Now, the redemption which we as yet await (continued below), will be that of Kalki, who will come as a Silver Stallion: all souls and every sort of folly will perish at the coming of this Kalki: true righteousness will be restored, and the minds of men will be made clear as crystal.

The Spell of Mirror and Pigeons

Frank Lewis Baer
James Blish
John Boardman
I. R. Brussel
James P. Cover
John Philips Cranwell
Joe Lee Davis
E. R. Eddison
Stuart Gilbert
W. Leigh Godshalk
James N. Hall
Edward M. James
William D. Jenkins
Judith Ann Lawrence
Rosamund McCandless
Harold Mosher
Paul Spencer
Hugh Staples
J. H. Stellwagen
Donald Wall
Stallion and Dragon

notes on (and by) Cabell and Eddison

We are now in the midst of still a third attempt at a revival of the works of E. R. Eddison. Three of his heroic fantasies -- THE WORM OROBOROS, MISTRESS OF MISTRESSES and A FISH DINNER IN MEMISON -- have been put out in paperback by Ballantine Books, which hopes to duplicate its great success with the Tolkien fantasies. It is a great delight to have these lovely books back in print; let us hope that this time they stay there.

When the WORM was first published in the United States in 1926, it carried with it a letter of appreciation from James Branch Cabell. We reproduce it below as it appeared, from JBC's own copy of the WORM:

DUMBARTON GRANGE
DUMBARTON, VIRGINIA

Albert & Charles Boni

Gentlemen:

In reply to your letter of the twelfth, it has now for three years stayed a puzzle to me that The Worm Ouroboros is not better known. The book, to be sure, is not for everyone. So many persons, indeed, to whose attention I have introduced it have got from the volume only boredom that I have at last, through a series of depressing failures to communicate my enthusiasm, been reduced to concluding that a reader finds himself in this book exceeding joy or else nothing at all,—in either case, quite unpredictably.

To me, in any event, The Worm Ouroboros remains a rather majestic example of romance,—of really pure romance, unadulterated, in our modern way, with satire or allegory, or even with humor,—of the romance, in fine, which purchases, through its own unadulterate magic, and for no utilitarian ends whatever, the momentary "suspension of disbelief" in many very beautiful impossibilities.

Yours faithfully,

James Branch Cabell

21 November 1925

This inclusion brought a very prompt response from Eddison — of particular interest because it reveals that Eddison in turn was an admirer of Cabell. It is reproduced below, in Eddison's own holograph, from one of Cabell's scrapbooks:
Dear Sir,

I have just received copies of the American edition of my "Worm Ouroboros," & read for the first time your generous comments on my book. I must write this line to thank you. Also, I must write this line to thank you for the pleasure I have had to thank you for the pleasure I have had to thank you for the pleasure I have had to thank you. In short, I must thank you for "Jurrge" and its beautiful treatment of the theme of the "Aegean" and the vision of Elysium, I too may voyage to someday. In that happy island of Codarenia where you have, in my (and of Ch. XXI & Ch. XXII) you have, in my (and of Ch. XXI & Ch. XXII) you have, it is my humble judgment, touched perfection. It has that quality of really great writing to be better than always at the last time of reading than at the time before; to be delightful never without all topical or extraneous additions with which, growing out of fashion, could rob it of its freshness with the lapse of time. I am proud to have your name on my book, & to know that you like it.

Yours faithfully,

James Branch Cabell, Esq.

E. R. H. Eddison

Cabell subsequently reviewed Eddison's MISTRESS OF MISTRESSES, in The American Mercury, January 1936, under the title, "Romance and the Novel." He said: "I find here -- in his finest, his purest, and his most romantic vein -- the finest living writer of pure romance." (Ballantine quotes this much, slightly inaccurately.) The review as a whole supplied the core material from which Cabell later developed the 24th chapter of SMIRF, "To The Public at Large" (1937, pg. 191). This is the passage in which he defines the novel as a form of journalism or copyist; the romance as a form of poetry or creation.