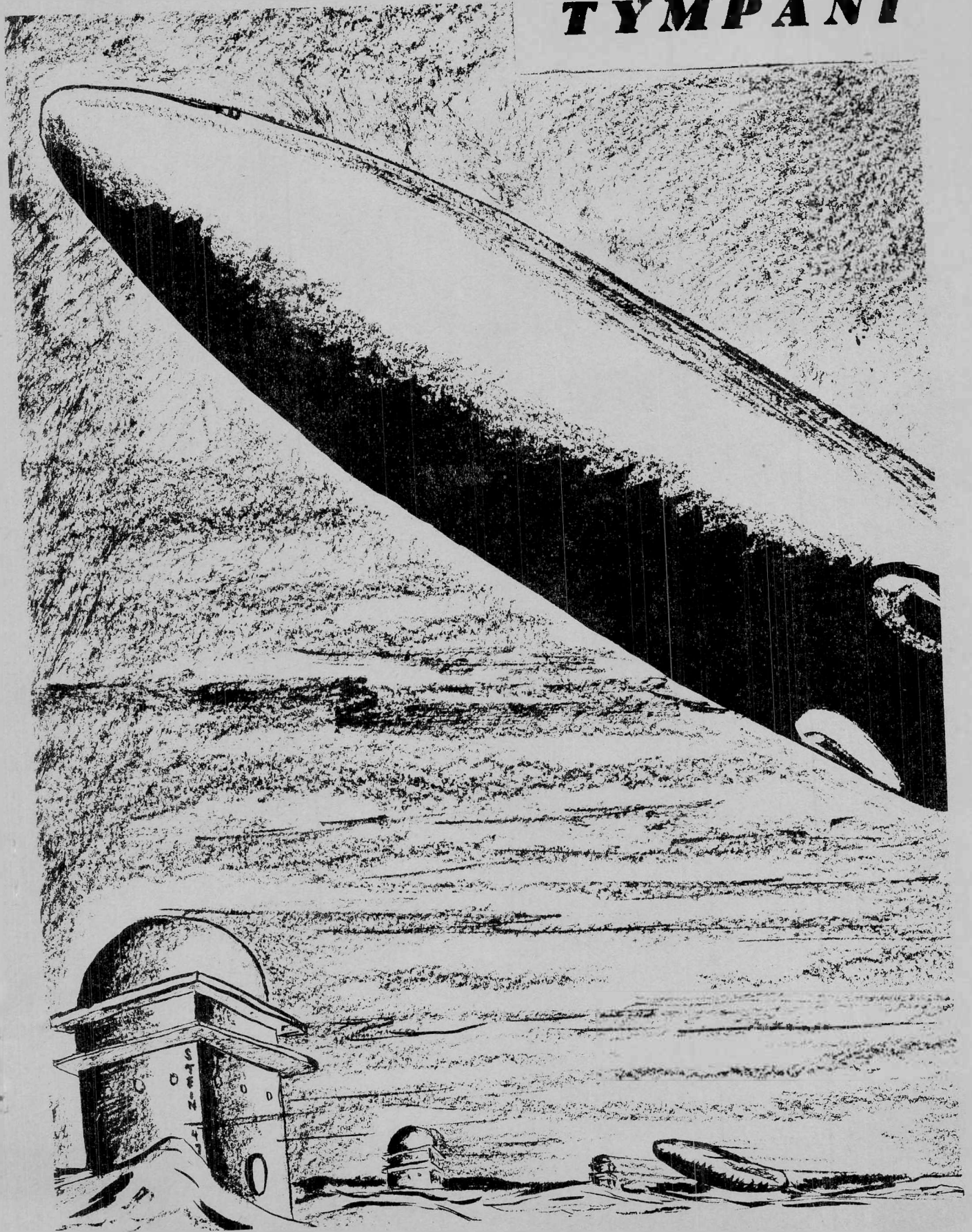


1947-08

# TYMPANI





T Y M P A N I

SPECIAL PHILCON MEMORY BOOK ISSUE

CO-EDITOR

Robert L. Stein  
514 West Vienna Ave.  
Milwaukee 12, Wis.

CO-EDITOR

Redd Boggs  
2215 Benjamin St NE  
Minneapolis 18, Minn.

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Forrest J Ackerman  
Box 6151, Metro Stn  
Los Angeles 55, Calif.

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Cover and interior by Bob Stein.....

A NEOTORIC-REDLANE PUBLICATION

PRESENTING TYMPANI

FOR THOSE READERS of the Philcon Memory Book who have never met with a copy of Tympani before, it seems necessary, first of all, to editorialize briefly in order to explain the purpose and policy of this fanzine. A glance through this special edition will reveal little of what Tympani is all about; this is not a typical issue. The regular bi-weekly numbers of this newszine are devoted primarily to the reporting of current events in the fantasy field, rather than to the presentation of fan-articles, although "Tym" features occasional reviews of new and current fantasy books and short articles of topical interest. A recent issue contained Prof. J. O. Bailey's own account of the background of Pilgrims Through Space and Time. Tympani #14 devoted six and a half pages to a complete Philcon report. Ordinarily, however, Tympani is concerned with news, not history.

Tympani was conceived in March, 1947, as a successor to Ember, Donn Brazier's weekly journal of "news, views, muse", which covered everything of interest to fandom for 33 issues before folding early this year. Like Ember, Tympani emphasized science discoveries and Fortean events during its early issues, but before many weeks had passed, Tympani found itself one of two regularly appearing newszines still surviving, the other being Fantasy Times, which had switched to a monthly schedule. Therefore, in an attempt to be of service to fandom, we have shifted toward a more general approach, carrying more and more straight fan news, although our "Current Scene" column still chronicles the latest scientific achievements and Fortean mysteries.

We are sure that if you are interested in the latest fan and pro news, written objectively -- without editorializing -- and presented in a format which emphasizes legibility rather than pretentious appearance, you would be interested in Tympani. We hope so.

## A FERRY STORY

By Forrest J Ackerman

SANDWICHED IN between Robert (The Post) Heinlein and Leslie (The Saint) Charteris in the October Thrilling Wonder Stories, one is surprised to find a collaboration by Francis Flagg -- dead over a year -- and Weaver (FJA) Wright. Writing Forry for the Story Behind the Story, Tympani's editors received this reply:

Let's see how it was. About 14 years ago, when I was about 17, Francis Flagg was one of the well known authors in Amazing and Wonder and Astounding, and I was one of the frequent contributors to the readers' columns (we did not kiddingly call ourselves "letter-hacks" in those days). I lived in Frisco, and Flagg in Tucson. We corresponded. One time we confided to me that he was running out of plots. I was bursting with ideas, and believed I wanted to be an author, but lacked the ability to write saleable stories. I leaped at the opportunity to supply plots to a favorite of mine, with the possibility of appearing in print as Flagg's collaborator.

"The Time Twister" was born as "An Experiment with Time", and was turned down by the magazines of its time. That was during 1933. The story was salvaged by being printed, in its original form, in the January 1934 issue of the top fanmag of all time, Fantasy Magazine. A little later it was reprinted in several instalments in my high school paper (after I had graduated and was attending the University of California) as "Into the Future".

Last year when I decided to become an agent, I thought once more of this story. Flagg had given me the original manuscript, as he gave me many of his MSS. (including the original "Machine Man of Ardathia", now the property of the Fantasy Foundation). I thought, "New times...new editors...new mags...why not?"

WAIT! WAIT! WAIT! I had forgotten and will have to drop back in my story a couple of years to record that "Doc" Lowndes had intended to publish the tale in Future Fiction, but it folded before the yarn could be used.

So, to get back to modern times: I sent Carnell the story for consideration for New Worlds. He said the "twister" twist would be lost on Englishmen, who would not be familiar with this slang for tornado. I said if that was the lone objection, it could easily be retitled; for example, "As Time Goes By". But it was still no buy.

When I first submitted it to Sam Merwin Jr., he rejected it -- but encouragingly. A rewrite job might save it, he said. It was too slow in starting, and too long. Well, why not? It had been my idea in the first place -- I'd been writing for three and a half years in the army -- maybe I could re-work it to Sam's satisfaction.

On 20 September 1946 I received this acceptance letter: "Congratulations. Trimming 'The Time Twister' and sprucing it up all around gave this Wright-Flagg opus just what it needed. It is now a very amusing snort with a nice final kicker and no morass of exposition in the opening pages."

(Continued inside Tympani's back cover)

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THE ARMCHAIR PhD CONSIDERS M-RAYS

By Paul H. Klingbiel

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OVER TWO DECADES AGO Alexander Gurwitsch of Leningrad announced the discovery of mitogenetic rays. Bernard Jaffe commented on the discovery in Outposts of Science (1935). Eulenburg-Weiner refers briefly to mitogenetic radiation in Fearfully and Wonderfully Made (1938). In 1939 The Secret of Life (Lakhovsky) was published in London which contained nothing but experiments involving mitogenetic waves and theories attempting to explain results obtained by experimentation. Since then -- silence.

I am very suspicious concerning the dependability of the statements made in The Secret of Life, since the author accepts M-rays as having been proved beyond doubt, and takes off from there. Eulenburg-Weiner is more cautious and states simply, "...no biologist, bearing in mind the physics of today, could doubt or question the liberation of radiant energy by the processes of life, (but) there is still a chance to quarrel over the exact nature of such energy, that is to say, over the wavelengths of the rays. There is still the question whether this energy can be observed, be recognized and measured by the means at present at the scientist's disposal. Thus far the existence of mitogenetic radiation has neither been absolutely proven by the many adherents of the theory, nor absolutely disproven by its opponents."

Since the rays appear to lie in the ultra-violet region of the spectrum (air is quite opaque to ultra-violet) and since the quantity of radiation is minute, the difficulty in detection of such radiation becomes evident. According to Lakhovsky, Professor Cremonese (whoever he may be) has published a monograph of photographs giving visible evidence of M-radiation given off by human saliva and human blood. But to the best of my knowledge, M-rays have yet to be universally accepted as fact.

As most of us are armchair PhD's, let us see what we can discover, supposing the following four assumptions to be true: (1) M-rays exist and are given off by living cells; (2) M-rays consist of different wavelengths in the ultra-violet region of the spectrum; (3) Specific types of cells radiate specific wavelengths of ultra-violet light; (4) M-rays are produced in the nucleus of the cell.

Elaborating on assumption four, the nucleus of any cell contains -- among other things -- hollow filaments, which are filled with a fluid consisting of essentially the same minerals in solution that sea water contains\*. The walls of the filaments are made up of organic compounds which will not pass an electric current. The reason for assumption three is now evident. The filaments mentioned above are exactly equivalent to current-bearing wires. Even a straight wire can be shown to have not only resistance to the passage of current,

\* These filaments are not to be confused with chromosome strings.

but also capacitance and inductance. And as even a straight wire will therefore oscillate at a definite frequency, so will the filaments of a given nucleus oscillate, the frequency depending upon the shape and size and composition of the filaments in a particular type of cell nucleus -- which we will assume to be the same for the same type of cell within very narrow limits.

Do we now have the solution to this known but hitherto unexplained fact? "Ultra-violet rays will paralyze an ameba in a quarter of a second, or kill and tear its body asunder like a bolt of lightning in three seconds." (Why We Behave Like Human Beings).

One specific wavelength, or a combination of wavelengths, in concentration interferes with the normal radiation of the ameba. This causes an overload in the oscillating circuit and the circuit breaks down. This is equivalent to a short or a blown fuse in an ordinary electrical circuit. To the ameba it spells death.

It does not seem unreasonable to assume that within definite limits another radiation pattern could have been chosen so that the effect of the impressed pattern and the normal pattern would have been beneficial rather than destructive to the ameba. If this is the case, we may have the essentials of something really big.

Suppose, by proper experiment, we were able to determine the normal radiation pattern of all the different types of cells in a healthy human body. We would then know, for instance, the radiation pattern of a normal liver, or a normal stomach, or the normal pattern of a red corpuscle. Then, if a patient had malaria, would it not be possible to combat the disease by irradiation, choosing a pattern specifically designed to augment the normal radiation of the corpuscle, or failing that, irradiation with a pattern designed to kill the malaria protozoa, but not harmful to the red blood corpuscle?

And might we not have here an excellent means of combatting cancer? If by chance a cancerous liver radiates at a different frequency than a normal liver cell, or if the wavelength is the same but the amount far greater than normal, then we could --

Yes, typical speculations by an armchair PhD! Nothing will be gained by continuing on in the same manner. Nevertheless, should M-rays be shown to exist, then it is of prime importance to determine:

1. The mechanism of radiation.
2. Between what limits of wavelength normal cells of the same type oscillate.
3. The effect produced by causing a cell to radiate:
  - a. More strongly;
  - b. More weakly;
  - c. Not at all.

Will some bright genius please repair at once to his laboratory and get started?

THE END

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\* Book Review \*

\* STAPLEDON'S SEARCH FOR SOL-MATES PROVES HOT STUFF \*

\* By Forrest J Ackerman \*

AFTER A DISAPPOINTING last effort, Death Into Life, the super-intellect of Dr. Olaf Stapledon has regenerated itself and emerged with another winner. The Flames, subtitled A Fantasy, just published in London by Secker & Warburg, is an 84 page thought-thriller.

My personal preference for the fictional works of Stapledon is as follows: (1) Darkness and the Light; (2) Last and First Men; (3) Last Men in London; (4) Sirius; (5) Star Maker; (6) Odd John; (7) The Flames; (8) Old Man in New World; (9) Death Into Life. Even though his latest rates low on the list, it still scores in the "excellent" class on an absolute scale.

I have twice been taken to task in the fan press recently, by friends, one of whom complained, "Ackerman never penetrates very deeply into the author's themes and intent", and the other of which commented, "entertaining and not too informative -- I wish he'd inject a few facts". Bearing these suggestions in mind, I shall try to do my best with The Flames, although I am not positive Stapledon himself is certain of what he wishes to say in this book. By a device of publishing something by a friend which the friend later disavows, he appears to have his cake and eat it too.

The book takes the form of a lengthy letter -- from an inmate of a mental institute. While admitting that the majority of the unfortunates surrounding him are insane, Cass -- the author of the letter -- is of course merely misunderstood.

Cass is an abbreviation of Cassandra. Cassandra was a prophetess of evil who was disbelieved. This Cass is a man of about 50 who, before his incarceration (and in fact during it) is a student of paranormal and supernormal psychology.

While hiking in England, Cass has a strange experience. He feels drawn to a heap of stones, in which he digs till he removes one particular stone. Upon uncovering it the object of his impulsive search seems so insignificant that he hurls it from him in disgust -- only to find himself frantically retrieving it a moment later, as though he had flung his own arm from his body.

He carries the stone with him to a cottage, wondering what to do next. Musing before the fireplace, he follows a whim to toss the stone into the flames...

And a salamander from the sun is reborn! Inert, frozen for ages in the (to it) frigid rock, the inch high incandescent gaseous intelligence awakes in one of the most fascinating sequences in science fiction. It cries out, mentally, in bewilderment -- where are its companions? why is it so cold? what has happened? It is answered by an extrasensory voice that tells of hosts of the flame-beings, alive in lava but locked beneath the earth, and others caught in the crust and immobilized by the cold.

Cass, the while, has been doubting his senses. Then the Flame contacts his mind. Readers have at one time or another probably heard a phonograph record, recorded at 33-1/3 revolutions per minute, played at the standard (faster) speed, so that the voice becomes a shrill, staccato chatter. Cass, the cold being, at first experiences a similar difficulty in understanding the lightning-like thoughts of the creature born of the sun. For the salamander indeed is of solar origin, exiled on earth when the parent body gave birth to the planets. Other solaroids have long been imprisoned on Mars and Venus and the other children of the sun.

The solaroid describes life on Sol to Cass, a life where abundant nutrimental energy (which could not be monopolized) made economic strife unknown; where war was impossible due to the construction of the creatures and their environment; and the concern, since physical science scarcely existed, was chiefly for the life of the mind.

The Flames liked the recent war on earth. It let loose a lot of heat and brought back a lot of the solaroids, who exist all over the world in spore form, to temporary life. The incendiary bomb was their favorite invention -- till the cold people created the atomic bomb. Now the Flames wish Cass to become their go-between with mankind, and get people to create a fiery home for them. Several hundred square miles of super-heat on some deserted part of the earth's surface. Cass realistically throws cold water on their desire: It would be all right with him, but other people are not so imaginative as he, and, "To the ordinary person, if he can be persuaded to believe your story at all, the idea of helping such alien creatures as living flames will seem quixotic, and moreover dangerous."

The Flame argues that its race does not expect something for nothing. Indeed, it believes its symbiosis with mankind will prove the salvation of mankind. Man is strong in power but weak in wisdom, "a pterodactyl of the spirit". The Flames can strengthen the spirit of man. The Flame makes an inspiring speech on pages 54 and 55, at the conclusion of which Cass says, "You have painted an arresting picture." But he fears the common man would never understand, would in fact fear the Flames as evil because different.

The Flame hints that its race has powers which could force mankind to co-operate. They would rather the mutual aid be voluntary on man's part, but -- Should spiritual violence prove the last resort --

Cass himself becomes alarmed at this hint of a threat. What is he getting into in giving his sympathy to this strange creature? How can he be certain the solaroids are sincere, and not attempting to snare mankind for some satanic purpose of their own?

Impulsively, he --

There are 20 pages left to the book. If you want to look into it yourself, your favorite fan dealer can probably get it for you. I trust my review will not be regarded as one gigantic propaganda piece designed to sell copies if I quote jams (jacket-and-mint) for sale at \$2.50 ppd., as I am a fan first and a dealer later on, and





have written unenthusiastic reviews of Doppelgangers, Death Into Life, Medusa, and other titles which I have for sale. So:

In summation, I will say that there are echoes of Star Maker and Darkness and the Light and Death Into Life in this book. If you appreciate the Doctor's brilliant imagination of extraterrestrial life, love, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and knowledge, you will not want to pass up this extraordinary novella. No point is proved; the two-minded Stapledon seems simply to be talking to himself and examining all sides of the problem of (here I take a cue from the blurbist) "the difficulty of entering into comradely trust with a mind alien to oneself in tradition and general texture, though identical in fundamental purpose." ##

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## NOSTRADAMUS AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

By Arthur Louis Joquel, II

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EDITORS' NOTE: The "return" of Nostradamus in Manly Wade Wellman's "The Timeless Tomorrow" (TWS, Dec.) makes this article particularly pertinent. It provides an answer to a question the story leaves unanswered: "What did Nostradamus write about the atomic bomb?"

MICHAEL NOSTRADAMUS, the sixteenth-century French doctor who wrote over a thousand peculiarly versified prophecies, has gained an enviable reputation over the years as an infallible seer. Certainly, a large number of his predictions have been fulfilled to the letter--although, in almost every case, because of the cryptic wording of the prophecy, it has been a case of discovering the matter after the event took place.

Besides a large group of what one might call "local" prognostications, there are many wider and further-reaching events which seem to have been recorded by Nostradamus. Among those which seem to have been fulfilled in World War II is one concerning the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, another concerning the part of the United States in the war, and a third referring specifically to the Anglo-American alliance, which even details the personal appearances of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill.

Such a history-making occurrence as the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan could hardly have escaped the time-searching gaze of Nostradamus. For instance, in Centuries II-VI, we find the following:

"Near the Gates and within two Cities  
Shall be two Scourges, I never saw the like  
Famine within Plague..."

Two cities -- Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Two scourges -- two atomic bombs. Famine within plague -- how else to describe, in understandable terms of the time, the deadly "radiation sickness" which afflicted the survivors? Again, in Centuries II-XXXV, we read:

"The fire shall take by night in two Houses,  
Many shall be stifled and burnt in it;  
Near two rivers it shall for certain happen..."

Nagasaki and Hiroshima both are located on rivers. The "fire by night" requires no explanation, I think, to anyone who has read John Hersey's Hiroshima. In Centuries II-XCI is given:

"At the rising of the Sun a great fire shall be seen,  
Noise and light tending towards the North;  
Within the round death and cries shall be heard,  
Death by Sword, Fire, Hunger watching for them."

Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed in the early morning. The second line is self-explanatory. And the last two lines -- again, how to explain, except by comparisons to things known, a devastation which would be completely incomprehensible at the time the prophecy was made -- which was hardly believed hundreds of years later when it occurred? Again, Century II-XCII:

"A fire from Heaven of a Golden color shall be seen  
Stricken by the high born, a wonderful case  
Great murder of Mankind..."

All observers of the atomic bomb explosions remarked upon the amazing colors exhibited, both by the explosion and the pillar of smoke which followed. As to the second line, remember this is a translation from the French. Could not "high born" be a homonym for "high borne"? The final quatrain which seems to have reference to this subject is Centuries V-VIII:

"...Within the Globes terrible and fearful  
By night the Fleet shall shoot against the City;  
The City shall be on fire..."

The size and shape of the atomic bomb is still masked by so-called "security" regulations. But, during the atomic bomb tests at Bikini atoll, there was a persistent rumor that the bombs, instead of being torpedo-shaped, are really round -- "Globes terrible and fearful". And the reference to the Fleet in this stanza would seem to be to Admiral Halsey's fleet which shelled the shores of Japan very shortly before the atomic bombs were dropped.

Perhaps the most pertinent quatrain to close this speculative article with might be from Centuries I-LXIII:

"The Scourges being past, the world shall be diminished,  
Peace for a great while, lands inhabited,  
Every one safe shall go by Heaven, Land and Sea,  
And then the Wars shall begin afresh."

THE END

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A FORRY STORY  
(Continued from Page 6)

Elatedly I wrote my friend Flagg, to send him his share of the check. Shockingly I heard from his sister that he had died a few months before. He never got to see this little yarn in print. His portion of the check was applied to his funeral expenses.

THE END

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NOTE: The regular edition of Tympani is published bi-weekly at 5¢ per copy; six issues for 25¢; twelve issues for 50¢. Advertising is accepted at the following rates: Full-page 75¢; half-page 40¢ or quarter-page 20¢. Remittance may be made to either editor (see page 2 of this issue). Trades arranged with other fanzines.

# TYMPANI

