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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE FANTASY FAN, OCTOBER 1933 ***

THE FANTASY FAN

THE FANS' OWN MAGAZINE

Editor: Charles D. Hornig

(Managing Editor: Wonder Stories)

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Volume 1	October, 1933	Number 2
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EDITORIAL

You will note several improvements in this issue of THE FANTASY FAN over the first number. The most noticeable one, of course, is the fact that there are almost twice as many pages as in the September copy. But our improvements do not end there—not by a long shot. Not only has the circulation been doubled, but we have a new policy. Starting with this issue, we will present a story every month (maybe more than one) by Clark Ashton Smith, H. P. Lovecraft, August W. Derleth, and other top-notchers in the field of weird fiction. You science-fiction fans are probably wondering by the import of the last sentence why we will not print science-fiction. Well, here's the reason. In the SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST we have a fan magazine for those scientifically inclined, which also presents gems of this type story by Arthur J. Burks, Ray Palmer, and others. We feel that the weird fans should also have a magazine for themselves—hence THE FANTASY FAN. But don't get discouraged, you science-fiction guzzlers, we have dozens of excellent articles composed just for you. Although THE FANTASY FAN will present no science-fiction stories, we certainly will continue to give absorbing columns, articles and departments that will make each issue well worth a dime to you. You won't want to miss the rest of Schwartz's "How to Collect Fantasy Fiction," or Ackerman's story of his A-1 collection, or the Club News or the Famous Fans department, or the Boiling Point, or Science Fiction in English Magazines by Tucker, or the super-excellent material we have on hand besides—dozens of articles of humor, satire, information, absorbing interest—the type of article that only the science fiction fan can derive full enjoyment from. So, while THE FANTASY FAN will lean toward the weird angle, it will be worth the while of every science fiction fan to continue to be a reader. Furthermore—through years of experience (well, a month, anyway), we have learned that a great many weird fans—we could almost say a majority—are also readers of science fiction and vice versa. After all, both science fiction and weird tales are fantastic, aren't they? They both are based on the highly improbable, and they both stimulate the imagination. It is a rare fan that does not like both. The scientifically

inclined reader may not like weird tales; those that only want to be horrified and terrorized may not like science fiction; but those who want their imaginations stimulated like both.

Let us remind you again, and inform the new readers, that this is primarily a magazine for the fans, of the fans, and by the fans—the fan, the whole fan, and nothing but the fan. (We hope that by this time you realize that we publish a FAN magazine). But all foolishness aside, we want you to run the magazine. Tell us what you like and what you don't like. As many letters as possible will be published in "Our Readers Say" department. We will always abide by the wishes of the majority, and very often act upon the opinions of a single reader—try out his ideas to see how the rest of the readers like them. Make believe that you are an associate editor—criticize us "to the hairy limit"—or tell us how good you think we are (we are not modest). If you feel as though you have the ability to compose suitable articles for publication in THE FANTASY FAN, send them in for our consideration, and if we find them acceptable, you will be paid for them in copies of THE FANTASY FAN—in cash as soon as possible. THE FANTASY FAN is still running on a deficit. Subscribe now, if you have not already done so, and insure yourself of a bigger and better magazine in the future.

The following departments: "This Month's Cash Contest"—"Penpals Wanted"—and the Questionnaire have been discontinued because of lack of support and enthusiasm on the part of our readers. The "Conglamitorial," and "About Authors" and similar departments may be left out once in awhile to make place for material of greater merit.

The feature of next month's issue will be "The Other Gods," by H. P. Lovecraft—a picturesque and weird story well up to the standard of Lovecraft's best, and far surpassing the general run of weird tale. We are extremely fortunate in being able to secure such stories. The November issue will also contain a poem by Clark Ashton Smith, the continuation of all continued in this issue (including another one of the "Annals of the Jinns" and will present many new and interesting features.

Yours for spreading the gospel of weird and science fiction.

The Editor

OUR READERS SAY

"I have read the first issue of 'The Fantasy Fan' with much interest. Good work! I like your departments, and hope you will be able to expand them, particularly those devoted to information about fantastic stories.

"'The Boiling Point' is going to be a great department. I was interested by the article on 'Science Fiction in English Magazines' by Bob Tucker. I predict that 'The Fantasy Fan' will be a success. With all best wishes"—Clark Ashton Smith

"Vol. 1, No. 1, looks to me very much what the younger science fiction devotee wants. Later on it might be a good idea to use matter of interest to weird tales enthusiasts—articles on the classics of weird literature, and information concerning weird magazines."—H. P. Lovecraft

We'll wager Mr. Lovecraft is well satisfied with this issue. It includes everything he asked for and then some. It is no longer for the "younger science fiction enthusiast," but for all lovers of the fantastic.

"I received the first issue of 'The Fantasy Fan' this morning and was indeed pleased with it."—August W. Derleth

"I recently received the first issue of 'The Fantasy Fan' and I want to congratulate you on your initial number. If future issues live up to the promise of the first one, you have nothing to fear. Your venture should be a successful one.

"Being essentially a collector, I enjoyed the articles 'How to Collect Fantasy Fiction' and 'Science Fiction in English Magazines.' I hope Mr. Tucker will be a more or less constant contributor to 'The Fantasy Fan' with information regarding stories in the English magazines.

"I have only one fault to find with the first number of 'The Fantasy Fan' and that's Forrest J. Ackerman. Can't you get along without him? Isn't it bad enough to find his letters appearing in all of the other magazines without having to endure more of him in 'The Fantasy Fan?' Maybe he is the most active science fiction fan, but I wish he would confine his activities to California. If you simply have to have him, please keep his outbursts to a minimum. I wonder if the 'World's most active science fiction fan;' 'The demon letter writer' realizes how tiresome and boring his continual out-pourings may become.

"Once more permit me to congratulate you on your efforts. I am looking forward with considerable interest to future issues. With best luck."—H. Koenig

You will be pleased to hear that Mr. Tucker has promised us a column on English science fiction every month. The second in the series appear in this issue.

Of course, we cannot take sides with you as to whether Mr. Ackerman's 'outbursts' are boring. That is for the readers to decide. Yours is the first unfavorable comment we have had upon Mr.

Ackerman's efforts, and we feel that the majority of the readers enjoy his articles.

"Your first issue certainly satisfies! Like Chesterfields, huh? Of course, I don't know—I don't smoke. But I've just read TFF thru, and it's a dandy first number.

"A real good idea, that, of reprinting the article about author Kostkos from the paper. He sounds a real stf'ist.

"If you want to know, I think that 'Science Fiction Alphabet' poem by Allen Glasser is great. I got a laugh out of every letter, and am interested in seeing what happens from N to Z. Also, I greatly enjoyed his 'Earthling Spurs Martian,' newspaper-of-the-future account—but Efej Akkamin for the terrestrial! From Ockermann to McKerman misspellings have ranged (and, yes, someone even addressed me Mr. Staples, once), but really——"—Forrest J. Ackerman

"I enjoyed the first issue of 'The Fantasy Fan' very much, your features and news items were well chosen and well written. There is little room for improvement, just more pages, better paper, and stories, which will come in time."—Philip Bridges

Mr. Bridges' wishes have also come true.

"Just what I think of TFF:—every single word in it is GOOD—I can't find a solitary thing to kick about. Its perfect. Superb. I'm sure glad I'm a subscriber."—Ted Lutwin

No, readers, this is not a paid testimonial. Of course, we know the magazine is far from perfect or superb, but we are pleased to see that the greater part of our readers were not disappointed in it.

"Congrats on the first of the 'Fan,' it's darn good. The stf alphabet is swell. Tucker's article and 'Club News' are good as are the columns. Am eagerly awaiting No. 2 issue. 'The Fantasy Fan' is filling a long-felt need and I expect it to grow and prosper. Bon voyage."—Daniel McPhail

"Got my first issue of TFF other day. Best articles were 'Science Fiction Alphabet,' 'About Authors,' and 'Conglamitorial.' I thought the whole magazine was excellent."—J. Sam Smart

"'Earthling Spurs Martian' almost sent me into a fit. 'Tis a good little mag. I hope you enlarge the size later."—David Stolaroff

"Received my copy of your magazine and liked it swell. Just what I've been looking for! Your promise of some more new Clark Ashton Smith stories make it even more enticing. Good luck to you!"—Duane W. Rimel

Well, fans, just to show you that the above has not gone to our head, read what someone else says:

"At present, 'The Fantasy Fan' isn't worth the time it takes, to read it or the ink to print it. And same can be said about all the Science Fiction 'fan' magazines."—B. K. Goree, Jr.

Mr. Goree forgot to mention that "The Fantasy Fan" isn't worth the paper it's printed on. Ink is very cheap.

"The first issue is really good, but I think a great many improvements can be made. I would suggest that you use a stiff cover of some heavy paper, with a table of contents either on the front cover, as in the 'Science Fiction Digest,' or on the inside of the front cover. A better grade of paper should prove of advantage. Leave the size the way it is.

"Now for the articles themselves. These were all good, especially Julius Schwartz's on the collection of science fiction, Science Fiction in English Magazines and Sequels by Popular Demand. I do not care an awful lot for Mr. Smith's stories, but have read some dandies by him. Some of his stories are a good cure for sleeping sickness, I agree with Mr. Ackerman on some points in The Boiling Point, but on others—aw, phooie, Mr. Ackerman! Because I just half agree with him, I think I will stay neutral in the controversy. Best wishes to you in your new venture. I hope you double your circulation in a few months."—Oswald Train

We have made several of the improvements you mention, and will make others in good time. Do you want a contents page, fans, or would you rather have the space used for some interesting article? Give us your opinions on the current issue, and tell us your likes and dislikes. We want to hear from you.

The Editor

ARGOSY FANTASTICS

(Courtesy Don Moore, Managing Editor, Argosy)

Fantasy Fans may be interested to know some of the forthcoming fantastic and weird stories scheduled for publication in Argosy, which has always featured this type of fiction. In the November 4th issue, Ray Cummings has a novelette, "Terror of the Unseen," in which a criminal scientist masters the secret of electrical invisibility and throws a great city into chaos. It is an exciting piece of science fiction complete in this issue.

The following week, November 11th, Erle Stanley Gardner presents the second of his series of stories about the Roadrunner, a lone wolf of the Mexican border who has a strange faculty of seeing in the dark—a scientifically possible but rare phenomenon which leads him into unusual adventures. This novelette is entitled "Border Justice."

Otis Adelbert Kline starts his second novel of the red planet in the November 25th issue. "The Outlaw of Mars" is a full length novel of adventure in the weird world of canals, filled with amazing warfare and fantastic animals.

The Kingdom Of The Worm

by Clark Ashton Smith

[Every fantasy reader knows Clark Ashton Smith, and he needs no introduction. Not only is he the favorite of thousands, but his work has been said to rival and even surpass Poe. Although, as a general rule, we do not take sides, we admit without the slightest hesitation that we enjoy Clark Ashton Smith's tales a great deal more than we do Poe's. Even those that find Smith's work altogether too fantastic must admit that no other author has nearly as beautiful a vocabulary, and few have as great an ability to produce the utterly weird effect as our present author. He claims that "The Kingdom of the Worm" is one of his weirdest and most original of his tales, and we are inclined to agree with him. Let the story speak for itself.]



FOREWORD

This tale was suggested by the reading of "The Voyages and Travels of Sir John Maundeville," in which the fantastic realm of Abchaz and the darkness covered province of Hanyson are actually described! I recommend this colourful fourteenth-century book to lovers of fantasy. Sir John even tells, in one chapter, how diamonds propagate themselves! Truly, the world was a wonderful place in those times, when almost everyone believed in the verity of such marvels.

Now in his journeying Sir John Maundeville had passed well to one side of that remarkable province in the kingdom of Abchaz which was called Hanyson; and, unless he was greatly deceived by those of whom he had inquired the way, could deem himself within two days' travel of the neighboring realm of Georgia.

He had seen the river that flowed out from Hanyson, a land of hostile idolators on which there lay the curse of perpetual darkness; and wherein, it was told, the voices of people, the crowing of cocks and the neighing of horses had sometimes been heard by those who approached its confines. But he had not paused to investigate the verity of these marvels; since the direct route of his journey was through another region; and also Hanyson was a place into which no man, not even the most hardy, would care to enter without need.

However, as he pursued his wayfaring with the two Armenian Christians who formed his retinue, he began to hear from the inhabitants of that portion of Abchaz the rumor of an equally dread demesne, named Antchar, lying before him on the road to Georgia. The tales they told were both vague and frightful, and were of varying import: some said that this country was a desolation peopled only by the liches of the dead and by loathly phantoms; others, that it was subject to the ghouls and afrits, who devoured the dead and would suffer no living mortal to trespass upon their dominions; and still others spoke of things all too hideous to be described, and of dire necromancies that prevailed in Antchar even as the might of emperors doth prevail in more usually ordered lands. And the tales agreed only in this, that Antchar had been within mortal memory one of the fairest domains of Abchaz, but had been utterly laid waste by an unknown pestilence, so that its high cities and broad fields were long since abandoned to the desert and to such devils and other creatures as inhabit waste places. And the tellers of the tales agreed in warning Sir John to avoid this region and to take the road which ran deviously to the north of Antchar; for Antchar was a place into which no man had gone in latter times.

The good knight listened gravely to all these, as was his wont; but being a stout Christian, and valorous withal, he would not suffer them to deter him from his purpose. Even when the last inhabited village had been left behind, and he came to the division of the ways, and saw verily that the highway into Antchar had not been trodden by man or beast for generations, he refused to change his intention but rode forward stoutly while the Armenians followed with much protest and some trepidation.

Howbeit, he was not blind to the sundry disagreeable tokens that began to declare themselves along the way. There were neither trees, herbs nor lichens anywhere, such as would grow in any wholesome land; but low hills mottled with a leprosy of salt, and ridges bare as the bones of the dead.

Anon he came to a pass where the hills were strait and steep on each hand, with pinnacled cliffs of a dark stone crumbling slowly into dust and taking shapes of wild horror and strangeness, of demonry and Satanry as they crumbled. There were faces in the stone, having the semblance of ghouls or goblins, that appeared to move and twist as the travellers went by; and Sir John and his companions were troubled by the aspect of these faces and by the similitudes

which they bore to one another. So much alike, indeed, were many of them, that it seemed as if their first exemplars were preceding the wayfarers, to mock them anew at each turn. And aside from those which were like ghouls or goblins, there were others having the features of heathen idols, uncouth and hideous to behold; and others still that were like the worm-gnawed visages of the dead; and these also appeared to repeat themselves on every hand in a doubtful and wildering fashion.

The Armenians would have turned back, for they swore that the rocks were alive and endowed with motion, in a land where naught else was living; and they sought to dissuade Sir John from his project. But he said merely, "Follow me, an ye will," and rode onward among the rocks and pinnacles.

Now, in the ancient dust of the unused road, they saw the tracks of a creature that was neither man nor any terrestrial beast; and the tracks were of such unwonted shape and number, and were so monstrous withal, that even Sir John was disquieted thereby; and perceiving them, the Armenians murmured more openly than before.

And now, as they still pursued their way, the pinnacles of the pass grew tall as giants, and were riven into the likeness of mighty limbs and bodies, some of which were headless and others with heads of Typhoean enormity. And their shadows deepened between the travellers and the sun, to more than the umbrage of shadows cast by rocks. And in the darkest depth of the ravine, Sir John and his followers met a solitary jackal, which fled them not in the manner of its kind but passed them with leisurely pace and bespoke them with articulate words, in a voice hollow and sepulchral as that of a demon, bidding them to turn back, since the land before them was an interdicted realm. All were much startled thereat, considering that this was indeed a thing of enchantment, for a jackal to speak thus, and being against nature, was fore-ominous of ill and peril. And the Armenians cried out, saying they would go no further; and when the jackal had passed from sight, they fled after it, spurring their horses like men who were themselves ridden by devils.

Seeing them thus abandon him, Sir John was somewhat wroth; and also he was perturbed by the warning of the jackal; and he liked not the thought of faring alone into Antchar. But, trusting in our Savior to forfend him against all harmful enchantments and the necromancies of Satan, he rode on among the rocks till he came forth at length from their misshapen shadows; and emerging thus, he saw before him a grey plain that was like the ashes of some dead land under extinguished heavens.

At sight of this region, his heart misgave him sorely, and he disliked it even more than the twisted faces of the rocks and the riven forms of the pinnacles. For here the bones of men, of horses and camels, had marked the way with their pitiable whiteness; and the topmost branches of long dead trees arose like supplicative arms from the sand that had sifted upon the older gardens. And here there were ruinous houses, with doors open to the high-drifting desert, and mausoleums sinking slowly in the dunes. And here, as Sir John rode forward, the sky darkened above him, though not with the passage of clouds or the coming of the simoon, but rather with the strange dusk of midmost eclipse, wherein the shadows of himself and his horse were blotted out, and the tombs and houses were wan as phantoms.

Sir John had not ridden much further, when he met a horned viper, or cerastes, crawling toilsomely away from Antchar in the deep dust of the road. And the viper spoke at it passed him, saying with a human voice, "Be warned, and go not onward into Antchar, for this is a realm forbidden to all mortal beings except the dead."

Now did Sir John address himself in prayer to God the Highest, and to Jesus Christ our Savior and all the blessed Saints, knowing surely that he had arrived in a place that was subject to Satanical dominion. And while he prayed the gloom continued to thicken, till the road before him was half nighted and was no longer easy to discern. And though he would have still ridden on, his charger halted in the gloom and would not respond to the spur, but stood and trembled like one who is smitten with palsy.

Then, from the twilight that was nigh to darkness, there came gigantic figures, muffled and silent and having, as he thought, neither mouths nor eyes beneath the brow-folds of their sable cerements. They uttered no word, nor could Sir John bespeak them in the fear that came upon him; and likewise he was powerless to draw his sword. And they plucked him from his saddle with fleshless hands, and led him away, half swooning at the horror of their touch, on paths that he perceived only with the dim senses of one who goes down into the shadow of death. And he knew not how far they led him nor in what direction; and he heard no sound as he went other than the screaming of his horse far off, like a soul in mortal dread and agony: for the footfalls of those who had taken him were soundless and he could not tell if they were phantoms or haply were veritable demons. A coldness blew upon him, but without the whisper or sougning of wind; and the air he breathed was dense with corruption and such odors as may emanate from a broken charnel.

For a time, in the faintness that had come upon him, he saw not the things that were standing beside the way, nor the shrouded shapes that went by in funereal secrecy. Then, recovering his senses a little, he perceived that there were houses about him and the streets of a town, though these were but scantily to be discerned in the night that had fallen without bringing the stars. Howbeit, he saw, or deemed, that there were high mansions and broad thoroughfares and

markets; and among them, as he went on, a building that bore the appearance of a great palace, with a facade that glimmered vaguely, and domes and turrets half swallowed up by the lowering darkness.

As he neared the facade, Sir John saw that the glimmering came from within and was cast obscurely through open doors and between broad-spaced pillars. Too feeble was the light for torch or cresset, too dim for any lamp; and Sir John marvelled amid his faintness and terror. But when he had drawn closer still, he saw that the strange gleaming was like the phosphor bred by the putrefaction of a charnel.

Beneath the guidance of those who held him helpless, he entered the building. They led him through a stately hall, in whose carven columns and ornate furniture the opulence of kings was manifest; and thence he came into a great audience-room, with a throne of gold and ebony set on a high dais, all of which was illumed by no other light than the glimmering of decay. And the throne was tenanted, not by any human lord or sultan, but a grey, prodigious creature, of height and bulk exceeding those of man, and having in all its over-swollen form the exact similitude of a charnel-worm. And the worm was alone, and except for the worm and Sir John and those beings who had brought him thither, the great chamber was empty as a mausoleum of old days, whose occupants were long since consumed by corruption.

Then, standing there with a horror upon him such as no man had ever envisaged, Sir John became aware that the worm was scrutinizing him severely, with little eyes deep-folded in the obscene bloating of its face, and then, with a dreadful and solemn voice, it addressed him, saying:

"I am king of Antchar, by virtue of having conquered and devoured the mortal ruler thereof, as well as all those who were his subjects. Know then that this land is mine and that the intrusion of the living is unlawful and not readily to be condoned. The rashness and folly thou hast shown in thus coming here is verily most egregious; since thou wert warned by the peoples of Abchaz, and warned anew by the jackal and the viper which thou didst meet on the road into Antchar. Thy temerity hath earned a condign punishment. And before I suffer thee to go hence, I decree that thou shalt lie for a term among the dead, and dwell as they dwell, in a dark sepulcher, and learn the manner of their abiding and the things which none should behold with living eyes. Yea, still alive, it shall be thine to descend and remain in the very midst of death and putrefaction, for such length of time as seemeth meet to correct thy folly and punish thy presumption."

Sir John was one of the worthiest knights in Christendom, and his valor was beyond controversy. But when he heard the speech of the throned worm, and the judgement that it passed upon him, his fear became so excessive that once again he was nigh to swooning. And, still in this state, he was taken hence by those who had brought him to the audience-room. And somewhere in the outer darkness, in a place of tombs and graves and cenotaphs beyond the dim town, he was flung into a deep sepulcher of stone, and the brazen door of the sepulcher was closed upon him.

Lying there through the seasonless midnight, Sir John was companioned only by an unseen cadaver and by those ministrants of decay who were not yet wholly done with their appointed task. Himself as one half dead, in the sore extremity of his horror and loathing, he could not tell if it were day or night in Antchar; and in all the term of endless hours that he lay there, he heard no sound, other than the beating of his own heart, which soon became insufferably loud, and oppressed him like the noise and tumult of a great throng.

Appalled by the clamor of his heart, and affrighted by the thing which lay in perpetual silence beside him, and whelmed by the awesomeness and dire necromancy of all that had befallen him, Sir John was prone to despair, and scant was his hope of returning from that imprisonment amid the dead, or of standing once more under the sun as a living man. It was his to learn the voidness of death, to share the abomination of desolation, and to comprehend the unutterable mysteries of corruption; and to do all this not as one who is a mere insensible cadaver, but with soul and body still inseparate. His flesh crept, and his spirit cringed within him, as he felt the crawling of worms that went avidly to the dwindling corpse or came away in gluttled slowness. And it seemed to Sir John at that time (and at all times thereafter) that the condition of his sojourn in the tomb was verily to be accounted a worse thing than death.

At last, when many hours or days had gone over him, leaving the tomb's darkness unchanged by the entrance of any beam or the departure of any shadow, Sir John was aware of a sullen clangor, and knew that the brazen door had been opened. And now, for the first time, by the dimness of twilight that had entered the tomb, he saw in all its piteousness and repulsion the thing with which he had abode so long. In the sickness that fell upon him at this sight, he was haled forth from the sepulcher by those who had thrust him therein: and, fainting once more with the terror of their touch, and shrinking from their gigantic shadowy stature and cerements whose black folds revealed no human visage or form, he was led through Antchar along the road whereby he had come into that dolorous realm.

His guides were silent as before; and the gloom which lay upon the land was even as when he had entered it, and was like the umbrage of some eternal occultation. But at length, in the very place where he had been taken captive, he was left to retrace his own way and to fare alone through the land of ruinous gardens toward the defile of the crumbling rocks.

Weak though he was from his confinement, and all bemazed with the things which had befallen him, he followed the road till the darkness lightened once more and he came forth from

its penumbral shadow beneath a pale sun. And somewhere in the waste he met his charger, wandering through the sunken fields that were covered up by the sand; and he mounted the charger and rode hastily away from Antchar through the pass of the strange boulders with mocking forms and faces. And after a time he came once more to the northern road by which travellers commonly went to Georgia; and here he was rejoined by the two Armenians, who had waited on the confines of Antchar, praying for his secure deliverance.

Long afterwards, when he had returned from his wayfaring in the East and among the peoples of remote isles, he told of the kingdom of Abchaz in the book that related his travels; and also he wrote therein concerning the province of Hanyson. But he made no mention of Antchar, that kingdom of darkness and decay ruled by the throned worm.

HOW TO COLLECT FANTASY FICTION

by Julius Schwartz

Part Two

The next task is more difficult: the question of back numbers of the current magazines. Some back issues are almost impossible to secure. However, be sure to try the magazine publishers. If this fails, scour the second-hand book and magazine stores. If they haven't the issues, leave a standing order with them. (They're eager for business and they'll make an honest attempt to secure the desired issues for you.) Scan the discussions columns. Readers often offer to sell or trade back numbers. Then try the large second-hand magazine dealers, such as Carl Swanson, Washburn, North Dakota and the Smith Book Co., Box 661, Lawrence, Massachusetts.

As a last resort advertise.

That takes care of all magazines that are now being published. Now we have to contend with real difficulties. We're going to trail down fantasy stories that were published in magazines no longer sold at newsstands! Chief among these defunct magazines is *Astounding Stories*, *Strange Tales*, and *Wonder Stories Quarterly*. (More details are needed with these out-of-print magazines, so it'll be given whenever definite information is known concerning them.) This periodical (*Astounding Stories*), a science fiction magazine, first appeared on the newsstands with its January, 1930 issue and was discontinued but a short time ago, in March 1933. Its companion magazine, *Strange Tales*, published weird, fantastic fiction. Dates: September, 1931 to January, 1933. *Wonder Stories Quarterly*, science fiction, ran from Fall, 1929 to Winter, 1933, publishing only inter-planetary tales in the last two years.

(Next month Mr. Schwartz describes the less known fantasy magazines.)



Subscribe now and insure yourself of a monthly copy. Only a limited number are printed.

INFORMATION

(This department will answer any question about fantasy fiction. There is no charge, and you may use it freely.)

1. When did *Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories* come out, how long was it issued and what was the selling price?—Con Pankevich, Jr.

Miracle, Science and Fantasy Stories appeared in 1931. There were only two bi-monthly issues, April-May which was on sale April 5th, and June-July, which came out on May 15. Both issues had been printed before the first one was on sale. It sold for 20 cents per copy.

2. How many *Amazing Stories Annuals* were there, and for what years?—Con Pankevich, Jr.

The 1927 *Amazing Stories Annual* was the only one published.

3. In what issues of *Amazing Stories* did the *Skylark* stories appear?—J. Smart

"*Skylark of Space*," by Edward E. Smith, Ph. D., appeared in the August, September and October 1928 issues of *Amazing Stories*, and its sequel, "*Skylark Three*" appeared in the same issues for 1930. The former story was collaborated on Lee Garby. Dr. Smith is now working on his third story in this series, which will be published in *Amazing* some time next year.

4. Who wrote "*Cosmic Power*"?—J. Sam Smart

"*Cosmic Power*," in the April, 1931 issue of *Amazing*, was by John C. Dare.

5. What were the stories in the first *Amazing Stories Quarterly*?—J. Sam Smart

"*The Morn of Doom*" by Earl L. Bell; "*The Atomic Riddle*" by Edward S. Sears; "*When the Sleeper Wakes*" by H. G. Wells (reprint); "*The Golden Vapor*" by E. H. Johnson; "*The Puzzle Duel*" by Miles

J. Breuer, M.D.; and "The Terrors of the Upper Air" by Frank Orndoff.

6. What were the stories in the first Wonder Stories Quarterly?—J. Sam Smart

"The Shot Into Infinity" by Otto Willi Gail (translated from the German); "The Artificial Man" by Clare Winger Harris; "The Hidden World" by Edmond Hamilton; and "The Gravitational Deflector" by Harry D. Parker.

7. Please give me a list of the stories written by Nathan Schachner—J. Sam Smart

"Back to 20,000 A.D." o Wonder, March, 1931; "The Death Cloud" o Astounding, May, 1931; "The Dead-Alive" o Weird, April-May, 1931; "Exiles of the Moon" o Wonder, Sept., Oct., & Nov., 1931; "Emperor of the Stars" o Wonder, April, 1931; "In 20,000 A.D." o Wonder, Sept., 1930; "The Menace from Andromeda" o Amazing, April, 1931; "Pirates of the Gorm" Astounding, May, 1932; "Revolt of the Machines" o Astounding, July, 1931; "The Tower of Evil" o Wonder Quart., Summer, 1930; "Venus Mines, Incorporated" o Wonder, August, 1931; "Slaves of Mercury" Astounding, Sept., 1932; "Emissaries of Space" Wonder Quart., Fall, 1932; "The Time Express" Wonder, Dec., 1932; "Memory of the Atoms" Wonder, Jan., 1933; "The Eternal Dictator" Wonder, Feb., 1933; "The Robot Technocrat" Wonder, March, 1933; a series of stories in the April, May, and June, 1933 issues of Wonder; "The Revolt of the Scientists", "The Great Oil War," and "The Final Triumph," and "Fire Imps of Vesuvius" Astounding, Oct. (All stories marked with o were collaborated with Arthur Leo Zagat, and "The Memory of the Atoms" was composed with R. Lacher. Mr. Schachner's first story was "The Tower of Evil.")

8. What happened to the sequel to "Thru the Dragon Glass," by A. Merritt?—David Stolaroff

For some unknown reason, Mr. Merritt never wrote a sequel to this story, although it could stand one very well. Perhaps he will write one yet, even after all these years, if his fans are persistent enough. Reprint copies of this remarkable story, A. Merritt's first, can be purchased for ten cents a copy from Robert Scarlet, Jr., 87-36 162nd St., Jamaica, Long Island, N.Y.

ABOUT AUTHORS

Some fan, after reading one of Jules Verne's tales in Amazing, wrote in claiming that he was a very promising author! Charles Willard Diffin and C. D. Willard is the same author.... The fastest writer: Arthur J. Burks. The slowest: Edward Elme Smith.... P. Schuyler Miller became a science fiction author as the result of a cover contest.... You can't call Raymond Gallun a half-pint, anyway. (How did that pun get into this column?)... The question is still unsatisfactorily: WHO is Anthony Gilmore???... Allen Glasser's "Captives in Space" in the July, 1932 "The Time Traveller" is a rejected entry of the November, 1929 Science Wonder Stories cover contest.... Two of the titles of H. G. Winter's stories contain the word "ice," which seems quite appropriate.... Sewell Peaslee Wright had a story in Weird years before Astounding.

CONTEST RESULTS

The winner of last month's cash prize contest is William Sykora, 35-51 41st St., Long Island City, New York. Here is his answer to "Why do you read fantasy fiction?"

"Why do I read fantasy fiction? I often wonder. The occult, the fantastic, have always held me with supreme, almost unholy, fascination. I have found that by constant practice, an all-excluding, all-consuming concentration bonds stronger than the strongest steel to all dismally horrible tales of the supernatural. The earthly ties that hold me mentally and morally to a workaday existence, are hypnotically rent asunder by a mesmerism born of steely sharp concentration. Thus do I thrill—quake—and shudder with the delightful ecstasy of bizarre adventure through the awful expanse of the inconceivably terrible unknown universe, and I love it."

Because of lack of support, we will not present another cash prize contest, until enough readers ask for one. If we receive enough petitions, we will take great pleasure in featuring another in the near future.

SUPERNATURAL HORROR IN LITERATURE

by H. P. Lovecraft

(Copyright, 1927 by W. Paul Cook)

1. Introduction

The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown. These facts few psychologists will dispute, and their admitted truth must establish for all time the genuineness and dignity of the weirdly horrible tale as a literary form.

Against it are discharged all the shafts of a materialistic sophistication which clings to frequently felt emotions and external events, and a naively insipid idealism which deprecates the aesthetic motive and calls for a didactic literature to "uplift" the reader toward a suitable degree of smirking optimism. But in spite of all this opposition, the weird tale has survived, developed, and attained remarkable heights of perfection; founded as it is on a profound and elementary principle whose appeal, if not always universal, must necessarily be poignant and permanent to minds of the requisite sensitiveness.

The appeal of the spectrally macabre is generally narrow because it demands from the reader a certain degree of imagination and a capacity for detachment from everyday life. Relatively few are free enough from the spell of daily routine to respond to rappings from outside, and tales of ordinary feelings and events, or of common sentimental distortions of such feelings and events, will always take first place in the taste of the majority; rightly, perhaps, since, of course, these ordinary matters make up the greater part of human experience. But the sensitive are always with us, and sometimes a curious streak of fancy invades an obscure corner of the very hardest head; so that no amount of rationalism, reform, or Freudian analysis can quite annul the thrill of the chimney-corner whisper of the lonely wood. There is here involved a psychological pattern or tradition as real and as deeply grounded in mental experience as any other pattern or tradition of mankind; coeval with the religious feeling and closely related to many aspects of it, and too much a part of our inmost biological heritage to lose keen potency over a very important, though not numerically great, minority of our species.

Man's first instincts and emotions form his response to the environment in which he found himself. Definite feelings based on pleasure and pain grew up around the phenomena whose causes and effects he understood, whilst around those which he did not understand—and the universe teemed with them in the early days—were naturally woven such personifications, marvelous interpretations, and sensations of awe and fear as would be hit upon by a race having few and simple ideas and limited experience. The unknown, being likewise the unpredictable, became for our primitive forefathers a terrible and omnipotent source of boons and calamities visited upon mankind for cryptic and wholly extra-terrestrial reasons, and thus clearly belonged to a sphere of existence whereof we know nothing and wherein we have no part. The phenomenon of dreaming likewise helped to build up the notion of an unreal or spiritual world; and in general, all the conditions of savage dawn-life so strongly conduced to a feeling of the supernatural, that we need not wonder at the thoroughness with which man's very hereditary essence has become saturated with religion and superstition. That saturation must, as a matter of plain scientific fact, be regarded as virtually permanent so far as the subconscious mind and inner instincts are concerned; for though the area of the unknown has been steadily contracting for thousands of years, an infinite reservoir of mystery still engulfs most of the outer cosmos, whilst a vast residuum of powerful inherited associations clings around all the objects and processes that were once mysterious, however well they may now be explained. And more than this, there is an actual physiological fixation of the old instincts in our nervous tissue, which would make them obscurely operative even were the conscious mind to be purged of all sources of wonder.

(continued next month)

TRUE GHOST STORIES

Edwin C. Hill talks on various subjects every night on the Columbia Broadcasting System. One evening he devoted his program to ghost stories about London that are supposed to be true. They sound very convincing and have many witnesses. We leave it to the reader whether to accept them as truth, or discard them as merely hallucinations. However, they are extremely interesting, nevertheless.

Once, two sailors were roaming around London and came upon an old, but handsome, mansion.

"Funny no one lives here," said one, "This shack seems too good to be left vacant."

But the two sailors didn't intend to leave it vacant that night. They had no money, and thus could not pay for lodging, so they entered the old house, intending to spend the night there.

After climbing to the second floor and finding a fireplace, they built a blazing fire with some wood they had secured. Curling up in some old clothes, they went to sleep beside the roaring fire.

Suddenly, after many hours, one of the sailors awoke, half-conscious of some noise. There it was again! It sounded like a door being closed. Yes—that's what it must have been. A few pieces of wood to bring the dying fire to renewed activity gave him some courage, but he woke the other sailor anyway.

He had hardly time to explain to his friend the reason for his disturbance, when the noise was repeated.

"It's the wind," said one, and they accepted that explanation, preparing to go to sleep again, but instantly their returned with greater confirmation. Another sound.

Any thoughts but of the supernatural were out of the question. This time it was footsteps—but what footsteps! Not human—not animal! They were padded sounds—something like bare feet. Nearer and nearer.

Suddenly they stopped, and the door opened. Slowly—and there was revealed to their terrified senses the most horrible monstrosity imaginable. It could not be of this earth!

One crazed sailor jumped past it and flew down the stairs, out of the house, and screamed in mortal terror into the streets.

He told his story—and the next day the body of his companion was found mangled on the ground. He had leaped out of a second story window.

Another story tells the tale of a man walking through a London park at day-break on the bank of the Thames. While passing a bridge, he spies a woman jumping into the river, and he takes off his coat preparing to save her, but a hand touches his shoulder. An officer.

"It's no use," he said, "You could not save her. She is not a living woman. Return tomorrow at this time and you will see her repeat her ghastly act."

The bewildered man did so, and the next morning was but a repetition of the one before.

"You see?" said the officer, "She does that for seven consecutive mornings each year. Today is the last one this year. She died here a long time ago."

(This article will be concluded next month.)

THE BOILING POINT

You will remember the terrific outburst Forrest J. Ackerman made upon Clark Ashton Smith's stories and weird tales in general in last month's column. Shortly after the issue went to press, we received the following postscript to his article which he requested to have printed at the beginning of this month's column.

"I could as well pick on John Taine—a favorite author, mind you—for 'The Time Stream' in Wonder Stories, another story considered doubtful science fiction. My only interest is to keep stf. in the stf. publications, and let fantasies and weird tales appear in the magazines featuring that type.

"It is to be hoped that Mr. Smith will discover many of his admirers thru the writings of readers caring to present arguments...."

It is only fair that Mr. Smith himself should have the first blow against Mr. Ackerman's argument, in defense of his own stories. He calls his defense "Horror, Fantasy and Science."

"Mr. Ackerman's fervent and ebullient denunciation of my stories, followed by Editor Hornig's invitation to join the melee, is not to be resisted.

"I infer that Forrest J. Ackerman considers horror, weirdness and unearthliness beyond the bounds of science or science or science fiction. Since horror and weirdness are integral elements of life (as is well known to those who have delved beneath the surface) and since, in all likelihood, the major portion of the universe is quite unearthly, I fail to understand the process of logic or syllogism by which he has arrived at this truly amazing proscription.

"Let me recommend to Mr. Ackerman, and to others like him, a more scientifically open and receptive attitude of imagination. If Mr. Ackerman were transported to some alien world, I fear that he would find the reality far more incredible, bizarre, grotesque, fantastic, horrific, and impossible than any of my stories.

"In regard to 'The Light From Beyond,' I cannot see that this tale is any more fantastic and unreal than others dealing with unknown dimensions or planes of hyper-space. Physical entry into such planes is improbable, but form an alluring theme for fictional speculation.

"It is curious that Mr. Ackerman should profess to like 'Flight Into Super-Time', a story which is wilder, if anything, than the ones he has denounced. I might also add that it was written as a satire on time-travelling, and should not have been read too seriously.

"Of course, it is Forrest Ackerman's privilege to dislike my stories, and to express his dislike whenever he chooses. I have merely tried to point out that he is in error when he condemns them as being inherently unsuitable for a scientfiction magazine."

H. P. Lovecraft also defends the weird tale:

"As for Ackerman's ebullition, I fear he can hardly be taken seriously in matters involving the criticism of imaginative fiction. Smith's story was really splendid, except for the cheap ending on which the Editor Wonder Stories insisted. Ackerman once wrote me a letter with a very childish attack on my work—he evidently enjoys verbal pyrotechnics for their own sake and seems so callous to imaginative impressions."

August W. Derleth liked everything in "The Fantasy Fan" except the letter in this department from Forrest J. Ackerman "Who," he says, "while usually quite interesting, nevertheless has the unpleasant habit of trying to make everything over into his own imagine."

R. H. Barlow gives an open reply to Mr. Ackerman in defense of Clark Ashton Smith.

"To my mind you are deplorably lacking in imagination to so condemn some of the finest work of the greatest living fantasy writer. Must you be so literal, physical, in your interpretation of imaginative literature? Clark Ashton Smith, whom I have the honor of knowing, is primarily and foremost a poet, his work having received the highest commendation of such persons as Edwin Markham, George Sterling, etc. Truly, his colourfully nightmarish visions are far superior to the conventional type of—forgive me—trash—printed in the average mercenary scientifiction magazine. The mere fact that a few helpless ray-projectors, heroine consisting mainly of lipstick and legs, and a dastardly villain, are not dragged in by the nape of their respective necks certainly does nothing to impair the excellence of his dulcet prose, but rather it an agreeable relief."

Come on, now, everybody join in the battle!

ANNALS OF THE JINNS

by R. H. Barlow

"...Thither Ganigul often retired in the daytime to read in quiet the marvelous annals of the Jinns, the chronicles of ancient worlds, and the prophecies relating to the worlds that are yet to be born...."

Wm. Beckford
—"Story of Prince Barkiarokh"

1—The Black Tower

At the head of the winding river Olaee, nearby the fragrant forest, stands the Black Tower of the Southlands. High into the air rise its bleak stone walls, piercing the sunset with slender spire. For eternity it has been there; by the sluggish waters on which float great bloated crimson lilies and for eternity will it be there. The peasants of the nearby village know not whence it came nor why 'tis there, and wisely avoid it when the moon is on the wane. Few dare visit the colourful forest of evil or the treacherous river, for strange and unholy things dwell therein.

Some tell of how on the dark of the moon there comes from the great star Sirius a growing speck of flame ultimately losing itself in the eternal midnight of outer space. However this may be, it is certain strange and alien beings built this ebon tower in the dawn of the world, for purposes not understood by mortals; sealing the door long ages since.

There is a tale the old wives spin, saying: One of the adventurous villagers, Castor by name, took undue interest in the tower and was frequently seen slipping furtively to and from it in the dusk. Of all the people of the town he had the least savoury ancestry, his father being a satyr, his mother a witch-woman. True, others mated with the people of the glen, yet it is not considered a thing to be proud of. The very Burgomaster had a gnome none too far back in his lineage, which was expressed in the coarse features of his evil countenance. But a satyr! The righteous citizens avoided Castor scrupulously, and the dislike was mutual. So it was he continued on his silent trips unheeded.

What he did there so often not known but the seasons came and went and the winter merged into spring and in time it was Walburgas Eve. That night the town gates were tightly closed and bolted and all cowered behind locked doors. Strange shapes flew screeching through the air and sniffed most horribly at the doorsteps.

That night Castor went to the tower as had become his habit, though his better sense warned him to stay home abed. His satyr ancestry openly rebelled, but the witch proved stronger. As he stole timorously through the wood he heard sounds of high revelry from within the castle. Therefore, he was quiet as he hesitated before the foot of the long unopened door. Queer things were abroad though he dared not return home alone through the forest, still more did he fear to remain within reach of the Things of the tower. As he deliberated on the course to take the great door swung silently open and a crab like claw lovingly encircled his waist and drew him in.

And he was seen no more by the villagers.

SCIENCE FICTION IN ENGLISH MAGAZINES

(Series 2)

by Bob Tucker

What England needs is a good science fiction mag. The present ones are thrilling, but small and cheap. They have swell titles, but often the story falls short. On the other hand, that's an old American custom. Believe it or not, but just 653210987600 stories have been written under the title "The End of the World"! (Editor's note: Mr. Tucker, I think you exaggerate. I haven't seen half that many.) And if you scientfictionists want some darned good arguments over anything scientific, just give this fellow a line: Dennis Gilbert Smith, 521 Bearwood Road, Smeethwick, Staffs., England. He is a student of theology.

Talk about a swell picture!—Wesso or Paul should look at the illustration of the moon-men attacking a giant army tank way back in the April 1st issue of "The Skipper," an English mag that makes a specialty of science-fiction.

Freaks in the raw: An English mag printed a story of a kid (age about 14) who had magnetic hands, and could draw metals to him by merely extending his fingers—well, the kid, instead of capturing the earth by pulling out its magnets with his fingers, as would usually be done does nothing but play tricks with scales, making water buckets dance in the air, etc—darn dumb, some of these authors.

"Red Raiders of Mystery" is a future air-war story in "Weekly Boy's Magazine", while another "The Rover," printed "Britain Invaded," this time by Chinese—what, again?...well, times are hard everywhere.... (Editor's note: not anymore. How about the N R A?) Another mag by the name of "Modern Boy" prints about two series of interplanetary stories a year concerning the adventures of Captain Justice. Blood and thunder. George Ward, 91 Milton Road Margate, Kent, England, would like to hear from some American fans.

MY SCIENCE FICTION COLLECTION

by Forrest J. Ackerman

Part Two

The foregoing covers approximately half of my set. The remaining portions of my stf collection are more to be looked at than read. My stf books and magazines lie behind sliding panels. These panels are decorated with various original stf illustrations. Two are by an artist friend showing the rocketship STF-I over a foreign world, and the other a city of the future. One is by Morey. There is a Tarzan jig-saw puzzle, and one of the mighty 56 foot prehistoric ape, King Kong, engaging in a battle with a flesh-eating allosaur. From "The Swordsman of Mars" comes another drawing. Two striking Paul illustrations are prominent, one being what I consider one of his very best: the inside drawing for "The City of Singing Flame," picturing the towering black and ivory edifices of that weird world. Buck Rogers in his interesting costume with rocket pistol smiles down. And Elliott Dold, Jr. has autographed his original frontispiece for Miracle Stories' first issue, "The Midnite Mail takes off for Mars." Paul's original Wonder Stories' cover for "The Dust of Destruction" hangs on a side wall.

(Next month Mr. Ackerman describes his science fiction autographs.)

THE SCIENCE FICTION ALPHABET

by Allen Glasser

Part Two—Conclusion

N is for Newton, the Gravity King,
Whose laws, in our mags, just don't mean a thing.

O's for Ourselves, who read science-fiction
We know what we like, and there's no dereliction.

P's for the Princess that's always on hand
To wed the brave Earthman who visits her land.

Q is for Quinn, the weird-story writer;
If he'd do science fiction his fame might be brighter.

R is for Robot, of whom much is said;
For many an author his antics have fed.

S is for Starzl, Schachner, and Sloane;
And let's not forget Doc Smith and Miss Stone.

T is for Time, a favorite theme
Which never grows stale—or so it would seem.

U is the Unknown, which writers employ

Whenever they need some death dealing toy.

V is for Venus, which belonged to one Kline
Until Mr. Burroughs took over that line.

W's Wonder, a changeable book;
You never can tell how it's going to look.

X means "okay" when written "All X"
A term which has brought Doctor Smith many checks.

Y's for the Yarn which will suit everyone;
We hardly believe it can ever be done.

Z is for Zagat—whom else could it be?
It's lucky for us his name starts with Z!



Come over to "Our Readers Say" and "The Boiling Point" and have a word.

SEQUELS—BY POPULAR DEMAND

by Walt Z. Russjuchi

Part Two

Ray Cummings' first story, in 1919, "The Girl in the Golden Atom," practically shrieked to the skies for a sequel, and Cummings obliged a year later with "The People of the Golden Atom."

Then, in 1921, Austin Hall, and Homer Eon Flint collaborated to write that remarkable story, "The Blind Spot," and what a fervor that created! The mystery of the "Blind Spot" was left unexplained, loopholes were hanging in the air, and it had one of the most unsatisfactory endings of them all. Readers entreated and implored the editor and the authors for a sequel. But alas! Just about this time Homer Eon Flint died, and it wasn't until 11 years later that the fans read Austin Hall's sequel, "The Spot of Life."

Ralph Milne Farley's "The Radio Man" created another sensation when it appeared in the 1924 Argosy-All Story, and it was followed by seven "radio" novels (only three of which, however, are related to the original story.)

"The Face in the Abyss" by A. Merritt was received mildly by the readers of the same magazine in 1923. It wasn't until Amazing Stories Annual reprinted this story in 1927 that a sequel was asked for. Ironically enough, though these readers were responsible for the sequels, "The Snake Mother," being written, it appeared in Argosy in 1930.

With the publication of Edward Elmer Smith's "The Skylark of Space" in 1928, the editorial offices of Amazing Stories were swamped with beseechings for the further adventures of the Skylark. Dr. Smith obliged with "Skylark Three" in 1930, and according to the discussions columns the readers won't object to the third in the series, which is now being written.

[Part three, next month, will be the conclusion of this article.]

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*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE FANTASY FAN, OCTOBER 1933 ***

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