

# SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST

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## **In Our Next Issue**

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The staff, after gagging the editor,  
produced an April Fool Number.  
For a few pages they give their idea  
of what SFD will be like 300 Years  
From Now, in 2233, A. D.

.. . . .

Coming back to the present the  
following articles are offered:

.....

Hans Waldemar Wessolowski  
An interesting interview by Julius  
Schwartz and Mortimer Weisinger

.....

The Making of King Kong  
How the RKO studios solved the many  
problems in connection with the filming  
of this unusual picture.

.....

The Service Department continues the  
Book List, of course

.. . . .

Other Interesting Features

.....

Watch for the Big Surprise Novel  
An unusual plot, told in an unusual way

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We introduce this month a new service to amateur science fiction authors. If you have written a story which you have failed to sell, or have not considered good enough to submit, we will service it for you. The great majority of writers sell their fiction through an agent, thus securing able criticism and increasing their chances for producing salable material. Send your manuscript to us. We will criticize it for you, and if we consider that it can be made salable, we will notify you of the fact, furnishing a complete typewritten criticism of the manuscript with suggestions as to markets, technical details and other information.

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Science Fiction Service Bureau  
4331 North 27th Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin



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Science fiction fans, like many other hobbyists, adopt and retain a number of idiosyncrasies. Thus we have a student of Roman archaeology that sneers at anything Hellenistic; a philatelist who thinks that anyone collecting coins is irredeemably insane. Each refuses to see beyond his individual field.

Determined readers of *Amazing*, *Wonder*, and *Astounding Stories*, for the most part, sneer at the so-called panderers of ghostly *Weird* and *Strange*. For the sake of clarity, let me say that a number of science fiction fans read the fantastic magazines avidly, but the others, nurtured on fiction a trifle far-fetched though based on scientific fact cannot tolerate this bastard literature. Personally, the editor's tendencies are toward these fantastic stories.

Weird tales have a historical foundation, an age which, when compared with that of science fiction, makes the latter resemble a babe in arms. We find a mention of these fantastic stories in John Milton's "L'Allegro" and in such an epic as the famous "Beowulf" of unknown English origin. More people, through the ages and at the present have read and are reading weird stories than fantasies based on scientific fact.

The editors and publishers are willing to extend the scope of our service, thereby including the so-called weird magazines.

(continued on page 2)

## TYPES OF SCIENCE FICTION

by David H. Keller, M. D.

There appears to be some confusion as to just what forms of literature can be called science fiction. When the works of Poe, Verne, Wells and Doyle were introduced to a generation thoroughly familiarized with the inventions of our machine and electrical age, they received instant, but perhaps a blase reception. There can be no doubt that the youth of 1870 thrilled when he read "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," but the youth of 1930 simply read in it a rather dull account of events that were made commonplace by the activities of the German submarine during the World War.

The editors of science fiction magazines and the authors who saw commercial gain in this form of fiction felt this change in the viewpoint of the reader. They believed, and justly so, that something more startling than "Around the World in Eighty Days" had to be furnished the science fiction fan, and so improbability was piled on improbability till the fantastic, grotesque and impossible was reached in every science fiction story. For example, one entire issue of a noted quarterly was filled with interplanetary tales.

The writer was not free from guilt in respect to this fictional failing, but in writing this type of story he has received scant personal satisfaction. Constantly such efforts have failed to arouse in him any sense of pride in their composition.

It is believed that science fiction has its place in literature. In a previous editorial it was shown that all inventions first started with the dreamer, then the inventor making the dream come true and then the practical business man finding a worthwhile use for the invention. In this se-

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### Types of Science Fiction (continued)

quence science fiction leads the way. But the great scope of this form of fiction should be an endeavor to enable the individual or the race to rapidly adjust itself to new conditions of life. This is only possible through the increasing growth of human intelligence. This is the one way man has risen from the animal plane, and, if he ever approaches the stars, it will be because he, of all animals, has a mind.

As an author I am, therefore, more interested in the reactions of the mind to new conditions of life than I am to tales of space travel or gigantic monstrosities. I cannot comprehend conflicts in the Nebulae, but when a father invents a Psychopathic Nurse to take care of his baby I feel very much at home. If a man, annoyed by the roar of automobiles past his house, invents a machine to stop all such travel, I sympathize with him; and if a man has his rent raised and his salary cut, and is driven, in desperation, to invent a new form of house where a man can live cheaply and well, I can understand it. Even if a man finds a new form of energy whereby he can become a better bridge player than his wife, I enjoy the tale.

Thus I have written of the little problems of life as influenced by science and the machine and electrical age. It has been my thought to write about the things every one is familiar with. For example, babies. Even in this age of contraception everyone has been a baby and a good many men and women have become parents of babies. Why shouldn't the scientific approach to infancy be made the subject of science fiction? It can and it is. I believe that I have more babies per story in my science fiction literature than all other authors combined. And the fans enjoy my babies and their problems - for example, the robot changing the moistened triangular infantile raiment.

Thus science fiction can become the literary sister of mental hygiene. It can serve the philosophy of everyday life in a form comprehensible to the average man

and woman. Some of the science fiction authors have been accused of being reforming preachers. But be that as it may, some one has to carry the burden of teaching the fundamental truth of science to mankind -- and what is more fundamental than a knowledge of the philosophy of life?

As an author I enjoy writing science fiction. But I wish more of such writing were good literature. How much of it will live on with the children of the great authors? There must be more than an idea, something besides plot--there must be good English, clear expression, a conquest of the art of sentence construction, a familiarity with the increasing development interest in a story leading to a final grand climax of a sentence or even a word. When the writers of science fiction are masters of literature then people will read their tales for the beauty of handling as well as for the plot.

(turn to page 4)

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Personally, we are happy to make this move, though it will mean much more work for our staff. But we shall not do so, until we know how our readers stand on this question. Being well acquainted with the sedentary existence of most of them, we shall take it for granted that they are for this step if they do not write in to the contrary. And if they do, we shall respect, their wishes.

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With the January issue, published so we understand to use up its stock of manuscripts, Astounding Stories makes its farewell appearance on the newsstands. The editors of the Science Fiction Digest hereby offers its regrets to the readers of theyclept magazine and its well wishes to the departing staff in the person of Mr. Harry Bates, whom we have always admired. In colloquial, and consequently happy, Spanish--hasta la vista.

- Maurice Z. Ingber -



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- Maurice Z. Ingber -

## TITANS OF SCIENCE FICTION

### - FARNSWORTH WRIGHT -

Editor of *Weird Tales* since November, 1924, was born in California forty-five years ago. Has English, Scotch, and French blood in him. Lived in San Francisco until 1906 when the earthquake 'threw' him out.

Was bitten early with the editorial bug. When attending a San Francisco High School he published an amateur magazine, "The Laurel," which he edited, wrote, and printed himself on a hand press belonging to a friend.

Was educated at the University of Nevada and the University of Washington. While at the latter he was managing editor of their daily paper. Had to work his way through college. Spent one year surveying, one summer canvassing books, another summer as entomologist for the British Colombia Hop-Company, campaigning against the hop-fleas and the hop lice.

When the United States got into the Big Scrap he went to France as a private in the infantry. Was acquainted with French well enough to act as a French interpreter in the A. E. F. for one year.

Returned to resume life as a newspaper reporter in Chicago. Was the music critic for the Chicago Herald and Examiner (the Hearst Morning paper in the Windy City) for two years.

Wrote stories and read manuscripts for *Weird Tales* when Edwin Baird was editor from 1923-1924, and later became its editor when the Popular Fiction Publishing Company bought the magazine in 1924.

He is the author of about 40 stories altogether, but story-writing is merely an avocation with him. Has written but one science fiction story, "An Adventure in the Fourth Dimension," an uproarious satire on interplanetary stories and science fiction in general. It was reprinted twice: in the Ten Story Book, and again with "The Moon Terror."

It is rumored that Mr. Wright writes under the nom-de-plume of Francis Hard, whose stories and poems have appeared in *Weird Tales* and *Oriental Stories* -- but he prefers not to say anything about it.

His favorite relaxations are chess and swimming, he prefers to read books dealing with science and history. His favorite poet is Keats, favorite story-writer is Alphonse Daudet, but thinks William Morris' "A King's Lesson" is the best short story he's read. Likes to see Mickey Mouse on the screen in preference to anyone else, and considers Master Robert Wright, age three, his favorite hobby.

Thinks the following stories are the best he has published, not in order:

The Stranger from Kurdistan - E. Hoffmann Price

The Phantom Farmhouse - Seabury Quinn

The Outsider - H. P. Lovecraft

The Werewolf Ponkert - H. Warner Munn

The Shadow Kingdom - Robert E. Howard

The Canal - Everil Worrell

The wind that Tramps the World - Frank Owen

A story has to go through a severe test before he accepts it. If it seems to hold any promise at all in a rapid reading it is marked "C" (meaning 'Careful Rereading') and put aside or taken home for more thorough reading. If it is still good, and there is no doubt in his mind that it is good, it is accepted. Roughly, about two stories are accepted out of every 100 submitted. However, one time it happened that 3 weeks went by without his accepting one story; then six acceptable stories came in one day's mail! He is the sole arbitrator; from his decision there is no appeal. This responsibility is distasteful to him, but thinks that it does result in a better selection of tales. If in doubt about a story he rejects it. However, in some very dubious cases he has asked the advice of an



author friend of his, whom he sometimes uses as an unofficial consulting editor.

One particularly humorous incident occurred during his career as editor. An ambitious young writer in Camden, New Jersey, not only refused to take a rejection slip as final, but wrote: "I am not conceited or egotistical, but if you print my story I can absolutely guarantee you that your circulation will increase one hundred thousand copies for the issue containing my story. If it doesn't, then you won't have to buy any more of my stories." Needless to say, the story was again rejected.

Mr. Wright has printed more than a thousand stories in *Weird Tales* since he took over the editorial reins, more than a hundred of which were science fiction. To him may be credited the discovery of such eminent scientifiction authors as Edmond Hamilton, Arthur J. Burks, Clark Ashton Smith, J. Schlossel, Clare Winger Harris, Donald Wanderei, and R.J. Robbins.

He is the only editor in the science fiction field who's giving his readers reprints—a practice which he innovated in 1925. This is what he once wrote concerning science fiction:

"The pseudo science of yesterday is the science of today. Scientific thought and ideas of the universe are changing so rapidly that the school books are far behind scientific discoveries. The swift changing ideas of the universe have fired the imaginations of that brilliant group of young writers who construct the intriguing weird scientific story...The vast majority of our readers receive these stories enthusiastically; but a few...complain that the stories of interstellar and interplanetary travels are so wildly fantastic and impossible that you cannot enjoy them. Complaint is also made when our writers picture worlds ruled by strange monsters; for, you say, it is inconceivable that a world can be run in the form of gigantic insects or even stranger monsters." However, Mr. Wright goes on to state, a perusal of the works of Charles Fort and Maurice Maeterlink will show that these "fantastic" assumptions are not at all im-

possible.

- Julius Schwartz -

### Types of Science Fiction (held over from page 2)

The interest in science fiction is an indication of its virility and growth. There is no doubt that it supplies a definite need in the psychological life of the nation. The S.F. fan is proof of this interest. Personally I adore him and his thoughts. He has praised me to the Stars and damned me to Hell and back again. I do not care what he says about me so long as he says something. Perhaps those who hate me the worst do not know of the close analogy between hate and love, do not realize that their intense reaction is simply a positive compensation to hide a sub-conscious admiration.

"It is to be hoped that Science Fiction will live on. There should be room for at least two competing magazines. The stories help our youth to attain the seemingly impossible and our maturities to face with greater equanimity the unending battles of life. Science Fiction is well worth while. I love to write it."

Philip Wylie, author of the famous fantastic "Gladiator" and co-author of the interplanetary serial which just finished running in Blue Book, "When Worlds Collide," is working on a story for the films. This new scientifilm will depict life fifty years from now. Not humorously, as in "Just Imagine," but in a serious manner this stfilm will attempt to answer the burning question of what will the world be like in 1980.

F.J.A.

"The Vampire Bat," latest horror film from Hollywood, opened recently in New York. Lionel Atwill, who so ably portrayed Dr. Xavier in the all-color spooky "Dr. X," heads the cast which includes Fay Wray. The story concerns the supposed ravages of a vampire in a little German village.

WHO IS ANTHONY GILMORE?



## The Woman of the Wood

"I have desire to be alone," replied McKay. "I do not like people too close to me. I would have my own land, and sleep under my own roof."

"But why come to me?" asked Polleau. "There are many places upon the far side of the lake that you could secure. It is happy there, and this side is not happy, M'sieu. But tell me, what part of my land is it that you desire?"

"That little wood yonder," answered McKay, and pointed to the coppice.

"Ah! I thought so!" whispered Polleau, and between him and his son passed a look of somber understanding.

"That wood is not for sale, M'sieu," he said.

"I can afford to pay well for what I want" said McKay. "Name your price."

"It is not for sale," repeated Polleau, stolidly, "at any price."

"Oh, come," urged McKay, although his heart sank at the finality in that answer. "You have many acres and what is it but a few trees? I can afford to gratify my fancies. I will give you all the worth of your other land for it."

"You have asked what that place that you so desire is, and you have answered that it is but a few trees," said Polleau, slowly, and the tall son behind him laughed, abruptly, maliciously. "But it is more than that, M'sieu--oh, much more than that. And you know it, else why should you pay such a price as you offer? Yes, you know it--since you know also that we are ready to destroy it, and you would save it. And who told you that, M'sieu?" he snarled.

There was such malignance, such black hatred in the face thrust suddenly close to McKay's, eyes blazing, teeth bared by up-lifted lip, that involuntarily he recoiled.

"Only a few trees!" snarled old Polleau. "Then who told him what we mean to do--eh, Pierre?"

Again the son laughed. And at that laughter McKay felt within him resurgence of his own blind hatred as he had fled through the whispering wood. He mastered himself, turned away; there was nothing he could do--now. Polleau halted him.

"M'sieu," he said, "enter. There is something I would tell you; something, too, I would show you."

He stood aside, bowing with a rough courtesy. McKay walked through the doorway. Polleau with his son followed him. He entered a large, dim room whose ceiling was spanned with smoke-blackened beams. From these beams hung onion strings and herbs and smoke-cured meats. On one side was a wide fireplace. Huddled beside it sat Polleau's other son. He glanced up as they entered and McKay saw that a bandage covered one side of his head, hiding his left eye. McKay recognized him as the one who had cut down the slim birch. The blow of the fir, he reflected with a certain satisfaction, had been no futile one.

Old Polleau strode over to that son.

"Look, Msieu," he said, lifting the bandage.

McKay saw, with a tremor of horror, a gaping blackened socket, red-rimmed and eyeless.

"Good God, Polleau!" he cried. "But this man needs medical attention. I know something of wounds. Let me go across the lake and bring back my kit. I will attend him."

Old Polleau shook his head, although his grim face for the first time softened. He drew the bandages back in place.

"It heals," he said. "We have some skill in such things. You saw what did it. You watched from your boat as the cursed tree struck him. The eye was crushed and lay on his cheek. I cut it away. Now he heals. We do not need your aid, M'sieu."

"Yet he ought not have cut the birch,"

muttered McKay, more to himself than to be heard.

"Why not?" asked old Polleau, fiercely; "since it hated him."

McKay stared at him. What did this old peasant know? The words strengthened his deep stubborn conviction that what he had seen and heard in the coppice had been actuality--no dream. And still more did Polleau's next words strengthen that conviction.

"M'sieu," he said, "you come here as ambassador--of a sort. The wood has spoken to you. Well, as ambassador I shall speak to you. Four centuries my people have lived in this place. A century we have owned this land. M'sieu, in all those years there has been no moment that the trees have not hated us--nor we the trees.

"For all those hundred years there have been hatred and battle between us and the forest. My father, M'sieu, was crushed by a tree; my elder brother crippled by another. My father's father, woodsman that he was, was lost in the forest--he came back to us with mind gone, raving of wood-women who had bewitched and mocked him, luring him into swamp and fen and tangled thicket, tormenting him. In every generation the trees have taken their toll of us--women as well as men--maiming or killing us."

"Accidents," interrupted McKay. "This is childish, Polleau. You can not blame the trees."

"In your heart you do not believe so," said Polleau. "Listen, the feud is an ancient one. Centuries ago it began when we were serfs, slaves of the nobles. To cook, to keep us warm in winter, they let us pick up the fagots, the dead branches and twigs that dropped from the trees. But if we cut down a tree to keep us warm, to keep our women and our children warm, yes, if we but tore down a branch--they hanged us, or threw us into dungeons to rot, or whipped us till our backs were red lattices.

"They had their broad fields, the nobles--but we must raise our food in the patches where the trees disdained to grow. And if they did thrust themselves into our poor

patches, then, M'sieu, we must let them have their way--or be flogged, or be thrown into the dungeons, or be hanged.

"They pressed us in--the trees," the old man's voice grew sharp with fanatic hatred. "They stole our fields and they took the food from the mouths of our children; they dropped their fagots to us like dole to beggars; they tempted us to warmth when the cold struck to our bones--and they bore us as fruit a-swing at the end of the forestor's ropes if we yielded to their tempting.

"Yes, M'sieu--we died of cold that they might live! Our children died of hunger that their young might find root space! They despised us--the trees! We died that they might live--and we were men!

"Then, M'sieu, came the Revolution and the freedom. Ah, M'sieu, then we took our toll! Great logs roaring in the winter cold--no more huddling over the alms of fagots. Fields where the trees had been--no more starving of our children that theirs might live. Now the trees were the slaves.

"And the trees knew, and they hated us!"

"But blow for blow, a hundred of their lives for each life of ours--we have returned their hatred. With ax and torch we have fought them--

"The trees!" shrieked Polleau, suddenly, eyes blazing red rage, face writhing, foam at the corners of his mouth and gray hair clutched in rigid hands. "The cursed trees! Armies of the trees creeping-creeping-closer, ever closer crushing us in! Stealing our fields as they did of old! Building their dungeon round us as they built of old the dungeons of stone! Creeping--creeping! Armies of trees! Legions of trees! The trees! The cursed trees!"

McKay listened, appalled. Here was crimson heart of hate. Madness! But what was at the root of it? Some deep inherited instinct, coming down from forefathers who had hated the forest as the symbol of their madness--forefathers whose tides of hatred had overflowed to the green life on which the nobles had laid their taboo, as one neglected child will hate the favorite on whom love and gifts are lavished? In such warped



minds the crushing fall of a tree, the maiming sweep of a branch, might appear as deliberate; the natural growth of the forest seem the implacable advance of an enemy.

And yet--the blow of the fir as the cut birch fell had been deliberate! And there had been those women of the wood--!"

"Patience," the standing son touched the old man's shoulder. "Patience! Soon we strike our blow."

Some of the frenzy died out of Polleau's face.

"Though we cut down a hundred," he whispered, "by the hundred they return! But one of us, when they strike--he does not return, no! They have numbers and they have--time. We are now but three, and we have little time. They watch us as we go through the forest, alert to trip, to strike, to crush!

"But, M'sieu," he turned blood-shot eyes to McKay, "we strike our blow, even as Pierre has said. We strike at that coppice that you so desire. We strike there because it is the very heart of the forest. There the secret life of the forest runs at full tide! We know--and you know! Something that, destroyed, will take the heart out of the forest--will make it know us for its masters."

"The women!" The standing son's eyes glittered, malignantly. "I have seen the women there! The fair women with the shining skins who invite--and mock and vanish before hands can seize them."

"The fair women who peer into our windows in the night--and mock us!" muttered the eyeless son.

"They shall mock no more!" shouted old Polleau. "Soon they shall lie, dying! All of them--all of them! They die!"

He caught McKay by the shoulders and shook him like a child.

Go tell them that!" he shouted. "Say to them that this very day we destroy them. Say to them it is we who will laugh when winter comes and we watch their bodies blaze in this hearth of ours and warm us! Go -- tell them that!"

He spun McKay around, pushed him to the door, opened it and flung him stagger-

ing down the steps. He heard the tall son laugh, the door close. Blind with rage he rushed up the steps and hurled himself against the door. Again the tall son laughed. McKay beat at the door with clenched fists, cursing. The three within paid no heed. Despair began to dull his rage. Could the trees help him--counsel him? He turned and walked slowly down the field path to the little wood.

SLOWLY and ever more slowly he went as he neared it. He had failed. He was a messenger bearing a warrant of death. The birches were motionless; their leaves hung listlessly. It was as though they knew he had failed. He paused at the edge of the coppice. He looked at his watch, noted with faint surprise that already it was high noon. The work of destruction would not be long delayed.

McKay squared his shoulders and passed in between the trees. It was strangely silent in the coppice. And it was mournful. He had a sense of life brooding around him, withdrawn into itself; sorrowing. He passed through the silent, mournful wood until he reached the spot where the rounded, gleaming-barked tree stood close to the fir supporting the dying tree-woman. Still no sound, no movement came. He touched the rounded tree's cool bark.

"Let me see again!" he whispered. "Let me hear! Speak to me!"

There was no answer. Again and again he called. The coppice was silent. He wandered through it, whispering, calling. The slim birches stood, passive, with limbs and leaves adroop like listless arms and hands of captive maids awaiting in dull wo the will of conquerors. The firs seemed to crouch like hopeless men with heads in hands. His heart ached to the wo that filled the little wood.

When would Polleau strike? He looked at his timepiece again. How long would Polleau wait? He dropped, lay on soft moss, back against a firm bole.

And suddenly it seemed to McKay he was a madman--as mad as Polleau and

his sons. Calmly, he went over the old peasant's indictment of the forest; recalled the face and eyes filled with fanatic hate. They were all mad. After all, the trees were--only trees. Polleau and his sons--so he reasoned--had transferred to them the bitter hatred their forefathers had felt for those old lords who had enslaved them; had laid upon them too all the bitterness of their own struggle to exist in this forest land. When they struck at the trees, it was the ghosts of those forefathers striking at the nobles who had oppressed them; it was themselves striking against their own destiny. The trees were but symbols. It was the warped minds of Polleau and his sons that clothed them in false semblance of conscious life, blindly striving to wreak vengeance against the ancient masters and the destiny that had made their lives one hard and unceasing battle against nature. The nobles were long dead, destiny can be brought to grips by no man. But the trees were here and alive. Clothed in mirage, through them the driving lust for vengeance could be sated. So much for Polleau and his sons.

And he, McKay: was it not his own deep love and sympathy for the trees that similarly had clothed them in that false semblance of conscious life? Had he not built his own mirage? The trees did not really mourn, could not suffer, could not--know. It was his own sorrow that he transferred to them; only his own sorrow, that he felt echoing back from them. The trees were--only trees.

Instantly, upon the heels of that thought, as though it were answer, he was aware that the trunk against which he leaned was trembling; that the entire coppice was trembling; that all the little leaves were shaking tremulously.

McKay, bewildered, leaped to his feet. Reason told him it was the wind--yet there was no wind!

And as he stood there, a sighing arose as if a mournful breeze were blowing through the trees--and again there was no wind!

Louder grew the sighing and within it now faint wailing.

"They come! They come! Farewell, sisters! Sisters--farewell!"

Clearly he heard the mournful whispers.

McKAY began to run between the trees to the trail that led out to the fields of the old lodge. And as he ran the wood darkened as if clear shadows assembled in it, as if vast unseen wings hovered over it. The trembling of the coppice increased; bough touched bough, clung together; and louder became the sorrowful crying: "Farewell, sister! Sister- farewell!"

McKay burst out into the open. Half-way between him and the lodge were Polleau and his sons. They saw him; they pointed and lifted mockingly to him their bright axes. He crouched, waiting for them to come close, all fine-spun theories gone, and rising in him that same rage which hours before had sent him out to slay.

So, crouching, he heard from the forested hills a roaring clamor. From every quarter it came, wrathful, menacing; like the voices of legions of great trees bellowing through the horns of tempest. The clamor maddened McKay; fanned the flame of rage to white heat.

If the three men heard it, they gave no sign. They came on steadily, jeering at him and waving their blades. He ran to meet them.

"Go back!" he shouted. "Go back, Polleau! I warn you!"

"He warns us!" jeered Polleau. "He--Pierre, Jean--he warns us!"

The old peasant's arm shot out and his hand caught McKay's shoulder with a grip that hurt the bone. His arm flexed and he struck against the unmaimed son. The son caught him, twisted him about and threw him a dozen yards away, breaking through the copse's edge.

McKay sprang to his feet howling like a wolf. The clamor of the forest had grown stronger.

"Kill!" it roared. "Kill!"

The unmaimed son had raised his ax. His first blow almost felled a birch. McKay heard a wail go up from the little wood.



Before the ax could be withdrawn he had crashed a fist in the ax-wielder's face. The head of Polleau's son rocked back; he yelped, and before McKay could strike again had wrapped strong arms around him, crushing breath from him. McKay relaxed, went limp, and the son loosened his grip. Instantly McKay slipped out of it and struck again, springing aside to avoid the rib-breaking clasp. Polleau's son was quicker than he, the long arm caught him. But as the arms tightened there was the sound of sharp splintering and the birch into which the ax had bitten toppled. It struck the ground directly in back of the wrestling men. Its branches seemed to reach out and clutch at the feet of Polleau's son.

He tripped and fell backward, McKay upon him. The shock of the fall broke his grip and again McKay was free. Again he was upon his feet, and again Polleau's strong son, quick as he, faced him. Twice McKay's blows found their mark beneath his heart before once more the long arms trapped him but the grip was weaker; McKay felt now their strength was equal.

Round and round they rocked, McKay straining to break away. They fell, and over they rolled and over, arms and legs locked, each striving to free a hand to grip the other's throat. Around them ran Polleau and the one-eyed son, giving encouragement to Pierre, yet neither daring to strike at McKay lest the blow miss and be taken by the other.

And all that time McKay heard the little wood screaming. Gone from it now was all mournfulness, all passive resignation. The wood was alive and raging. He saw the trees shake and bend as if torn by a tempest. Dimly he realized that the others could hear none of this, see none of it; as dimly wondered why it should be so.

"Kill!" screamed the coppice--and ever over its tumult he was aware of the roar of the great forest.

He saw two shadowy forms -- shadowy forms of swarthy green-clad men, that pressed close to him as he rolled and fought.

"Kill!" they whispered. "Let his blood

flow. Kill."

He tore a wrist free. Instantly he felt in his hand the hilt of a knife.

"Kill!" whispered the shadowy men.

"Kill!" screamed the coppice.

McKay's free arm swept up and plunged the knife into the throat of Polleau's son! He heard a sob; heard Polleau scream; felt the warm blood spurt in face and over hand; smelt its salt and faintly acrid odor. The encircling arms dropped from him; he reeled to his feet.

As though the blood had been a bridge, the shadowy men leaped into materiality. One threw himself upon the man McKay had stabbed; the other hurled upon old Polleau. The maimed son turned and fled, howling with terror. A white woman sprang out from the darkness, fell at his feet, clutched them and brought him down. Another woman and another dropped upon him. The note of his screaming changed from fear to agony and died abruptly into silence.

And now McKay could see none of the trees, nor were Polleau and his sons to be seen, for green-clad men and white women covered them!

He stood stupidly, staring at his red hands. The forest's roar had changed to a deep joyful chanting. The coppice was mad with joy. The trees had become thin phantoms etched in emerald translucent air as they were when first the green sorcery had meshed him. And all around him wove and danced the slim, gleaming women of the wood.

They ringed him, their song bird sweet and shrill; jubilant. Beyond them he saw gliding toward him the woman of the misty pillar whose kisses had poured the sweet green fire into his veins. Her arms were outstretched to him, her strange wide eyes were rapt on his, her white body gleamed with the moon radiance, her red lips were parted and smiling, a scarlet chalice filled with the promise of undreamed ecstasies. The dancing circle, chanting, broke to let her through.

Abruptly, a horror filled McKay. Not of this fair woman, not of her jubilant sisters --but of himself.

He had killed! And the wound the war had left in his soul, the wound he thought had closed; was again open.

He rushed out of the broken circle, pushed the shining woman aside with his blood-stained hands and ran, weeping, toward the lake's edge. The singing ceased. He heard little cries; tender, appealing little cries of pity; soft voices calling on him to stop, to return. Behind him was the sound of little racing feet, light as the fall of leaves upon the moss.

McKay ran on. The coppice lightened, the beach was before him. He heard the fair woman call, felt the touch of her hand. He did not heed. He ran across the narrow strip of beach, thrust the boat out into the water and, wading through the shallows, threw himself into it.

He lay still for a moment, sobbing; then drew himself up and caught at the oars. He looked back at the shore now a score of feet away. At the edge of the coppice stood the woman, staring at him with pitying, wise eyes. Behind her clustered the white faces of her sisters, the dark faces of the green-clad men.

"Come back!" the woman whispered, and held out slender arms.

McKay paused, his terror lessening in that clear, wise gaze. He half swung the boat around. But his eyes fell again upon his blood-stained hands and again the hysteria gripped him. One idea only was in his mind now--to get far away from where Pol-leau's son lay with his throat ripped open, to put the lake between him and that haunted shore. He dipped his oars deep, flung the boat forward. Once more the woman called to him and once again. He paid no heed. She tossed out her arms in a gesture of passionate farewell. Then a mist dropped like a swift curtain between him and her and all the folk of the little wood.

McKay rowed on, desperately. After a while he slipped oars, and leaning over the boat's side he wiped away the red on his

hands and arms. His coat was torn and blood-stained; his shirt too. He took it off, wrapped it around the boat's stone anchor and dropped it down to the bottom. His coat he dipped into the water, rubbing at the accusing marks. When he had lightened them all he could, he took up his oars.

His panic was gone from him. Upon its ebb came a rising tide of regret; clear before his eyes arose the vision of the shining woman, beckoning him, calling him . . . he swung the boat around to return. And instantly as he did so the mists between him and the opposite shore thickened; around him they lightened as though they had receded to make of themselves a barrier to him, and something deep within him whispered it was too late.

He saw that he was close to the landing of the little inn. No one was about; and he was not seen as he fastened the skiff and slipped to his room. He locked the door, started to undress. Sudden sleep swept over him like a wave; drew him helplessly down into ocean depths of sleep.

A KNOCKING at his door awakened McKay, and the innkeeper's voice summoning him to dinner, sleepily he answered, and as the old man's footsteps died away he roused himself. His eyes fell upon his coat, dry now, and the poorly erased blood-stains splotching it. Puzzled, he stared at them for a moment--then full memory clicked back into place.

He walked to the window. It was dusk. A wind was blowing and the trees were singing, all the tiny leaves dancing; the forest hummed its cheerful vespers. Gone was the unease, all the inarticulate trouble and the fear. The woods were tranquil and happy.

He sought the coppice through the gathering twilight. Its demoiselles were dancing lightly in the breeze, leafy hoods dipping, leafy skirts ablow. Nearby marched their green troubadours, carefree, waving their needled arms. Gay was the little wood, gay as when its beauty had first lured him to it.



McKay hid the stained coat shrewdly in his traveling trunk, bathed and put on a fresh outfit and sauntered down to dinner. He ate excellently. Wonder now and then crossed his mind that he felt no regret, no sorrow even for the man he had killed. Half he was inclined to believe it had all been only a dream--so little of any emotion did he feel. He had even ceased to think of what discovery might mean.

His mind was quiet; he heard the forest chanting to him that there was nothing he need fear; and when he sat for a time that night upon the balcony a peace that was half an ecstasy stole in upon him from the murmuring woods and enfolded him. Cradled by it he slept dreamlessly.

McKay did not go far from the inn that day. The little wood danced gaily and beckoned him, but he paid no heed. Something whispered to wait, to keep the lake between him and it until word came of what lay or had lain there. And peace still was on him.

Only the old innkeeper seemed to grow uneasy as the hours went by. He went often to the landing, scanning the far shore.

"It is strange," he said at last to McKay as the sun was dipping behind the summits. "Polleau was to see me today. He never breaks his word, or if he could not come he would have sent one of his sons."

McKay nodded, carelessly.

"There is another thing I do not understand," went on the old man. "I have seen no smoke from the lodge all day. It is as if they were not there."

"Where could they be?" asked McKay indifferently.

"I do not know," the voice was more perturbed. "It all troubles me, M'sieu. Polleau is hard, yes; but he is my neighbor. Perhaps an accident----"

"They would let you know soon enough if there was anything wrong," McKay said.

"Perhaps, but--" the old man hesitated. "If he does not come to-morrow and again I see no smoke, I will go to him," he ended.

McKay felt a little shock run through him--tomorrow then he would know, definitely, what it was that had happened in

the little wood.

"I would if I were you," he said. "I'd not wait too long, either."

"Will you go with me, M'sieu?" asked the old man.

"No!" whispered the warning voice within McKay. "No! Do not go!"

"Sorry," he said, aloud. "But I've some writing to do. If you should need me send back your man; I'll come."

And all that night he slept, again dreamlessly, while the crooning forest cradled him.

THE morning passed without sign from the opposite shore. An hour after noon he watched the old innkeeper and his man row across the lake. And suddenly McKay's composure was shaken, his serene certainty wavered. He unstrapped his field glasses and kept them on the pair until they had beached the boat and entered the coppice. His heart was beating uncomfortably, his hands felt hot and his lips dry. How long had they been in the wood? It must have been an hour! What were they doing there? What had they found? He looked at his watch, incredulously. Less than five minutes had passed.

Slowly the seconds ticked by. And it was all of an hour indeed before he saw them come out upon the shore and drag their boat into the water. McKay, curiously dry, deafening pulse within his ears, steadied himself; forced himself to stroll leisurely down to the landing.

"Everything all right?" he called as they were near. They did not answer; but as the skiff warped against the landing they looked up at him and on their faces were stamped horror and a great wonder.

"They are dead, M'sieu," whispered the innkeeper. "Polleau and his sons--all dead!"

McKay's heart gave a great leap, a swift faintness took him.

"Dead!" he cried. "What killed them?"

"What but the trees, M'sieu?" answered the old man, and McKay thought that his gaze dwelt upon him strangely. "The trees killed them. See--we went up the little path through the wood, and close to its end we found it blocked by fallen trees. The flies

buzzed round those trees, M'sieu, so we searched there. They were under them, Polleau and his sons. A fir had fallen upon Polleau and had crushed in his chest. Another son we found beneath a fir and upturned birches. They had broken his back, and a broken branch had taken his throat out --but that was no new wound, the latter."

He paused.

"It must have been a sudden wind," said his man. "Yet I never knew of a wind such as that must have been. There were no trees down except those that lay upon them. And of those it was as though they had leaped out of the ground! Yes, as though they had leaped out of the ground upon them. Or it was as giants had torn them out for clubs. They were not broken--their roots were bare--"

"But the other son--Polleau had two?" Try as he might, McKay could not keep the tremor out of his voice.

"Pierre," said the old man, and again McKay felt that strange quality in his gaze. "He lay beneath a fir--his throat torn out."

"His throat torn out!" whispered McKay. His knife! The knife that had been slipped into his hand by the shadowy shapes!

"His throat was torn out," repeated the innkeeper. "And in it still was the broken branch that had done it. A broken branch. M'sieu, pointed like a knife. It must have caught Pierre as the fir fell, and ripping through his throat--been broken off as the tree crashed."

McKay stood, mind whirling in wild conjecture. "You said -- a broken branch?" McKay asked through lips gone white.

"A broken branch, M'sieu." The innkeeper's eyes searched him. "It was very plain -- what it was that happened. Jacques," he turned to his man, "go up to the house."

He watched until the man was out of sight.

"Yet not all is so plain, M'sieu," he spoke low to McKay, "since in Pierre's hand I found--this."

He reached into a pocket and drew out a button from which hung a strip of cloth.

They had once been part of that stained coat which McKay had hidden in his trunk. And as McKay strove to speak the old man raised his hand. Button and cloth dropped from it, into the water. A wave took it and floated it away; another and another snatched it and passed it on. They watched it, silently, until it had vanished.

"Tell me nothing," said the innkeeper. "Polleau was a hard man and his sons were likewise. The trees hated them. The trees killed them. The -- souvenir -- is gone. Only M'sieu would better also -- go."

THAT night McKay packed. When dawn had broken he stood at his window, looking long at the little wood. It too was awakening, stirring sleepily--like drowsy, delicate demoiselles. He thought he could see that one slim birch that was -- what?

Tree or woman? Or both?

Silently, the old landlord and his wife watched him as he swung out his car -- a touch of awe, a half-fear, in their eyes. Without a word they let him go.

And as McKay swept up the road that led over the lip of the green bowl he seemed to hear from all the forest a deep-toned, mournful chanting. It arose around him as he topped the rise in one vast whispering cloud -- of farewell. And died!

Never, he knew, would that green door of enchantment be opened to him again. His fear had closed it -- forever. Something had been offered to him beyond mortal experience -- something that might have raised him to the levels of the gods of Earth's youth. He had rejected it. And nevermore, he knew, would he cease to regret.

THE END

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"The Woman of the Wood" by Mr. A. Merritt originally appeared in *Weird Tales* dated August, 1926.



## THE SCIENCE FICTION EYE

by Julius Schwartz

It seems that *Amazing Stories* has finally gone in for reprints! "The Ho-Ming Gland" in the February 1933 is the same story as "The Island of the Gland-Men," which was printed in the January, 1931 *Wonder Stories*. Mr. Gernsback explains the trouble: Malcolm Afford, the author, sent the story originally to *Amazing Stories* but they held the story so long, that he ordered that it to be cancelled. Afford then submitted the story to *Wonder Stories*, where it was accepted and printed. *Amazing Stories* forgot about it; but there must have been an extra copy of the story around their office, so they printed it.

Paramount, filming H. G. Wells' "The War of the Worlds," may change the locale to suit American audiences. Instead of having the Martian invaders land in England, as in the book version, they'll land in the southern part of the United States, and begin a march from there upon the Capitol.

Harl Vincent has written "Whisper of Death" and "When the Comet Returned." The former is a story of our own world a few years hence, when what appears at first to be a terrifying natural phenomenon is found to be a herald of one of the boldest of plots against world government and prosperity. The latter is an interplanetary story of the future, dealing with the adventures of a Terrestrial and his Martian friend who encounter many interesting and strange experiences on a scientific expedition that is brought to nought by a witch-doctor of the Martian drylands.

A. Merritt has just about decided to stop that plagiarism suit against *Amazing*, on condition that they print a retraction, an apology, and pay the lawyer's bill....The original title of Ralph Milne Farley's "The Radio Man" was "The Silver Planet"....Hugo Gernsback has just put out the first issue of "Technocracy Review"....David H. Keller is working on "The Tree of Evil." Although it will take about half a year to work out the plot mentally, Dr. Keller

assures me it will be worth while. "It's going to be a good one when finished," he promises....I wonder what Universal Pictures would do without Boris Karloff? Carl Laemmle, Jr., spends three-fourths of his time reading fantastic yarns with a view of getting something thrilling for Karloff. He has just purchased "The Man who Cheated Death," a tale of a magician.

The first chapter to Ralph Milne Farley's "The Radio War," which ran serially in *Argosy*, was deleted by the editor. It recounted how Farley learned from a Harvard classmate of his, the son of a Chinese magician how to commune with his ancestors. He taught this to his daughter, and she to her son (as yet unborn), and he to his son. The last named individual uses this method to communicate with Farley, which is how he happened to know the story of "The Radio War." The original title was "The Radio Eye." The editor explained the deletion by saying that the science fiction fan, nowadays, doesn't care how he gets his story, so long as he gets it.

L.A. Eshback has just completed "The Brain of Ali Kahn" and "The Last Performance," the latter written in collaboration with C.E. Noll. At present he is working on a cancer story called "The Monstrous Malignancy"....His favorite story is "The Time Conqueror"...."Brain," by Lionell Britton, (published by Vanguard, New York, \$1.50) is the latest stf. book. It is an interesting fantasy, depicting a world operated by a gigantic mechanical, nearly perfect, brain constructed in the Sahara Desert....

Edward Elmer Smith is almost done with the third of the "Skylark" sagas....He is likewise gathering material for another wild yarn of space....Here's what E. E. says regarding his stories: "I work hard and long on the stuff, and like it immensely, but somehow or other I can't seem to make a story half as strong as it should be." He likewise considers his novels "mediocre"....R. F. Starzl sold "The Last Planet" to *Astounding Stories*, but when it was returned *Wonder Stories* promptly accepted it....

## THE TIME TATLER

by Forrest J. Ackerman

The column this time will deal more or less with some interesting things I picked up while on vacation. - On the train, was reading a Cummings' yarn. Lady next to me remarked: "Oh, you read Freak Fiction too?" Well, it was the first time I'd ever heard it called that...With Technocracy, the scientific plan for an Utopian future, skyrocketing in public opinion, Los Angeles newspapers are featuring Edward Bellamy's tale of the year 2000, "Looking Backward." Incidentally, Ralph Bellamy, the well-known movie actor, is a direct descendent of Edward...Science reported the appearance of a comet New Years' morning. "Probably some watchers saw two comets!"

Dracula! Frankenstein! "Grand Guignol" combines into one show four outstanding fantastic plays...MGM's war drama of 1940 will be titled "Men Must Fight" from the stage play and book of the same title...L. A. Eshbach's latest story is "The Outpost on Ceres," the first of a series of interplanetary stories about the Earth, Venus & Mars Transportation Lines, Inc. At present he is working on the second story of the series temporarily called "Men of the Space Ship Terra"...

Karloff, after looking at his scenes in "The Mummy," murmured, "Not only am I wrapped up in my work, but I can qualify as the perfect rotter!"...Loring Brent, author of "The Return of George Washington," was the writer of the recent film hit, "The Phantom President"...Talked to Bob Olsen over the phone. He says his wife is threatening to "tell all," after she had to call him to dinner three times recently only to discover when he finally came to the table with a magazine in his hand that he was reading his own story, "The Pool of Death." Bob says that it, like all other stories nowadays, was not released until so long after acceptance that he'd forgotten who did the murder! "But the worst part was that Bob laughed at his own jokes," his wife claims. So now you know. It's all Bob's fault, he tried to bribe me to keep

it quiet, offered me his whole stf collection in fact (in fancy?), but SFD readers must have the truth, the whole truth, and everything but...

Another radio broadcast: this time it was a short one about a mythical scientifilm company. They were producing H.G. Wells' "Outline of History," but with typical Hollywooditis, the title was changed to "Hot Hemispheres." The producer was raging because his director took two weeks to make the earth when originally, he stormed, "it was done in six days! At this rate, it'll take till 3846 to get up to the present!" ...Lowell Howard Morrow's latest is "Wings of Thot," having to do with the sub-conscious mind.. How do you like the pictures conjured up by motion picture titles?: "Maker of Men"--Herr Frankenstein; "The Crash"--possible end of rocket flight; "Once in a Life Time"--stories like "The Blind Spot" and "Thru the Dragon Glass;" "The Man from Yesterday"--ye Time Traveller; "The Blonde Venus"--one of Williamson's or Cummings' 'girls.' Watch for more.

An interesting little event: Richard Dix was in his dressing room at RKO Studios when right past his window trotted a livid green police dog! He rushed out to verify his senses--and sure enough, calmly ambling down the lot was the green dog! Later, he found out it was a 'prehistoric wolf' used in 'the picture destined to startle the world,' King Kong...F.P.1, the floating island story, is being shot on a small island in the Adriatic.

Joe Skidmore telepathed one of my pet ideas in his "Souls Apace" story. Apparently the minds of Science Afflictionists, as one correspondent would have it, run alike. Anyway, Joe's suggestion to authors with ideas is that they look up in some big catalog and get themselves one of the new Atomic, High-voltage, Radium Screen Idea Protectors. The devise, he says, is no larger than a wash-tub "and is worn over the head, weighing only 160 pounds when fully charged." His latest are: "The Beetle in the Amber," "Death Dice," "The Adventures of Posi and Nega."



SCIENCE  
SCRAPFICTION  
BOOK

by Julius Schwartz

"The Man who Rocked the Earth" by Arthur C. Train and Robert M. Ward, published by Doubleday in 1915.

One thing this fantastic tale does bring home to us -- that the movements of the spheres are mightier than the maneuvers of armed forces. Of course, the man who caught their secret could control human destinies and put an end to war. It was in July of 1916 that mysterious messages signed PAX began coming to the President of the United States. The European War must end at once and future wars made impossible. Then PAX begins to give demonstrations of what he can do if his warnings are not heeded, and the world, thoroughly convinced, yields to his demands.

...

## Criticisms

"It is a thrilling story of the great war, with the horrors of war left out."

- Boston Transcript

"This new story in an ingenious yarn with an excellent basis idea."

- New York Times

... ..

"Not in Our Stars" by Michael Maurice, published by Lippincott in 1923.

In the early part of this tale the earth comes into collision with a gigantic meteorite, which upsets its normal movements and in some obscure fashion disarranges the orderly progress of time. The hero discovers on awakening that he had jumped forward something like a year in his own life without having lived through the interval. This un-lived portion of his life includes his marriage and its failure after a few months of happiness, a fatal quarrel with the man who he thinks has supplanted him, and his arrest, trial, and condemnation for murder. From the point of awakening the victim of this queer mishap begins to move backward through the period which

he has missed, until he reaches his point of departure just before making his proposal of marriage. Then he returns to normal, with the complication that he has the foreknowledge of what the result will be if he ventures to marry.

...

## Criticisms

"'Not in Our Stars' is of decided dramatic quality, but the manner of its telling is not quite the equal of its content."

- Boston Transcript

"'Not in our Stars' is a shocker, but genuinely a novel, in the sense that its real subject is not the mere sensationalism of the machinery used, but normal human experience, however, extended into a setting of bizarre circumstances."

- The London Times

"The underlying conception is novel rather than convincing. It leaves us bewildered and skeptical, yet we read on in spite of ourselves. For it stimulates the deductive powers and satisfies the universal craving for something strange, different and new."

- New York Times

... ..

"A Romance of Two Centuries," by Kenneth S. Guthrie, published by the Platonist Press in 1919.

This is one of those romances that look into the future. The early chapters relate the circumstances, growing out of the World War, that permit the narrator to wake up in the year 2025. Those that follow describe the conditions, habits, customs, etc. of that far off time. The subdivisions of the tale are: "A Romance of Two Centuries; North America of the Future; South America of the Future; The Coming World Capitol; Destinies of Europe and New York."

...

## Criticism

"Dr. Guthrie has brought all his scholarship to bear upon this postulate of the future, and has woven his speculations into a fascinating narrative."

- Review of Reviews

## THE SCIENTIFILMS

by Forrest J. Ackerman

### METROPOLIS

An UFA scientifilm released six years ago, written by Thea von Harbou, directed by Fritz Lang. Characters: John Masterman, played by Alfred Abel; Eric, Masterman's son, Gustav Froehlich; Rotwang, the inventor, Rudolf Klein-Rogge; Joseph, Theodor Loos; No. 7, Heinrich George; and Mary, girl and automaton, Brigitte Helm. Story took place in indefinite future. Once every so often a party from the working class--they of the 'gray denim' who lived in the underground cities deep in the earth, worked in the Middle Levels, and dreamt of the upper where the aristocracy rested easy on the work of the laborers--a party from the working class was allowed to visit the electri-city that was Metropolis. Upon one occasion, Mary, beloved daughter of the workers, ascended, and while visiting caught the eye of Eric, son of a wealthy aristocrat. She enchanted him and he followed her to the lower levels where he realized for the first time the awful plight of the people there; saw them toiling, dying at their awesome machines in the middle levels. Once, while investigating, he saw one of the aged workers, unable to tend his machine, die--and others with him--when the angry metal monster exploded in a mighty burst of unleashed power.

Eric returned to his influential father, begged him to help the suffering people. But John Masterman turned an unhearing ear. Below, the workers, guided by Mary, began holding secret meetings in the catacombs. Rotwang, inventor and aristocrat, learned of the meetings and planned to subdue them. For this, he created a robotrix, a mechanical woman, and, by kidnapping Mary, and with the use of amazing machinery, made of the steel girl a perfect double for the maid of the lower levels. His automan was to teach servility to them but instead it taught hate and revolt. Later, Mary escaped and revealed the plan to the people who, upon uprising, were nearly drowned when tons of water began pouring

down upon them in their subterranean abode, the elevators stopt, and they had to surge upwards towards safety on stairs. The robotrix was taken and thrown upon a pile of futuristicars which were set on fire and so destroyed the false Mary. In the end, they of the lower level were promised a new and better deal as Eric and Mary were joined after a thrilling fight between Eric and Rotwang atop Metropolis' greatest structure.

### BETTY BOOP'S UPS AND DOWNS

a Paramount scienticartoon, in which the depression becomes so bad that the whole earth is for sale. Saturn buys it, and, in attempting to pull out the "For Sale" sign, removes the earth's gravity, which is depicted by a huge magnet. Then, upon earth scenes reminiscent of the story "When the World Went Mad," in an ancient Amazing Stories Quarterly, are enacted. A man chopping at a tree cuts clean thru the wood, and the tree goes flying up into space. A flyer jumps out of his plane with a chute, and falls upward. Houses, trees, trains, automobiles, people -- all go shooting upward, amazing Mars, Venus, and the other planets, until Saturn finally returns the gravity. Fantastic, but amusing.

### RADIO-MANIA

directed by R. William Neil, a Herman Holland presentation, distributed by W. S. Hodkinson. Scientist played by Grant Mitchell, rest of cast unknowns. Arthur Wyman, radioist and would-be inventor installs a huge radio outfit with which he hopes to establish communication with Mars. He makes several attempts and to assure himself that he has spoken to someone on the planet, he prepares a formula which will turn clay into gold and coal into diamonds. He soon becomes a millionaire with this incredible formula, but after all it turns out to be only a dream, and he destroys the radio machine in despair. However, he does invent a tickless alarm clock and makes plenty of money. The Martians were depicted as very laughable creatures, and had ears about eight inches long.



## SPILLING THE ATOMS

with Rap

Technocracy--Science Fiction--Prophecy. Again has science fiction proven to be prophetic. Does Technocracy mean the realization, so early, of Dr. Breuer's "Paradise and Iron"?...Forrest Ackerman is announced as winner of the future slang contest. His entry was considered on its merits alone...There is no better time than the present to join the Jules Verne Prize Club. I am informed that members have the right to vote on all of the twelve monthly stf issues even if they join as late as November. So come on. For address see advertisement page.

Each of the existing stf mags expect to be sole occupants of the field in five months...Weird Tales, by the volume of stf it now publishes, has become one of the blue bloods in the stf field, altho it still runs cold...Forrest (Fire) Ackerman writes revealing all. His two loves, Marlene Dietrich and Sari Maritza are his idea of the "scientific" girl of the "future." Well, a poor excuse is better than none. 'Sall right, Forry, we like 'em too.

Got a fan letter which I feel is worth passing on. Here it is: Dear Sir: Why don't you disintegrate? Why you haven't even a valence! If I were you, I'd attempt an interplanetary flight at once. You've got the "gas" and anybody so dumb couldn't get hurt! I understand you began writing science fiction in 1928--no wonder there is a depression in stf! I suggest that you write a sequel to "The Time Ray of Jandra" and jump in your own hole. No doubt with a density as great as yours you would reach the interior of the earth without the least difficulty. With Lake Michigan so near, why don't you use it? If S.S. Held is windy, you're a cyclone--and Held IS windy. But I like your column anyway, that's the kind of a stfan I am. Sincerely yours, Felix Gerard...Well, I asked for it.

Here's the winning list of future slang: A Heaviside - wet blanket, bore; Rocket Pocketeer, Inter. pirate; Heark me, Listen, you; Gear up, get hot; Esperant, come to

the point, lay your cards on the table; Co oil a robot, take a jump in the lake; Give-in, girl; Fireworks, rocket port; Millicent, money; That's gravitude for you, space-rocket pun; Grapples, jitters, heebie-jeebies; She's 87, she's hot stuff.

Robert A. Wait is an expert chemist with several notable achievements in research work besides being an expert stf writer... Joseph Kennelly, author of "Death From the Seas" in the Jan. 1931 Wonder originally submitted the story in a 20,000 word length. The re-write man evidently believed in the then current adage "divide by 2 and you're nearer right...That re-write man should have gotten "The Death of Iron" to work on and divided by six.

Murray Leinster's "Fifth Dimension Tube" is heading right smack for January honors in the Jules Verne Prize Club. In fact voting thus far is unanimous--which beats something or other--for dear old Murray...Add similes: As bashful as the hero of EE Smith's interplanetary stories; As original as a Martian landscape; As tall as a Martian.....Embarassing moments: When the artificial gravity becomes inoperative just as you are celebrating the passing of the twelve-million-mile limit by pouring a glass of beer....Professor Piccard still does not know how high 'up' is.

Wonder Stories and Amazing Stories, take notice! The JVPC was formed to stimulate science fiction, offer an incentive to writers in striving for better fiction, and make the world more science fiction conscious. It's design is to help you. Five other publications have done their bit in bringing the JVPC to the attention of their readers. In the interest of science fiction I urge you to publish information which has been furnished you. As membership grows the JVPC will be enabled to purchase space in your magazines but initial advertising to procure working funds is necessary. Your authors especially will appreciate your participation in this initial impetus... JVPC members are urged to second this invitation by mentioning the JVPC in their letters to science fiction magazines.

## THE ETHER VIBRATES

by Mortimer Weisinger

Nathan Schachner, who succeeds David Lasser as President of the American Interplanetary Society, has been paid for his "Raiders From the Deep" by Astounding, but the yarn is still begging for printer's ink...David Lasser, whose chief diversion consists of passing around juvenile letters received by Wonder, is head of an unemployment relief council in New York...Street & Smith, despite all rumors, will positively not put out a science-fiction mag for at least two years to come...It was A. Merritt who informed Argosy that it had published that pilfered story...Merritt was in a position to know, since he had accepted the story for his American Weekly, which, incidentally, is now on the air...

While writing for Young's magazine back in 1920, Seabury Quinn used the middle name Grandin...R. M. Farley and E. R. Burroughs consulted the same reference books while writing their Inner World series...Harry Bates is occasionally mentioned in Walter Winchell's column of chatter...Frank Nankivell, who is a major character in Meek's "Drums of Tapajos" and its sequel, is a cartoonist in real life...Astounding used to be open for poetry, but Bates claims he never received verse good enough for publication..."Progress" will not go in for pseudo-scientific articles, so save your postage, authors...That s-f play "The Red Planet" folded after a one week run, it being reported that only two tickets were paid for during its stay...

Homer Eon Flint's "Man in the Moon" originally appeared as a serial in the now defunct "Evening World"...Charles Diffin's latest treat is "Blue Magic," a serial...Diffin at present is trying to invade the detective story market...Howard Phillips Lovecraft is the full name...The Shuberts once contemplated using "The Return of George Washington" for a play, but for some reason or other abandoned the idea...Some of the illustrations for Strange Tales for January 1933 were drawn back in '31...Dr.

William Lemkin was a cartoonist for Gernsback's "French Humor" some years ago...He also was the creator of that Science & Invention strip, 'Scienty Simon, Scientist'..

Dr. T. O'Connor Sloane, who has a son married to Edison's daughter, is pediculous with degrees..."Red Dust of Venus" was originally the title for Cloukey's "In the Spacesphere"...There is a patent filed in Washington for an electrical device to summon aid for people buried alive similar to the one described in Clark (Lexicon) Smith's "The Second Interment"...The Planetoid, which just flopped, was originally the name of the bulletin launched by the Florida branch of the Scienceers...Who is E. Snooks, D. T. G., who authored "Why the Heavens Fell," the yarn which elicited such heavy pan mail?...Stanton A. Coblenz is off s-f for a long time...A. J. Burks picks the names of his characters from phone books..Garth Bentley does humorous jingles regularly for Ted Cook's column of mirth...

The solution to Willard Huntington Wright's (S.S. Van Dine, to you) latest novel, "The Kennel Murder Case," is that "the dead man walked upstairs!"...Thomas Sigismund Stribling, of "Green Splotches" fame, is still unmarried...Burks' title "The Dance of the Drowned" was originally used by Donald Cooley for a story in Forum...J.M. Walsh won \$750, for one of his novels, in an Australian contest...

Joan Burroughs, daughter of the author, plays the part of Jane Porter in the radio version of "Tarzan of the Apes"...The spookinema, "The Vampire Bat" is worth seeing..."When the Green Star Waned" is the most popular story ever printed by Weird...The story, "The Martian," which was originally titled "Exiled to Earth," is the name of a scientifiictionovel by DuMarier...A.G. Stangland likes to keep out of 'entangling alliances', (marriage, to you)...I'll tell you that SFD knows the real identities of more than forty s-f authors who use or have used nom-de-plumes...You'll know them soon, too, watch SFD...A time-machine is evidently needed to compete in Wonder's latest contest...



## SERVICE DEPARTMENT

conducted by Julius Schwartz

The Book List is continued:

## - C -

Corelli, Marie (continued)

The Soul of Lilith i

Vandetta p

The Young Diana f

Ziska r

Corvo Weird of the Wanderer tt

Cowan, James Daybreak i

Cox, Erle Out of the Darkness p

Out of the Silence p

Craig, Colin A Suitor from the Stars i

Crane, Nathalia An Alien from Heaven sf

Crosby, Edward H. Radiana ey

Cummings, Ray

Brigands of the Moon i

The Girl in the Golden Atom lp

The Man Who Mastered Time tt

The Sea Girl f

Tarrano the Conqueror i

## - D -

Dail, C. C. The Stone Giants p

Wilmoth the Wanderer, or

The Man from Saturn i

Daudet, Alphonse Port Tarascon ss, u

Dell, Bernice V. The Silent Voice f

Delmaine The Vengeance of Science sf

DeMille, James Cord and Creese p

The Strange Mms Found

in a Copper Cylinder lc

DeMorgan, John In Unknown Worlds i

D'Esme, Jean The Red Gods lc

Desmond Ragnarok f

Devinne Day of Prosperity f

Dixon, Thomas The Fall Of A Nation f

Doney, Nina My Life on 8 Planets i

Donnelly, Ignatius

Caesar's Column f

Dr. Huguet sf

The Golden Bottle sf

Douglas Pharaoh's Broker i

Douglas, Norman In the Beginning p

Dominik, Hans Atlantis f

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan

The Doings of Raffles Haw transmutation

The Land of Mist p [of metals

The Poison Belt sf

Maracot Deep a

DuMaurier, George Peter Ibbetson dm

The Martian i

Dunn The Mark of the Bat p

- E -

Eastwick, James The New Centurion w

Edwards, Gawain The Earth Tube f

England, George Allan

The Air Trust f

Cursed p

Darkness and Dawn f

The Flying Legion sf

The Golden Blight f

Ewers, Hanns H. Alraune sf

- F -

Farrere, Claude House of Secrets p

Useless Hands f

Fezandie, Clement Through the Earth c

Flammarion, Camille Lumen sf

Urnaia p

Ford A Time of Terror f

Forrester The Eternal Moment f

France, Anatole Penguin Island ss

The White Stone u

Franklin, Edgar

Hawkins Humorous Adventures es

Fuller, Alvarado M. A. D. 2000 f

Futrelle, Jacques The Diamond Master sf

- G -

Gail, Otto Willi By Rocket to the Moon i

Gale, Zona Romance Island a

Ganpat Harilek lc

The Mirror of Dreams p

Gardner, Marshall

A Journey to the Earth's Interior c

Gaston, Henry A. Mars Revealed i

Gozlan, Leon

The Emotions of Polydore Marasquin lc

Graham, P. A.

The Collapse of Homo Sapiens f

Gratacap, L. P.

The Evacuation of England f

Gayton, Bertram The Gland Stealers es

Gernsback, Hugo Ralph 124C41 i

Gibbons, Floyd The Red Napoleon w

Giles, F. S.

Shadows Before, or, A Century Onward

Gobsch, Hanna Death Rattle w

Green, Fitzhugh Z. R. Wins lc

Grierson The Heart of the moon i

(continued in our next issue)

### THE SCANNING DISK

Science fiction fans make whoopee when such motion pictures as the "Island of Lost Souls," "Frankenstein," and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" come to local theatres. And Mr. Richard Watts, ace cinema critic of the New York Herald Tribune, puts the first two mentioned films in the list of pictures that tortured him most, and adds that the last was the most insipid offering he had ever sat through, though the performance of Frederic March redeemed the wasted ninety minutes. The question is: What of it?

... ..

Comment From an Ex-Editor  
Editor, Scanning Disk:

Well, here we are again, dear readers, in a little skit entitled "Confessions of an ex-editor," or "How have the mighty fallen."

Oh, you don't remember me? Well, I was once connected with De Dime Driveller, Science Fiction's Phoney Pan Magazine. But that was 'way back in the good old days, when Amazing had a Quarterly, and Wonder hadn't taken off weight, and -- please bow your heads -- Astounding and Strange Tales were still with us. Speaking of the last two, look what I went and wrote (with apologies to Longfellow's Hiawatha)

How About It?

In the borough of Manhattan  
Lives a publisher named Clayton.  
He is rich and he is famous,  
But a shadow seems to haunt him;  
For a nation's voice is calling,  
From New York to San Francisco;  
"Give us back our dear Astounding!  
Give us back our well-loved Strange Tales!"

And, to start the next generation off  
right, how about some stf Mother Goose?  
Here's a sample:

Little Miss Locket  
Sat in her rocket.

Wending her way thru space.

She tried some repairin'

To let some fresh air in --

And now she is lost without trace.

There you are! And, as the man whose

parachute failed to open, remarked, nothing can be done about it now.

Very truly yours,

Allen Glasser

... ..

### News Notes

S. Gernsback refused to publish advertisements for either SFD or Science Fiction. Why? Dr. Keller recently breakfasted with two SFD columnists. What scandal Schwartz and Weisinger will spill now... When those same two columnists visited Arthur J. Burks they enjoyed a six hour session with him... They even talked to the Princess Der Ling who once escorted Burks through the Forbidden City... A. Merritt has just recovered from a severe attack of the Grippe... The editor of SFD refuses to read science fiction, insists upon wearing spats, goes to meet his girl friend when the editorial board is convened at an important executive meeting, never keeps his dates with the board at all, and so he gets retired... Your new Ed will be the Publisher... Under protest, Conrad H. Ruppert, the business manager, takes the post evacuated by Maurice Z. Ingber.

Buck Rogers and his Gang were at Abraham and Strauss' store at Brooklyn recently. Now, if Professor Goddard were in the city, he could have come to the Department store and tried to interest the spectators at the broadcast in purchasing rockets.

... ..

### POEME

In E.A. Poe fashion (no apologies)

Once upon a midnight dreary,  
Before a fire so bright and cheery,  
I pondered over a thick volume  
Of weird fantastic lore.

While I nodded, nearly napping,  
Some ghouls came a-rapping,  
Ghosts and werewolves tapping,  
Tapping at the oaken door.

"Get up, you fool!" my dad muttered,  
Hammering on the oaken door--  
"It's late and almost four."

And so--to bed.

Willy F. Smith



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*Classified Advertisements*

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**FOR SALE**

Old Argosy-AllStory mags. dating back to 1920. Trade for stf books. N. Caldwell, 4008 -- 18th Street, San Francisco, Cal.

Any book by Edgar Rice Burroughs, in excellent condition, 30 cents. Mortimer Weisinger, 297 Lexington Av., Passaic, N.J.

These and a few others left: Beyond the Violet, Giesy; World of Indexed Numbers, McMorro; Alibi from the Ether, Garret Smith. Miracle Stories. Complete list and prices for stamp. Forrest J. Ackerman, 530 Staples Ave., San Francisco, California.

Your Horoscope -- Learn your true character. Your destiny. Send only 25 cents to Rendall, 8060 88th Ave., Woodhaven, N.Y.

Rare science fiction from out-of-the-way magazines, as Popular, Blue Book, aviation and mystery magazines. Send offers immediately. Highest gets the stories. Enclose stamp for reply. Novelettes: The Yellow Planet, Splendor of Asia, Voice of Kali by Sax Rohmer, When Manhattan Dark Disk by Victor Rosseau, Doom by Ray Cummings, Vanishing Point, Ambassador to Mars. Short Stories: Blood-red Haze of Madness, Port of Missing Planes by Will McMorro, Winged Master. Serials: Last Atlantide, Fred MacIsaac, 6 parts; Coil of Circumstance, 2 parts; Brain Master, 3 parts; Morgo the Mighty, 4 parts. Julius Schwartz, 255 E. 188th St., New York, N.Y.

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