

MAY 1944

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\* BROWSING \* : Whose saga commences with J.M. Rosenblum at 4  
 \* \*\*\*\*\* Grange Terrace, Leeds 7, continues with Gus Will-  
 \* \*\*\*\*\* morth and E. Everett Evans in Los Angeles, and  
 \* New Series No. 2 // concludes via the mailings of the Fantasy  
 \* Amateur Press Association and the British  
 Fantasy Society.

Love and kisses to all at Los Angeles who give a hand with this  
 paper. [ Ta, Michael, but the pleasure is ours.]

COMMENTS Let's drop all formality & the editorial plural, & all  
 be pals together! Wonder what this second American-  
 produced issue of BROWSING will look like? When the first issue  
 returned to me in completed form, it seemed quite a stranger --  
 dressed up in its Yankee clothes. But it is a very pleasant feeling  
 to meet in such altered guise, all the material which left this add-  
 ress in an unconnected jumble & once again thanks to Everett Evans  
 for his endeavours.

By now the issue of "BROWSING" devoted to a discussion on  
 Weird fiction should have been fully distributed via FAPA, unless,  
 unhappy thought, they didn't reach the appropriate mailing manager.  
 The stencils for this were cut in August 1944, the mimeoing done about  
 April '45, & the copies mailed to the USA in May; which only goes to  
 show how long a publication can take betwixt conception & distribution.  
 So far some very encouraging comments have come in about it; notably  
 from Harold Wakefield of Toronto and Matthew Onderdonk of Delmar, NY.  
 The later says blithely that "the intellectual tone of the discussion  
 is just about the highest I have encountered in fan publications". I  
 quote that here so that the folk who contributed so nobly to the round-  
 -discussion can have some idea of the sort of reception with which  
 their effort met.

I've been pleasantly busy here of late, but not least pleasantly  
 so, in entertaining visitors. Included is a mention of a weekend when  
 Frank Parker & Allan Miles were in Leeds; at the end of August I went  
 holidaying in Scotland & called, chez. Doug Webster, Edwin Macdonald,  
 Dr. W. A. Gibson, & Osmond Robb. Joyce Fairbairn who was along part  
 of the time includes her impressions. During the last two months call-  
 ers at Grange Terrace have been Edwin Macdonald on his way South, Ron  
 Lane of Manchester--twice--, Sgt Norman Lamb of Toronto who is ruddy-  
 faced, cheery, a bibliophile after my own heart, expert on pornography  
 -- especially the classic pornographic works---or would it be more  
 accurate to say the pornographic classics? Don Smith once pointed out  
 that the recipe for a work enduring thru the centuries includes a  
 modicum of fantasy & a modicum of filth.

Just after Norm Lamb left, a phone call from Aberdeen informed me  
 that a certain Milton A. Rothman was present there & intended to make  
 Leeds his next stop. To tell the truth, Milty rather surprised me with  
 his general quietude & reticence; unless, as is possible, the laddie  
 was somewhat shy in this hectic household. Next caller was Al Godfry  
 who emanates from somewhere in Southern Ontario & had been with a Can-  
 adian engineer unit in the front line fighting from Caen in Normandy to  
 the Ems canal in Germany, via Belgium & Holland, notably at Arnheim.  
 Al was almost the opposite of what I had envisioned--tall, sturdy, self-  
 possessed with plenty of confidence & composure & a faculty for making  
 himself at home anywhere within a minute or two.

All these visitors amused my two year old nephew enormously. No sooner has he got used to saying Uncle Nor-Nor, then its Uncle Milty, & Uncle Milty gives place to Uncle Ally (!) within a few days. Incidentally, Milty & Al Godfrey did manage to meet up for a couple of hours & I'm hoping to see the results of some candid camera snapshotting before long.

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BOOK DEPT Have been wondering recently whether it would be worthwhile to list in some form the books which are really worth reading in the fantasy genre. We booklovers keep telling the rest of fandom about this book or that, but all this plethora of information merely bewilders the fan-in-the-street who merely wants to know of a modicum of fantasy books he shouldn't miss. Of course the '12 best books' sort of series tells him of a few but how about just listing some of the fantasies of the near-classic standard which are comparatively easy to get hold of. Tastes differ tremendously of course, but the use of main divisions---Utopian, interplanetary, allegory, wacky fantasy, adventure fantasy---does deal with that objection to a considerable degree. If anyone shows interest, I'll try my hand at a list of books I should recommend without hesitation in a future BROWSING.

Whilst rooting around in a bookshop with Milty, that gentleman discovered in the archeology section a rather interesting book, which I kindly took away from him in case he got too attached to it, & purchased it myself. Has anyone ever heard of it? Details are, viz --  
 NAPOLEON / in the Other World /A Narrative /Written by himself /and found near his tomb /in the /Island of St Helena /by Xongo-Tee-Foh-Tehi, /Mandarin of the Third Class, published London, Henry Colburn, 1827, large 8 vo, pp 406, my copy leather bound. The work is a conducted tour of a remarkable assortment of hells situated all around Space, & in which people are divided in classes according to their iniquities & punished in a suitable & educative manner, with provisions for repentance & mitigation of sentence. I was astonished at its broadmindedness considering the period. For example, good living atheists cannot go to Heaven as they do not admit its existence but they live after death in conditions superior to those they had known in life: whereas persecuting popes & inquisitors are in the lowest of all the hells.

Anyone interested in obscure allegories may like a note of "Through a Peer Glass: Winnie's Adventures in Wastemonger" told by Arthur Waghorne, drawn by David Wilson; Hodder & Stoughton, London 1908, pp 183. Our little female meets all the then-current political types in a Lewis Carrollish itinerary thru both houses of Parliament.

To all & sundry -- I intend in the near future, whilst writing this, to compile a full list of my fantasy collection---some 1300 fantasy books, plus about one hundred associated non-fiction works. Not wishing to inflict this on all FAPA & BFS members, will anyone desirous of a copy please let me know, & I'll send them one, when ready.

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:::::All typographical errors, quaintness of format, and mistakes of insufficient importance to mention here (such as spelling and King's English) are the proud possessions of the printers, to wit, //one Willmorth, and is not in collusion with the editor over there.

LEEDS SCENARIO

Prologue: A Leeds hotel. Early Saturday Afternoon.  
A dual edition of E. Frank Parker hovers near telephone.

Parker No. 1 says: It's no use. There wasn't any reply when you tried to phone him on Thursday. He's still on holiday in London. Damn.

Parker Self No. 2 says: Aw, G'wan. Ring his number and see. He might be back by now.

Parker Self No. 1 (unwillingly): Well, all right. It's a chance of finding a point for this otherwise lonely week-end. And (more cheerfully) if he's not there I can always press button B and get my tuppence back.

(Both Selves, adding up to one complete Parker, confront telephone.)

Parker (After Dialing): Hello. Mr. Rosenblum?

A Voice: Speaking. Is that Frank Parker. I've been expecting you to call.....

SCENE FADES.

ACT 1, SCENE 1 The Rosenblum Menage, a very short while later.

J. Michael Rosenblum: Can't understand it. There's always someone here; I was here myself on Thursday evening. No reply you say?

Frank Parker: No reply. (Sheepishly) Maybe I dialled wrong!

Michael: Well, here you are anyway. You know my father and mother. (FP exchanges greetings) Meet my sister, Esther, and her small two-year-old son. (General exchange of salutations, coloured by the fact that FP too has 2-y.o.s. Comparing of notes re size, shape, and general characteristics. Connoisseur-like inspection of respective photographs. Meanwhile native 2-y.o.s. stands on head repeatedly to amusement of assembled company.)

Michael: Have you seen this FAPA mailing.....this number of "New Statesman".....this.....  
(JMR and EFP rapidly become unintelligible.)

ACT 1, SCENE 2 Michael's bedroom. Books strewn over everything, interlarded with magazines and fanmags. The guy Parker resembles a pocket cyclone when led to fantasy books en masse.

EFP: What price the atomic bomb?

JMR: I'm really frightened. We're faced with a new age or extinction. AS I see it, it's a great opprotunity really to make peace organizations take their rightful leadership. But people must be educated...

EFP: Well, I've usually not much faith in the mass mind -- look at the election results! -- but this time I believe they'll find themselves thinking despite themselves.....  
(Prolonged meta-philosophical duologue re atomic bomb.)

ACT 1, SCENE 3 The Rosenblum menage. EFP and JMR at tea with family

Esther: Now don't talk about books. It's not sociable, so there!  
(Tea substantially completed.)

ENTER: Flt Lieut. Allan Miles.

Alan: Here I am. I always seem to come here when you're all finishing your meal.  
(Introductions, AM to EFP.)

Michael: Without trying to lead you on, what do you think about the results of the atomic bomb?

Alan: (in a burst of sanity) We-e-ell, it makes a dam' big hole.

ACT 2, SCENE 1 EFP's hotel.

JMR: My round, I think. Two pints of bitter and one of black-and-tan.

EFP: Hup!

Waiter: Sorry, sir. No more draught beer. Exit waiter.  
(Lugubrious pause.)

ENTER: Waiter.

Waiter: I've managed to drain these out of the barrel. (Prolonged cheers.)

EFP: Now--hup!--ash I wash shaying, atomic bombsh are shumpin'...

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT 2, SCENE 2 The Same. EFP, having spent the morning feverishly writing letters, is at last relaxing with a book and pipe.

ENTER JMR and Alan.

EFP: Hello. Here you are. I've had a busy morning.

JMR: (Drily, eyeing book.) So we see!

Scene fades into a Leeds restaurant.

Alan: Hamburger steak and mushrooms, please.

EFP: Sounds perfect. Ditto for me.

JMR: Gimme an omelette.....

ACT 3, SCENE 1 Templenewsham Museum and Modern Homo Exhibition.

JMR: Watch that picture carefully as you pass. The perspective changes before your eyes.

EFP: I knew I oughtn't to have had that beer!

Alan: Don't look now, but that nude statue is very anatomically complete....

EFP: Don't they think bathrooms necessary in the homos of the Brave New World?

ACT 3, SCENE 2 Leeds City Station.

JMR: Bye-bye, Alan. All the best.

EFP: Let's look at the girls who've got seats in Alan's train. maybe we can find one who'll let him sit down and sit on his lap. (Inspection follows thru' carriage windows.)

JMR: (As train steams out.) Keep standing, Alan!

ACT 3, SCENE 3 In JMR's office.

Esther: Aren't you coming to this party, Michael? You'll be expected.

JMR: No. I'm not invited. And anyway (indicating EFP) I've got an excuse.

Esther: Well, you might at least come to bring me home.

JMR: Not on your life. (EXIT Esther, pouting.)

(EFP settles among fantasy books, burrowing weevil-like whilst JMR addresses some envelopes.)

EFP: Ever read "Ladies in Hades"?

JMR: Oh, well, if you're interested in erotic fantasy.....  
(Fade-out into animated conversation.)

ACT 3, SCENE 4 At JMR's relations' home, wherein is the party.

JMR : Please we've come to call for Esther.  
EFP,

QUICK CURTAIN

ENVOI Outside EFP's hotel in Leeds.

EFP: I hates to go.

Esther : Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye.....  
JMR

EFP: Stand by and I'll drop one of these big glass ashtrays out of the window.

All: (Chorus.) We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when.

The Commissionaire: 'Ere. Wot's all this. Doncha know it's early mornin'? You'll meet again in clink if you ain't a bit quieter.

FADE OUT...

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 BOOK FILLER: When Woman Proposes; Anne Warner, Boston; Little, Brown & Company, 1911; pp 158; illustrations by Charlotte Weber Ditzler and decorations by Theodore B. Hapgood; strike of labor and army for better pay and conditions in a hypothetical country at some future time. . . .  
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MY FIRST STENCIL

by JOYCE FAIRBAIRN

J. Michael Rosenblum is wishing to pour out to the world in general a vast amount of information regarding the doings and sayings of the tiny mass of humanity, Fandom. I have never been a fan, but I used to be in the Junior Astronomical Association and everyone knows that there are strong personal ties between the two.

This is really only to give me practice in typing.

Last week Michael took me away on holiday. To Scotland, to the homes of the Webster and the Macdonald. And in return he wants me to write about what he did.

My memories are very mixed. Chronologically it went something like this:- Looking out of the train on that coast run from Edinburgh to Aberdeen whilst dawn was just breaking, the sea looked very gray and the light shone over the Firths; Arriving at Aberdeen to be greeted by Doug Webster and escorted to a Webster house, empty of Websters but gratifyingly full of cats; talking to Doug all day until Edwin arrived in his own car from Iverness, and then talking to Doug and Edwin until as a result of loss of sleep on the overnight journey I fell asleep. Then all sorts of memories crowd in on each other -- Ride in Edwin's car to Inverness via Culloden Moor. that bloodthirsty place where the last battle on English soil was fought. Edwin's house and family and hot Scotch broth and Edwin's books--the lad is the right sort. Incredibly cheap books in Inverness market, and Michael discovering that he'd dreamed of buying books in exactly that place months before. Riding to Fort William along the shores of Loch Ness (no monster observed) and incredibly lovely scenery. Rushing up and down Ben Nevis. On Thursday setting off to go to Kingussie, but on discovery that buses ran only Wednesdays and Fridays rushing back to Inverness and not a bit surprised to be casually sauntering down the street and run into Edwin. Riding to Aberdeen in a compartment with a dear old couple to whom Michael talked in his usual dogmatic way about food and vegetarians and atom bombs and music--before leaving they thanked us for making their journey so pleasant. Then meeting Webster family who are making such a magnificent success of living together in a family and still getting on well---I could say a lot about the Websters and their methods, but Doug wouldn't be able to give his approval first as I'm doing this straight on a stencil. Ride to Banchory and the river Feugh

A weirdly and wonderfully got up volume is Tremlett Carter's "People of the Moon", published, I should imagine, about 1900, by 'The Electrician' Printing and Publishing Co. The cover is in a bright blue red and silver, and it is the only book illustrated by Lunar scenes

and finding Doug waving a hay fork and still talking. Bookshops and Brother Tony's excellent records, intermingled with Mother Webster's

## BROWSING

PAGE EIGHT

the inhabitants dressed pseudo-Graeco-Roman wise: a shocking way to be. A couple of paragraphs will most likely be sufficient to satisfy stfans of the literary quality of this work. The Lunar hero has just saved the Lunar heroine from a dragon. She cries:

"Thou art too good!" the maiden cried. "Why didst thou desire to save such an one as I? I was only a poor slave. And now---now I am thy slave, am I not? Thou wilt have me for thy slave, wilt thou not, good master?" The girl gazed beseechingly--not without the tenderness of one who loves her protector--and she clasped her soft, bare arms round Indra's feet as if imploring him to hear her words.

He raised her and seated her on a rocky ledge beside him. "Nay, I am thy slave, fair maid", he cried rapturously. "Be thou my mistress come live with me and be my love--my life--my all."

Alas, poor Marlowe! to be honoured thus by such a slob!

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One of the most interesting of the recent stf novels is "Lost Men in the Grass" by Alan Griff (Oxford University Press, 1940). A tale of men reduced to the size of ants: it is not unimpressively told. An excursion into an ant-hill is quite vivid. The style is very much under the influence of H.G. Wells, though it hasn't the high quality of the early Wellsian romances. It is a great pity that the author has so closely followed his master, in places, as almost to be open to a charge of plagiarism. The ant-hill episode is, in spirit and idea, very much after the magnificent "First Men in the Moon". Some passages, even, read nearly word for word. Here are two sentences from Alan Griff: "Once I saw a six-legged creature running in front of me, his legs going in and out exactly like those of a running dog. I saw him glance over his shoulder, and heard him shriek as he ran aside out of my path into the darkness."

Compare them with this from Wells: "I saw a Selenite running in front of me, his legs going exactly as a man's would do on earth, saw him glance over his shoulder, and heard him shriek as he ran aside out of my way into the darkness."

And this in Griff: ".....If we were to endure their treatment--"

"I won't endure it", said Raquel, and put a stop to that.", plainly has its origin in: ".....But if we endured----"

"Neither of us could endure a six-inch plank across the bottomless pit for very long."

"No," said Cavor; "but then----"

"I won't," I said. "

Molgar, pressing his companions during their flight through the ant-heap to stop and try to establish communication, is simply Cavor during the flight up through the moon.

Be more Griffian, Mr. Griff!

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"Wireless Messages from Other Worlds" by Eva Harrison (Love-Light) (London, L.N. Fowler & Co., 1915) is a perfectly serious account of a set of spiritualistic seances, at which inhabitants of Mars, Neptune, Jupiter, Mercury, Saturn and a planet of Regal, in Orion, communicated. The actual information given is meagre. Thus, the Martian is described as, "Similar to yourselves in appearance, but there is an air of quiet repose about him not often seen upon this Earth." Of Jupiter, we are told: "The Heat of the Sun is far greater in this planet than on yours

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and finding Doug waving a hay fork and still talking. Bookshops and Brother Tony's excellent records, intermingled with Mother Webster's excellent food. At night, pubs, and invariable Webster conversation and hospitality until 2 AM. The next night an all-night journey back but leaving Edwin and Michael to visit Dr. Gibson at Edinburgh---that is their story.

It was a wonderful holiday. I can't say anything about what we did like the people who keep on writing informative accounts of fan meetings. Also I promised Michael to write a review of the play "Doll House" which Ron Lane and I went to see in London and I have a feeling that he meant that to appear on this stencil too. Perhaps I could bring the two in together by comparing the Webster household with what Ibsen would have approved of. But I don't want Doug to get a bad impression of me especially as he did say something about all of us going back for Hogmanay.

//I, too, remember the Mother Webster's cooking--I was never dined and tead more continuously in my life, and I claim to have been tea'd by experts while sojourning in England. However, not being Joyce I didn't pay much attention to the Brother Webster, but I did notice the sister Webster!//GUS//

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BOOK FILLER: Shadow-shapes, Ella Erskine; London, Elkin Mathews, MCMIX; pp 147; very short stories, mood writings, some are fair fanta-  
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OFFHAND AND WITHOUT PREPARATION \* R. G. MEDHURST

It is axiomatic that most pseudo-scientific fantasy is rubbish, cheap and nasty. That, presumably, is why "fans" with pretensions look so consistently ashamed, and why they are so touchy. When the fantasy in question consists of the literary remains of an aspiring author deceased when young, the worst is almost inevitable. Consequently, one is more surprised than one would have been to come across the excellent title-story in the volume called "Beneath the Surface and Other Stories" by Gerald Warre Cornish (London, Grant-Richards, no date--the introduction is dated October 1917--19 1/2 x 12 3/4 cms, pp 373). The title story takes up about half of the book. I shan't attempt to describe the "plot", because it would be impossible in a few words to put over an idea that the author takes nearly 200 pages to build up. It must suffice--as a curiosity-wetter--for me to say that Gerald Warre Cornish sets out to describe, so far as it can be described, the last terrestrial journey of a notable traveller, one Fin Lund; and this journey turns out to be the most remarkable ever made by man. The style, in its cumulative effect, reminds me of Algernon Blackwood's method (see, for example, "The Human Chord"), but it seems to me to achieve great preciseness and to avoid Blackwood's wordy diffuseness.

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Of misleading titles there is no end. "Grey Ghost" by Muriel A. Pollesfen (sp? gus) (mine is a Newnes sevenpenny edition) is not a weird fantasy but a super-airship tale, complete with bombing from the air, written in the calm of the pre-acroplane days.

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Also, of the borrowing of ideas is there no end. Why, one wonders with the Atomic Revolution surging over us, does Bernard Buley, in one of his Modern Fairy Tale series ("The Boy Who Played with Giants", to wit), find it necessary to lift bodily the method of propulsion described in Herbert Strang's "1000 Miles an Hour"?

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There is a peculiar flavour associated with this writing up of trivialities, now that the Atomic Revolution has actually come upon us, and the existin social set-up--in fact, the present civilisation--is about to be swept away by a flood of cheap power. By the time these notes are read (I am writing two days after the first atomic bomb on Japan) the implications of this turning point will, no doubt, have begun to seep through to the lay mind. Meantime, stf enthusiasts will doubtless freshen-up their memories of Well's "The World Set Free!

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The moon trip, as has already been pointed out, won't be long, now. I have just bought the "Carisbrooke Library" edition of Ben Jonson's "Masques and Entertainments" (George Rontledge, 1890, p. 439, 21 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 14 $\frac{1}{2}$  ems, price 2/0), which is a convenient form in which to have his "News from the New World Discovered in the moon" (1620). This masque has the ideas of a musical Lunarian language, and so forth, which seem to run through the seventeenth century Lunar voyages.

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There is a lengthy footnote to Edgar Allan Poe's moon voyage, "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall", concerning previous moon trips, of none of which does Poe seem to approve. He deals very hardly with Locke's "Moon Hoax", and he dismisses Cyrano de Bergerac's Lunar voyage as "utterly meaningless". He doubtless read one of the crudely and maliciously expurgated editions current in his time. He came into possession of a French translation of Bishop Godwin's "The Man in the Moone", minus author's name, without being sure that it was not the original. This he, with reservations, approves of. He mentions, without recalling the title of the work, a notice in the "American quarterly Review" of Joseph Atterley's "A Voyage to the moon: with some account of the Manners and Customs, Science and Philosophy, of the People of Morospfia and other Lunarians", (New York: Elam Bliss, 1827).

The only Moon trip mentioned by Poe that I haven't been able to trace is "The Flight of Thomas O'Rourke". Poe says: "Thomas, the hero, was, in fact, the gamekeeper of an Irish peer, whose eccentricities gave rise to the tale. The 'flight' is made on an eagle's back, from Hungry Hill, a lofty mountain at the end of Bantry Bay." A variation on this story is "Daniel O'Rourke's Wonderful Boyage to the Moon", an undated chap-book included in "Amusing Prose Chap-Books", edited by Robert Hays Cunningham (London, Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1889, pp 350, 21 X 14 ems). This has certain points of difference from Poe's version. The flight is made on an eagle's back, but not from Hungry Hill. Neither is Daniel specified as a game-keeper. As Poe remarks, this "is a jeu d'esprit not altogether contemptible.

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I forgot to point out, in a letter to "Fantasy Commentator" (see Summer 1945 issue, back page) that William Hope Hodgson's "The Dream of X" is a first version of "The Night Land". Very much shorter, and recommended, on that account, if you have, like me, too little patience for 583 pages of gentle lovers kissing, and quarrelling and lying in arms in various conditions of dress and undress, midst darkness and brooding monsters.

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"Wireless Messages from Other Worlds" by Eva Harrison (Love-Light) (London, L.N. Fowler & Co., 1915) is a perfectly serious account of a set of spiritualistic seances, at which inhabitants of Mars, Neptune, Jupiter, Mercury, Saturn and a planet of Regal, in Orion, communicated. The actual information given is meagre. Thus, the Martian is described as, "Similar to yourselves in appearance, but there is an air of quiet repose about him not often seen upon this Earth." Of Jupiter, we are told: "The Heat of the Sun is far greater in this planet than on yours

Which is rather reminiscent of the famous description, given by the spirit of Sir Walter Scott at a Mrs. Piper seance, of the climate of Mars: "Very fair--it is in the torrid zone!".

Does anyone know of a book called "A Message from the Sun-world", promised by this same "Love-Light"?

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DELVINGS INTO THE WLIRD &amp; IMAGINATIVE

BY JACK BANKS

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Lost books and others

The wells of inspiration are somewhat dry, a continuing application of mind to political matters has left a gaping abyss in place of my customary "Delvings". However, perhaps these few odd jottings may serve to hold the interest, until better things come to mind....

Some months ago, while searching a friend's bookshelves, I came across one or two examples of fantasy literature that may have escaped notice by other than the zealous bibliophiles.

There was "The Master Beast", a work of the late 19th or early 20th century, I believe. By Horace W. C. Newte, it is chiefly interesting, or rather amusing to me as being sub-titled; "Being an account of ruthless tyranny inflicted on the British People by Socialism, A.D. 1888-2020".

Another, a non-fiction book, was entitled, "Some Aspects of H. G. Wells" by Patrick Braybrooke, a nicely printed volume from C. W. Daniel, published in 1928. Being a study of Wells' work it contains several comments upon his science-fiction....

My rather rough notes made at the time, which I have just unearthed, contain mention of "Tales of the Grotesque", another product of the now defunct house of Philip Allan, noted for the production of the "Dr. Blayre" book, and also, if I remember, for an emasculated version of Pragnell's "Green Man". The author of the present work is C. A. Lewis (I am not aware of any connection with C. S. Lewis, the noted theologian-science-fictionist.)

I had the opportunity to read one or two of the stories therein, and they were of a good standard. The full contents are as follows:

Lost Keep	The Chords of Chaos	Hybrid
Tower of Moab	The Moerschbaum Pipe	The Dirk
Haunted Air	The Iron Swine	The Child
	Animate in Death	

I have not sufficient remembrance of them separately now, but can recall among other things, the incident of the wild child, who lived alone surrounded by bones....of the strange tower that changed.....and of the houseboat and the air that suffocated.

The volume, "Modern Tales of Horror" was new to me then. Edited by Dashiell Hammett, it contains stories by Lovecraft (Music of Erich Zann), F. B. Long ( A Visitor from Egypt), and Wandrei's "Red Brain", with other contributors, including a particularly compelling story about an old Southern woman who lived alone with the body of her long-dead bridegroom...../Editor's note.--This book is published in USA un-

der the title of "Creeps by Night". 7

Finally, there is material for a piece of fantasy investigation. Hearing some recordings of Moussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition", I was told that the pictures which had inspired some of the strange impressions in this work were by an artist named Hartman. Of him, I know nothing. Perhaps others do.....

And would it be permissible to end this miscellany by quoting a piece of information culled from a book on witchcraft. Edmund Gurney, in "Phantasms of the Living" mentions that some 260 books have been written on Witchcraft, chiefly in the 16th to 18th centuries.

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 BOOK FILLER: The City of Dreadful Night and other poems, being a selection from the poetical works of James Thomson ("B.V."), London, Bertram Dobell, 1910, pp 256. A book (as advertised) of poetry, some of it quite lovely fantasy. To quote, from the title poem:

Some say that phantoms haunt those shadowy streets  
 And mingle freely there with sparse mankind;  
 And tell of ancient woes and black defeats,  
 And murmur mysteries in the grave enshrined;  
 But others think them visions of illusion,  
 Or even men gone far in self-confusion;  
 No man there being wholly sane in mind.

And yet a man who raves, however mad,  
 Who bares his heart and tells of his own fall,  
 Reserves some inmost secret good or bad:  
 The phantoms have no reticence at all:  
 The nudity of flesh will blush though tameless,  
 The extreme nudity of bone grins shameless,  
 The unsexed skeleton mocks shroud and pall.

I have seen phantoms there that were as men  
 And men that were as phantoms flit and roam;  
 Marked shapes that were not living to my ken,  
 Caught breathings acrid as with Dead Sea foam:  
 The City rests for man so weird and awful,  
 That his intrusion there might seem unlawful,  
 And phantoms there may have their proper home.

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 BOOK FILLER: Between the Lights, Margaret Baillie-Saunders, Hutchinson & Co, Ltd, London, pp 251. 'Mystical tales and verse of folk-legend, ghost-lore and fantasy'. Shorts and verse, many of them quite fair fantasy.

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 BOOK FILLER: The Seven That Were Hanged, Leonid Andreyev (Andreieff), Boni & Liveright, Inc., New York (Modern Library), 1918, pp 194. ((Also: Book League of America edition, 1931, pp 194, 8vo)) Title story is not itself a fantasy, but the second novel in the book is "The Red Laugh", a horror story depicting the ghastliness of war and is written in Andreyeff's particular style. While not so long, and perhaps not so well done as 'Lazarus' it is a fair fantasy of the horror variety

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BROWSING

Author: GLOAG, John

Type: Chemical Discovery

Title: "THE NEW PLEASURE"

Pub: London, Cassell & Co Price: 7/6

Further Information:

Synopsis of Plot: A harmless, habit forming drug gave its addicts a hyper-sensitive sense of smell. The story of the impact of this upon all aspects of civilization

Review: I have read several of John Gloag's works, "Tomorrow's Yesterday" is pessimistic about mankind, "Manna" carries hope, frustrated it is true, but real. "The New Pleasure" achieves--by drastic means, perhaps--an utopia it would be a pleasure to live in, in many ways. There was no curtailment of freedom...quite the reverse.

A scientist lets his friend try a pinch of pinkish powder, taken as snuff, that he had developed and used for years. It was rather pleasant, and the friend scented commercial possibilities, while commenting on the odors of the traffic. It was explained to him that it improved his sense of smell.

Shortly thereafter the stuff appeared on the market. Very cautiously. It was proven harmless; it was boosted by various takers; it was preached against....and for... The Tobacconist and confectioners sold it in inexpensive packets.

The tobacco interests found it dangerous...sales were dropping. People couldn't stand the smell. Delicate perfumes and bathing equipment boomed. Whispering campaigns and outright attacks were launched by big business. No taker stopped taking it. No one, once started, would stop. When the law threatened the people making it broadcast the formula and instructions. Since it was simple to make, of readily available ingredients, addicts need never go short. The ban fell through. Sales barely dropped. People need not bother to make their own---and didn't.

Smell became a major factor in life. The army went on strike for separate rooms and daily baths for all ranks. And got them. The cinema industry recognized the change--alone of industries--and built properly ventilated theatres. Personal odor became the major factor in the choice of mates. Tourist trade lapsed....people could not tolerate the smells in those quaint, foreign places. Shipments of the drug were sent to such, reform followed immediately the local population awoke to the horrors of their accustomed (by the new standard) stench. And the tourist toured again.

Meanwhile the population deserted the cities. Whatever they did, people in the mass were unable to bear one another, or were driven by an urge to seek fellows with compatible smells. This led to vast numbers of city dwellers adopting a gipsy-like life for which they were totally unfitted, to the breakdown of food distribution, and to the death by exposure of a huge percentage of the population in densely peopled areas.

The survivors--after all there were many--settled down to a form of rural or semi-rural life, or became nomadic. Internal combustion engines had become unpopular, but some others--inoffensive olfactorily--survived.

The thinning and spreading of the population--by loss of the unfit and the increase of personal freedom--and the discarding of many inhibitions that took place during the upheaval led to a very large increase in personal happiness and contentment among the survivors. These, in

((THE NEW PLEASURE))((Cont'd))

Britain at least, were largely rural to begin with, and the end result was a population addicted to simple pleasures, outdoor sports, jest and with a strong touch of philosophy, firmly based on agriculture, and with industry greatly curtailed.

The change is seen through the eyes of a series of characters, who are clearly and sympathetically depicted, and who are used to make plain the course of the change without having their own stories interrupted. The author carries his fundamental idea through to a logical and rather complete application.

W. ROBERT GIBSON in Browsing number 1.

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BOOK REVIEW

JULIAN PARR

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The World of Tommorrow, I.Q. Evans, (A Junior Book of Forecasts) 10/6, 1933, Denis Archer, London WC1.

A very remarkable book this--to my knowledge unique in its makeup and appearance.

Its contents are pure science-fantasy non-fiction--it has all the well-worn stf themes, and some new ideas---it ranges from chapters on "Materials" to "Life & Thought". So I think it is not quite so 'Junior a book as to be ignored: I really think it is worth reading, and even keeping for reference, as a broad and comprehensive outline of stf ideas on future possibilities. The author's sources range from Wells and Sinclair, thro' O'Duffy and Hattersley (strangers to me!) to David Lassar and "three surprising American magazines full of stories of 'scientific'.

There are a number of fairly good illustrations--(the cover itself is the same scene from the film 'Just Imagine' that was used recently on a VCM cover) and some of them scenes from films (including one I recognize as from VFA "Girl on the Moon"), some illustrations of recent inventions, and a number of Wesso and Paul drawings (from Amazing I presume).

And now for the format--fascinating and new---: The margins are very broad top and bottom of the pages, and narrow at the sides (not an improvement in my opinion)--all illustrations are on transparent 'Diophane' (rather thick cellophane)--not too clear, and tending to wrinkle--but giving the scenes, especially photos, a fine 'luminosity' --"almost stereoscopic" it is claimed. The binding is a more permanent method than stitching using a 'Neo-Nevett Tape Slot' metal backing.

The covers are also very thick transparent 'Diophane' (upon which the photos are mounted---it's very effective) and overlaps onto the pages in a "yapp" fore-edge: it's stainless and washable, too!

In other words, it has to be seen to be believed and appreciated!

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BOOK FILER: Gods' Man, A Novel in Woodcuts; Lynd Ward; Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith, Inc., New York, 1930 (fifth edition)(Pardon! Fifth impression). A fantasy in pictures, i.e., woodcuts. There are no words at all, except headings of chapters. Hero sells soul to devil for a paint brush, sic., the ability to paint. After great successes, many conflicts, and great happiness, the usual thing happens.....

BROWSING

Author: Type: Satire; Time camera.

(Pseud) "Merlin Nostradamus"

Title: The Age of Science

Subtitling:

Pub: Date: 1877 Pages: Few Size: Small

Illustrations:

Other Editions:

Further Information: A London dealer (Grafton & Co.) once handled a copy with a note attributing authorship to MISS FRANCES POWER COBBE.

Synopsis of Plot: There is no plot. A device has been perfected for photographing future documents. It is not yet able to perform on those of the past, but the inventor has hopes. We are given excerpts from a (then) future newspaper.

Review

By W. Robert Gibson.

The exaggeration or inversion of traits being criticized is the satirist's standby. He produces his lines to infinity, if need be, to make them meet. Stanton A. Coblenz is most prolific in the field among current science fiction writers.

A spiritual ancestress--if the a/m note is right--of his wrote this little brochure. The style of writing and the method of driving home points might be his. But Coblenz does include a story of sorts among his ingredients. "Merlin Nostradamus" was above such sugar-coating. The potion is served without added flavouring.

"The Age of Science" is the name of the newspaper photographed. It is a vast production, designed to be hung from the subscriber's ceiling. It is printed in large type, and read with a telescopic device necessitated by the reader's poor eyesight. That reader was in very poor shape; like all his world he was in the hands of his physician....Self-medication was punishable--burning at the stake the penalty. The same was true of such crimes as bandaging a child's cut finger, or failing to follow the medical edicts; or implying a disrespect for them. The churches had been disestablished, and the colleges of medicine had taken their place, possessions, and prestige, to say nothing of that of the law. The inquisition had come again, and "The Age of Science" matter-of-factly speaks of the queen's attending the burnings.

Other excerpts tell of the pallatives used in treating the symptoms of various disorders; murder, theft, and so on; and suggests that cures will eventually be found. Scientists studying diseases learn how to propagate them wonderfully; their cures are also forecast.

Meanwhile the citizen of the period must make out as best he can, ridden by disease and doctors, submitting to vaccination, canination, porcination, etc., (for smallpox, rabies, measles and so on) and reinforcing his eyes with powerful lenses.

"Merlin Nostradamus" holds out little hope for him.

BROWSE

Author: MARCHARD, Bishop

Type: Allegory, Fantasy

(Pseud)

Title: THE STAR CALLED WORMWOOD

Subtitling:

Pub: London, Victor Gollantz. Date: 1941 Pages: 277 Size: 8vo.

Illustrations:

Other Editions:

Further Information:

Synopsis of Plot: Human beings taken out of normal time sequence.  
Used to show consequences of contemporary trends, & attempted to  
evaluate the evolution of humanity.

Review

By: A.W. Busby.

At first one is a little disappointed in this book as it appears to be pacifist propaganda thinly disguised under the ever available cloak of fantasy. The opening is tame enough but after struggling through 150 odd pages virtue is rewarded and the latter part of the book amply rewards one's patience. The tale opens in 1839 when a farm boy suffers a serious accident to his head. An unskilled surgeon patches him up and in so doing disturbs his brain and unconsciously imparts to the boy a sense of eternity. He finds himself transferred to the Elysian Fields here he meets Blake and other long dead poets. He is eventually redirected to Earth this time to 2039 in company with Samuel Taylor Coleridge. They find themselves right in the middle of a war between Bretagne and Mitler. Mitler is a direct descendant of many other -itlers starting from one, Hitler. This war between the two races is about the umpteenth. The story dwells for a while on the adventures of the two from the past chiefly designed to give the author's views on some of the defects of civilization and then comes the surprise mentioned above. Coleridge who is in touch with the Celestials learns of a stupendous forthcoming event and we are transferred to the venue. God at last despairing of Man and his misdoings calls a "Director's Meeting" and the principle item on the agenda is to consider the desirability of liquidating the subsidiary company, "Man & Son". Those seekers after pornography who had bothered to read 'Ulysses' will remember the middle passage presented in dramatic form which caused most of the trouble with Mrs. Grundy (always excepting the masterly closing chapter). This story is now presented in the same style quite effectively. There is some punning that would gladden 4c. Also some parodies, for example:

"The profit boy to the war has gone  
In the U.S.A. you'll find him  
His radio set is switched full on  
And his workfolk left behind him.  
And o'er the air in distant realms  
These sounds do most him please,  
The moan of shells in immemorial elms  
The mutter of innumerable fees"

I leave the reader to see how it all works out. At one stage in the proceedings God decides to abdicate but this hardly solves the matter.



Author: GREEN, Julien

Type: Reincarnation

Title: "VAROUNA"

Pub: Paris, Librairie Plon: 1940 Price: 26f. (approx. 2/7 or 50¢)  
Pages 279

Further Information: Not yet published in English to my knowledge.

See previous books by Green published in Britain by Dent,

Synopsis of Plot: A mysterious chain binds together the lives of three people in different centuries, each one of them being aware of some connection with the other and of some deep instinct that bridges the years. Three separate stories in one, showing the influence of the chain and the vague prescience of centuries-old memories.

Review: Julien Green, an American, brought up in France, described his early days in his recent biography, 'Memiors of Happy Days'. More accustomed to speaking French than his own language, he has, like Somerse Maugham in similar circumstances, benefited in that his literary style is forceful and livid.

In the preface to this book he touches on the problem of reincarnation and states that he does not wish to support the idea of individual reincarnation, but rather to hint at a racial memory that does not die out across the ages. Whatever one may think of his views, he himself does not hold to them in the story, which certainly depends upon the idea of individual rather than racial memory.

The book is devided into three parts. In the first, Hoel, a young boy in the early days of civilisation, finds a chain on the seashore and keeps it, being told in dreams what his future can be if he holds it fast. He is, however, swayed by a Christian hermit and flings it away, thereby breaking the scheme laid down by the mysterious beings who counselled him. Instead of a glorious life he leads the life of a penniless nomad and finishes up by murdering an old woman.....finding out too late that she was the woman he had been destined to love if the chain had not been destroyed.

Helene, the second character, is also shown a vision in a dream, but we are shown less of the effect of the chain than the effect of her unbalanced father who, trying to see in his daughter the features of his dead wife, has recourse to a fake magician who promises to bring back the dead woman's spirit in the girl's body.

The third section occurs in the early years of the present century Jeanne, a young writer, vaguely aware of the "I have been here before" nostalgia, finds herself drawn to the character of Helene, about whom she has read in a book of local history. She ties up the loose ends of the story for the reader, and herself weaves a romance around the idea. The madness of Helene's father and the wiles of the magician are, to this modern girl, psychological matters rather than the demoniacal thin they seemed at the time. She realises, through dreams and a subtle consciousness of the girl's character, that she and Helene are in some way related, and finds at the end, seeing an ancient but familiar chain in a London museum that she and her husband were destined to fulfil the purposes of the different threads of human life that lead up to thier time, and that now the consummation has been achieved.

There is something delightfully unreal about all the incidents in this book that reminds one of Hans Andersen, but Green's precise language and sense of form make this book a beautifully-planned and thoroughly satisfying work of art.

JOHN F. BURKE

"NEW FRONTIERS": A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE UNBIASSED INVESTIGATION OF MAN'S POWERS, HABITS AND BELIEFS

Everyone has become aware of the great unfolding of new knowledge in the purely physical sphere during recent years, for this is brought forcibly to our notice in everyday life. Not least of all to affect us is the utilisation of atomic energy which brought to an end the recent war, and at the same time heralded a new era in man's history.

But like advances are taking place in the realm of man's discoveries about himself, his attributes and his habits. For the first time that we know of, a large scale attempt is being made to approach with a scientific attitude the more esoteric workings of man's make-up. Investigators have begun to probe into hitherto neglected fields, trying to find out the facts behind what has been thought of merely as superstitions. The archives of occult societies, which have tended to command the interest only of 'believers', are yielding vast amounts of information of unprecedented interest to all who retain an active and curious mind.

Starting from this viewpoint, and with an open, unbiased and widely-ranged policy, it has been decided to attempt to produce a monthly magazine, with the provisional title of "NEW FRONTIERS". It will present the results of contemporary researches into the fields of psychology and parapsychology. It will deal with older knowledge now becoming available, and with the thoughts and theories produced by new discoveries. We hope, further, that it will serve as a method of contact and means of expression for students and enquirers into the Unknown. No ideology or dogma will be emphasised, but all sincere seekers, from whatever angle and whether sceptics or believers, are ensured of a fair hearing. In particular it is hoped to acquaint the man-in-the-street with facts and ideas which are not likely to reach him by other channels.

To these ends, we should be grateful for the help and co-operation of all interested people; and in particular, invite literary contributions from anyone who has anything to tell or say.

WHAT WE WANT!

We are in need of articles, ranging from 800 to 4000 words in length, plainly written in literate English and dealing with any of the following topics or subjects:-

- Psychical Investigation, criticism and hypotheses.
- Present day Psychological Aspects.
- Parapsychology and experiments therein.
- Interesting Supernatural Phenomena.
- Folklore and folk-customs, civilised or primitive.
- 'Mysteries' of Human History.
- Primitive Religion and Mythology. /movements.
- Basic Ideologies and Psychology of Modern Progressive
- Investigation of Human Pre-History--Atlantis or Lemuria
- Theories concerning Time and Nature of the Universe.
- Also--- Actual Experiences and records of experiments of groups working in these fields.

Fiction appertaining to this type of material may also be included in moderation, based on a definite point or theory preferably, and there is no objection to humorous treatment. Fillers giving information, suggestions, experiences, or beliefs of paragraph length are welcome.

THE PUBLICATION will be by a general publishing firm who will attend to production and distribution, but the editors will have a free hand in selection and presentation of the work. Payment will average 21/- per 1000 nominally. Precs may be sent in advance, if desirable.

EDITORIAL ADDRESS IS: Miss J. Fairbairn, #243, Crookesmoor Rd, Shoffie