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Gruzzle

is an amateur magazine of comments and stuff, published for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association by Joe Kennedy, 84 Baker Ave., Dover, N. J. The pastoral theme of our cover ("Gnome and Companions") is intended to counterbalance this issue's somewhat bookish tone.

Number 3

Spring, 1948

WARNING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS CORNER

"The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes---or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two---is gone."

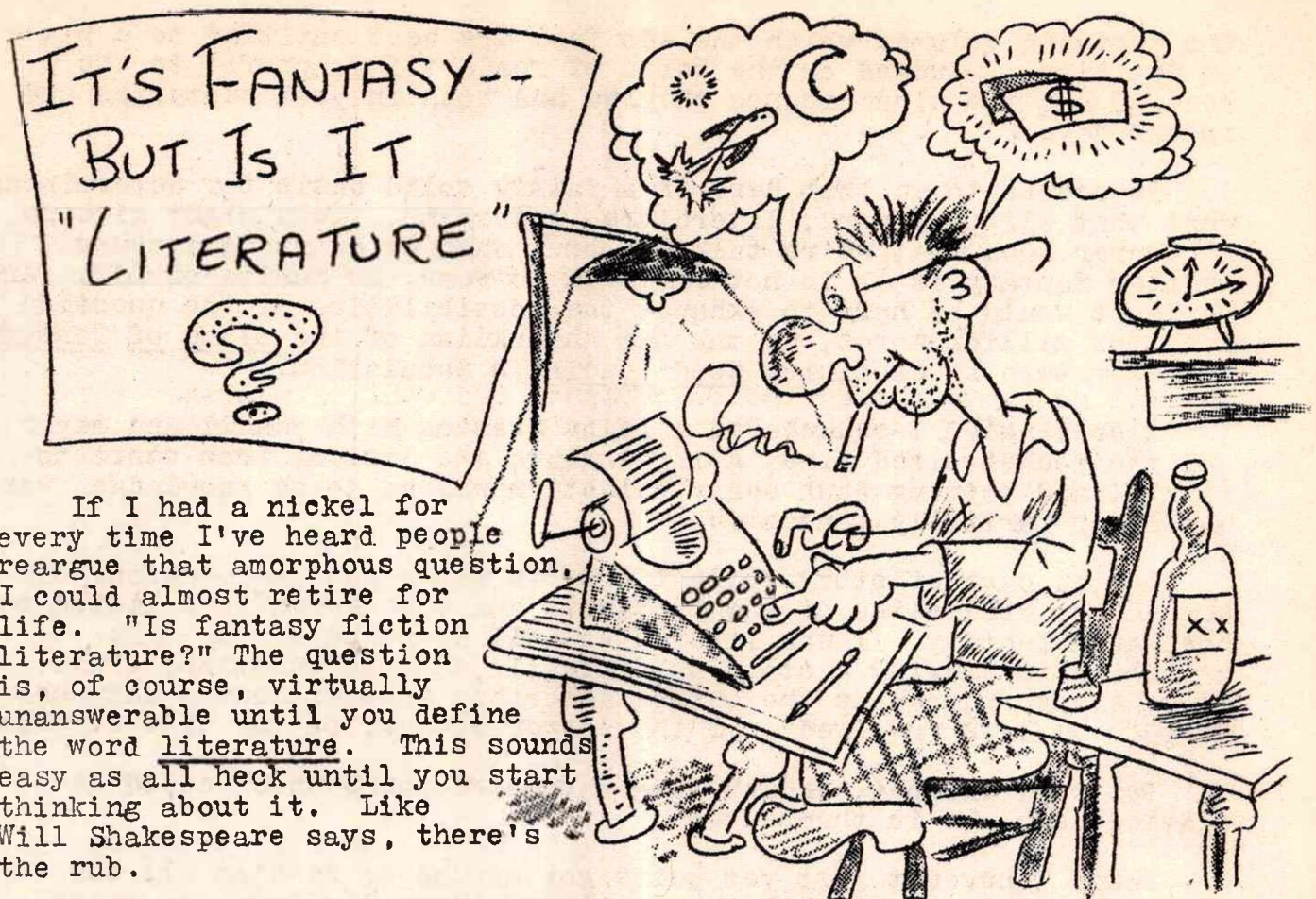
---The Rhubaiyat

"Top fanzine today - - -
Cold Crud tomorrow."

---Synapse #2.

"At present we trust a man with making constitutions on less proof of competence than we should demand before we gave him our shoe to patch."

---JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



If I had a nickel for every time I've heard people reargue that amorphous question, I could almost retire for life. "Is fantasy fiction literature?" The question is, of course, virtually unanswerable until you define the word literature. This sounds easy as all heck until you start thinking about it. Like Will Shakespeare says, there's the rub.

However, several months ago I chanced to pick up a pocket-edition entitled Good Reading, published by Penguin Books under its Pelican imprint. A copy will set you back 35¢. Good Reading is subtitled "A Guide to the World's Best Books"; it's prepared by The Committee on College Reading, whatever that is, and lists some one thousand books which the editors consider of "solid worth and pleasant readability", with brief descriptions about each. They note, also, if the book's available in an inexpensive reprint edition. The tomes are classified in regards to historical period, literary type, or subject, in the following categories: Greece, Rome, The Middle Ages, The Renaissance, Tudor England, 17th Century, 18th Century; Novels: American, British, and Continental, of the 19th and 20th centuries; The Orient, Pan-America; The Short Story, The Drama, Poetry, Essays-Letters-Criticism, Biography; Religion, Philosophy; Humor and Satire, The Fine Arts, Geography, History, Science, Economics and Sociology, Political Affairs, Reference Books, and Pamphlets -- which seems to cover things pretty well. There are brief articles on each of these fields, written by PhD's and various other critters. To top things off, there are personal listings of favorite "basic books" by each of editors of Good Reading (a distinguished line-up including blokes like Sinclair Lewis, John Erskine, Lin Yutang, Clifton Fadiman, Carl Sandburg, John Dos Passos, and more), a listing of 100 of the most "significant" books, and some miscellaneous advice on how to read, including Ben Franklin's sage observation that being ignorant is not so much a shame as being unwilling to learn.

The editors make it plain that their list of the "world's best books" is by no means supposed to be definitive; nor have the selections been made by any occult process. It is simply a tabulation of

the thousand volumes which the eds feel are best entitled to a place on the list -- judged on the basis of readability, profit to the reader, and the significance they've had both in past centuries and in our day.

It occurs to me that here is a fairly solid basis for determining what that slippery word, literature, refers to. This might give us a clearer idea what we're talking about when we start to discuss whether fantasy is or is not entitled to wear the mantle of LIT. And while it would be hard to exhaust the possibilities of the question in a few million words, we may get an inkling of the place of fantasy in literature by examining Good Reading's tabulation.

Accordingly, I squandered a rainy evening with pencil and paper and the pocket-sized tome, going through the listing from start to finish, and jotting down every selection which, to my knowledge, was wholly or partially fantastic.

In the case of story-collections, in which some were definitely beyond the borderline of the fantastic and some weren't, I listed the book as a fantasy. I was liberal as hell about this. My only criterion in judging a story as fantastic was the question, Could these events happen as the author describes them without a suspension of natural laws involved? If the answer was no, on the list it went.

Poetry I skipped, except long narrative poems which could be classed as books in themselves.

Since I haven't just yet quite got around to reading all the thousand volumes, heh-heh, a couple of these listings are guess-work. I didn't have a copy of The Checklist of Fantastic Literature on hand, either, so I may've omitted one or two qualified fantasies. But the compilation should be near enough to completeness to be indicative of something or other.

An asterisk (*) in a bracket after a title indicates that the book was also on Good Reading's list of the 100 most significant tomes of all time. The original classifications have been retained.

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GREEK LITERATURE: PLAYS by Aeschylus (*). "Prometheus" is fantasy, I know. Aesop's FABLES. PLAYS by Aristophanes (*). If you've never read "The Frogs", better go get it. Twenty-three hundred years old and still good for laughs. PLAYS by Euripides (*). Homer's ILLIAD and ODYSSEY (*). PLAYS by Sophocles (*).

ROMAN LITERATURE: THE GOLDEN ASS by Lucius Apuleious. Say the editors: "Delightful tale of a roisterer changed through black magic to an ass and doomed to fantastic adventures until the pity of the goddess Isis permitted him to resume human form." Ovid: METAMORPHOSES.

MEDIEVAL LITERATURE: THE ARABIAN NIGHTS (*). BEOWULF. Boccaccio's DECAMERON (*) There are two or three fantastic yarns in this fabulous volume -- the Seventh Story of the Ninth Day of the Decameron is a traditional Weird Tales-style sort of thing: a man dreams that a wolf chaws up his wife's neck and face, warns her, but she pays no heed, and what happens? Exactly as he dreamed, the wolf gnaws her up. And in the next-to-the-last story in the book, a character is

transported from place-to-place via "a magical power". Chaucer's CANTERBURY TALES (*) contains a few fantastics -- The Wife of Bath's Tale, the Friar's Tale, the Manciple's Tale, for instance. Dante's DIVINE COMEDY (*). EVERYMAN (perhaps the best known allegorical morality play). Langland's PIERS PLOWMAN. Malory's MORTE D'ARTHUR (*). The TRAVELS of Sir John de Mandeville. Mandeville seems to have been the medieval Major Hoople, spinning some fascinating tall tales of his journeys throughout the world. He claimed to have discovered in Africa a race of people having only one foot "of such proportions it gave shade from the sun." "In the Dead Sea," he reported, "iron will sink and feathers float." Back in those days, tho, everybody believed him. Finally, Sturluson's HEIMSKRINGLA, sagas of the Norsemen.

ABOUT THE MIDDLE AGES: Twain's CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN ARTHUR'S COURT.

RENAISSANCE LITERATURE: Rabelais - GARGANTUA AND PANTAGRUEL (*). Also listed is a volume published by University Classics, titled FAMOUS UTOPIAS OF THE RENAISSANCE, including Campanella's CITY OF THE SUN and More's UTOPIA (*). To make a clean breast of my ignorance, I honestly dunno if there's anything fantastic in DON QUIXOTE (*).

TUDOR ENGLISH LITERATURE: PLAYS by Marlowe ("The Tragedy of Dr. Faustus", etc.). PLAYS by Shakespeare (*). "MacBeth", "The Tempest", and "Midsummer Night's Dream" fit in here. Spenser's FAERY QUEEN.

17th CENTURY: Bunyan's PILGRIM'S PROGRESS (*).

18th CENTURY: Swift's GULLIVER'S TRAVELS (*). Horace Walpole's CASTLE OF OTRANTO. "First of the Gothic novels," say the editors, "a wildly romantic tale of dark deeds and supernatural intervention."

19th CENTURY NOVELS: American: Bellamy's LOOKING BACKWARD. British: Butler's EREWHON. Mary Shelley's FRANKINSTEIN. Possibly, Peacock's NIGHTMARE ABBEY and HEADLONG HALL, which are described as satires on the Gothic novel. I've never read 'em. Stevenson's DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE. Wilde's PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY. Continental: Daudet's TARTARIN DE TARASCON (?).

20th CENTURY NOVELS: American: Cabell's JURGEN. Jack London's THE IRON HEEL. Nathan's PORTRAIT OF JENNIE. British: Max Beerbohm's ZULEIKA DOBSON. De la Mare's MEMOIRS OF A MIDGET. Garnett's LADY INTO FOX. Hudson's GREEN MANSIONS. I have never met a person in my life who said he enjoyed that one. Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD. Joyce's ULYSSES. Stephens' THE CROCK OF GOLD. White's SWORD IN THE STONE. Continental: A. France's PENGUIN ISLE. Kafka's THE CASTLE.

ORIENTAL LITERATURE: Firdausi's EPIC OF KINGS. Kalidasa's SAKUNTALA.

HUMOR: ADVENTURES OF BARON MUNCHASEN. Bemelmans' THE BLUE DANUBE. Carroll's ALICE IN WONDERLAND. Esther Shephard's PAUL BUNYAN.

MODERN DRAMA: PLAYS by JMBarrie. PLAYS by Ibsen ("Peer Gynt") (*).

POETRY: Goethe's FAUST (*). Wilde's POEMS AND FAIRY TALES (appropriate title!).

SHORT STORIES: Benet's TALES BEFORE MIDNIGHT. De Maupassant's SHORT STORIES (*) -- 'specially "The Horla" and "Was It a Dream?". TWICE

TOLD TALES by Hawthorne. Certain of Henry James' SHORT STORIES. Irving's THE SKETCH BOOK. Poe's TALES (*). COMPLETE SHORT STORIES of Saki. And Saroyan's THE DARING YOUNG MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE AND OTHER STORIES is described as "fantasy in the modern manner".

RELIGION: THE BIBLE (*). SCREWTAPE LETTERS by C.S.Lewis.

And there you have it. Sixty-nine titles, of which 19 are also listed among the hundred most significant books of all time. Of those "hundred best", about 58 could be classified as fiction or drama -- which makes nearly one-third of 'em fantasy! I don't know if we're much closer to answering the question, "Is fantasy literature?", but 'twould seem that impossible stories are not quite the bastard half-brothers of "respectable classics" which some critics would have us believe.

'Tis perhaps interesting to note, too, what fantasy didn't make Good Reading's list. Note that Frankenstein wormed its way into the select company, while that other old goose-bump-raiser, Dracula, just didn't rate. You might've expected, too, that Haggard's She might've placed somewhere on the thousand. Or Wells' Time Machine, which would certainly seem as significant to me as Bennett's Old Wives' Tale or Undset's Kristin Lavransdatter, both of which made the top hundred. None of Wells' science-fiction is listed, altho his Tono-Bungay, Outline of History, and Science of Life all are included. Capek's Meteor rates, but not R.U.R.

Incidentally, wonder if there's a collector in fandom who has 50% of the above-listed fantasy titles in his collection!

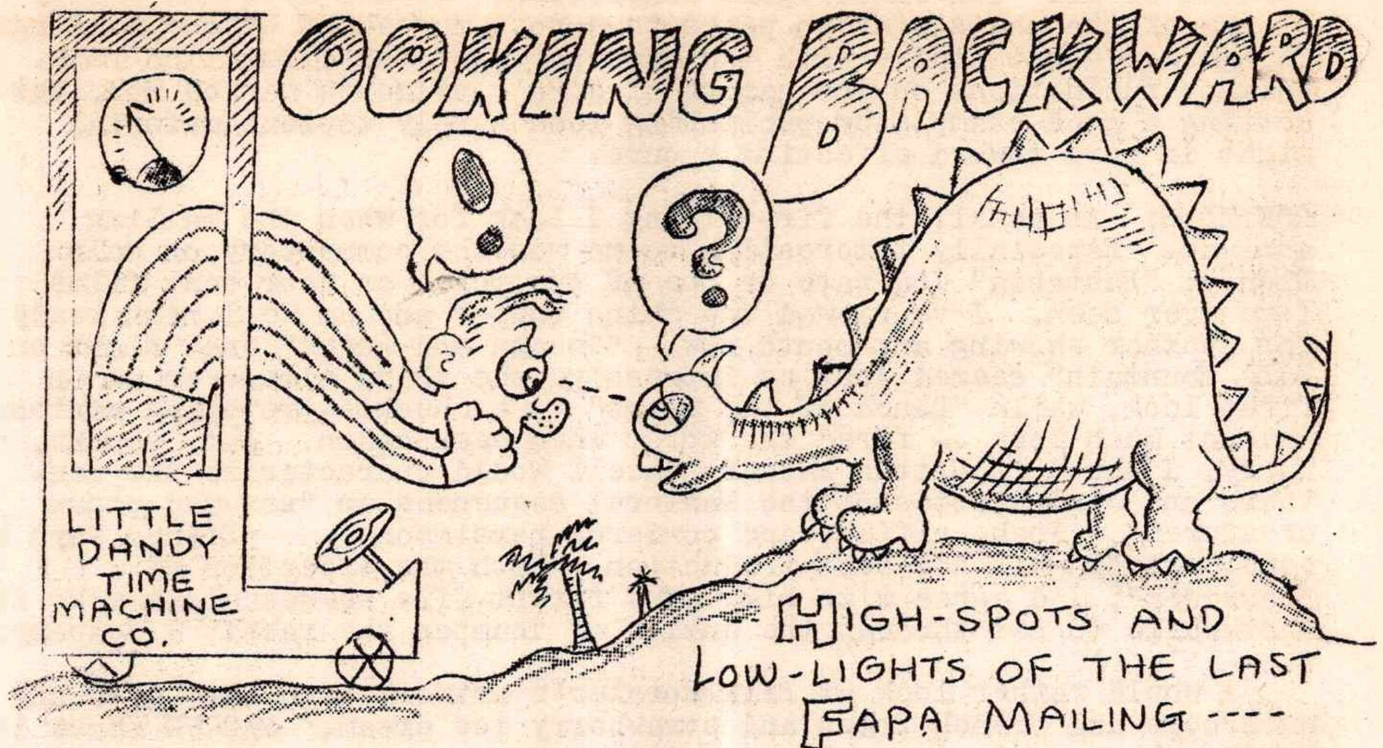
GRULZAK SAFEGUARDING PUBLIC MORALS CORNER

From Tigrina's review of the surrealist film, "The Andalusian Dog", in Light #34: "Next, a lively chase ensues in the apartment, the man chasing the woman, cornering her and caressing her in a way which if described here would prevent this magazine from circulating through the mails. The man then picks up some ropes, to which are attached slabs of some indefinable material. Pulling on these, he uses all his strength to approach the woman. The scene enlarges. We see now that in addition to the slabs, two grand pianos with dead mules atop them, and two cadavers attired as priests are also included in the man's burden. The head of one of the mules is covered with a viscid slime. The woman now runs out of the door. The man drops his load and runs after her..."

Oh, Censor---!

GRULZAK NEW RECRUITING LINE FOR FANDOM? CORNER

From the Portland Science-Fantasy Soc'y Bulletin of October '47: "He ((John de Courcy)) said there is much in the world today, unexplained by our accepted beliefs; well documented Fortean material. 'Nearly all religions have one idea in common---salvation! I like to consider the possibility that the Earth is being observed by some galactic civilization...perhaps the man next door is an observer for the "aliens"...and those of us who have broadened our minds to a certain extent are those who are considered worthy of "salvation"... I think a large number of science-fiction "fans" would be in this select group..."



In case anybody's curious about that drawing in YELLUM which the Official Editor snipped a hunk out of, the censored portion of the picture showed smoke rings spurting forth from the posterior of the lady, a la jet propulsion.

C. Burton Stevenson's post-mailed ORACLE was a welcome arrival. FAPA, I think, can use a mercilessly honest critic to ride herd on us and apply the spurs when we lapse into a don't-give-a-damn-what-goes-on-the-stencil attitude. Granting Stevenson's premise that over-devotion to fan activity often may result in "a rather distorted personal scale of values", I still got the impression that CBS was building the foundations of his argument on some rather cloudy generalizations, without getting down to specific cases or verifiable facts. It might facilitate discussion, Burt, if you'd give us extensional definitions of the words "fan", "fannism", and so forth in the sense that you use 'em. Does it seem surprising that in an a.p.a. whose membership is primarily drawn from prozine-readers or ex-prozine-readers, fannish personalities plus highly subjective critiques of professional fantasy fiction should predominate? If not from the actifan field, from where would you have FAPA draw its recruits? Of course, we could always run a little ad in the personals column of Sat Review of Lit---! 'Nother thing -- I suspect that Stevenson's drawing all his conclusions anent "the fannish orientation" from the fanzines he's read, the letters he's swapped with actifans, and suchstuff. Again, it's only to be expected that fans might seem rather one-sided to an observer judging them solely from their publications and correspondence, wherein they're bound to stress the interests that they have in common with their readers. If you could sit down for an hour or two and bat the breeze with some of the actifans you're presumably criticizing, Burt, you might revise your opinion re. their mental horizons. The problem, as I see it, is not to figure out a scheme for giving the heave-ho to people whose FAPA-zines don't interest you, but rather to get those people to produce and to spend some time and thought in the process. ORACLE might be sprightlier reading were Stevenson to feature more articles and

sorties of his own intelligent concoction, 'steada devoting nearly eleven of the mag's sixteen pages to a post-mortem of bygone mailings. Things get a bit stuffy with the atmosphere of the dissection room. Weighty ruminations on the nature of FAPA's ailments may be fun, but setting a good example by publishing less purely topical material might do more toward effecting a cure.

HORIZONS: As usual, the first thing I look for when the mailing arrives. Especially interesting to me was the commentary on Walt Disney; "Fantasia" I'd rate as one of the three or four best films I've ever seen. I've viewed the thing thrice and am well nigh ready for another showing any month now. "Tocata and Fugue" and "Night on Bald Mountain" seemed just as impressive the third time over as on first look, while "Dance of the Hours" -- a chuckle-provoking cartoon and not much more -- fared the worst when seen again. But, shucks, Harry, I doubt if Cotton Mather himself would characterize the centaurs and centaurettes of the Pastoral sequences as "sex-mad pagan creatures". Posh, piffle, and powdered persimmons. Disney says he considers "Bambi" his best production. With the exception of "Fantasia", I'd agree with him. The forest-fire scenes alone make it worthwhile to sit through the antics of Thumper the rabbit & company.

I would rather look at Bill Rotsler's artwork than eat steak and mushrooms and french fries and strawberry ice cream. MASQUE shore is purdy.

Excellent cover on ICHOR. I have the greatest of respect for anybody who publishes a mimeographed magazine of poetry, but in all honesty I didn't care for anything in the issue, possibly excluding the EbeY item. It seems that too many modernist poets construct dazzlingly intricate spires of verbiage to distract the reader's attention from the obvious fact that the poet has nothing to say. At first I thought Robert-Peter Aby might be a pseudonym of Editor Hart; but, no, the guy really must be a French teacher just as the contents page claims. Who else would think of rhyming "Louis XVI" with "says"? Anybody who watches a cat munch on a gopher and compares the snapping of bones to the crackling of faggots in Hell should take a good stiff slug of sulfur and molasses.

For the first time in many, many moons, I comprehended the significance of PLENUM's cover. Together with Tom Gardner's articles in Fantasy Commentator, Rothman's "The Crackpot and the Scientist" should be required reading for people who are still going around asking "But how can you be sure Amazing Stories isn't telling the truth?"

SYNAPSE does a better-than-adequate job of summarizing the main objections to fanzine reviews in Amazing. Altho Rap has announced that the Shaver Mystery is on the way out, what indication have we got that the same elements of pseudo-science, occultism, and sadism won't continue in AS just as before-- only perhaps under different by-lines than that of Richard S. Shaver? Judging from the first three installments of "The Club House", Graham's a competent columnist; his explications of actifandom are readable and intelligent -- but I still think Amazing's audience is a highly undesirable place to solicit fan mag subscriptions and club memberships from. What price ego-boo??

In these last remaining lines, I might comment that I'm glad to see Redd Boggs and Dons Bratton and Wilson active in FAPA, fling some well-deserved orchids at PHANTEUR, and nominate SPARK and H-1661 as the fastest improving FAPazines. Anybody got a stencil-stretcher?

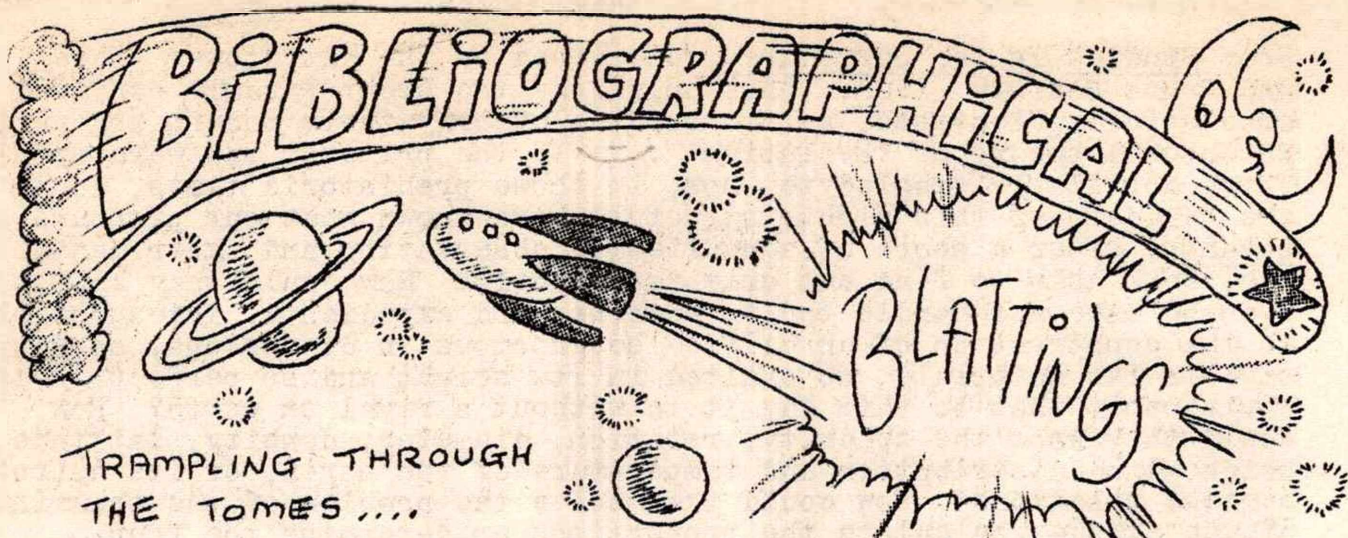
GRULZAK WELL, THAT TAKES CARE OF THAT! CORNER

From Studies in the Scriptures, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1908: "Not only does the Great Pyramid confound atheistical scientists, but it refutes utterly their modern and anti-Scriptural theory of 'Evolution' ... If the primeval man were nothing but a gorilla or troglodyte, how, in those prehistoric times, could the builders of this mighty structure have known what our profoundest savants, after a score of centuries of observation and experiment, have been able to find out only imperfectly? How could they know how even to make and handle tools, machines and expedients, indispensable to the construction of an edifice so enormous in dimensions, so massive in its materials, so exalted in its height and so perfect in its workmanship that to this day it is without a rival on earth? How could they know the sphericity, rotation, diameter, density, latitude, poles, land distribution and temperature of the earth, or its astronomical relations? How could they solve the problem of the squaring of the circle, calculate the proportions or determine the four cardinal points? ... How could they devise a standard and system of measures and weights, so evenly fitted to each other, so beneficently conformed to the common wants of man, and so perfectly harmonized with all the facts of nature? ... Men may sneer, but they cannot laugh down this mighty structure, nor scoff out of it the angles, proportions, measures, nature references and sacred correspondencies which its Maker gave it."

Jeez, I wish I lived back in them prehistoric times. Must've been funny to watch them old Greeks and Egyptians and Phoenicians swinging by their tails from the coconut trees.

YOUNG FANS!! DO YOU FIND YOURSELF DEVELOPING AN INFERIORITY COMPLEX WHEN YOU PERUSE THE PRODUCTIONS OF FAPA'S BRAIN TRUST ? ? ?

Then you'll enjoy the Spectator Amateur Press Society! Unknown to many stefnists, the SAPS is quietly bumbling along, dumping a fat, luscious envelope full of deliteful fan mags into the mails four times a year. Take the last mailing, for instance, which appeared in April -- it contained 19 titles, including Lloyd Alpaugh's SUN SHINE, Coslet's 14-page FLOOR, chock full of science-fiction reviews, HAROLD W. CHENEY JR., Kennedy's SPACEHOUND'S GAZETTE and BLUE BEM COMICS, Schaumburger's EGOBOO and BRILLIG, Boff Perry's 17-page Index to VAMPIRE, Spelman's NAMLEPS, Froeder's PROZINE, Storer's QUEER -- and a bunch of other things, including a book which Cheney himself mimeo'd and bound in hard covers! Most of the material pales into insignificance when compared with FAPA's best; but the SAPS are dedicated to the proposition that amateur journalism should be for the hell of it, and the ego-boo flows like wine. Much of the contents of the bundles consist of weird attempts at humor, but so far Redd Boggs is the only one of our intelligent members who has quit in disgust. And there are advantages to SAPS. Small circulation means less work. Dues are a miserly 25¢, and you need publish but 4 pages per six-month period. Membership has just been upped to 30 by popular demand, so there is probably room for YOU. Drop a card to the official editor -- Lloyd Alpaugh Jr., R.F.D. 4, Somerville, N.J. Just tell him you want to join SAPS. Yes, friends, a one-cent postal may change the course of your life. (The foregoing advertisement donated by the Committee to Expand SAPS by Leechishly Sucking Members out of FAPA, Un-Inc. Any similarity to Communist Menace is accidental.)



W.A. DWIGGINS: Millennium 1 (Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y.; published in Canada by the Ryerson Press.) \$2. First -- and presumably only -- edition limited to 1750 copies.

Will Man be dominated by his own inventions? This familiar theme of pulp science-fiction, which seems to have become a little more credible since Hiroshima, is neatly presented in this brief melodrama. Mr. Dwiggins has written a genuine sleeper. Not a solitary fanzine, to my knowledge, mentioned the book's appearance back in '45. I wasn't aware of its existence when I compiled the year's survey of hard cover stf for the 1945-46 Fantasy Review. Nor did I hear of Millennium 1 until copies began appearing on the 19¢ remainder counters of Times Square bookshops, the final resting place of most good tomes which fail to sell.

Physically the book seems compact and attractive. Its futuristic dust jacket, emblazoned with the silhouette of a bizarre machine printed in solid red against a white background, is an eye-arrester. From the inside flap we learn that author Dwiggins is a gray-haired gentleman whose profession is designing linotype faces. Ten rather Lawrence-esque drawings of the stage sets, printed in green ink on the opening pages, add to the volume's effectiveness.

Millennium 1 is a hundred-page play of four primary episodes, set in the indefinite future. The brief foreword contains the core of the theme: "... Suppose that all these mechanical slaves serving mankind got sick of their jobs ... suppose that they managed, by means of some unknown vibration, to get in touch with one another and pool their grudges. * * Suppose that the higher orders of the machine fraternity, already raised to almost human levels in point of automatic functioning, should take the next step in evolution and emerge as personalities, with faculties of judgment, selection, purpose, organization, individual action ... what, then, would be the position of humankind upon Earth?"

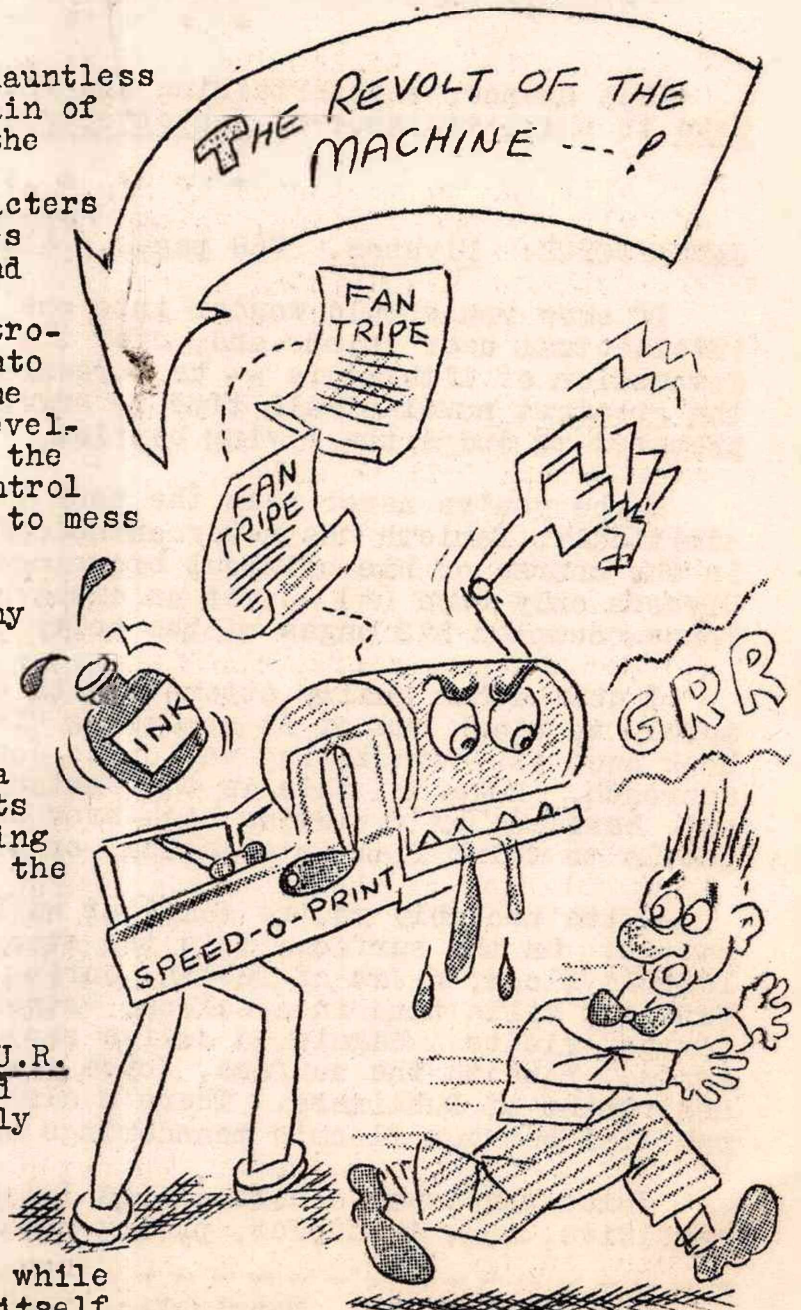
As the play progresses, we catch a few intriguing glimpses of life in this grim futureworld. Mechanical titans rumble across continents, annihilating tribes of annoying "homogrub", while more fortunate humans huddle in subterranean caverns, coming forth only by night. An underground Federation has been established. Physicists desperately struggle to construct new weapons of defense; humans of less scientific turn of mind creep through the darkness and slice the enemy's power cables.

The thinking machines, however, fail to realize that the cavern-dwelling homogrub are the remnants of Man -- legendary creator whom the machines worship as a god. A religious ritual has come down from antiquity: "In the beginning was Man and before Man there was not any Force or Motion of Form. Man created all things. Man with His infinite skill created Machines in His own image..." The automatons, oddly enough, converse in a spoken language of their own; and while this device may strain the reader's credulity a trifle, the author has a rather good excuse for using it -- without speech, there'd be no play. Aaah-h-h, but the machines aren't entirely devoid of emotion -- on occasion they're even capable of such profanities as "For Man's sake!" and "Oh, Rust!" (I'm not entirely certain that this seemingly humorous touch was intentional on Dwiggins' part! Other than this, he maintains a thoroughly dead-pan approach -- the direct opposite of Stephen Vincent Benét's memorable treatment of a similar theme in "Nightmare Number Three".)

Comes the pay-off. Our dauntless scientists penetrate the domain of "oo", Prime Co-ordinator of the machines, whose control room abounds with mechanical characters bearing such fascinating names as Action 5, Δ 15, .33+, and N77. Blackmaster, leader of the homogrub, succeeds in introducing the truth about man into the consciousness of the Prime Co-ordinator, who promptly develops a short circuit, leaving the lucky humans once more in control of earth and presumably free to mess it up again.

Admittedly, it's a sketchy story. Then too, the reader is under the disadvantage of mentally having to pad with meat the play's skelectile frame. The fact that fully a third of the dialogue consists of technical instructions being flashed back and forth among the machines and the scientists doesn't especially make for readability.

Throughout the play the nostalgic odor of Capek's R.U.R. comes drifting back, over and over again; and yet I strongly doubt that Millennium 1 will see the stage. Its sprawlingly intricate sets would require a producer with a yard-thick bank book, while certain aspects of the play itself



would render it virtually un-enactable. Some scenes, for instance, call for colored lights that flash in rhythm to the words of the speakers! I can picture a frustrated electrician standing offstage, frantically snapping a switch on and off, and quietly going nutty trying to keep up with the script.

Considered as a whole, the story seems to miss fire by a few degrees, and I suspect that the casual reader will put the book down with a vaguely "so what?"-ish feeling. But Dwiggin's, I think, has done a creditable job of handling difficult material. Millennium 1 somehow possesses what is perhaps the fundamental requisite of a superior science-fiction yarn -- it will start your own imagination ruminating.

It's worth grabbing.

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Paul Spencer's entertaining and informative review of Finnegans Wake in the last issue of Jabberwocky has inspired us. And so---

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JAMES JOYCE: Ulysses. 768 pages. (Modern Library Giant, \$2.45.)

If ever you should wander into one of Greenwich Village's intellectual beer joints and, over the foam, become involved in a discussion of literature -- be forewarned. For should you opine that the greatest novel of all time is anything other than Ulysses, be prepared to dodge the flying bottles.

Maybe you've never seen the book listed in Korshak's catalog ... admittedly, Derleth has never anthologized it ... H. P. Lovecraft, in the course of his critical browsings, to my knowledge has mentioned Ulysses only once (*) -- yet an extravagantly fantastic tour de force occupies 172 pages of the hefty volume.

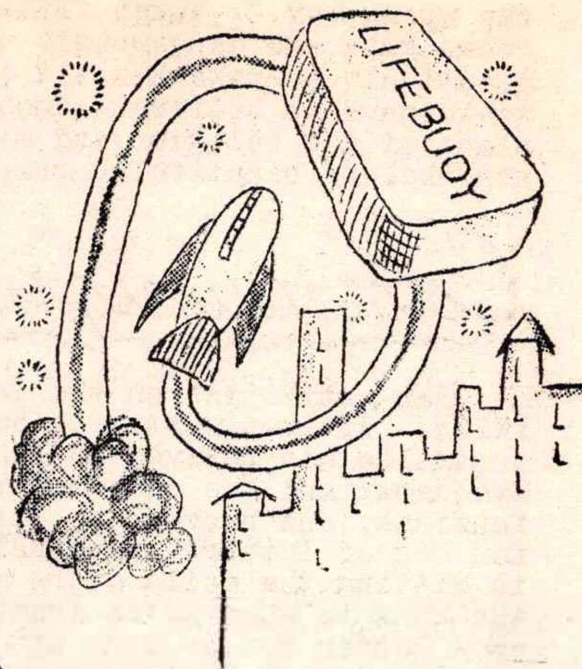
I feel a bit guilty attempting to carve up a modern classic merely to slash out of it something "fantastic". For the bulk of the book owes its devastating wallop to Joyce's mercilessly realistic approach. However, this is the Fantasy Amateur Press Association; and, besides, by reviewing high-brow books like this maybe I can get people to think I am intellectual or something.

Quite probably you're familiar with this novel and its subject matter. On the surface, it's the story of the wanderings of one Leopold Bloom, a Jew of Dublin, during a single day. He attends a funeral, kills time in a saloon, strolls by the sea side and ogles femmes, visits a bagnio, a coffee shop, and finally winds up home again. Beneath the surface, Joyce takes us inside the minds of an assortment of Dubliners. There's also a loosely woven but ironic parallel between Bloom's meanderings and Homer's Odyssey.

James Joyce was a self-exiled Irishman: learned, cultured, sensitive, and, I suspect, pretty much of a neurotic. He wrote to

(*) -- Page 157, Marginalia.

satisfy his own exacting standards -- consequently the reader may find Ulysses somewhat stiffer going than Carson of Venus. Because Joyce's work at times veers almost over the borderline of comprehensibility, it's conceivable that you could write a sententious criticism of his stuff without understanding a thing the man's trying to say. He says plenty, you'll find, the more you study his damnably ponderous, witty, obscene, brilliant, revolutionary, profoundly admirable book. Nor does Joyce feel obligated to stick to a single style throughout the whole novel; indeed, he affably helps himself to whatever style of writing seems pertinent or impertinent to the proceedings. When Bloom sits in on a newspaper-office bull session, the text is interpolated with headlines. In another section, Joyce burlesks the styles of English literary greats from the early Anglo-Saxon scribes up through contemporary writings. The famous 46-page stream-of-consciousness section which concludes the book is totally punctuationless -- a terrifying glimpse inside a woman's mind, as Mrs. Bloom reclines in bed and reflects back over the years. The lady's recollections of a free-wheeling life make terrific reading and, in my opinion, should insure Joyce of a measure of immortality.



The wild, indescribable Walpurgis Eve section takes the form of a play script with elaborate stage directions. In these nightmarish sequences, Bloom wanders through the local red light district, encounters William Shakespeare, a nymph, the Antichrist, Edward the Seventh, Mrs. Bloom in Moorish attire, leading a camel, various Dublin celebrities, soldiers, idiots, bawds, and crones; a cake of soap rises where the moon ought to be; Bloom finds himself on trial for making improper advances to a scullerymaid; he is chased by bloodhounds, pelted with dead codfish and cabbage stumps; he witnesses a hanging and a black mass, visits a "house of ill repute", metamorphosises into a woman; the city catches fire; witches fill the air, astride brooms; the dead arise in white sheepskin overcoats; it rains dragon's teeth.

As Clifton Fadiman says, "You pays your money and you takes your Joyce." If the reader pauses to track down every classical, political, historical, religious, or geographical allusion in the text, he'll be collecting social security ere he's encompassed half the volume's page span. Your 'umble critic attempted to take the book in stride, pushing onward through passages in which he, frankly, understood nothing -- and found that the context often became clear from the ensuing sections.

To Joyce, man is a filthy animal damned to a hell on earth. In the novel's opening pages, character Buck Mulligan puts this point rather neatly to Stephen Dedalus, the author's projection of himself: "...You have the cursed jesuit strain in you, but it's injected

the wrong way." Taken flatly for its face value, Joyce's philosophy seems grim and dangerously unhealthy. I suspect, however, that he didn't always take himself quite so seriously as some of his critics would have us believe. Though Joyce proposes nothing to take the place of the religion and morals which he blasts apart, Ulysses is nonetheless beautiful carnage while it lasts.

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Communique FROM **DOWN UNDER**

Fan activities on the Island Continent are once again in full swing. After a wartime hibernation, the Futurian Society of Australia was revived in August '46; fan meetings are becoming more frequent; and the club is steadily building up a library of books, fanzines, and proz. The Futurian, a neatly mimeo'd half-legal-sized fan mag of letters, personalities, news items, and collecting tips, is hitting the mails every month. Vol Molesworth, its editor, is the agent to whom we're indebted for this information. Vol dropped us a letter not so long ago to offer a write-up on Australian fandom for the annual Fantasy Review. You lads of the NFFF -- if and when you publish that proposed yearbook of scientifantasy, don't forget to include a section on the up-and-coming Futurians.

"My second reason for writing," Vol continued, "is that most of us 'down under' are stf-hungry. Very occasionally a pro slips through the general ban imposed in June, 1940, but copies of current and recent US prozines are very few and far between. None of us have anywhere near complete collections. Some have only one copy a year! # We rely on British Reprint Editions of Astounding and Unknown, which appear bimonthly, contain 64 pages, no illustrations, no serials. Can we get down on our knees and do a bit of begging? Can you, or some of your fellow fans, send us a few prozines occasionally? All I can offer in exchange are British Reprint Editions, which may interest you as curios, Australian stf, stamps, magazines, newspapers, and other non-stf stuff such as some of you may be interested in. # Stf available now in Australia includes Tomorrow and Tomorrow by M. Barnard Eldershaw, 13/6 (roughly two dollars, twenty cents); The Missing Angel by Erle Cox (who wrote Out of the Silence) at 10/6, a little under two dollars; Through Space to the Planets, by Winnifred Laws, 4/9 (about 75 cents), and The Rangers of the Universe, also by Laws, 5/6 (about 95 cents). # Main fan-style Australian stf consisted of several novelettes published during the war, pocketbook size, by myself and a bloke named A. Connell, who had stories in old Wonder. Unfortunately, my 9 books (The Stratosphere Patrol, The Three Rocketeers, Spaceward Ho!, Ape of God, Monster at Large, Wolfblood (lycanthropy) and Satan's Understudy are long out of print and very hard to locate; same with Connell's stuff, altho a few copies of his Lords of Serpent Land remain. # If you, or any of your friends, can help me out with occasional US prozines, I would be glad to send in exchange any Australian stuff you may want. Unfortunately we are not allowed to send money to USA, although this prohibition may be lifted in the future. # Of course we have heard of some of the books being published now (what wouldn't I give for a copy of Dark Carnival, for instance) ... Well, Joe, excuse me for chewing the fat like this but when the science-fiction bug bites, the victim is doomed." Okay, collectors -- the rest is up to you. Vol's address is 160 Beach Street, Coogee, Sydney, Australia.

LITTLE LESSONS IN LOGIC CORNER ----

Our specimen today is excerpted from a letter by a Mr. Erich K. Zeger in "The Reader Speaks", June '48 Thrilling Wonder:

"...Mr. John Barrett should use a little more logic in the building of his plots. # In Mr. Barrett's story, THE LONG WAY BACK, his characters traveled through an atom. Mr. Barrett says there is nothing smaller than an electron. He contradicts his own story -- his characters are made up of atoms the same as everything else in the universe. # How could the atoms in their bodies shrink so small as to pass through another atom if there is nothing smaller than an electron? There would have to be something smaller, otherwise the trip would be impossible. Space would have to be infinite to make such a trip possible -- another contradiction, as this example in logics proves:

"All material is composed of atoms.
All atoms are material.
All atoms are composed of atoms.
All atoms' atoms are composed of atoms.
All material is infinite.
The universe is material,
therefore, the universe is infinite. ..."

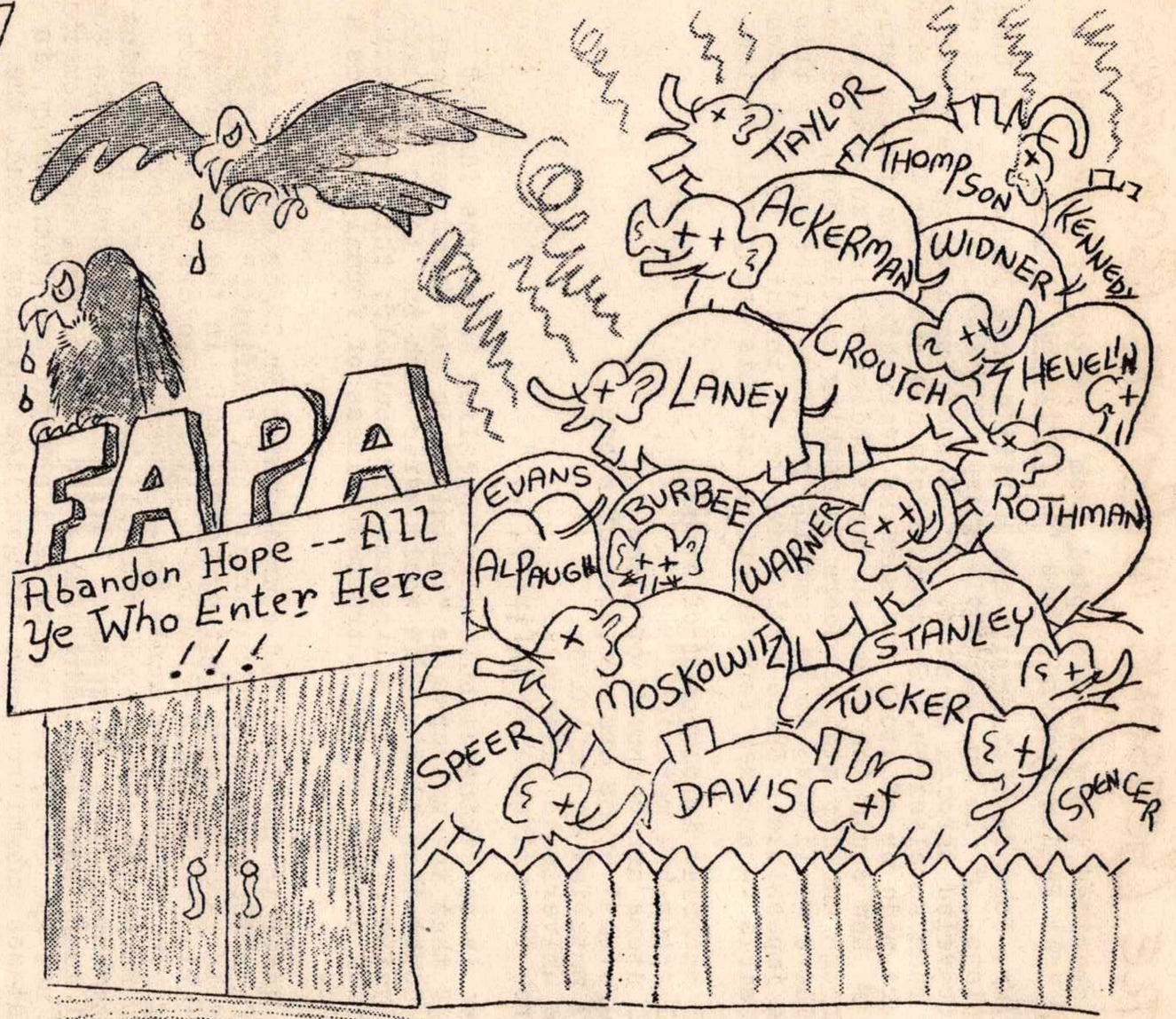
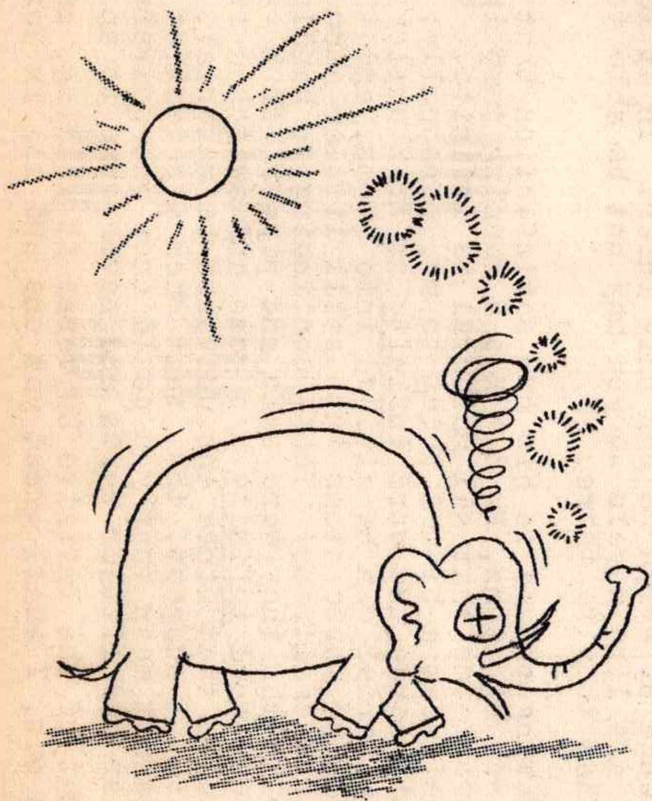
There is something diabolically appealing about the idea of "proving" that the universe is "infinite" in six brief sentences; but I kinda doubt that Al Einstein would agree with the logic involved. Try analyzing Mr. Zeger's syllogisms for yourself; this is, I think, a beautiful example of the untrustworthiness of formal logistics a la Aristotle.

The joker in the deck, of course, which Mr Zeger doesn't notice, is the fact that the words "material" and "infinite" have different meanings in each instance that he uses them! In the first premise, "All material is composed of atoms", material refers to just about anything you can put your hands on -- trees, flowers, your girl friend's navel, et cetera, and you will be fairly safe in granting the statement. But when he says, "All atoms are material", the word material means here something else again -- not necessarily something you can see and feel, but matter as distinguished from energy, in this instance sub-microscopic thingamajigs whirling around, the existence of which we can only infer. In at least one characteristic, atoms are like navels -- you may not be able to see them, but you can bet that they're there.

Having proved to his own satisfaction that all atoms' atoms are composed of atoms, Mr Z takes a running jump into the aching void and proclaims that all material is infinite. This statement in itself doesn't mean a blamed thing to me, personally; but 'twould seem that in this sense the word infinite as Mr Z employs it refers to the "fact" that material can be divided into atoms, and the atoms into littler atoms, and those atoms into still littler atoms, and so on down into infinite smallness. Then, continuing to handle highly abstract concepts as tho they were salt and pepper, Mr Z -- unaware that the slippery word infinite has gone and switched its meaning again -- concludes that since the universe is material, the universe is "infinite"! I suspect, tho, that when a scientist says "infinite universe" he doesn't mean that you could chop the universe up into littler and littler and littler parts and never come to an end.

But if the Infinite Universe is willing, and if Alpaugh's flivver holds out, I shall greet yez one and all in Toronto.

The ELEPHANTS' GRAVEYARD
 "FAPA ... WHERE OLD FANS GO TO DIE."
 - RICK SNEARY



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