherwise. I think this answers a lot of questions for all of us! I want to mention, also, Your Characters. In his frenzied desire to "keep things moving" onstage the young artist often creates hollow characters. In the case of one of my own central characters in DARK SOULS, namely The Dog, I attempted to combine many characteristics found in both man and beast and

the result was, automatically, healthy theatre to a high degree.

I have often been asked what mainstream writing has influenced my work. This is, of course, no easy question to answer, but I would have been very much amiss, indeed, were it not for men like Dylan Thomas, Rube Goldberg, Mark Twain, A.E. van Vogt, Ernie Hemingway and Olsen and Johnson. These, and others a good deal like them, heavily weighted my earlier efforts.

DARK SOULS was written, in first-draft, when I was at my lowest financial ebb, in that jobless Spring of 1954. It sprang, almost full-grown, from inner tensions (aided and abetted by an empty stomach!) and justified itself, I believe, by a depth and a devious subtlety far broader than surface quality would suggest. At least, I like to think of it that way! Like the finest work of Fry, Strindberg, Odets and even, perhaps, William Shakespeare, a lot of my play lies beneath the surface of a wooden stage. To some, it might even appear chaotic and confused, but I am reminded of a remark attributed to the late great Spanish poet, F.G. Lorca: "Confusion is the very thin cloak worn by clarity." Let no one deny this truth! DARK SOULS, then, is a boldly drawn knife in the face of staid theatre. Like all experiments of a more radical nature, it cannot be too lustily condemned or too highly praised. Only the melting sands of time will give us a full and final verdict. I, in the meantime, am content to let my record stand!

CHARACTER LISTING

Note: The following individuals did not play the following roles in the original play.

Nannie Darendinger as THE LUCKLESS WIDOW
Zugmunt Wilk as THE DARK PREACHER
Nello and Claude Kunkel as THE BROTHERS
Frances Fahrenkrug as THE STRICKEN MAID
Katie Pulleybone as THE ILL-FATED YOUNG GIRL
Lester Hoots as THE CONDUCTOR
Golda Barfuss as THE HOPELESS DRUNK
Raymond Tarbutton as THE IRATE FOLKSINGER
Simon Brain as THE EVIL GATEMAN
Thiam Ghong as THE ORIENTAL
Kenneth Dankwardt as THE SEEDY PRACTITIONER
Nikolaus Kronschnable as THE RUSSIAN CYCLIST
Riley Suggs as THE HANGER-ON
Orlando Pipes as THE MONEYED YOUTH
Ethellow Kiesewetter as THE NERVOUS AERIALIST
Emma Overturf as THE COLD AUNT
Dover Jurney as THE SMUG ENGLISHMAN
George Fiebelkorn as THE TUBERCULAR MILKMAN
Christo Popoff as THE FRENZIED TRUCK DRIVER
Elwood Beeles as THE UNDERTAKER
Ali Leaf as THE SHY SCOUTMASTER
Marjorie Mudge as THE BATHING BEAUTY
Petrus Westervoorde as THE NEWSHAWK
Elly Apes as THE CONFIDENT ACTRESS
Verna Puddy as THE COOK
Lawrence Torrance and Shirley Gurley as THE LOVERS
with
Rose Testa as THE DYING MOTHER

Final Note: All of these individuals, both major and minor, listed here and on the opening page, are real people and, therefore, were not in the play as I wrote it.

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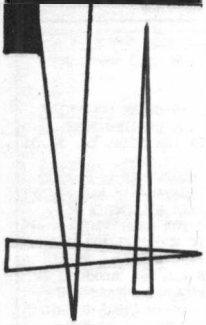


"For, to the extent a man believes, he cannot seek; and so long as he prays, he is not trying his own best."
—Philip Wylie, from AN ESSAY ON MORALS

In case you're wondering, no, there wasn't a July issue. I took a much deserved vacation —at least, I thought it was deserved. Taking an issue of Playboy in hand, I marched out to face the world and look it in the jaundiced eye. Having shortly had enough of that, I sat on my hind-quarters for a few months and did nothing.

And oh how we have lost that great talent, that great ability to do nothing. All other animals have it—watch them sometime. The dog lying in the shade for hours on end, doing absolutely nothing. While we humans, being more intelligent nor they, have got to always be doing something. Let the other poor, stupid animals waste their time lying around relaxing, contemplating, studying the worlds in the grains of sand. Not us, boy, not us, we've got an appointment with the Doc. We've gotta do.

So here I am, in the meantime having moved our "Jesus loves this home" plaque. Our new address: Box 356, Times Square Station, New York 36, New York.

We're getting the next issue out early—it being our special Election Issue, featuring an article on our Favorite Candidate, Pogo. Consequently, there won't be time for you to get your ads in—if any of you care. But we do want your money, and we do offer the largest circulation and best services in fandom for advertising. So come lose, already, and get that ad in you've been putting off and putting off. Deadline for the January issue: November 20.

Among other things in the next issue will be H. P. LOVECRAFT: THE GODS by Lin Carter, the last part of that monstrous trilogy begun in SFA for March 1950, HOW TO BE A SCIENCE FICTION CRITIC by Robert Bloch and a story we announced long long ago for our sixth issue, FIRST MOVE by S. Fowler Wright. Unfortunately, there was a short delay...RS

CYRIL KORNBLUTH: The current issue of INSIDE reflects great credit on everybody concerned. When I think of the smeary, hekto'd fanrags of my youth—! Lin Carter's impeccable scholarship is a delight, and I think Pat Patterson's illustrations are, flatly, several notches above the best art work I have previously seen in amateur publications...Bloch's article alone would have made it a distinguished issue. Science fiction is very fortunate that it has such an energetic, well-informed, clear-thinking critic at its service. I think he proves his point about the boom-and-bust and that the case may now be considered closed. The answer is in the May INSIDE, and that's that...I do, however, question one of his periph-

eral assumptions without for a moment questioning his conclusions. I am not convinced that any significant proportion of the movie audience is made up of "the sadists—the potential and actual pyromaniacs, paranoids and psychopaths...who revel in fantasies of mass violence and destruction."...I submit myself as a case in point. I go to the movies rarely, and almost always to see "spectacle". I try to see each De Mille film because I know it will probably have a few memorable minutes in it which will remain in the library of scenes and backgrounds in my head. I made a point of seeing MGM's Diane. not—so help me God!—to drool at Lana Turner but to watch the fatal joust of Henri IV, if I have his serial number right. It cost me a dollar, and now I know what a tournament looked like when Renaissance nobles were playing that they were Mediaeval nobles. And I know in Technicolor. Parts of the Kirk Douglas Ulysses were superb, notably the scene in Cyclops' cave, the Cretan costume and decor of Nausica's palace, the contrasting neolithic house of Ulysses. Sure, the Cyclops ate a Greek—why not? Isn't that what ogres are supposed to do?...It's a question of degree, too. On the Waterfront made me sick with too much blood. So did the scene in Them where an ant mandibled somebody in half. Too much. So did a horrible Italian-made throw-them-to-the-lions spectacle whose name I have forgotten in self defense. I walked out of the theater as an arena scene showed signs of rapidly developing into something that could appeal only to a sadist or masochist. Too much...The fact that the rest of the audience stayed means little, and it means a lot. It means little because they stayed out of habit, because they wanted their money's worth, because they would have been stranded in the middle of the afternoon with nothing to do. It means a lot because by staying they were risking their psychological integrity...I think Bloch has hold of the wrong end of a problem which is bigger and more serious than the question of science fiction's popularity. It is the manufacture on large scale of sadists and masochists by such brutality as he decries in the comics, fiction, broadcasting and the movies. I don't think we have them among us in large numbers—yet. There are a few shocking incidents which come to light every year, but if there is a nation-wide flogging mania I have not heard of it. Bloch is talking about big numbers, multitudes who fill large theaters and run up multi-million-dollar gross receipts. I would like to examine his evidence.

JUANITA COULSON: In fanzine publishing, material ranges all the way from stilted seriousness to ribaldry to the point of bad taste. I could say, fairly, that when I began publishing a monthly fanzine, in February of 1953, I was aware of the variety, and had already made up my mind as to the content of my fanzine. Variety, in the middle range: neither too stilted, nor, at the other end, would I include pointless smut. The majority of the fanzine's readers were college students, or adults, and the adolescent brand of heavy writing, or light, would be boring. In two years of publishing, I could not always avoid the stilted dryness, but I did manage to leave out the smut...Therefore, it came as somewhat of a shock to find I was considered a licentious, perverted ravisher of youthful minds in my publishing endeavors. Not an accusation alone was this, but a predetermined judgment that could well affect my future...It began rather suddenly. I am a school teacher (or at least I was at the time of the incident—whether or not I still am may very well depend on the following facts). While teaching the second grade in Feb. of '55, I was interrupted by my principal and told I was wanted at a meeting of the school

board one hour from then. One hour! That was my warning. Why, what, who? None of these questions were answered. An eighth grade girl was to take charge of my class during my absence. Needless to say the morning was a waste to the second grade. ...An hour later I presented myself at the school board's meeting. After a slight delay waiting on a member who never arrived, we began. I was still completely in the dark. Then came the question, as to what was this little "paper" I was circulating...Somewhat floored, totally unprepared and unable to see what this might be leading to, I began to explain and defend to the best of my ability. Of the board, obviously only the superintendent of schools had seen the fanzine, and his personal reaction was that it was "silly", to which I countered, if that were a valid objection, half of the women's publications and a large number of the "male" magazines were objectionable. Whereupon the superintendent slipped into the background and a woman member took over the inquisition...And that is the best term I can apply—inquisition. Doubly so in that the accused was never allowed to meet his accuser (merely informed that there had been "comments"), never able to receive one definite point to which the board objected. It became a merry-go-round of "What is there in the magazine to which you object? Is there anything therein lewd, obscene, pornographic, or otherwise objectionable?"—at which point we went off on another fruitless tangent...Again and again the statement of "soiling the minds of youth" was brought up. Again and again this was countered by saying no one in the city where I was teaching was reading the fanzine and any underage persons who were reading it, were doing so with the approval and assent of their parents. This was not something exposed to the children. What was there to object to? In what way was I perverting the minds of youth? Off on another tangent...Finally, rather off handedly, things came around to the renewal of my contract, at which point mention was made of the fact that I had applied at another school and they had written for a recommendation. This business of the fanzine would go in my recommendation—they felt it only "fair" to the other school...The other school is still confused. It has seen the fanzine and adjudged it silly but harmless, but because of the recommendation (I have no way of knowing exactly what went in that document) is still leery of acceptance. The attitude seems to be one of "there must be something or the thing wouldn't have come up"...My state is one of the many which regularly goes out into the high schools, talking up the profession of teaching, enlarging on the opportunities, the creativeness, the challenge of working with young minds. They plea for teachers, their professional journals publish countless articles on "How Can We Bring Young People into the Field of Teaching?" I might offer a suggestion. First, they might begin by being honest. Tell the incoming college student, "If you teach, you must create the way we say; your opportunities are to be a good little parrot, do nothing untoward or beyond the norm; the challenge is whether or not you can tread a predetermined straight and narrow."...I intend to keep publishing. I have a college degree, a fair amount of art ability, and a determination. I will start back at the source, if necessary—at my college, which not only knew about the fanzine, but approved it. But if it comes to a question of teaching or publishing, I'm afraid I'll go into a factory before I give up my personal freedom...This is the land where you have freedom of choice in choosing an occupation. Just be careful. There are occupations where it is safer to be a non-thinking, non-creative character than someone with imagination.

# Complaint of the

# BEM

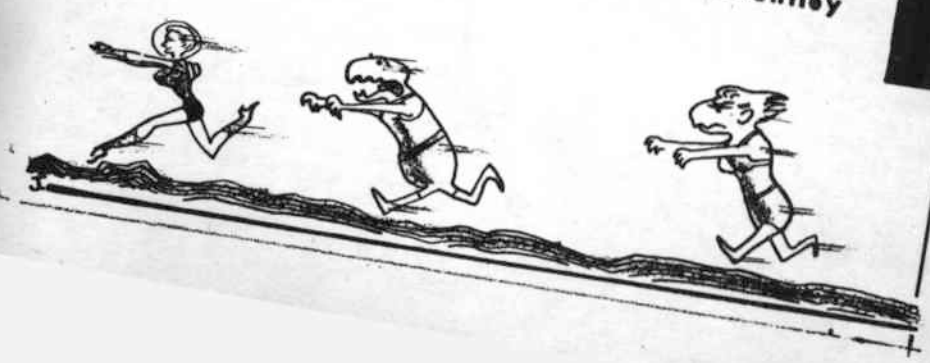
In the stories of fantasy fiction,
  And the extra-terrestrial books,
Your artists' unlovely depiction
  Is highly unfair to our looks;
And writers who write of our features
  Have played the same libelous games—
They have cast us as lecherous creatures
  Who seek to seduce human dames.

On the planet of which I am native,
  A most handsome gent I am deemed.
My antennae are quite decorative;
  My lavender eyes are esteemed.
My figure is fully in fashion
  In lands where my species has reigned
And even in moments of passion,
  My conduct is chastely restrained.

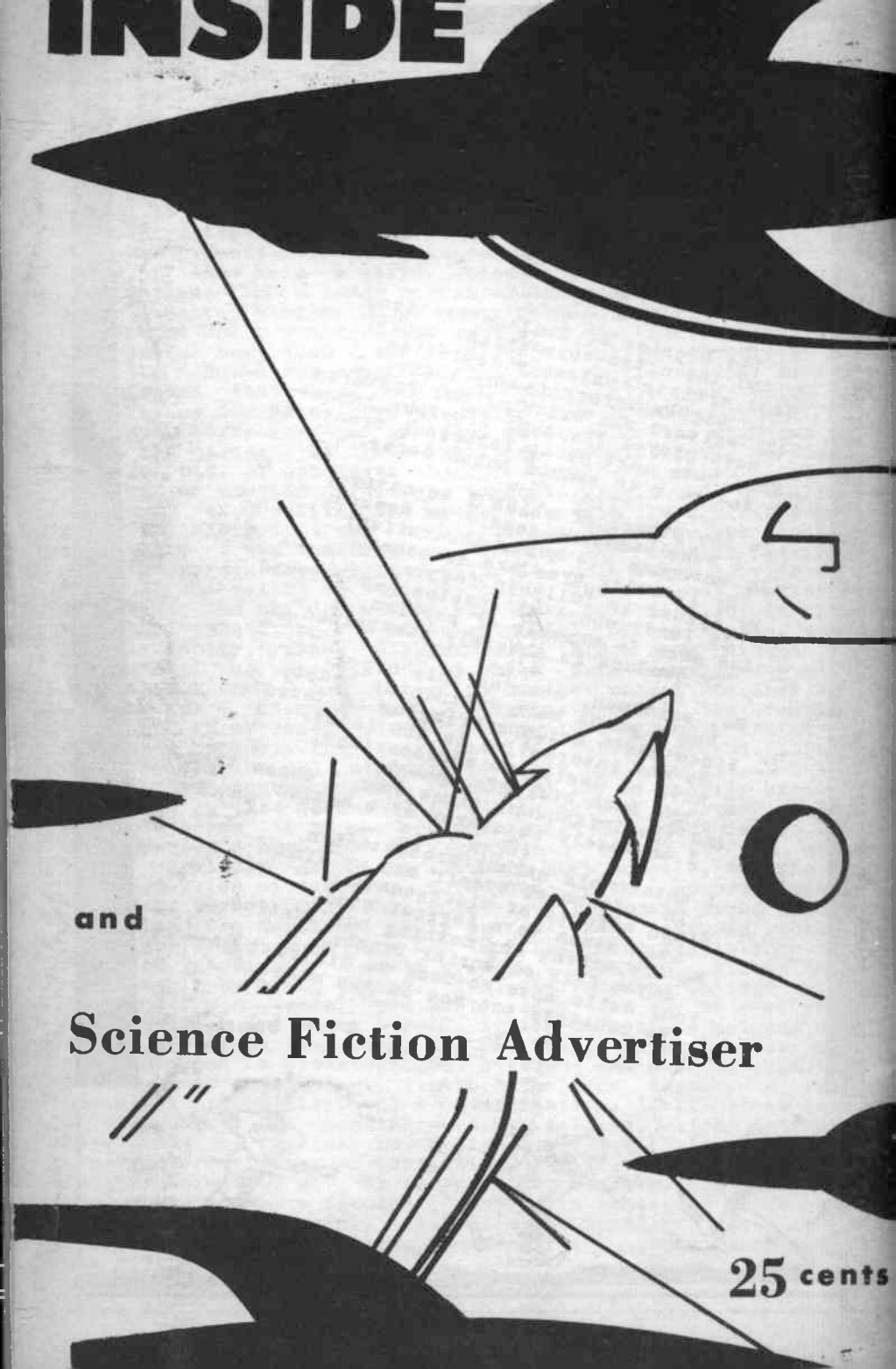
So, earthmen, abandon this error.
  Don't paint me a villainous beast,
Since earth maidens cringing in terror
  Do not interest me in the least.
I have no desire to embrace them;
  They lack biologic appeal;
And the infrequent times when I chase them,
  I am merely in search of a meal.

I enter this strong protestation
  In defense of myself and my kind
Since efforts at miscegenation
  Lack sense to a logical mind.
We are asking for nothing but justice
  And a fair editorial break:
Your dolls have no need to distrust us—
  We monsters are not on the make!

garth bentley



INSIDE



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