



## THE REFERENCE LIBRARY

**THE SHRINKING MAN**, by Richard Matheson. Gold Medal Books, New York. 1956. 192 pp. 35c.

This, like the author's "I Am Legend," is an original novel. It hasn't the former book's shocking originality, but it is a very expert handling of an old theme which everyone longs to play with, the man who shrinks.

For no visible reason—there is some double-talk about radioactive spray—Scott Carey begins to grow smaller. In a series of flashbacks we follow him through the successive stages of humiliation and resentment as he shrinks to boy-size, child-size, baby-size, doll-size, retaining all his adult appetites in his minuscule body, and tormenting his wife and child with his almost paranoid reaction to his plight. Whether medicine could have helped him, we never know; for reasons of the story, he refuses to give it a chance. Finally the major part of the tale is played out in his last few days, in the desert of his own empty basement, where he must forage for food, find shelter, and traverse vast distances under the constant threat of a black widow spider.

It's as good a job of its kind as we have, and it will be released shortly as a motion picture. It can be a good one.

**THE CROSSROAD OF TIME**, by Andre Norton.  
**MANKIND ON THE RUN**, by Gordon R. Dickson. Ace Books, New York. 1956. 169/151 pp. 35c.

The Norton half of this Ace Double Novel makes it worth your silver: it was written as an original. It is an excellent fast-action yarn, in which young Blake Walker finds himself entangled in a man-hunt which shuttles him back and forth among a series of parallel time-streams and alternate

worlds. It's as smoothly done as Miss Norton's space operas planetary yarns.

The Dickson contribution doesn't stand up quite so well, though it moves as fast and the plots within plots are downright van Vogtian. The flaw is, I think, that the basic gimmick is stated and demonstrated but never made reasonable: a society in which, depending on your social status, you must continually move on from place to place. Some of the details are very well done, as you'd expect, but the book as a whole doesn't quite come off.

**THE MAN WHO LIVED FOREVER**, by R. De Witt Miller & Anna Hunger.  
**THE MARS MONOPOLY**, by Jerry Sohl. Ace Books, New York. 1956. 137/183 pp. 35c.

This is about the low point in the series of double novels that have been coming from Ace recently. "The Mars Monopoly" is a western transplanted to the future and to Mars, with villainous industrialists, heroic asteroid miners, misunderstood natives, and a least-suspected bad man. The Miller-Hunger effort is just another story about someone who keeps on living for the good of mankind, even though he has to slaughter a long series of young stalwarts to do it. I'm growing allergic to books in which the chief character is The Master. I'll have to write one myself, to take the curse off and get a fresh point of view . . .

**EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS BIBLIO**, edited by Bradford M. Day. Science-Fiction & Fantasy Publications, 127-01 116th Avenue, South Ozone Park 20, New York. 1956. 29 pp. 50c.

Another Brad Day service to the collector: this time for the Burroughs fan. He has also done an excellent similar job with Talbot Mundy's long list of adventure and adventure-fantasy books and magazine stories, for the same price.

This bibliography is sub-titled, quite honestly, "materials toward" a full Burroughs bibliography. Anyone who has been reprinted and pirated as often as the creator of John Carter and Tarzan must have left many, many titles still to be located and annotated. Still, it's an excellent basic job, well worth the price. I missed principally a series listing for the Mars, Venus, Pellucidar and Tarzan books, especially the three former, which will show in what order the books follow each other.

**IT #6: UPA ISSUE**, Walter L. Lee, Jr., 9850 Yoakum Drive, Beverly Hills, California. 1956. 90 pp. 50c.

A neat job of three-color, well-registered hectographing with offset cover and some illustrations comes from the fan press that recently surveyed the science fiction and fantasy film field. This is a running account of the personalities involved in making the famous UPA ("Mister Magoo," "Gerald McBoing Boing," "Telltale Heart") cartoons, something of what they have done and how they do it, and a little about what they have on the fire. I wish I'd seen many more of the cartoons listed here.