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THE ROMANCE OF THE EEL

by Jasper P. Bibulous

Truth to tell, the romance of the eel reely isn't very romantic, at least not to us humans¹. Eels apparantly come in two sexes², male and female, which makes it very convenient for the male (or the female, as the case may be, and depending on the viewpoint). When the married eels³ decide that it's time for another little exemption, the true Romance of the Eel begins. It's not exactly the same kind of romance as when they were courting, but a little more abrupt; a few corners are cut here and there, but the final result is the same.

Actually, not too much is known about sex² habits of the eel, since ~~wenn~~ are unable to tell male from female⁴, so all we can do is put two eels into an aquarium together, and trust that the sexes² are properly assorted. If no neweels are forthcoming after a reasonable interval⁵, it is safe to make one of three assumptions:

- (a) Their names are Harry and Irvin;
- (b) Their names are Agatha and Nellie; or
- (c) She wouldn't have anything to do with him if he were the last eel in the world.

Having failed in your first effort, you can try again. This time we will assume that your-- and the eels'⁶-- efforts are crowned with success, and you are now blessed with an aquarium full of small, or pcoekt-size, eels. Your first thought will probably be to wonder how one goes about drowning baby eels. Only secondarily will it occur to you that you must have missed something somewhere along the line, for as far as you can tell, the two eels had been behaving in a reasonably respectable manner. Of course, with eels it's a little difficult to tell if they're being respecatble or not, but they didn't look like they were misbehaving.⁷ After all, the whole idea of this experiment was to determine the romantic aspect of the eel's life. So there's nothing to do but try the experiment again, with, of course, the co-operation of the eels. And this time pay attention and watch them closely⁸!

Eels may generally be found in water. They seem to like it. If you should encounter any eels in Bourbon, pay no attention; after awhile they'll go away. These eels are not related to the elephants which occur in the same Bourbon; they are merely sharing the same quarters in a fascinating type of symbiosis⁹. Some people even eat eels; generally speaking, eels don't eat people. Personally, I'll take the bourbon.

The Conger Eel, from which the famous dance was taken-- the Conger¹⁰ Line resembles an eel when viewed from above-- is world famous. In that event, I shan't waste space on it here. The Overwrought, or Pixilated Eel, (Tyrannosaurus Meek) thinks he is a shark. Of course, he doesn't fool the other Eels, who can see that

he is really a Pixilated Eel¹¹, and when they refuse to run away from him and hide, he devours them all. This makes the Pixilated Eel very lonely, so he can often be found talking to himself-- in Esperanto (or Eelsperanto), of course-- which is why he is called Pixilated.

Students of eels were once considerably baffled by an eel which seemed to come from eight directions at once. May complicated theories were formulated to account for this phenomenon. Sir Oswald Phlugg, Bart., the eminent British Eelectrician, was of the opinion that the Duoquadreel was in reality a $2\sqrt{2}$ dimensional cross-section of a six-dimensional eel caught in the stasis of space-time continuity at the point where entropy, gravity, and the attraction of Marilyn Monroe cancelled each other. In reality, the solution was much simpler. The Duoquadrieel was really an Octopus, and it turned out that Sir Oswald had just consumed a pipe of hashish before coming up with his theory. If he had come up with Marilyn Monroe instead, his reception in the scientific world would have been far different.

It can plainly be seen that the Romance of the Eel is filled with both romance and eels. Eel romance is therefore especially interesting, particularly to eels.

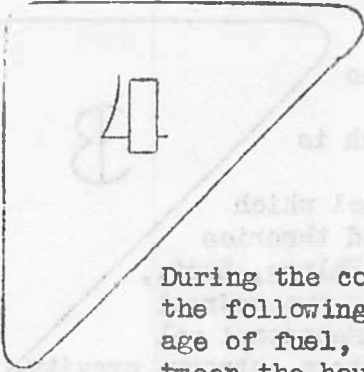
FIN

Flippernotes:

1. Eels find it fascinating.
2. Oooh!
3. LIGHT is a family publication.
4. Fortunately, the eels apparantly have no trouble.
5. Ten years.
6. After all, they helped too, you know.
7. The behavior of some electric eels is shocking!
8. Peeping Tom!
9. In any event, it is recommended that you change your brand.
10. Mistakenly pronounced "stag".
11. Unless he is a Deceptive, or Doublecrossing Eel (Tyrannosaurus Xx), which really is a shark.

What's happened to the U.S. Army, asks the Fredericton Gleaner apropos of the life led by Senator McCarthy's former henchman, "Private Schine, among other things, continued to pursue his civilian affairs for some weeks after he was drafted; he didn't clean up his quarters; he shirked kitchen fatigue; he paid other men to clean his rifle; and despite all this, he enjoyed five times as much leave as his fellow-soldiers. Anyone with experience in the Canadian or British armies will be puzzled by all this. What kind of officers condone this kind of behavior? What kind of soldiers will for a fee, take on the dirty work of a leadswinger like Private Schine? Above all, what has happened to the American Army's backbone-- the leather-lunged, flint-hearted, incorruptible sergeants? The situation would be ludicrous were it not a bit disturbing. After all, the American forces are our principal guarantee of security-- and of victory, if the worst comes to the worst. And atomic weapons may be a poor substitute for good sergeants, especially in an army of Private Schines."

-- Financial Post, May 15, 1954.



I LIKED THESE

"Last night," said the salesman, "I finally persuaded my girl to say yes."

"Congratulations," said his buddy. "When's the wedding?"

"Wedding," said the salesman. "What wedding?"

During the coal crisis in England in '47, the British Government released the following communique to the nation's businessmen: "Owing to the shortage of fuel, employers are asked to take advantage of their typists between the hours of 12 and 2."

The young man was asked by his girl the nature of the insect floating on his drink. "It's a lady bug," he said, and she murmured, "My but you've got good eyes."

"Wife: "Wasn't it disgusting the way those men stared at that girl's legs on the train?"

Husband: "What train?"

A girl walked up to the information desk in a hospital and asked to see the "uptern".

"I think you mean the 'intern', don't you?" Asked the nurse on duty.

"Yes, I guess I do," said the girl. "I want to have a 'contamination'!"

"You mean 'examination'," corrected the nurse.

"Well, I want to go to the 'fraternity ward', anyway."

"I'm sure," said the nurse, "that you're thinking of the 'maternity ward'."

To which the girl replied loudly, "Uptern, intern; contamination, examination; fraternity, maternity. . .what's the difference. All I know is I haven't demonstrated in two months and I think I'm stagnant."

FAPA NOTES

by Leslie A. Croutch.

For those who don't like the mushy ride of the average new car there is a possible out. Wouldn't it be feasible to get a sedan delivery, put windows in the side panels, instal seats, or what have you, and have a car with a stiffer ride and so on? For those young bucks who like to go road parking, a converted sedan delivery with a bed installed would be the ideal equipment. A sort of Tucker Motel on Wheels! But seriously though-- for a stiff ride, short turning radius, simpler equipment, no mushy ride, how come those who dislike the modern passenger car haven't given the little light delivery trucks a long hard look? One of these properly weighted in the rear for improved traction, and with your own custom-built cab installed on the box would give you a neat little rig that would handle well, have enough scat, be more rugged than a passenger car, have a tighter turning radius, plus various other advantages. For the travelling fan like Tucker it might be quite the gadget-- think of Bob visiting everyone with a mobile fan library and printing shop all set up ready to roll at a moment's notice. Or is the possibilities too ghastly? (Ouch-- that vern should be plural!)

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But by keeping the tires of a passenger car inflated a pound or two higher than normal you can get a much stiffer ride and more sensitive steering. This isn't recommended with old tires, though. Down there in the States, I understand the manufacturers instal what is known as "southern springs" or some such name. These are very soft rear springs. They do in Southern Ontario on some cars, I know. Dodge for instance, will instal southern springing for southern Ontario, and northern springing for up here where the roads are rougher. These springs are stiffer, and will do quite a bit to make a car more "roadable". Or get heavy duty rear springs installed. My 1947 Dodge had them. The ride, with no load in the back seat, was hard, but boy, you could whizz around curves at 50 without a lead or a side slither where conventional springing gave you a soft roll and you could feel the tail start to break loose. Wouldn't be possible to change the 15" wheels for 16" and instal 600-16 tires? It would throw your speedometer out, but you could probably instal a corrected unit.

For more traction in the winter, try stowing about 200 to 300 extra pounds in the trunk of your car! In the 40 coupe I had I used to carry a 50lb box of sand and a 75 lb. cement chimney block! This isn't much, but combined with soft springs that old coupe would walk right along through stuff that would stick the average car.

Move over Danner-- you aren't the only individualist in the crowd. I own ONE suit, which I seldom wear anymore. I seldom dress up on Sunday-- I dress the same as during weekdays, which is semi-dress. My idea of dressing up with a good pair of pants, a light colored shirt and a gabardine jacket-- NOT a sport jacket like a suit coat-- I seldom wear tires-- always go bareheaded except in the winter when I have been wearing a ski-cap the past few winters. I always try to dress for comfort first.

--LARK.

I was very interested in Ernie Pittaro's remarks on this new-fangled video tape, and I have to agree with most of what he says. I am vastly intrigued by the gadgetry of the stuff, but is it practical? I always took scientific advance to be finding simpler ways of doing something, not more complicated ways. Why all that expensive equipment and complex circuitry when a comparatively inexpensive and rugged movie camera and projector will do the same thing and so much cheaper? Almost any peasant can operate an 8MM or 16MM outfit whereas you'd have to be a bally tech to handle the other. The Land Polaroid camera has pointed the way to picture-taking where the intermediate stages of processing is done away with. Is it too much to imagine that in the future they'll be doing the same thing with movies?

Personally, I think anybody that even for one instant considers using electronic means for home movies instead of the photographic means is either a rock-brained idjit or he has more money than he is fit to be allowed to handle. Of course he may be just plain gadget-happy, but to the tune of thousands of dollars?

But I don't altogether agree with Ernie when he starts to wax derogatory about 8MM movies. They aren't as good as professional 35MM, or even as good as semi-pro 16MM. I'll grant him that. But they aren't quite as bad as he seems to think. Perhaps he is soured by having to sit through a few showings put on by enthusiastic amateur friends of his. For my money, considering the small screen used, 8MM is just as acceptable as 16MM or 35MM. After all, who uses 8MM to fill a screen many feet wide? Personally, I have seen 8MM on a screen 4' wide and it was bright enough and sharp enough for anybody. This I do admit, though-- a great deal of the commercial 8MM projector film being sold today are very bad prints, either

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under printed or other printed, and not always as needle-sharp as they might be. But that isn't the fault either of the gauge or of the film. It's the fault of the processor and his equipment. The sharpest 8MM commercial prints I have seen are those put out by Castle and they are excellent. I have many feet of 8MM shot my myself and they are everybit as sharp as the average 35MM picture screened in the average theatre. I know that this is due more or less to careless projection habits, but what I am getting at, is, considering the size of the auditorium or room and the screen, the 8MM is completely acceptable. I have a lot of Kodachrome movies that I would be willing to have compared with a lot Hollywood has turned out and not be ashamed when it came to clarity, exposure, fidelity of color, and focus-- and a lot of that Hollywood stuff was Technicolor, too. As for sound on 8MM. So far I'm not excited about it. After all, where 8MM is shown, in the home, there is a vastly different environment. Sound, in my opinion, just isn't required. In fact, I have found it rather restful to be able to sit and watch silents and converse, if I so desire, with whomever is with me, and not miss anything coming from the screen. Pittaro must sit awfully close to the screen to see "baseball-sized" grain in a projected 8mm picture. I think Ernie is liking his dislike for anything smaller than 35mm color his outlook.

I received a letter inviting me to purchase "Editor's Choice in Science Fiction". I threw it in the waste basket at the post office!

--STEFANTASY

BOX 121

Attempts at fiction writing by the jolly peasants who read this illustrious publication. Everyone is welcome to come in. Why don't YOU?

SAM W. MCCOY, NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO. MARCH 31, 1954.

HOLD IT! STOP THE PRESSES! Does Tucker mean to sit there on his big fat butt, and tell the world at large that he CAME THRU NIAGARA FALLS without stopping in to view Go-Devil, Jr.?! The world of fandom totters on the brink, to think that such a mighty fan would stoop so low! Just for that, MISTER Tucker, I'll not drop down to Bloomington to see you when I visit Chicago in nine or ten days-- I can be snooty too!

The mailing came in very tattered condition-- the envelope, that is. I hope nothing is missing (not having checked the Fantasy Amateur listing), but that was primarily the reason I didn't re-use the envelope on the LAST mailing. Enjoyed it in spots, the mailing that is. I noted Browne wasn't present this time. I also note Crutch received no mention in the polling this time-- wha' happen? Good god, your stuff was a helluva lot better than a lot of crud put out by some of the names that do appear on the list! / Here I wish to go on record that I did NOT bribe Sam to say this!-- ED/ When are the "elections" held, anyway?

This character (what's the feminine of character? Characterix?) (characteress?) GMCarr is an opionated -- opinionated female ass. Real hifalutin' type language-- and a repeated misspelling like "infalliable". Real high tone type literature-- and scurrility like her review of "Fantasia". She looks down here nose at those who disagree with her, calling them eggheads-- it is indeed no wonder she thinks McCarthy

Can Do No Wrong-- she has the same (you should pardon the expression) mental outlook as he has. In McCarthy's case, if you're not for him, you're a Communist. Yes. In Carr's view, if you don't agree with her-- in her support of a loudmouthed smear artist like McCarthy, or in her own narrow-minded approach to sex-- you are an egghead (whatever THAT is), or a "poor deluded boy" (not the overtones of superiority here). The one good thing that can be said for Carr is that she causes comment. But so did Hitler.

And a later letter-- April 26, 1954:

LIGHT? A marvellous issue! And damned if I know why-- I did not read my own article, so can't claim that's what made it so good; perhaps it was the letter column, perhaps just the general atmosphere of taking a swipe at all ~~rapports~~ sorts of sacred cows -- my diatribe against Texas & Chambers of Commerce in general, Norm having a go at mailing comments, you & KI delivering a few blows at McCarthyism and crapped-up cars, Norm's derision of "War of the Worlds" (which, incidentally, I thought ill-founded-- imagine how breath-taking it would be to see Victorian-clad individuals making with 1890-model armament at Wells' 1890 version of a Martian spacecraft!) and so on. I liked it! And the new format-- that, too, I liked. Something has gone wrong with me, linking everything like that. Gads!

Our tastes in jazz seem to dovetail, since I too am particularly partial to Dixieland, and detest "modern" (ha!) jazz as the dissonances of so many non-musical hopheads. It's not even music; the sounds are discordant, and the prize seems to go to the yuk who can make the (a) loudest (as with trumpets) or (b) queerest (with high-pitched saxophones trying to sound like flutes) noise. No two "muscisians" (ha!) seem to be playing the same tune, if tune it is, and certainly it is fruitless to try to dance to these sounds. At least Dixieland, and even the "swing" of the 30's, was danceable, a very important quality in my book.

Back to LIGHT-- I prefer the typing as in this issue-- that is, running right across the page. This way leaves only one ragged margin, and for a two-columned typed page to look right, the left hand column of each page (at least) must be justified-- otherwise the whole impression is somewhat tatterdemalion. I find it no harder to read, and like it better for the reason given. Wonder what the comments will be on the Income Tax form?

Incidentally, in your comments on "War of the Worlds" you consistently referred to a previous sf movie as "The Day the Earth Stopped". I think that "Stopped" should be "Stood Still", [I think so, too, but for some strange reason I always get that titled mixed up that way--EH] at least that's the way I remember it! Yes, I enjoyed "War of the Worlds", even didn't cavil too much at the obviously-dragged-in-love interest, but what rotted my sox beyond words (although I'll try to find words to describe it) was the learned "professor", who took one rapid glance at the martian craft and proceeded to analyse and explain the whole thing in a series of pseudo-scientific gobbledegook phrases about "electromagnetic lines of force" and all sorts of similar crap, entirely without the aid of instruments, detectors, indicators, figures, calculations, or any similar intellectual aids. This boy made it up out of his own head; if anybody in real life had pinpointed the facts so accurately from so little observation, everybody in the immediate neighborhood would be after that professor's scalp, since he is obviously a Martian himself, or is in their employ, a renegade. No one else could possibly know the score so easily. Of course, the "scientific" jargon used was so much meaningless doubletalk, but still you get the idea.

MORE FUEL FOR THE "AUTO FIRE"

by Leslie A. Crouth.

Acknowledgement is hereby given the Toronto Daily Star and its correspondent, Ben Rose, over whose byline the article appeared from which the following facts were freely pirated.

So much is being ballyhooed today, both by auto manufacturers and by their dealers about today's car being so much better than they ever were, that I felt sure the following little article will not be amiss. Far be it from me to suggest that Mr. Cummings, chief engineer, Chrysler Corporation of Canada, is calling his contrivances bloody liars!

The Ontario legislature has a committee on highway safety, which has been interviewing various peoples in various phases of the automobile industry. Seems J. P. Cummings was in the chair one day and the following pertinent questions and admissions were made, which bear out the things a lot of us motorists have been contending for a good many years.

To wit:

Mr. Cummings said Chrysler could not stay put in the face of increased horsepower planned by its competitors for 1955 and 1956, and that an increase in power for Chrysler products was on the books just as it was on the books for other manufacturers. Mr. Cummings admitted, however, that the horsepower race wasn't making the engineering staff any too happy. As the engines are made bigger and more powerful, the engineers find they have to make the clutch, the axle and shaft stronger to stand the extra load placed upon them.

He claims there is no public demand for the safety belts; that more accidents occur at speeds less than 50 mph than over; that adults objected to the belts and that children just don't like to be restricted. Cummings conceded that the steel used in the cars today is of much lighter gauge, but that the makers try to make up for this lightness by using ribs and stronger brakes! "I admit," said Mr. Cummings, "that the fenders of today won't stand up as they did 20 years ago."

Also: "I frankly must agree that the bumpers today, considering the higher speeds attainable, are not comparable to what we used to have. But you would be surprised at the speeds at which they will stand up."

Shades of Henry Ford!
And: "We take something quite light and make it look substantially heavy." And then the authorities outlaw slot machines and other mechanistic forms of rookery!

"Is that what the public demands?" Asked a committee member.

"Yes."

"Does the public demand fancy dashboards with all those instrument panels?" To which Cummings replied: "You might say we create that demand by offering it to them."

Thus straight from one horse's mouth we find more fuel to heap on the fire of controversy, "Are modern automobiles as good as they used to be?" My answer is that in many ways they are better. But it seems that every time we are offered an advance we have taken away some advantage. Why can't the manufacturers keep the good points and only discard the weak ones?

Answer, dear teacher, is sales. Sell cars and the public be damned—don't make 'em too good for then we won't be able to sell as many!

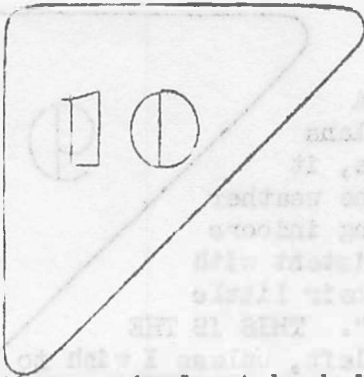
LIGHT FLASHES

Well, here it is August 29, 1954. I had the best of intentions in the world to have this issue in the 68th FAPA Mailing, but you know the old saying about the best laid plans of bachelors and rats going astray? Around the end of June, it was, the plans went astray for fair: the shop got busy, the weather got busy-- another way of saying it turned too nice to being indoors except for eating and sleeping and other fundamentals coexistent with health and living. So I just stuck the stencils away in their little cubbyhole and figured on getting things wound up "some day". THIS IS THE DAY, THEN, FOR SOME WORK ON LIGHT. I haven't enough room left, unless I wish to make this issue more than 10 pages, and I don't, to do any serious blabbling about the new mailing. I may do this in detail in the next issue. But there are a few little things that stuck in my memory that I can use as a springboard to fill up this column. . .

Lee Hoffman mentions about tubes getting mixed up in sockets. Tell us something original, Lee! I have a small variation on this subject though. That is the set that came in with a REAL mixture. It was a 5-tube Addison (Canadian make) AC/DC "gutless wonder". Original line-up was 12SA7, 12SK7, 12SQ7, 50L6GT, 35Z5GT-- the usual thing. Oh yes-- also a pilot lamp, either a 4A7 or 5L. But when the set was brought in what do I find-- 1A7GT, 6SK7, 12SQ7, 6V6GT, and a 6X5GT-- PLUS a #55 for the dial lamp! How do you like THAT mixture? I asked the kid where the rest of the tubes were. He assured me they were all there. After some discussion, he admitted they had a shoebox full of old tubes at home; that his dad had had the tubes out to be tested; and that they MIGHT have got them mixed up as he had been trying tubes in the set to see if he could get it to work. So I got him to go home and bring back the shoebox-- in this box were some old 2.5 volt tubes, "which won't work in the set" said the boy genius. Also some octal base 2 volt battery tubes "which won't work either". Out of this glorified mixture I found a 12SA7GT-- a 35Z5GT, and a 35L6GT. None of them were any good. In fact, there wasn't a tube in the whole box that were any good-- I had to test them ALL as per customer request, even the ones that didn't belong to the radio. After putting in a good set of tubes, I find the filter capacitor open in both sections and the filter resistor open.

Then there was the guy who brought in an Addison (another one!) battery portable during just this past week. He wasted almost an hour of my time-- and his-- showing me what was wrong-- what needed fixing-- what he wanted done to make it work-- in the process of which he tugged this wire-- wiggled that part-- broke a couple of leads-- was so in the way that I never once had one uninterrupted view of the chassis-- and then tried to tie me down to an exact to the penny advance price of what the repairs would cost and the suggestion that it could be repaired in an hour! I refused to be tied down to anything and I finally got him out of the shop so I could work on it. What was wrong, all you little radio people who are reading this? Both leads to the loop broken; terminal torn out of form of antenna coil; plates of oscillator section of tuning capacitor rubbing; every danged adjusting screw completely out of adjustment; dial indicator bent; belt slipping; socket contacts sprung enough so they weren't gripping tube pins securely.

Middle of the month a customer that lives a couple of blocks over sent in his kid with one tube to be tested. Trouble-- radio won't play. Tube OK. In a little while kid comes in with another tube. Tube OK. In the next two hours kid comes in with the rest of the tubes-- it's a 7-tube mantel-- one at a time. All tubes OK. Next morning guys gives a call to pick up the set. Trouble? Capacitor and resistor failure! At least this guy had sense enough to leave the alignment screws alone.



But the kind of calls I like was the one I got during the war. During those days we had a lot of outside laborers come in to work at the nearby munitions plant. I think the majority came from Quebec province. Anyway, this day when I made this call what opens the door but a little French-Canadian babe who spoke mighty poor English, and all she had on was a flimsy sort of dressing gown half done up the front through which a lot of veal was peeking shyly. I was informed the radio was in the bedroom. . . ! I didn't try fixing anything there. I got the set and scrambled.

Besides, business and pleasure doesn't mix. When I took the repaired set back danged if she was dressed the same way. I have often wondered since whether that was all she had to wear or whether she was figuring on a free job. . . !

Danner Boy, I think it was, made a remark about how many people purchased prints of feature pictures for their home movie projectors? Bill Grant in Toronto has several 8MM prints of old-time films, such as "The Lost World". John Russell Fearn, I think it was, told me once he had a 9.5 MM sound print of "Metropolis". I think a lot more would have such prints of favorite films providing the prints were available. I, for one, would like to have a print of Cecil B de Mille's "Ten Commandments". What fans with a photographic bent can do if they so desire and own the movie equipment is to try to make short fantasy or science-fiction films of their own! I am nuts? Read the ACL's MOVIE MAKERS, or Ver Halen Publication's HOME MOVIES and look at the movie makers making amateur mysteries, adventures, westerns. Some have carved out puppets and made animated puppet films that have taken prizes. Why not fantasies or science fiction films?

I'VE got a lot of ACOLYTES around here somewhere. In fact, I think I may have a complete file of them. If Helen sells her's for a buck each, I'll have to dig mine out and ask a buck for them also! Or I'd be happy to swap for 8MM movies-- but noone nohow seems to have any movies on hand.

Next time I have a spare radio parts catalog I'm going to have to send it to LEE as a curiosity. Maybe she's never seen a Canadian parts catalog and would be interested in prices and so forth. I've seen plenty of U.S ones so an exchange wouldn't mean much.

Look, Danner-boy, are you a model railroad hound? I like to read about the hobby but so far that is as far as it goes. I can easily see where it would be a fascinating hobby. I once thought what fun could be had combining model railroading with electronics-- a complete radio operated system-- or is that too ambitious?

I like Paul's work, though I can't say as much for Gernsback's SCIENCE-FICTION, which didn't raise my blood pressure one iota.

-30-

To avoid auto-infection, put slip covers on the seats and change them frequently, and always drive with the windows open.

A permanent set of teeth consists of 8 canines, 8 cuspids, 2 molars, and 8 cuspidors.

A mermaid is a fish who is a virgin from the waist up.

AS SHE IS GOING TO BE MARRIED NEXT MONTH, SHE IS VERY BUSY GETTING HER TORSO READY.

Geometry teaches us to bisex angels.

CERTAINLY THE PLEASURES OF YOUTH ARE GREAT, BUT THEY ARE NOTHING TO THE PLEASURES OF ADULTERY
