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D I R E C T C U R R E N T S

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-foot 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 Blackbeard 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 D69. 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 8 1/2x11) 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."
O! 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 applause.
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.

