

quality in fiction has become, when the playful "Voice of the Dolphins" is hailed, when "the warmth and genuine sentiment of "Pilgrimage" will get a condescending smile, and when "Some of Your Blood" won't even be read by most of the critics who set our literary goals.

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Final Seacon bulletin: if you are within commuting distance of Detroit, and want to go to the 19th World Science Fiction Convention in Seattle, Labor Day week end, get in touch at once with Reva Smilay, Apt. 404, 3421 W. Chicago Street, Detroit 6, Michigan. The Detroit fans are chartering a DC-4—if they can fill it—which will take them from Detroit to Seattle and return for only \$157.50. This seems unbelievable, but it's what they say. The plane will leave Detroit on August 31st and get back there September 5th. The Seacon hotel, the Hyatt House, is right at the Seattle air terminal, so there's no problem at that end.

To avoid the "no show" headache that drives the airlines nuts, there will be a deposit of \$25.00 when you make your reservation. If the flight is cancelled, you get it back. If you change your mind at the last minute, you don't.

As for the Seacon itself, need I say again that Robert A. Heinlein is Guest of Honor and principal speaker . . . John W. Campbell is on the program . . . membership is \$2 now, plus \$1 more when you get there. Send it to P.O. Box 1365,

Broadway Branch, Seattle 2, Washington. The dates are September 2nd, 3rd and 4th, so that the Detroit plane will get you there early enough to become acquainted with people, and brings you back before you are completely exhausted.

STAR HUNTER, by Andre Norton.
THE BEAST MASTER, by Andre Norton. Ace Books, New York. No. D-509. 96 + 159 pp. 35¢

Ace plugs the reprint—abridged—of "Beast Master" with a long quote from one of my paeons of praise for Andre Norton, as one of the top practitioners of adventure science fiction now writing. I agree with every word of it, and not just because I said it here before. For creating strange worlds, stocking them with strange creatures, entangling pleasant people in intricate yet believable plots, Miss Norton has no real equal.

The shorter part of this Ace Double Novel, "Star Hunter," is new and has a rather more complicated plot than usual. A plot to pass a mentally conditioned youngster off as a lost heir to a galactic fortune, by having him "found" on a seemingly harmless planet where he has been planted, blows up in everyone's face. The world turns out to be anything but harmless, with a particularly nasty, particularly potent intelligence working behind the scenes, with a race of efficient humanoid "hounds" to hunt the human hunters, with a mysterious valley that has an even greater mys-

tery at its center, with . . . but that's why you read this kind of book, to be dragged along by the plot.

Miss Norton tells me that she has never written a sequel to one of her science-fiction novels, except that in the "Time Traders" series the adventures occur within the same conceptual framework, and main characters of one book stand in the wings of the next. She invariably creates solid, tantalizing mysteries and leaves the solution wide open . . . and "Star Hunter" is the worst of the lot in this respect. If Jules Verne could write several sequels to "Swiss Family Robinson," to tie up loose ends, and if Sprague de Camp and Bjorn Nyberg have been able to go on adding to the misadventures of Conan the Cimmerian, then somebody, some day, is going to be able to make a lifetime career of chinking the open spaces in Andre Norton's universe of worlds. I just hope they do it as well as she, and that she makes 'em wait a long, long time to start.

INVADERS FROM THE INFINITE, by John W. Campbell, Jr. Gnome Press, Hicksville, New York. 1961. 189 pp. \$3.00

It would be nice to report that this twenty-nine-year-old novel by our editor—third and last of the "Arcot, Wade and Morey" stories from the old *Amazing Stories*—is as good as it was when it first appeared in the Spring-Summer 1932 *Amazing Quarterly*. However, John Campbell was writing a very different,

trail-blazing type of story very shortly thereafter, under the pen name "Don A. Stuart," and he would be the last to deny that the two types of story are universes apart.

This yarn was close to the peak of the "super physics" school of that era, which John and Dr. E. E. Smith carved out of a corner of the space-opera field. Skittering around the frontiers of physical and chemical theory, using something that was not quite scientific double-talk, to explain the miracles that the heroes brought out of thin air almost by snapping their fingers, they nevertheless maintained a pace and created a spirit of excitement that typified the science fiction of their day. Their readers put the magazine down convinced that if scientists weren't such stupid clods, all these things would come to pass next Tuesday.

In this, utterly ruthless, utterly vicious villains from the other side of nowhere set out to exterminate all competition in our galaxy. A race of super-dogs come to Earth for help, and our trio of supermen gladly give it. They zip around the universe collecting allies and weapons, fighting skirmish after skirmish and battle after battle . . . travel in time as well as space . . . oppose irresistible forces with immovable screens . . . and, of course, win hands down. The firewords are terrific, and there's never time to get choosy about the logic. However, if John Campbell were to write the same kind of story today—as I am sure he could—it would be utterly different. As it is,