SPECIAL SHORT STORY NUMBER

THE FANTASY FAN

THE FANS' OWN MAGAZINE

Published Monthly | Editor: Charles D. Hornig (Managing Editor: Wonder Stories) | 10 cents a copy $1.00 per year

137 West Grand Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey

Vol. 2, No. 6 | February, 1935 | Whole No. 18

FINALE

This, the February 1935 number, is the last issue of THE FANTASY FAN. The life of TFF has extended over exactly one and a half years—since September 1933, and during that time we have learned that there are not enough lovers of weird fiction who are interested enough in the subject to pay for a fan magazine. We may call it an experiment that failed. We have done everything in our power to keep TFF from going on the rocks, but our worst fears have been realized. Our printer, a fantasy fan himself, gave his services for an amount far below that charged by others so that TFF could exist from the first, but a steady increase in well-paying jobs has deprived him of the time he usually devoted to printing it.

Our greatest regret is the necessity of breaking off H. P. Lovecraft's "Supernatural Horror in Literature" in the middle of it. Dozens of short stories, poems, weird articles and columns will have to be returned to the authors. Writers who would like their unpublished material to be turned over to the editors of *Fantasy Magazine* should advise us of it, all other contribuions to be mailed back before May first.

Subscribers can help us and themselves at the same time if they will accept back numbers of TFF in payment for the future issues that they cannot receive. This will lighten the burden upon the editor who has already lost a couple of hundred dollars in the venture, and will provide readers with the issues they missed or duplicates of those they have. In the latter case, they will find that back issues of TFF are steadily increasing in value. The first issue, September 1933, which is out of stock long ago, now markets for a value between 50 cents and $1. per copy. Prices of back numbers are as follows: Oct., Dec., 1933, Jan., Feb., Mar.,

(continued on page 96)

SUPERNATURAL HORROR IN LITERATURE

by H. P. Lovecraft

Part Seventeen

Many of Hawthorne's shorter tales exhibit weirdness, either of atmospere or of incident, to a remarkable degree. "Edward Randolph's Portrait," in "Legends of the Province House," has its diabolic moments. "The Minister's Black Veil" (founded on an actual incident) and "The Ambitious Guest" imply much more than they state, whilst "Ethan Brand"—a fragment of a longer work never completed—rises to genuine heights of cosmic fear with its vignette of the wild hill country and the blazing, desolate lime-kilns, and its delineation of the Byronic "unpardonable sinner," whose troubled life ends with a peal of fearful laughter in the night as he seeks rest amidst the flames of the furnace. Some of Hawthorne's notes tell of weird tales he would have written had he lived longer—an especially vivid plot being that concerning a baffling stranger who appeared now and then public assemblies, and who was at last followed and found to come and go from a very ancient grave.

But foremost as a finished, artistic unit among all our author's weird material is the famous and exquisitely wrought novel, "The House of the Seven Gables," in which the relentless working out of an ancestral curse is developed with astonishing power against the sinister background of a very anciecnt house—one of those peaked Gothic affairs which formed the first regular building-up of our New England coast towns, but which gave way after the seventeenth century to the more familiar gambrel-roofed or classic Georgian types now known as "Colonial." Of these old gabled Gothic houses scarcely a dozen are to be seen today in their original condition thruout the United States, but one well-known to Hawthorne still stands in Turner Street, Salem, and is pointed out with doubtful authority as the scene and inspiration of the romance. Such an edifice, with its spectral peaks, its clustered chimneys, its overhanging second story, its grotesque corner-brackets, and its diamond-paned lattice windows, is indeed an object well-calculated to evoke sombre reflections; typifying as it does the dark Puritan age of concealed horror and witch-whispers which preceded the beauty, rationality, and spaciousness of the eighteenth century. Hawthorne saw many in his youth, and knew the black tales connected with some of them. He heard, too, many rumours of a curse upon his own line as the result of his great-grandfather's severity as a witchcraft judge in 1692.

From this setting came the immortal tale—New England's greatest contribution to weird literature—and we can feel in an instant the authenticity of the atmosphere presented to us. Stealthy horror and disease lurk within the weather-blackened, moss-crusted, and elm-shadowed walls of the archaic dwelling so vividly displayed, and we grasp the brooding malignity of the place when we read that its builder—old Colonel Pyncheon—snatched the

land with peculiar ruthlessness from its original settler, Matthew Maule, whom he condemned to the gallows as a wizard in the year of the panic. Maule died cursing old Pyncheon—"God will give him blood to drink"—and the waters of the old well on the seized land turned bitter. Maule's carpenter son consented to build the great gabled house for his father's triumphant enemy, but the old Colonel died strangely on the day of its dedication. Then followed generations of odd vicissitudes, with queer whispers about the dark powers of the Maules, and peculiar and sometimes terrible ends befalling the Pyncheons.

The overshadowing malevolence of the ancient home—almost as alive as Poe's House of Usher, tho in subtler way—pervades the tale as a recurrent motif pervades an operatic tragedy; and when the main story is reached, we behold the modern Pyncheons in a pitiable state of decay. Poor old Hepzibah, the eccentric reduced gentlewoman; childlike, unfortunate Clifford, just released from undeserved imprisonment; sly and treacherous Judge Pyncheon, who is the old Colonel all over again—all these figures are tremendous symbols, and are well matched by the stunted vegetation and anaemic fowls in the garden. It was almost a pity to supply a fairly happy ending, with a union of sprightly Phoebe, cousin and last scion of the Pyncheons, to the prepossessing young man who turns out to be the last of Maules. This union, presumably, ends the curse. Hawthorne avoids all violence of diction or movement, and keeps his implications of terror well terror well in the background; but occasional glimpses amply serve to sustain the mood and redeem the work from pure allegorial aridity. Incidents like the bewitching of Alice Pyncheon in the early eighteenth century, and the spectral music of her harpischord which precedes a death in the family—the latter a variant of an immemorial type of Aryan myth—link the action directly with the supernatural; whilst the dread nocturnal vigil of old Judge Pyncheon in the ancient parlour, with his frightfully ticking watch, is stark horror of the most poignant and genuine sort. The way in which the Judge's death is first adumbrated by the motions and sniffing of a strange cat outside the window, long before the fact is suspected either by the reader or by any of the characters, is a stroke of genius which Poe could not have surpassed. Later the strange cat watches intently outside that same window in the night and on the next day, for—something. It is clearly the psychopomp of primeval myth, fitted and adapted with infinite deftness to its latter-day setting.

But Hawthorne left no well-dined literary posterity. His mood and attitude belonged to the age which closed with him, and it is the spirit of Poe—who so clearly and realistically understood the natural bassis of the horror-appeal and the correct mechanics of its achievements—which survived and blossomed. Among the earliest of earliest of Poe's disciples may be reckoned the brilliant young Irishman Fitz-James O'Brien (1828-1862) who became naturalized as an American

GLEANINGS

by Louis C. Smith

I promise to write an article about that Great High God among fantasy authors, M. P. Shiel; much of the best science-fantasy, from a literary standpoint, has been written by him. Anyway, when you read "The Purple Cloud," "Dr. Krasinski's Secret" "This Above. All," or any of the other two score novels penned by him, such little matters as scientific accuracy never enter your head (which does not by any means imply that his science is not correct to the N'th degree). A hypnotist with words is M. P. Shiel.

And he is—and has been—almost as much a Heaven-born genius as some of the characters he weaves through the pages of his novels. He is fluent with a half dozen languages, is literally a master of all sciences, writes in a blinding, complicated style no one else on Earth could imitate—much less create!—and has written as many books as Haggard, Burroughs, and a few others combined. At 12 he wrote a novel; at 13, printed a newspaper; and at 15, wrote novels for serialization in large public papers.

Lester Anderson, fantastiac extraordinary of Hayward, California, is fortunate enough to count himself a very good friend and correspondent of the lexicographical (hah!) Clark Ashton Smith.

Speaking of whom: Smith and H. P. Lovecraft are great friends, by correspondence. Lovecraft refers to C.A.S. as "My good old friend and correspondent, Klarkash-Ton, Heirophant of Atlantis and High-Priest of Tsathoggua."

Again Bram Stoker! His latest to chance my way is "The Jewel of Seven Stars." With every reading of this English weird-tale master; I am seized in profound melancholia, despairing the fact that he did not live another twenty years, to pen another score novels. Not content with being a master of superb plot (involved plot too!) Stoker went to exquisite pains to instill that ultra-weird and chilling sense of the unreal so characteristic of his work.

In "Jewel of the Seven Stars," he spins a yarn of Egyptian queens who wield a strange and powerful influence over the lives of present-day people;

(continued on page 95)

Supernatural Horror in Literature

(continued from previous issue)

and perished honourably in the Civil War. It is he who gave us "What Was It?" the first well-shaped short story of a tangible but invisible being, and the prototype of de Maupassant's "Horla;" he also who created the inimitable "Diamond Lens," in which a young microscopist falls in love with a maiden of an infinitesimal world which he has discovered in a drop of water. O'Brien's early death unboubtedly deprived us of some masterful tales of strangeness and terror, though his genius was not, properly speaking, of the same titan quality which characterized Poe and Hawthorne.

(Discontinued At This Point)

The Slanting Shadow

by August W. Derleth

Mr. Abner Follansbee, investigator for the Society for Psychic Research, stopped his car to peer out into the Wisconsin woods. To his companion he said, "This is apparently the place, Fred. There's a sign off to one side. Pretty well shot. 'Kroll's Inn'. Let's see that young lady's letter again."

Fred Tenny took a letter from his inner coat pocket and thrust it toward Follansbee, who opened it and regarded the scrawled writing dubiously.

"Probably just another wild goose chase," he said presently. "Looks to me more like a matter for the police. The girl's guardian, Uriah Kroll, disappeared over a year ago—and since then his room has been very strange. That's all it amounts to. I suppose the young lady thinks she's got a ghost on her hands."

The younger man smiled. "Something about a shadow, isn't there?"

"Yes. 'There's a queer shadow on the bed in his room when the moon shines,' she writes. 'I can't understand it. It shouldn't be there.' That's all."

"Very lucid," commented Tenny laconically.

The inn itself was a quiet little house of stone, hugging the ground in the middle of a clearing not very far from the heavily wooded roadside. A flagstone walk led up to a low stone porch, where the key to the front door lay under the mat, just where Miss Harriet Sears had said it would be in her letter to Follansbee.

As he bent to unlock the door, Follansbee said, "At least we can thank goodness we're alone. Miss Sears isn't likely to come bursting in on us at all hours of the night—she vowed she'd never set foot inside the building until we'd settled that shadow business."

He threw the door open on a short hallway lending directly into a low, raftered sitting-room, into which Follansbee immediately strode, followed by his companion. The room was comfortably and well furnished with antique pieces. The chairs were curiously carved and obviously hand-made. Follansbee, however, wasted no time in the sitting-room, but led the way into another, smaller room, and around into a large bedroom in the southeast corner of the building.

This was the room which had been occupied by Uriah Kroll, prior to his disappearance, as described in Miss Sears' letter. It was a large, oddly furnished room, with a bed against the south wall, and a single chair next to it, the north wall of the room aext the door being occupied by what appeared to be work-bench. Follansbee, having looked cursorily at the bed; went over to the bench and bent above it.

Tenny came over and stood at his side.

"What do you make of it?" Follansbee asked.

"Queer outfit," Tenny replied. "Looks as if he might have been blow-

ing glass, doesn't it?"

Follansbee bent and took up a book. "Well, look at this," he said in surprise. "Arbatel's *Treatise on Magic.*"

"Yes," supplemented Tenny excitedly, "and see here—he's got a trident, and incense, and oils—why, he dabbled in magic!"

"No doubt of it," assented Follansbee gravely.

He put the book down and examined the instruments on the bench. He chuckled oddly to himself, held up a magical diagram made on a sheet of stiff paper, and smiled at it with Tenny. Then he turned away, looked once more about the room, and said, "If you brought the lunch kit, we'll eat. The sun'll go down in about three-quarters of an hour, and the moon'll be up shortly after. We might as well be ready."

"What's the procedure?"

"We sleep here—nice, comfortable double bed, as far as I can see," replied Follansbee.

Lunch eaten, the two investigators returned to the bedroom where they were to sleep. The moon had already risen, so long had they sat in the kitchen, but it was not yet throwing its light through the single window to the south. Follansbee and Tenny sat talking for the better part of an hour.

It was the older man who first noticed that the moonlight had reached the counterpane of the bed. "There we are," he said. "Now for the shadow."

They sat for a few minutes in silence, while the light of the moon crept in a parallelogram across the counterpane. But there was no shadow save the shadow a tree, a few branches of which dipped into the moonlight.

Presently Follansbee rose and went in some irritation over to the bed and stood looking down at the patch of moonlight. "Batty as can be," he murmured, obviously referring to Miss Harriet Sears.

Tenny, who had drifted to his side, said suddenly, "what a funny angle those branches have!"

Follansbee bent abruptly closer. "As if they were coming from above," he murmurmed. "But look here—they're not just branches—they're like a forest of little trees, and what odd spines for leaves!"

Suddenly he whirled to the window. "Oh, now I see," he said harshly. "*There's no tree of any kind beyond the window!*"

"Nor anything to make that shadow," added Tenny.

They stood for a few moments scrutinizing the glass and looking through it into the clearing outside. The line of trees to the south was too far for any shadow to reach the house; the trees were shadowed in an uneven line across the clearing below. Then they returned to the bed and stood looking down at the counterpane.

"Well, there has to be some explanation," said Tenny.

Follansbee nodded. "But I don't get it," he said. Then he stopped abruptly, staring down at the parallelogram of moonlight widening eyes.

Tenny followed the older man's startled gaze.

There, in the moonlight, was a tiny, moving shadow—a shadow only slightly over two inches in height, moving

with incredible rapidity, yet achieving no distance in the parallelogram of moonlight—the figure of a man!

Back and forth it ran within a space so small that it might have been covered by the extended palm of a hand. The two men stared in growing amazement. Then Follansbee turned to the window again. But there was nothing there—nothing on the glass, nothing against the glass outside, nothing flying against the moonlight in the sky.

He turned back to the bed. The shadow was still there. He bent, peering intently. The incredible shadow was running wildly, this way and that, its tiny arms outflung, its spindle-legs moving rapidly upon the counterpane, a thing alive, yet without substance.

"Good God," muttered Tenny at last. "It's a man—it's a live man. But where is he?"

"I don't know," Follansbee jerked out.

He stood for a few moments more, his fascination for the unbelievable shadow holding him there; then he swung away and went over to the work-bench, where he lit a lamp and began to thumb swiftly through a group of the old books lying carelessly abandoned there.

Tenny followed, asking, "Can I help?"

The older man nodded. "Check up on all references to magical designs in these books," he said. "I've got an idea. I don't know what's in it, but it's worth trying."

It was Follansbee who found what they sought. "Here it is," he said suddenly. "Magical designs on glass. It's been marked up by someone, too—Kroll, most likely. Parts of it are illegible, but the sense of it can be made out. Third paragraph down in the second column."

Tenny bent to read the printed lines on the yellow page;

"Certain mages have brought into being worlds of glass—invisible in glass, the objects of such consistency that though they cannot be seen in the light of the sun, they are shadowed by the moon...The glass is of no ordinary kind, but must be specially made. And the creatures to be placed there may be drawn from the mindor from life."

"You see?" out in Follansbee, drawing the book away. "That's what he was doing—but something happened. He tried it on himself, and vanished."

Tenny turned astonished eyes on the glass in the windew.

Follansbee abruptly left the work-bench and, going over to the window, raised it. "It's the upper pane we want," he murmured. "It must be broken—there's no other way. But be careful that all the pieces fall into the room."

As he spoke, the older man pulled down the upper half of the window. Then he drew the curtain down outside the glass, and into the room again below.

"All right," he said. "Break it, Fred."

Tenny rapped sharply against the glass of the upper pane. It did not break. He struck it harder with the trident from the work bench. Still it did not break. Then he smashed into it with all his strength. The glass

broke into incredibly small fragments that slithered down the drawn curtain to the floor.

Follansbee let the curtain snap up. Looking down, he and Tenny exclaimed simultaneously. The window lay in silver fragments on the carpet in the moonlight that stretched to the bed—but beyond the fragments ran a tiny dark shadow, of substance now.

"Good God!" breathed Follansbee hoarsely. "*The dimensions didn't change!*"

"It's Kroll," said Tenny. He swooped to seize hold of the figure on the carpet, but at that moment it disappeared under the bed. He sank to his knees. "Kroll!" he shouted. "Come out, Kroll!"

There was a vague scuttering noise beneath the bed.

Follansbee came to his knees at Tenny's side and peered into the moonlit dusk beneath the bed. "Kroll" he whispered softly. Turning abruptly, he said to Tenny, "Get over on the other side. He's skirting the wall toward the door."

Tenny moved to obey.

Then suddenly there came a quick rustle, a dark shadow launched itself from the wall upon the two-inch figure that crept toward the door, there was a shrill squeal, a tiny human scream, and abrupt, unnatural silence.

"*A rat,*" whispered Follansbee shakily. "*My God!*"

He got up unsteadily and looked down at the bed. The moonlight lay unbroken on the counterpane.

The End

KARLOFF'S MONSTER

by Forrest J. Ackerman

An interview of extreme interest to fantasy film fans was that of Boris Karloff with Jimmie Fidler over the air on the "Hollywood on the Air" program earlier in the year. Karloff spoke: "I shall create a Monster like Frankenstein's. No brain—just a huge creature which shall guard against reporters and interviewers. Connect the electrodes!" A snap. "Throw the switches!" A crackling of electricity. And Karloff, crying: "It lives ...it moves!...it lives...Karloff's monster LIVES!" Then the Monster spoke—with the voice of Jimmie Fidler, the interviewer. "Alas"—Karloff was in despair; "I *have* created a Frankenstein monster: it's a fan magazine writer!" And Jimmie Fidler then proceeded to question him. Proving himself to be anything but one of the many monsters he has portrayed, William Henry Pratt (known on the screen as the man from Karloffornia who is sure to never Boris) stated in a private word addressed to his admirers that he greatly appreciated all their letters, and that he was always grateful for criticism received of his work.

His next pictures will be "Frankenstein Lives Again!" "A Trip to Mars," "The Werewolf of London," and "The Raven."

The Legacy

by Kenneth B. Pritchard

My friend, Frederick Brown, and I are lawyers. Lawyers often come up against strange cases; but the case that Brown had a while ago, was the oddest and by far the most weird I have ever heard of.

Brown and I were lunching together one noon, when the subject was broached of the peculiar things that one sometimes meets up with.

"James," said Fred, "You never had anything happen to you that can compare with a certain case of mine; I'll wager on it."

"Shoot," I said. "Let's have an earful. What's it all about?"

"I had a legacy," he began without hesitation, "a few weeks ago, that was void to all concerned unless it was signed by one man. All others involved had attached their signatures to the documents. But, Ogleman's —that was his name—was missing."

"You mean the Ogleman that died a short time ago?" I broke in.

"The same," Brown admonished. "I must hasten to add," he went on, "that a time limit was set, on this certain day, in which the signatures must be obtained. Ogleman was not in town.

"The final limit was set for 8 P. M. For days, before the last one arrived, my client had me sending out feelers in all directions trying to contact this one man. The evening before the final day, I at last got in touch with him, and he promised to come without delay. He wired back that he would leave in the morning as he was situated in a place where transportation facilities were not the best. All I could do then, was wait.

"Ten o'clock the next morning I received a telegram. Ogleman had been struck by a speeding auto. But as I read further, I realized that the man would arrive anyway. His condition I did not know, as the message had imparted no more than the two facts I've already given.

"It was half past seven that evening that the missing man showed up at my client's home. He was quite a sight, I can assure you."

My friend paused as though to reflect upon the unusual scene. His eyes widened for a moment in sudden horror, and then he continued in his regular manner.

"I found myself looking at him as I shook his one good hand. The other arm was in a sling that had been hastily made. His head had a bandage around it, and his face was white; almost the color of several patches adhering to it.

"My client shook hands with him also. 'Glad you came, Ogleman,' he said, "Everything depends on you, you know."

"'Yes,' said Ogleman as he relinquished his hand, 'I know that the legacy must be signed.'

"His voice seemed strangely hollow and unnatural, and there was an

unreal appearance about the man.

"He turned to me. I shuddered somewhat at the bits of blood that had caked on the bandages. 'We must hurry,' he said, 'The time is short. Have you the papers ready?' he asked eagerly.

"'Yes,' I replied, 'everything is ready. Come over to the table with me. There is a chair there, and you can sit down and sign.'

"I felt that he would collapse if he did not be seated soon.

"I handed him the pen, and gave him the papers, showing him where to sign. Being hurt as he was, it was very difficult for him to write. However, he managed to scrawl his name on the last sheet. All was legal, then.

"I took the pen from his hand and said, 'Now it is done. There won't be any more trouble over it.' I somehow forced a smile.

"My client beamed approvingly. But Ogleman never stirred. I looked at him. He pitched forward on the table. I was greatly alarmed and hastened my client to summon a doctor.

"Ogleman was dead!"

"I've heard of tales like that before," I remarked dryly.

"Maybe," rejoined Brown, "But the docter said that Ogleman had been dead for ten hours!"

The End

WITHIN THE CIRCLE

by F. Lee Baldwin

A. Merritt is contemplating a sequel to "Thru the Dragon Glass."

Robert Bloch recently sold his second story to WT. Title: "The Feast in the Abbey."

H. P. Lovecraft is working on a tale called "The Shadow Out of Time."

Adolph de Castro, author of "The Last Test" and "The Electric Executioner," is 74 years old, a graduate of Bonn, and master of 7 languages. He has had published work of undoubted importance. Some of his unpublished books are of great potential interest and value....He lived in Mexico from 1922 to 1925 and had interviews with Villa and his generals in 1923; from whom he derived an account of the end of his associate and colleague Ambrose Bierce at the hand of these revolutionists. There are three slightly differing reports as to Bierce's death, all of which are probably carelessly transmitted variants of the actual facts. De Castro's original name is Gustav Adolf Danziger—he changed it during the World War, taking the name of a remote Spanish ancestor. He came to America in 1886 and was a dentist for a long period. Also pursued politics to some extent and was American consul at Madrid for a time. The piece of work he did with Bierce was translat-

(continued on page 96)

The Mirror

(Annals of the Jinns - 9)

by R. H. Barlow

Upon a certain day in the year of the Plague of Dragons, the Emperor of Yondath held court in his ancient palace above the crypts. Many of his subjects had come from sheer curiosity, and when he cast sentence upon Khalda, at least two of the more squeamish shuddered. For he had condemned the sorcerer Khalda to the tortures of the Green Fungi, and of course every one knew what meant. Even if they had been obtuse or ignorant of the ways of the torturers in the subterranean rooms, the austere and saturnine look upon the face of His Majesty would have implied much that was not pleasant.

But Khalda, the only pupil of the wise one Volnar, stood scornfully before the throne and gave no sign of terror, although his doom was a fabled and terrible one. He even contrived an ironic obeisance before they took him away. The two ugly slaves that held him exchanged significant looks as they silently led him out of the gorgeously-hung room. Then those who had gathered began to depart, and many resolved not to anger their ruler after that.

Khalda's crime, it had been proclaimed, was that of high sacrilege. Not only had he sought through ancient and unwholesome magic the creation of artificial life, but he had spat upon the greenstone feet of the great idol in the market place, and asserted that the deity was impotent and its priests humbug. Perhaps this iconoclastic behavior was regretted by Khalda, since his destination was not pleasant to contemplate, but he gave no sign as the slaves led him through a series of connected chambers. Each of these dimly-lit rooms was more ancient in appearance than the one preceding, and after he had traversed some dozen, the very bricks of the wall were so slimy with old moss that they emitted a noxious odour. Likewise the passages grew steadily darker.

Legend told of the things that lay beneath the palace, and of the Head Torturer Malyat that had dwelt in his crypt for untold years without being seen by man. It was said that his face was obscured from even his victims, by an ancient and grotesque mask. On this Khalda reflectec as the guards paused to light their tapers at a sconce tipped by a pool of sulphurous flame that seethed and boiled endlessly. He wondered at this, for no tracks disturbed the settled dust, yet the torch was as if newly kindled. Guided now by this melancholy light, they descended again, their torch but little dispelling the gloom. In this manner they made their way toward the lower chambers. Khalda wondered at the labor

that must have gone into chiseling these chambers from the rock, and at the ponderous ornamental masonry that remained yet immovable after so long a time.

At length they came to an ultimate passage fronting a huge door of iron curiously decorated and covered with the patina of aeons. This appeared most formidable to the prisoner. It was upon this ancient portal that the guards smote with their clanging brazen swords and then retired, leaving Khalda alone. He wondered what evil thing would appear as he saw the door slowly opening.

Then, in a terrible silence that his shrieks did not wholly dispel, a metal projection not unlike a tenacle rhythmically emerged, swayed a moment, and wrapped itself about him.

And he was drawn into the chamber of Malyat.

Four cycles of the crimson moon elapsed before rumours found their way to the ears of the emperor. A tale was told of the last creation of the sorcerer, a masterpiece of malign sorcery, that had escaped destruction by the zealots of the greenstone god.

It was said that all the work of Khalda was evil, but that this last creation was supreme. Even unto his last days he had labored and expended his talents upon a certain mirror of strange design. No man knew the purpose for which it was shapen; but it was certain that Khalda had not constructed it for the dubious vanity of reflecting his withered visage. The polished glass in it had come from the subterranean artizans of Saaldae, and it was polished and silvered by devious means. And the frame was of ebony strangely wrought with a monstrous carving. Great skill had gone into this, yet none knew its precise whereabouts, and the tales could find no definite origin.

So the Emperor had scrolls lettered in the heiroglyphs of the land, and these were posted about the capitol and all the outlying provinces. And they said that any man that could produce this mirror would have a reward bestowed upon him.

At first there came many with false claims, but a supplementary proclamation was issued, to the effect that imposters would be painfully disposed of, and thereafter the ruler was little annoyed.

But in time there came an ancient one, unbelievably filthy, and clad in garments of odorous antiquity. His face was hideously wrinkled, yet it held a certain inscrutabled wisdom. This repulsive being came unto the palace gates and demanded entrance. And the guards at first laughed, and then grew angry, and would have run him through with their long lances, had not the Emperor intervened and called upon his men to desist. For he had heard the commotion and became curious. Thus admittance was granted to the beggarly person, and he entered as if he had expected this from the start.

In dignity he went, and bowed before the throne, strangely incongrous amid the richly clad servants that shrank from him in repugnance. The Emperor's dwarf sought to make mock of the foul being, and rolled

completely off his cushion in gales of false amusement; but he saw the eyes of the stranger and straightway climbed back, mumbling in a surly tone to himself.

The Emperor bade him state his mission, and the old one spoke in a manner remarkable for one so uncouth, saying, "I have brought the object you desire."

With great interest, the Emperor bade him display it, but the old one refused, stating in tones of certainty that he wished to make a few observations first.

"I might press my claim," observed the Emperor, somewhat amused by this effontery.

"I believe I have likewise the right of naming my price," suggested the old man.

"Truly," assented his majesty, "but first tell me, what is this mirror?"

"It is the mirror of Truth," was the reply.

"A pretty allegory," remarked the Monarch, and settled back.

So it was, the unclean person spoke freely in the court of the ruler.

"You will recall that this mirror was constructed by a certain sorcerer," he began in an unpleasant tone. "And you will also recall that this sorcerer did you a great service once...did he not, Majesty?"

The Emperor looked startled, and then very grave.

"He did...but how came you to know of this?"

"I shall elucidate when the time has come. Likewise, did you promise certain things to this sorcerer in return for his labors?"

The Emperor's eyes smoldered with secret fury, but he said nothing.

"This you ignored, and some moons agone had the wonderworker —I believe he was referred to as a blasphemer in the sentencing — this man you had brought before you and sent to the terrible tortures of Malyat. Am I not correct?"

"That is common knowledge," asserted the ruler, uneasily.

"And he was taken to his doom?"

"My slaves seldom fail me."

"I am grateful to your majesty, for truth was essential. I have the mirror here," said the old one, abruptly.

"What wish you in return?"

"It is yours—my payment will be given me in due time."

And as the Emperor leaned forward, the man announced his identity and drew back his tattered robe, revealing the horror that lay beneath.

Then as the Emperor gazed in fascinated repulsion, Khalda drew forth the mirror, with its strangely shapen handle, and held it up that all might see.

And when the ruler looked therein, no man may know what was reflected, for a strange and terrible thing occurred. Some dire magic was at work, for the doom that came unto his majesty was alien to all accepted lines of death.

The End

The Little Old Lady

by P. J. Searles

Connors was genuinely puzzled. What had happened to the old lady? Surely she could not have fallen from the car. On the other hand why should she have left before reaching her destination and how could she have got out without his notice? Her disappearance was perplexing.

He had first seen the old lady when he had stopped to admire the picturesque church on the outskirts of Huntsville. Wearing an old fashioned, rather shabby, taffeta dress ornamented at the throat and wrists with bits of yellowed lace, a bonnet that proclaimed her adherence to the fashions of 1880; and with a sole jet pendant hanging from her neck, she was standing near the car as Connors came out of the church and strolled through the adjoining grave yard reading quaint inscriptions on the tombstones. Her manner was forlorn and pathetic as she edged timidly up to Connors to ask in a low voice if he were driving on to Milltown. When Connors replied in the affirmative the old lady hesitantly mumbled that she had not seen her daughter in Milltown for five years and could she ride into the city with him.

Since the front seat was loaded with bundles Connors had placed the old lady in the rear and driven on. Some twenty miles had been traversed and the outskirts of Milltown reached when Connors discovered he was out of cigarettes. Stopping the car at a corner drugstore he went in to buy his favorite brand. Once inside he recalled the old lady's presence and, stepping out again, asked if she would like an ice cream soda. Her pleasure and gratitude seemed all out of proportion to the offer until she said she had not tasted ice cream for over five years.

When they were ready to drive on again Connors asked the old lady where she wanted to be taken. At first she was certain she could walk the rest of the way but finally agreed with Connor's insistence that he could easily drive her to the daughter's home which she had never visited. Number 17 Portland street was the address she gave, an address that took Connors far out of his normal route into an unfamiliar section of the city. After perhaps fifteen minutes of driving he reached Portland street and stopped the car at a corner to inquire directions for number 17. The first person he asked pointed to a house four doors from the corner.

It was at this moment that Connors turned around and discovered the old lady was missing.

Her disappearance was puzzling. It seemed unbelievable that she could have left the car without being noticed by Connors, or that she would have left without so much as "Thank you," but the fact remained that she was gone. Connors jumped out of his seat, looked up and down the street, glanced behind the car, peered into the corner

there was no sight of the old lady.

Connors was both perplexed and irritated. After a moment's indecision he stepped across to number 17 and rang the bell. His summons was answered by a pleasant looking, young woman.

"Pardon me," said Connors, "I am afraid I don't know your name, but are you expecting your mother today?"

"My mother," replied the woman with a gasp, "why — why, what do you mean?"

"A nice old lady in Huntsville this morning asked me to drive her to 17 Portland street to visit her daughter whom she hadn't seen for five years. I brought her into town but when I stopped at the corner there to inquire the way I found she was no longer in the car. So I came on here to ask if she had already arrived."

"What did she look like?"

"A sweet old lady, short and slender, snow white hair, pale thin cheeks, wearing an old fashioned taffeta dress with yellowed lace and a jet necklace. Is that your mother?"

"Yes, that is my mother but she died in Huntsville five years ago today."

The End

Gleanings

(continued from page 84)

of mummified cats walking again and striking in the dark, vampire-like; of hypnotic spells and influences; of developments so utterly mystifying and gripping, the reader cannot put the book down after once opening it. And Bram Stoker's novels are not the abbreviated two-hundred page book so much in evidence today; they are voluminous; though not, I might mention, as "infinite" as "Anthony Adverse."

Here is something — not strictly fantasy, but certainly of interest to all who make fantasy a hobby—which I have deemed worthy of passing on: about twenty years ago there lived in Honolulu, in the much-sung Hawaiian Islands, a man, W. D. Westervelt by name, who spent all his spare time in the collecting of legends and myths about volcanoes. Perhaps the best result of his efforts was a little book called "Legends of Hawaiian Volcanoes," small but crammed to the fly-leaves with fascinating historical, scientific, and mythological data. Others had the titles of "Legends of Ghosts and Ghost-Gods," "Legends of Old Honolulu," "Legends of Maui," etc. No, not true fantasy, but they read like first-rate weird stories. Incidentally, this is a field for stories practically untouched; tales built around Hawaiian and other old native legends have been scarce.

Once, in those dear dead days when I first awakened to the call of fantasy, I was seized with some strange outbreak of energy; and typed two copies of Edmond Hamilton's first tale, "The Monster God of Mamurth." The copies are still on had. Not faultless typing, but readable. If anyone has not read this great little story by Hamilton, I'll gladly send a copy to the first two fans writing me.

Finale
(continued from page 81)

June, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec., 1934, Jan., Feb., 1935 — 10 cents each; Nov., 1933, Apr., May, 1934 —20 cents each; Sept., 1933, July, 1934 — out of stock. We would appreciate it if you will take your refund in back issues, which, as we said, will soon prove of considerable value. Subscribers who would not like to do this will receive a refund in cash, charging them ten cents for each number received in their subscriptions. All returns will be made before May first.

So, good-bye, friend reader — it's been nice to have met you!

Within The Circle
(continued from page 90)

ing the German novel of Richard Voss — "The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter." He was German-speaking and (1889) was not fluent in English. Bierce, on the other hand, was a master of English but knew no German. De Castro — or Danziger —admired the Voss novel and made a rough translation, with certain modifications, into such English as he knew. Then Bierce took that crude translation and made the present admirable English novelette out of it. The book as it stands is a curious three-man job. It is not a weird tale.

Good-bye, Friends