

universes are unreasonably anachronistic: Pickwick would be dead by 1895; a landlady wouldn't be wearing a servant's cap; "The Admirable Crichton" (1902) could not possibly be quoted. The glimpse of Flatland is clever, and delightfully appropriate to the mathematical Moriarty. The episodes set in our own universe include several easily-corrected errors: for example, graduate students and instructors do not earn sabbatical leaves. The novel was cobbled together from three shorter works which appeared in *Fantastic Stories* in 1976, 1977, and 1979, and the joints still show. For instance, the rules of magic should not change midway through the book, and the quotation from Fredric Brown's *What Mad Universe* should not appear twice. These may seem like small points, but combined they tend to make the action and the characters unbelievable, and they get in the way of the comedy. Fletcher Pratt and L. Sprague de Camp did this sort of thing better in their Harold Shea books (*The Land of Unreason*, *The Incomplete Enchanter*, and *Wall of Serpents*). Not recommended. --Ruth Berman

## REPRINTS REPRINTS

79-26 HALF IN SHADOW, by Mary Elizabeth Counselman. Arkham House, Sauk City, WI, 1978, 212p, Cloth, Coll., \$8.95. ISBN 0-87054-081-5.

This first American collection of Counselman's stories is expanded from a 1964 British edition. The lead story, "The Three Marked Pennies," was one of the three most popular shorts ever to appear in *Weird Tales*, the other two being H. P. Lovecraft's "The Outsider" and Robert Barbour Johnson's "Far Below." The magazine's readers liked strong ideas, and weren't too fussy about execution, which is perhaps why Counselman isn't more widely published today. "Pennies" tells about a mysterious contest in which one person will get money, one travel, and a third death, according to which penny he has. The curse of "The Monkey Spoons" delivers itself much as expected. In "The Smiling Face," a jealous husband's scheme backfires, and the head the savages bring back isn't the one he wanted. Most of these tales are wholly predictable, although she sometimes draws material from the folklore of the Southern Appalachians, producing stories rather like those of Manly Wade Wellman, on a lower level. A few tales are mere sketches, in which characters visit remote places, report on supernatural phenomena, and then leave. "The Unwanted" tells about a woman living with imaginary children. "The Tree's Wife" has the spirit of a man dwelling in a tree. "A Death Crown for Mr. Hapworthy" is probably the best story in the book, about a charm and talisman collector who wants one of those balls of feathers the angels make in the pillow when they carry a departed soul off to its glory. Minor and undistinguished, even for horror fans. --Darrell Schweitzer

79-27 IT, by Theodore Sturgeon. Misfit Press, Dearborn, MI, 1978, 27p, Paper, Story, \$2.00. No ISBN. Distributed by Howard DeVore, 4705 Weddel St., Dearborn, MI 48125.

One of the most memorable stories in the August, 1940 issue of *Unknown* was this chilling and vivid tale of horror, since reprinted in Sturgeon's *Without Sorcery* (1948), and as a separate monograph by Prime Press for the 1948 Worldcon in Toronto. This stapled pamphlet was neatly printed in an edition of 500 numbered copies for the Eastern Michigan University SF Society. Six

effective colored pen and ink illustrations by Jean Hanke Woods enhance the text. An inexpensive gift for the Sturgeon enthusiast. --Neil Barron

79-28 MARCHERS OF VALHALLA, by Robert E. Howard. Berkeley Books, New York, 1978, 215p, Paper, Coll., \$1.95. ISBN 0-425-03702-9.

Reprinted from the 1972 Donald M. Grant edition are eight Howard stories, introduced by Fritz Leiber, and illustrated by C. W. Eddy. The tales are placed in Howard's pseudo-historical settings, ranging from 11th century Celtic Britain ("The Grey God Passes") to 19th century India ("A Thunder of Trumpets"). The title story begins in the drab 1930s, in Howard's native state of Texas, and quickly moves to prehistoric Lemuria, populated by beautiful maidens and fierce warriors. "Sea Curse" and "Out of the Deep" present watery horrors and witchcraft in 18th century England, respectively. "The Thunder-Rider" uneasily blends sorcery and serpent worship in an unsatisfactory and poorly-placed tale. "For the Love of Barbara Allen" is a minor tragedy set in the Texas of Howard's day, and in the Civil War period. Blood feuds and revenge in "The Valley of the Lost" are blended with sinister practices of worship by an underground reptilian species. For the Howard collector only. --Thomas M. Egan

79-29 ALLAN QUATERMAIN, by H. Rider Haggard. New-castle Publishing Co., North Hollywood, CA, 1978, 278p, Paper, Novel, \$3.95. ISBN 0-87877-117-4. The Newcastle Forgotten Fantasy Library, Volume XVIII.

Statesman, soldier, and writer, Rider Haggard (1856-1925) was a man to be reckoned with. He was knighted for his investigations into agricultural and social conditions, served in Africa during his youth, was friends with most of the leading writers of his time (such as Kipling), and was the author of more than 50 novels, as well as nonfiction treatises in other fields. Allan Quatermain was Haggard's most successful character, having been featured in some twenty books. Haggard himself was occasionally fatalistic, but Quatermain is eminently practical, whether fighting in the Zulu Wars, or, as in this book, probing the lost land of the Zu-Vendi. After the death of his only son (Haggard himself was later to suffer the same fate), Quatermain decides on one last trek to unexplored Africa, and discovers Zu-Vendi with his two companions and his old Zulu friend, Umslopogaas. There the old explorer finally meets his fate, and dies, seemingly bringing an end to his saga after only two books. Haggard later filled in the adventures of his earlier years, from youth to old age, even going back to his previous incarnations in prehistoric times. This new printing is taken from the Longmans, Green second printing of 1887, and includes all of the original illustrations. The new introduction by George Slusser analyzes the novel thoroughly, as well as comparing Haggard with such writers as Conrad. Slusser does make one mistake, however, making *King Solomon's Mines* the author's first novel, when it was actually his third. Recommended. --Chet Gottfried

79-30 THE CROSSROADS OF TIME, by Andre Norton. Ace Books, New York, 1978, 242p, Paper, Novel, \$1.75. ISBN 0-441-12323-9.

22-year-old Blake Walker rescues what seems to be an FBI agent, and finds that the lawman is actually from a world that has crosstime travel--the ability to journey to parallel Earths in which history took different paths. His prey is a would-be dictator who seeks to dominate some primitive world by using the deadly weapons of a superior society. Blake, who has latent ESP

powers (he can sense danger), is impressed into the service of the time corps. On one of his first assignments he is captured by the quarry's criminal allies, and thrown into the maze of worlds. He barely survives the rigors of different New Yorks, one of which has been blasted back into savagery by Nazi rocket attacks in World War II, and one so different as not to be recognizably human. Blake is finally rescued by his time-Wardsmen teammates, and rejoins them for the final assault on the criminal Pranj's stronghold.

*Crossroads* is a well-written introduction to the concept of parallel worlds. It becomes slightly sidetracked when Blake is forced into his overlong ordeal through worlds not really connected with the plot, and Blake himself spends a lot of time being bewildered (though understandably so). However, the action and tension remain constant, and the settings are fascinatingly exotic. This 1956 novel displays its Cold War era origins in its gloomy succession of time-lines in which Earth has always been destroyed in a nuclear or similarly catastrophic war; but this supports Blake's resolution to keep the same fate from being brought by Pranj to our own world. There is an equally good sequel, *Quest Crosstime* (1965), in which Blake goes on his first mission as a full-fledged Wardsman into an alternate America dominated by a militaristic Aztec/Toltec society. Recommended.

--Frederick Patten

79-31 FUTURE PERFECT: AMERICAN SCIENCE FICTION OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, edited by H. Bruce Franklin. Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, 404p, Cloth, Anth., \$15.00. ISBN 0-19-502322-6. Oxford University Press, New York, 1978, 404p, Paper, Anth., \$4.95. ISBN 0-19-502323-6.

Few studies of 19th-century antecedents of modern SF had been published when the first edition of this valuable anthology appeared in 1966. In it, BF states: "...one good working definition of science fiction may be the literature which, growing with science and technology, evaluates it and relates it meaningfully to the rest of human existence." Franklin later remarks what should now be common knowledge both among SF readers and among those who still view the field with suspicion or disdain: "There was no major nineteenth-century American writer of fiction, and indeed few in the second rank, who did not write some science fiction or at least one utopian romance," later adding that "not until late in the nineteenth century was there much American fiction in a strictly realistic mode." Franklin acknowledges Moskowitz's discovery that the term "science fiction" was first used in 1831.

Most of the writers whose stories appear here should be familiar to anyone moderately familiar with 19th-century American literature. Hawthorne's Aylmer in "The Birthmark" is one of a long line of "mad scientists." Other facets of science are revealed in "The Artist of the Beautiful" and "Rappacini's Daughter." The influence of Poe is well-known, but Franklin shows that Poe was at heart anti-scientific and escapist. The three tales included by Poe are also among the 16 in the well-annotated edition by Harold Beaver, *The Science Fiction of Edgar Allan Poe* (Penguin, 1976). Franklin suggests similarities between Melville's "The Bell-Tower" and Ellison's "I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream" a century later. A less familiar example of humans as machines is the 1890 story, "Dr. Materialismus," by Frederic J. Stimson.

Marvelous inventions were common in 19th-century fiction, and are still a staple of 20th-century SF. J. D. Whelpley's "The Atoms of Chladni" (1860) is a good early example of this theme. Modern medical science was also developing during this period, and many physicians wrote SF. For this revised edition, Franklin replaced

Silas Weir Mitchell's "Was He Dead?" with Jack London's first published work of SF, "A Thousand Deaths" (1899), in which are found the seeds of his later works. The eight-page commentary on London and SF is a very useful one. Psychology was the most exciting science of the 19th century. Three tales representing this area are Thomas W. Higgins's "The Monarch of Dreams," Bierce's "A Psychological Shipwreck," and Bellamy's "To Whom This May Come." Early speculations on space and dimensional travel are found in Bellamy's "The Blindman's World," Washington Irving's fragment, "The Men of the Moon," Fitz-James O'Brien's familiar "The Diamond Lens," two brief pieces--nominally science--on the fourth dimension, and Bierce's "Mysterious Disappearances."

The anthology concludes with three specimens of time travel: "Christmas 200,000 B.C.," by Stanley Waterloo (author of *The Story of Ab*), Twain's "From the 'London Times' of 1904," and William Harben's "In the Year Ten Thousand." The commentary in this section, "The Perfect Future," is completely revised from the earlier edition, and emphasizes the contrast between stories which extol coming technological marvels, and those which present the darker visions we have come to know so well. Franklin's commentary is intelligent, and his selections provide abundant proof that SF is one of several legitimate and respected literary forms, even at this early date. Since he sometimes quotes Sam Moskowitz, I am surprised that he didn't see fit to include one of the pieces from Edward Page Mitchell's *The Crystal Man* (1973), which has a valuable 64-page introduction by Moskowitz on this neglected 19th-century writer who anticipated many ideas common in later stories. The additions and revisions in the commentary, and the slight change in contents, are probably not enough to justify purchase of the new edition by those who have the old. Still, this is an essential part of the library of anyone seriously interested in science fiction and its history.

--Neil Barron

79-32 KULL, by Robert E. Howard. Bantam Books, New York, 1978, 186p, Paper, Coll., \$1.95. ISBN 0-553-12019-0.

This new collection of Kull stories follows the earlier Lancer edition (1967), including all but two of the Kull cycle, but leaving out Lin Carter's notes and additions to Howard's unfinished tales. The enthusiastic introduction by Andrew Offutt should serve the purpose of motivating readers new to Howard's work. Kull is the King of Valusia, and a native of ancient Atlantis, a swashbuckling barbarian living in a complex and richly-imagined pre-Cataclysmic world. Less burly than Conan, and less gloomily introspective than Solomon Kane, Kull is one of Howard's best-realized characters. His world is peopled, in the usual fashion, by sorcerers, creatures, and mighty enemies. This new edition appends the incomplete story fragments at the end of the connected series of completed stories. For sword and sorcery buffs.

--Dennis M. Maloney

79-33 ALL FLESH IS GRASS, by Clifford D. Simak. Avon Books, New York, 1978, 254p, Paper, Novel, \$1.75. ISBN 0-380-39933-4.

Simak's great forte is the creation of sympathetic non-humans who patiently attempt communication with distrustful mankind. *Flesh*, originally published by Doubleday in 1966, belongs to the same period as *Way Station* (1963), when the Cold War was at its height, and the Bomb seemed an ever-present danger. A small rural community finds itself surrounded by a force field. Millville is unique in being a portal between universes. Superior life forms can get through--with cooperation.