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Excerpt from a Letter (14 Sep 47) from Prof JOBailey, author of
PILGRIMS THROUGH SPACE AND TIME:

"For the general public and readers who know little of scientific fiction, the book is all right. I know that it is disappointing to people who, like you, have been interested in the scientific fiction of the past thirty years. You know some of the reasons for inadequacies in the chapter dealing with scientific fiction since 1915: the books needed were not available to me in libraries here, and I did not have money to buy them; the book was completed in the late 1930's, and then hastily revised, under the impression that it was coming out at once, in late 1945; many other interests, connected with making a living, forced me to drop the reading of scientific fiction, except now and then, after the 1930's. . . . But the fact remains that the field of scientific fiction most prolific in quantity and perhaps most interesting to the largest number of present-day readers is rather skimpily treated in the book.

"A second volume is needed, a follow-up volume to deal with scientific fiction since 1915. It would take what I have as a basis, perhaps as a method, if the method seems good. It would study the rise and fall of the various magazines, the experiments in new patterns, the reflections of the ideologies of the 1920's and 1930's and 1940's in this fiction, the rise of 'fandom' and the appearance of clubs and fan magazines, etc., etc.

"Now, I would like nothing better than to tackle the preparation of such a book. But I should have to have at least a year, perhaps two years, of leisure, with the opportunity to spend a good deal of time in a large city with a library that has the pieces; say, New York or Washington. At present teaching advanced courses at the University of North Carolina, in fields quite removed from scientific fiction, and under the obligation to keep abreast of those fields, I simply cannot find this needed year or so."

And later on in his letter:

"Did I ever tell you what became of the idea I once had (and the work you helped me do, to some extent) of getting up an exhaustive bibliography of scientific fiction? I got together upwards of 5000 titles, without opportunity to go to a great library and examine the pieces; I saw that the task was greater than I could complete, under the circumstances. So I gave it up. I simply sent the titles to a couple of people who were interested, and who still have my box of cards -- for whatever use they may find in them. I sent the box of cards to Mr. H. C. Koenig of New York, for his use and the use of Langley Searles." #

SCIENCE FICTION IN SCHOOL: As a followup for the foregoing letter from a University instructor who is a science fiction (or scientific fiction) enthusiast, I have a small report to make about an academic discovery. I do not know whether text books are more or less standard thruout the nation, but in one San Francisco highschool at least, in 3d year French, a volume called LA FRANCE VIVANTE is being used. One lesson which the students are given to translate is a 4-pg article entitled "L'Astronautique" (Interplanetary Navigation). It is prefaced by a foto and page biog of Robt. Esnault-Pelterie, and sparkt by a cute little cut symbolic of space flite. Groping to remember my C+ French from 15 years ago, I'd translate the conclusion as: "--may never see with my own eyes the first botanical or zoölogical specimens brought from Mars or Venus, but it may be possible to view photographically the face of the Moon, which the first astronauts will bring back from their great adventure."

"All we need to get to the Moon is the application of the symbol \$" Ley

ANTHONY BOUCHER Reviews 6 Fantasy Books for the Readers of GLOM (and purchasers of the San Francisco Sunday Chronicle):

Travelers in Time, edited with an introduction by Philip van Doren Stern (Doubleday; \$3.50). Mr Stern's anthologies have always ranked among the finest in the fantasy field for sheer good taste and literary quality, and if anything, he's outdone himself in this collection of tales of time-travel. It's regrettable that he has resolutely neglected the pulps, whose standards are often higher than his curt introductory note assumes; but even without them, he has assembled 2 dozen time-twists, some familiar, some novel, and all excellent.

The Mislaid Charm, by Alexander M. Phillips, illustrated by Herschel Levit. (Prime Press, \$1.75). How a dull young man achieved a memorably expansive evening by encountering, at once and all for the first time, intoxication, an Amazon, and the pilfered talisman of the Pennsylvanian Dutch Little Men. A sort of Thorne Smith-with-fig leaves--lightweight but delightfully refreshing. (And I hope if Prime Press continues this admirable policy of publishing novelets from the palmy days of "Unknown", they'll do a more professional job of printing and format.)

The Legion of Space, by Jack Williamson, illustrated by A.J. Donnell. (Fantasy Press; \$3). Eons hence, the fate of all mankind is threatened when a would-be dictator invokes the aid of monstrous allies from another system, and 4 heroes (including the virile John Star and the Falstaffian Giles Habibula) battle alone against unspeakable forces. Not so much true science fiction as pure swashbuckling adventure set in the future--something below Williamson's best, but grand fun.

The Weapon Makers, by A.E. van Vogt. (Hadley Press; \$3). Far in the distant future, the solar system is dually governed by the tyrannical pomp of the Isher Empire and the underground intellects of the Weapon Makers, with one immortal man holding the balance between them--a balance perilously upset when interstellar travel is at last achieved. A vast fantastic melodrama, sometimes stirring in its wild concepts, sometimes shockingly flat in its writing--and probably only for the postgraduate fan, who has worked gradually up to it.

Pilgrims Through Space and Time, by J.O. Bailey. (Argus Books; \$5),
For years enthusiasts have patiently
awaited this long-promised book, which could have been to science fic-
tion what Haycraft's "Murder for Pleasure" is to the detective story.
I regret to report that it is dully written, repetitiously constructed,
critically insecure, and based on insufficient and capriciously select-
ed material. The only usefulness I can see in it is as a source of
many detailed plot-synopses--in which good books sound just as silly as
bad books.

Miracle on 34th Street, by Valentine Davies. (Harcourt, Brace; \$1.75).
By now you've seen or at least heard of the
film about how the Christmas Spirit was brought to Macy and Gimbel by
an old man who might really be Santa Claus. It's a completely joyous
story idea with nice satiric slants; unfortunately this novelet version
is written with all the literary grace and skill of a fairly promising
rough synopsis.

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"THIS BOOK IS NO GOOD!"--Marion Montgomery. I (Fja) don't know who
Marion Montgomery is or what her credentials
are as a literary critic, but she has spared no pains to inform the
world of her opinion of "The Moon Is Feminine" by Clarence (Babyons)
Dane. In a second hand copy of the fantasy of the Green Man, which I
purchased some time ago, I found Marion's unequivocal handwritten dec-
laration. "This book is no good." And on the title page (besides
copying the author's name and the book's title in her own hand) she
echoed: "No good." Marion seems to get around, as on the otherwise
nearly empty page 43 she has printed: Clarkesdale, Mississippi.
Memphis, Tennessee. Tijuana Mexico. Elsewhere thruout the book she
has printed her name about as many times as the ubiquitous Kilroy. In
connection with Chapt. XXIV (I meant to type conjunction but struck a
double "n" and have no correction fluid) she reveals her address: 608
Washington, Memphis, Tenn. But by the end of the chapter she seems to
have moved up the street a couple blocks to 804. At the end of Chapt.
XXVI she prints her complete name and address twice, and repeats the
information atop the facing page. On page 300 the same info appears,
and finally on pg 305. It occurs to me it would be fun if every FAPA
member woud drop Marion at least a postcard making some comment about
"The Moon Is Feminine"--Imagine her amazement at this unaccountable
flood of mail from all over the country. And Necromancer's editor,
Dave MacInnes, lives in Memphis; praps we shoud charge him to interview
Marion (taking co-ed Pamela, ofcourse, as chaperon).

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WEINSTOCK TAKES STOCK OF BRADBURY. Matt Weinstock, author of the new
book "My L.A.", recently had this
to say about Our Boy Brad in the Daily News: Six years ago Ray Brad-
bury, 27, L.A. High class of 1938, sold the Daily News at Norton Ave.
and Olympic Blvd. His hobby was science fiction, the world of tomorrow
stuff in which the weird and fantastic are made commonplace. He had
been writing his own stories since he was 12. Suddenly he clicked.

Ray's forte is horror and we admit he scares hell out of us. One
of his tales is about folks who drink each other's blood. We are cer-
tain the headlines Ray used to shout had nothing to do with all this. #

COPY OF A LETTER FROM A FAN (AGE 15) TO THE PRODUCER OF "KING KONG"-----

A friend of mine in Los Angeles sent me a clipping about your proposed production, THE END OF THE WORLD. The statement made, altho I believe it only newspaper bunkum, rather concerned me so I that I would write.

It is stated that "Hollywood's most ingenious technician-producer, Merian C. Cooper, would make a picture depicting the end of the world--if he could decide just how it will happen." Now, as a lover of fantastic fiction and films, about which I recently wrote you, I want the film to go thru. And so I'd like to make a suggestion on the end of the world for what it's worth.

Suppose you have the picture like this. It is the dim, far-distant future. A world with a red, dying sun. Desolate; ice-covered. All lakes frozen over; water existing only in little pools; far down in subterranean depths. Mankind has burrowed deep into the earth's interior in its fight for existence.

Now also suppose there are two factions: those who are content to dwell in their inner-earth homes, kept alive by heat from the earth's center, and those who wish to migrate to another planet. Those in power, they who are content to stay as they are, have control of the one upper outlet to the surface, and forbid its opening. Those of the lesser power, however, secretly are building a gigantic spaceship to be run on inexhaustible atomic power.

One day a keeper of the surface gate sights thru a telescope with outside connections a fiery marauder headed for the earth. The ones in power are skeptics, but the lesser group predicts the doom of the earth and speeds work on the ether-ship.

As the unwelcome visitor nears earth, its heat melts the ice. Titanic floods sweep across the face of the world. There is the fight at the surface gate to keep it from being opened and the spaceship leaving. But the migrators win. And then there is the spectacle as the Venus-bound terrestrials watch the end of the world. The tidal wave sweeps down to the subterranean abodes--down to the molten interior of the earth. And, too, the alien mass strikes the world. What a sight! Three possible endings of the world combined into one!; glacier, explosion, and collision!

Love interest could be weaved in. It might be surmised that giant slugs inhabit the lower regions and present a menace to humanity. There could be a thrilling fight between one and a group of men, the men having flame-hurling weapons or something of the sort.

I'm terribly enthusiastic about this production and only hope that you can gather something worthwhile from the hurriedly sketched outline I've given.

Forrest J Ackerman
530 Staples Avenue
San Francisco, Cal
October 11, 1932

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BONUS: I am giving Editor Burbee some copys of programs for Metropolis and Caligari which I rescued after local audiences had left recent revivals. Fapans will find one or the other in their envelope. OK? FJA