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Editor to Editor: Letters between a Lovecraft Fan and Poe Scholar

Kathryn Heffner
University of Iowa
Aug. 10, 1943.

Dear Mr. Derleth,

Yes, I suspected Dralhis was dead. I never met him, but believe he was the eccentric gentleman who once visited a coin dealer of my acquaintance here, and made a great impression. He was not unpleasantly eccentric, I judged, and I was very sorry I missed him.

It is too bad there is difficulty about paper for a book like Lovecraft's. His work is LITERATURE with a capital L, in my opinion, and publication thereof is to my mind part of the record of American culture.

I have written this deliberately, because sometimes officials in charge of such matters as releases of paper may be interested in a professorial opinion. The fact Lovecraft printed his work so largely in pulp magazines must lead a person not acquainted with its scholarly and artistic merits to underestimate it. But there is no real intellectual basis for a judgment based on where a man prints his stuff; it may be excusably misleading, but it is not truly valid. Use this as you like --- for the record I add that it is certainly unsolicited. I do not set myself up as a great critic, but have been recognized as a respectable one by the late Professor Saintsbury, whom I knew well; and I was a pupil of some rather distinguished men, such as W.P. Trent and Brander Matthews..... and at a distance, of the gentleman whose name I have spent so many years in studying, Mr. Poe.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Ollive Marbott

Associate Professor of English, Hunter College.

I may add that all the books from your press seem to me chosen for good style and high imaginative qualities. I wish I could say as much for the larger commercial presses in general.