HET BPEMA 63

Published for the 63rd Distribution of APA L, 30 1965, by Bruce Pelz, who is looking forward to a long New Year's Party Weekend. IncNeb 430.

DIRECT CURRENTS

GREGG WOLFORD: Condolences on the results of the speech tournament; I had a few like that, mostly the couple times I did any straight debate. When I stuck to Extemp and Original, I did much better. (A quick check of the scrapbook shows 3 seconds and a first in Boys' Extemp, and a 3rd in Original.) I'm curious as to which school in this NFL Region is generally considered the best in the tournaments and congresses. Your opinion? (Or your coach's?)

ANDY PORTER: Pfui; Bailes wouldn't have to tell people: "Nedicks, Fedicks, double bedicks, pipkins all agree!"

TED WHITE: I assume you meant to tell Macfarland that you would have to cut some of the Milford Conference to attend the Midwestcon, not the Westercon, which is still held over the weekend of the 4th of July, and is thus still accessible.

Dian has plowed through about 20 Gothics so far, and will probably put the comparative review through SAPS or SFPA. I wouldn't go near the

things with a ten-foct pole.

Whether or not a book (or set of books) is "better written" than another book or set is really a matter of individual opinion and taste. The Charteris and Hamilton books -- Saint and Helm books -- may not be as intricately detailed as the MacDonald/McGee ones, but I don't think this automatically means that the latter are better written. As for the philosophy of the McGee books, could you pin down on paper what it is you feel you should emulate in that philosophy?

JAYN: You are awarded the Plague of the Week (I think it's Bill Black-beard this week) for including that heavy spice catalog on a poor defenseless piece of 20# paper.

RUTH BERMAN: Yes, the illo represented Aslan & Co. Glad you liked it.

BARRY GOLD: While I don't really care how much of what kind of material you put through APA L -- if it isn't interesting, I can always stop reading it -- I do begin to wonder when you constantly harp on such things as the Purity Test and the Plans For Dog. A purity test once every two or three years is interesting enough in that it gives an insight into the changing attitudes of the newer neofans (not a redundancy). More than that it becomes tedious to the reader and merely indicates a colossal hangup. I speak from woeful personal experience: races in losing purity points are a waste of time and energy. I doubt these comments will dissuade you, but even so, maybe you could limit the manifestations of these problems in APA L to those manifestations that are of some general interest in themselves?

FRED PATTEN & CETERA: On the other hand from that I was waving at Barry, I disapprove heartily of leaving out of the Distribution anything submitted in proper form (50 copies of a stapleable SEXIL) by a LASFS member. Let the people who've volunteered to agent for Outsiders decide whether to mail the entire D or 1st Class a part of

it. Other than that, objections can come from the membership at large; if they think something in poor taste I'm sure they'll stomp on the culprit. But as yet APA L, which exists at the will of the contributors, has not yet appointed an Official Censor, and I don't think we need one to appoint himself.

A VISIT FROM SAINT MELVIL (Or: Mr. Dewey Opens The Doors of Perception) by Jean Tuckerman (reprinted from the UCLA Library Newsletter)

'Twas the week before Christmas, but in the library Most of us felt far more weary than merry. The students were lined up halfway to the gate,

But their books turned up missing after half an hour's wait:

While people with stack passes asked of themselves

Why there never was anything left on the shelves.

With visions of term papers due in their heads, Still others thumbed indexes halfway to shreds.

Then dashed to the card catalog with a clatter. The reference staff was worn down to a tatter

When one of us croaked (trying hard to keep cool):

Now, brace yourselves -- here comes the Library School."

Oi! swifter than IBM circuits they came

To whisper discreetly each reverend name: "Now Besterman, Winchell, then Grove and Malcles:

"No Kirkus? how Murray! Here's PMLA "To add to the Library Journals on call

"Now memorize! memorize! memorize all!"

They fled like the rainbow, while I, not so fleet,

Staggered off to the staff room to prop up my feet.

I indulged in that wonderful feeling called "breaking" And dozed to a state neither sleeping nor waking.

It seemed that I sat in a vast auditorium

Where my peers were declaring complete moratorium On libraries, books, and the whole institution --

When a voice from the rear cried: "Stop! there's a solution!"

And up to the stage strode our own Santa Claus,

Good Saint Melvil, preceded by thundrous applauso.

He stood in the spotlight, accepting our praise.

He had curious wings made of catalog trays.

The stub of a pencil was clutched in his teeth: IBM cards encircled his head like a wreath.

In his buttonhol, P-slips, most carefully crushed.

I laughed when I saw him -- and was promptly shushed.

Said Saint Melvil: "You needn't commit hara-kiri;

"I have some great plans that will make you feel cheery.

"To begin with (quite logically) Acquisition:

"To anticipate needs we will use precognition

"Combined with clairvoyance. You'll know at a glance

"What to order. Selection takes place in a trance.

"Now, classification and suchlike: don't cavil --

"An airtight contract will be made with the Devil.

("It's a library service of fine reputation;

"Books will process themselves while you go on vacation.)

"Bur Forward! We must now restore circulation: "All paging will be done by teleportation.

"For an adequate bookstack, a faultless invention: "The stack will extend into the fourth dimension. "And the book that you need will appear in your hand.
"Clairvoyance again (it's a most useful tool -"Come and study it at my new library school)
"Is a Reference asset. And just watch their faces

"When you turn up at once in two different places!" (This simple technique combines symbolic logic

"With a moderate measure of old-fashioned magic.)
"Now, if you feel shattered by all these perfections,
"A bar has been set up in Special Collections."

The Way of Life 13 by Edward J. Dean

Five PM on Labor Day found Leo Carter driving slowly over the causeway toward the mainland. The abruptly curtailed NonCon left him with an afternoon and evening to kill, so he decided to visit his parents for a while.

"Not that we're not glad to see you, son," said his father as they shook hands in the doorway, "but it isn't anywhere near your monthly Visiting Day yet. What brings you here?" They moved into the livingroom, and, after greeting his mother and Cecily, Leo sprawled in an easy chair and told them how Corky had thrown everyone out at 2PM.

"Well, I guess she just had enough of the lot of you," said Jim Carter. "Can't say I blame her; my limit would probably be three hours instead of three days. Science Fiction's a waste of time." Leo braced himself for the usual lecture, but his father finished almost before he had begun: "But if that't what you like, it's your life."

Leo relaxed and opened some small-talk gambits -- a few about fans he mentioned to his parents before, some about his job, and that he had decided to sign up for a couple night courses in college this semester.

"What will you be taking?" asked Cecily.

"I have three semesters of a foreign language and four semesters of science, plus a couple electives. One each of German and chemistry or maybe physics will do to start with. Twice a week is all I can manage right now."

"If you take physics," said his sister, "maybe you'll get Len's

mother as a teacher. Wouldn't that be nice?"

"It's not always the best thing to have a personal friend for a prof," replied Leo. "They usually have to be extra hard on you to provo — to themselves if to no one else — that they aren't playing favorites in class. I like Nina — Mrs. Cosgrove — but... I gather you got on pretty well with Len?"

"Uh-huh. He's coming over to take me to the show tonight, and then

maybe next weekend... "Cecily was interrupted by the doorbell, and jumped up to answer it. When she returned, Len Cosgrove was with her, and the

rest of the family went to greet him.

"How are your parents?" asked Jim Carter in conventional gambit.
"Fine," returned the boy. "Dad went out on a charter boat this
morning and won't be back till late tonight; he doesn't catch much, and
I think he spends most of his fishing time talking politics with the
other fishermen, but he enjoys it. And Mom" -- he turned to Leo -- "has
been in conference with a fan for the last few hours -- Mike Miller, he
said his name was; nice guy to come talk to Mom about Fandom!"