



"Have you a book on the repair of spaceships?"

or steer, should the starving passengers eat each other? Opinions may be divided. But that the final impact of the ending to this story (which avoids being horrific) is powerful must lie above doubt.

*Balance* is "new"—no spaceships, no space-opera. The search for a super-genius who threatens the power of the unscrupulous money-making big bosses is the theme. Finding her—for woman she is—proves difficult, yet not half so difficult as the solution her finder has to adopt. Also in this category comes *Unknown Quantity*. The Preacher preaches against servotron robots, causing reduced sales. He cannot be stopped or bribed. But when a servotron robot is trained to out-preach the Preacher, a novel and unexpected ending arises. *Robots Don't Bleed* has poignant qualities, especially when the hard-bitten hero returns from space to find his girl-friend is a robot. But the anticipated catastrophe does not develop as the reader may expect. Nor does the ending in *Machine Made*, another robot story. This time the robot is a "big brain" and Rose is a trifle simple—the girl who dusts the brain's control panels. The ending of this story makes other folk look simple!

*The Two Shadows* is very different. Two men are stranded on Mars, believing themselves all that is left of humanity until a third person arrives. Though the setting of this resembles the title story *No Place Like Earth* there is no other similarity. *Castaway* and *Chemical Plant* are both worth reading. The "twist in the tail" of *Castaway* is of the kind which could arise nowhere except in science-fiction, and really surprising. *Chemical Plant* has its mystery, especially when a 8,000-ton spaceship vanishes though there is no one to move her. When the crew find yellow, red, green and blue lakes, the aspect of the matter changes. It is a chemical plant!

In all, this collection of stories is a good one, and worth keeping. It would form an excellent introduction to present-day S.F. of the shorter kind, and should certainly stir any reader who has previously looked upon S.F. magazine stories as little more than fisticuffs and tough-stuff with ray-guns and space-ships replacing six shooters and broncos.