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BY THE WAY  
OF  
INTRODUCTION

BY  
H. C. KOENIG

I wish I had the time to investigate the possible sources for many of our well-known stories of the weird and fantastic. It would be a fascinating pursuit. I do not mean hunting down of plagiarists; but rather searching for the genesis of the ideas and plots in the fantasy tales. It would not be an easy task but I suspect that frequently some surprising and interesting information would be revealed.

For instance; fifteen years ago Edna Keaton in an article in "*The Bookman*" made out a strong case to show that the Bronte sisters in "*Jane Eyre*" and "*Wuthering Heights*" were influenced and inspired by the writings of that "forgotten creator of ghosts" Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu.

In an article published in *American Literature* in 1941, Robert Lee Wolff demonstrates that in all probability Henry James obtained the idea for his classic ghost story "*The Turn of The Screw*" from an anecdote told him by Archbishop Benson (father of A.C. Benson and E.F. Benson), and the setting for the story was supplied by a picture titled "*The Haunted House*" drawn by T. Griffiths for the 1891 Christmas issue of "*Black and White*", a London magazine.

Professor J.O. Bailey recently proved beyond question that the specific source for Poe's tale of Arthur Gordon Pym was the novel "*Symzonia*"; *A Voyage of Discovery* written by Captain Adam Seaborn and published in New York in 1820. The parallels in episodes, descriptions, etc are too strong to be denied. Professor Bailey also shows that Poe's "*Hans Pfaal*" was based to a large extent on "*A Voyage to the Moon*" by Joseph Atterley (Professor George Tucker) published in 1827.

Many other cases could be cited. I'm convinced that Olaf Stapledon and S. Fowler Wright, to say nothing of the short-story writer Phillip M. Fisher, were all influenced by William Hope Hodgson. And, readers of Edith Birkhead's book "*The Tale of Terror*" and H. P. Lovecraft's essay "*The Supernatural in Fiction*" cannot fail to note that Lovecraft had Professor Birkhead's book at hand when he wrote his splendid essay.

Did Algernon Blackwood base his *Dr. Silence* stories on Le Fanu's "*Dr. Hesselius*"? Was Arthur Machen acquainted with Le Fanu's famous doctor when he wrote the *Dr. Raymond Tales*? Who knows?

All of which is merely a prelude to the essay which follows. Some months ago I was privileged to read an honors essay titled *Modern Mythological Fiction* by Robert Butman. I promptly appealed to Mr. (now Ensign) Butman for permission to reprint it in *The Reader and Collector*. In his essay, the author discusses the influence of *Theosophy on Futuristic Fiction, Fantastic Fiction and Mystic Fiction*. He shows how H. G. Wells was influenced by Madam Blavatsky's writings, particularly in his short story "*The Man Who Could Work Miracles*". In the chapter on *Fantastic Fiction* he shows, in considerable detail, that *Theosophy* appears in many of H. P. Lovecraft's works; and that the *Cthulhu mythos* is very closely linked to the doctrines of *Theosophy*. The parallels

between the races mentioned by *Blavatsky* and *Lovecraft* are startling. I am sure the reader will find *Ensign Butman's* essay extremely interesting, informative and provocative.

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The essay by *Ensign Butman* runs into forty or more pages; much too long for a single issue of *The Reader and Collector*. Hence it becomes necessary to publish it in serial form. The essay is divided into five chapters and a bibliography.

Chapter I	-	Background and Characteristics
Chapter II	-	Futuristic Fiction
Chapter III	-	Fantastic Fiction
Chapter IV	-	Mystic Fiction
Chapter V	-	Conclusions
		Bibliography

*Chapter I* appears in this issue; the remaining chapters will be published in consecutive issues. It is planned to page number the essay independent of the rest of the magazine so that readers may bind it as a whole at the completion of publication.

MODERN MYTHOLOGICAL FICTION

by

Robert Butman

## Background and Characteristics

"But what is there, - beyond the stars?" he would ask.

"Other worlds, Francesco, other stars, which we see not."

"And beyond them?"

"Still others."

"Yes, but in the end, - in the very end?"

"There is no end."

"There is no end?" repeated the boy, and Leonardo felt Francesco's hand tremble within his; in the light of the unmoving flame of a lamp burning on a little table in the midst of the astronomical instruments he saw that the child's face had become covered with sudden pallor.

"But where," asked he, slowly, with growing amazement, "where is Paradise then, Messer Leonardo, - the angels, the martyrs, the Madonna, and God the Father, sitting on His throne, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost?"

The master was about to retort that God is everywhere, - in all the grains of sand of the earth, as well as in the suns and the universes; but kept his peace, sparing the child's faith.

*Dmitri Merjcovski, The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci*

## CHAPTER I

Modern mythological fiction shows more clearly than any other field of expression the results of the growth of religious questionings which culminated, in the last years of the nineteenth century, in the Victorian breakdown. Church doctrine had early been attacked because of the paganism which had been included in its ritual. The eighteenth century, with its "*philosophy of reason*" denounced the Church, and substituted "*natural religion*." Scientific discoveries in the Victorian period turned Biblical dogmatism into weak allegory. Western man, entering the scientific age of the machine at the turn of the century, had a choice between the infallibility of religion and the authority of science. This final counter to the age-old credo caused the Victorian breakdown.

The breakdown showed itself in the ever-increasing interest in paganism, hiding under the guises of spiritualism, sun-worship, free-thought, or psychic study and the distrust of any Christian monotheistic doctrine. In literature this interest expressed itself in both the popular and intellec-

tual fields. Since the first decade of the twentieth century the influences and cross-influences of these two fields have become unified and distinct enough in mythological qualities and in the sources on which they draw, for a study to be made of them.

These mythological qualities are found in the cosmological and the symbolic aspects of modern literature. Cosmological myth is a result of the development of the relationships of personified elements of Heaven and Earth into a genealogy, or system, which aids in explaining man's position and purpose on earth. Symbolism, as used in this paper, is that which grows from the relationships of personified moral qualities developed in a way conducive to explaining and ordering a society. The closer either of these types of personification comes to presenting the idea in a form close to and understandable by the majority of men, the more powerful will be its appeal. If the judgments of God are personified in the Thunderbolt, the appeal is much stronger than if they are merely called the judgment of God. This powerful personification which brings abstracts closer to man's understanding will be called "*vital symbolism*" to differentiate it from the geometric style of symbolism (such as the cross or circle).

Reactions to the breakdown were forced to take into consideration both scientific and religious ideas in order to develop a successful mean between the two authorities. Thus we find in modern mythological literature, as in modern mythological religions, elements both scientific and religious. In vital symbolism the entrance of the scientific was abetted by the pseudo-scientific religious groups, such as the Theosophists and Rosicrucians, who had merged pagan symbols and chemical formulas. Cosmology in modern literature was joined to the scientific by introduction of theories of space-time, the fourth dimension, and astronomy. Cosmological descriptions invented by single men as substitutions for the account in Genesis, may be called

"intuitive cosmologies." The modern expressions differ from those of *Dante*, *Milton*, *Swedenborg*, and *Blake* only insofar as they must also satisfy the scientific demands of cosmology as well as of vital symbolism. The introduction of scientific aspects also protects the modern writer from the epithet of "mad visionary".

Our background today is no longer religious, or Biblical. The days of "father's Bible" are past as are attempts to stifle science by banning "evolution." Today the background of the child, and adult, is scientific in influence. The great attraction for children of "toy" chemical sets does not spring, however, from a purely abstract desire to explore exact science. They attract because of the same reasons model disintegrating rays made after the pattern of *Buck Rogers'* and *Dr. Huer's* sell well; the attention of the child is drawn by the adventure which they suggest, in the adult mind, science has likewise attracted attention outside the laboratory.

The mystic and unearthly aspects of science are taught by such lurid means as the *American Weekly*, or by such glamorized production as the movie version of *Popular Science*. Any far-fetched story of scientific wonder is given substantiation by articles in papers and on the radio. Certainly the robot bombs, radar, flame-throwers, penicillin, sulfa drugs, and suspension of life by freezing parts of the body, which are all written up in the legitimate press, give us reasons for expecting science to be considered miraculous and to be so treated in literature and religion.

The extent to which scientific discoveries and inventions have taken hold of the popular imagination is demonstrated by the misdirected reactions of the public to *Orson Welles'* life-like, but fantastic, radio adaptation of *H.G. Wells'* *War of the Worlds*. Some Americans thought the invaders from Mars as real as the Japanese when they bombed Pearl Harbor.

It is hard not to see truth in any scientific story of what is to be, when "The Talk of the Town," in The New Yorker of December 18, 1944, can comment that

It seems highly significant to us that a small boy in Colorado long ago sent in to his favorite artist an idea for a bomb shaped like a plane, which would travel under its own power, and that a girl in Texas sent in plans for a long-distance rocket-driven missile. Those ideas happen to be, respectively, V.1 and V.2. Twenty years ago we would have laughed when our junior geniuses sat down at the drawing boards. Today it is not so funny. The world still fails to get the point, and people fail to see how brief is the interval between today's comic strip and tomorrow's explosion. We're all living in the funny papers now, but only the children seem to know it.

Surely F.S.C. Northrop failed to get this point when he wrote the article "Literature and Science," which appeared in the Twentieth Anniversary issue of The Saturday Review of Literature.<sup>1</sup> He completely overlooks the effect of science in the popular fields, in what we call modern mythological fiction, and in plot themes, dealing only with the personal effects the Victorian breakdown wrought in prominent literary and scientific writers.

One effect of science on literature can be seen in a clear light through its connection with mythological revivals. This connection is presented by Robert Scoon in his book Greek Philosophy Before Plato. He writes that during the lifetime of Pythagoras, Greece experienced

a revival of the primitive religious beliefs in the form of the mystery cults... It appears as if the Ionian science made the Old Gods impossible, only to be confronted with the more primitive practices of the Orphic Mysteries.<sup>2</sup>

Also illuminating is the comment made by a scholar writing in a recent folklore journal about ghostlore in New York.

It might be expected that a rational age of science would destroy belief in the ability of the dead to return. I think that it works the other way; in an age of scientific miracles anything seems possible ....

1. F.S.C. Northrop, "Literature and Science," The Saturday Review of Literature (August 5, 1944), vol. XXVII, No. 32, pp. 33-36.

2. Robert Scoon, Greek Philosophy Before Plato, p. 36



A parting guess... would be that there will be an increase rather than a decrease in ghostlore during the coming decade.<sup>3</sup>

These two questions presenting popular reactions within scientifically minded periods show why the relationship of mythology and the Victorian breakdown is so close. These reactions are made of the same stuff as mythology: the use of personal, meaningful gods and symbols; the establishment of large mysterious powers of nature as revolving about the race of man on a central world.

In modern mythological literature the scientific and the cosmological-symbolic aspects are combined in many ways. Several popular themes contain both scientific speculation and the unscientific return of man to the position of importance; that is, the position in which the larger scientific forces can be interpreted as revolving around him, and for his benefit. The first theme concerns racial-memory, remembered incarnations, or the intuitive knowledge of the past, and links up with Freud's theories of race-soul and Instinct.<sup>4</sup> The Theosophists at one time acclaimed a practice of discovering the past by physical contact with an object made during the period being investigated. According to them, scenes of the past age would then swarm into the mind of the "adept", who would describe the incidents seen and thus dictate perfect history. Although, unfortunately for history, this method did not turn out as accurate as hoped, it inspired new plots for writers.

A second theme is that of metamorphic exchange of bodies, between two living creatures. Here a man may become like a beast, or a beast like a man, physically or mentally, or two men may exchange minds. This weird idea is closely linked with well-known psychological phenomena, examples of men thinking themselves teakettles being as usual in psychology books as in short stories.<sup>5</sup>

3. Louis C. Jones, "The Ghosts of New York: An Analytical Study," Journal of American Folklore (October, December, 1944), CLVII:254.

4. For example, Julien Green's Varonna, and Richard S. Shaver's "Remember Lemuria," in Amazing Stories (March, 1945), pp. 13-70.

5. For example, H.H. Munroe's "Laura", in his collected short stories, and Gerald Heard's "The Switch," in his book The Great Fog.

Edward Wagenknocht describes a third theme in his introduction to Robert Nathan's *Portrait of Jennie*. He writes:

*Portrait of Jennie* is --- a novel which clearly suggests J. W. Dunne's *Serial Time*. It is one of the few American examples - another is Mr. Nathan's own later novel *But Gently Day* (1943) - but in England the production of this kind of thing has now grown into a very respectable small industry. Of course it did not all begin with Dunne, nor yet with Einstein; it began with the first man who ever stopped to think about time. There are, perhaps, hints in Lewis Carroll's *White Queen* and in Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee*; Mrs. Oliphant speculates about it in her autobiography; H. G. Wells, who exercised a very strong influence on Dunne, without ever quite approving of the results, did a good deal with it in *The Time Machine*. Perhaps the most lucid explanation of the matter is in *Berkeley Square*, the play which John Balderston constructed under the spell of Henry James' last, unfinished, novel, *The Sense of the Past*. The man in the boat passes this point on the river bank now and that point later on, but the man in the plane sees both points at the same moment; for him the past and the future coalesce. If Time is a fourth dimension of Space, then that which has been might well be forever, and the hypothesis of a "fold in Time" might explain such curious phenomena as our sometimes dreaming in advance that which afterwards actually happens.<sup>6</sup>

The "fold in Time" theme differs from the memory theme in that in the latter all the action takes place in the present, while in the former the characters actually change place in time.

The fourth theme, the "Atlantean," involves the lost races and continents, relying on the statements in *Genesis* that "in those days there were giants in the earth," and "that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" and on Plato's discussions of Atlantis. Scientific speculation on the original home of the American Indian, on the unexplained statues on Easter Island, the seeming similarity of Mexican and Egyptian architecture, on the meaning of Stonehenge and other archeological remains is used by the mythologist in his stories. Atlantis still poses a question of interest to both scientists and writers, although the Pacific continent of Mu seems now to be left to the scholastic charlatan alone. Races of Giants, Mermen, Earthmen,

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6. Wagenknecht, *Six Novels of the Supernatural*, pp. 776-777.

Winged Men, and of many other combinations are popular subjects of stories, and hardly ever are they mentioned without some attempt to connect their existence to reality by documentation,<sup>7</sup>

A fifth theme is the "sorcerer." Developments of psychological studies in telepathy, witchcraft, hypnotism, mental suggestions, and heredity have revived the occult and magical under scientific protection. The sorcerer appears as a full master of psychology and magic in innumerable modern tales. Witches' Sabbaths and curses return to fiction with scientific psychological interpretations.<sup>8</sup> This last theme is, perhaps, the most common, since it adds to almost any topic an aspect of mystery. The scientific explanation of witches, ghosts, hidden knowledge, ancient wisdom, and magic, however, was not the creation of these writers. Despite the amount of interpolation and elaboration which has been added, *Madam Blavatsky's* books on Theosophy seem to be the epitome, if not largely the original source, for fictional occult speculation.<sup>9</sup> A very great part of modern fiction which deals with ancient mysteries can be laid to suggestions from *Blavatsky* and her followers. Her writings present both the symbolic and

7. For example, *D.H. Lawrence's The Plumed Serpent*, and *H.P. Lovecraft's "The Temple" in The Outsider and Others*.
8. For example, *Mercjouski's The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci*, and *E.M. Forster's "The Celestial Omnibus," in Great Tales of Terror and the Supernatural*.
9. *Alvin Boyd Kuhn* writes in his book *Theosophy* (p.1): *In the mind of the general public Theosophy is classed with Spiritualism, New Thought, Unity and Christian Science, as one of the modern cults. It needs but a slight acquaintance with the facts in the case to reveal that Theosophy is amenable to this classification only in the most superficial sense. Though the Theosophical Society is recent, theosophy, in the sense of an esoteric philosophical mystic system of religious thought, must be ranked as one of the most ancient traditions. It is not a mere cult, in the sense of being the expression of a quite specialized form of devotion, practice, or theory, propagated by a small group. It is a summation and synthesis of many cults of all times. It is as broad and universal a motif, let us say, as mysticism. It is one of the most permanent phases of religion, and as such it has welled up again and again in the life of mankind. It is that "wisdom of the divine" which has been in the world practically continuously since ancient times.*

present both the symbolic and the cosmological approach to antiquity, resurrected and defined with scientific terms. Theosophy teaches the identification of magic with modern science and psychology, although it much berates the successes of modern scholars. Rather than leaving, in the older literary style, a "winged-thing" as a source for blind awe and fear, Theosophy presents a scientific explanation of its existence by lengthening Darwin's theory by millions of years, and filling his theories in to explain what went before the ape-man. Projecting into the scrambled fragments of ancient lore a consistent scientific doctrine which could only be found, as it was claimed to have been found, by the help of the ancient authors, the followers of Madam Blavatsky's Theosophy developed an encompassing explanation of life. It was with admirable deftness that they insinuated into her original doctrines which were for the most part plausible, any chance scientific phenomenon or bit of ancient wisdom they could find. The result was weakening to her original doctrine, but it brought in even more of the scientific, in the form of auras, molecular construction, and comparison of Einstein's theories to archaic Eastern doctrines. These added qualities made Theosophy more appealing to the scientific interest of the early twentieth century.

The writers of modern mythological fiction who drew on Blavatsky often applied the later Theosophic scientific ideas to their stories. In this manner the boldness of presenting an imaginatively documented story of ancient races was lessened, and its possibility increased. Blavatsky had given the greatest boost to a scientific interpretation of magic by her identification of electricity as the means by which many Biblical miracles were contrived. Likewise she termed mesmerism and telepathy electrical actions - a thesis which is being proved by modern investigation on brain currents. But the more advanced scientific explanations of space travel,

disintegration, and suspension of life were supplied by her followers, mainly Anne Besant, "Bishop" Leadbetter, and A.P. Sinnett.

These same works which gave the basis for the scientific form and scientific defense of the mythologist, also gave him the cosmology which he demanded. Among mythological writers D. H. Lawrence, W. B. Yeats, and Aldous Huxley were attracted by her method of returning the world to a purposeful existence, and human life to a divine struggle. Since the argument was backed by innumerable references and fine reasoning drawn from the advances of science to date, it was far more appealing than the Transcendentalism of a former literary age, not deeply troubled by scientific reason.

The "speculative mythologists" of Mr. Hungerford,<sup>10</sup> with their interpretations of ancient history by means of myths, could no more be expected to solve the philosophical problems following the Victorian breakdown and the dominance of science, than could the reserved religion of Quakerism. As science was the key of the breakdown, so it is the key of the mythological reaction to the breakdown. Rising high over the shoulders of the other attempts of religious minds to join science to religion stands Theosophy, figuratively flinging out its left arm of mystery, paganism, and wonder, and its right arm of history, religion, and reason, to clasp the imagination of the writer torn between religious ardour and scientific scepticism.

The broad interest shown by writers of all types of mythological fiction in Theosophy and Madam Blavatsky, shows their common desire to discover a new symbolism and cosmology. This interest also shows that they were looking for "scientific" arguments to defend a new mythos. Enough connections

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10. In Mr. Hungerford's book *The Shores of Darkness*, he deals with the mythologists Bailly, Braynt, and Wilford, showing the influences of their "speculative mythology" on Keats, Shelley and Blake.

of a positive nature will be shown later on, moreover, to establish a direct relationship in many cases. A brief history of Theosophy will aid in showing its position in the historical and ideological relationships with which we are dealing.

Theosophy was founded on November 17, 1875, by Helena Petrovna Hahn-Hahn Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, in New York City. Following closely on the heels of Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, D. H. Home, Eusapia Paladine, Charles Slade, and other students or practitioners of the spiritual arts, it added to this conglomeration a body of persons who approached the subject from a new standpoint. Led by the "Masters," a group of Tibetan spiritualists, they were guided and advised by thought, letter, and intuition. Blavatsky, the "Masters'" special pupil, led the study by writing two textbooks, *Isis Unveiled*, published in 1877, and *The Secret Doctrine*, in 1888. These books gained her, and Theosophy, a wide reputation. Extremely well received by reviewers and critics for many years, they kept Theosophy from immediately collapsing into childishness.

The public heard a great deal about the society when it staged the funeral of Baron de Palm of Germany in New York the same year the group was founded. A procession of Theosophical leaders dressed in animal skins and leading domesticated beasts ended at a building, decked in oriental finery and pagan symbol, in which an imitation of ancient burial rites was held. The funeral made the headlines. Later, when the group became more substantial it caught the interest and publicity of the British Society for Psychical Research. After further expanding, Theosophy became enough of a force to gain the support of Annie Besant, an extremely popular and energetic social reformer in Britain. Under Mrs. Besant's leadership, after the death of Madam Blavatsky on May 8, 1891, many converts were added to the faith, and many new schools were founded. With the failure of the "Alycone,"

an Indian boy discovered by Mr. Leadbetter, to bring about the expected entrance into his body of the spirit of Jesus Christ in another visit to earth, in 1929, Theosophy fell from the popular fancy. Rosicrucianism was to gain a more important position in the form reestablished by a follower of Madam Blavatsky; a position sustained by its consistent advertising in magazines and newspapers. Theosophy itself, broken by questions of succession in leadership and of dogma, continued to decline, and exists now in scattered fragments of its once wide and well-organized society.

The relation of Theosophy to the introduction of science into the mythological revival, lies in its joint presentation of "ancient wisdom", the accumulated myths of many nations and ages, and the type of scientific presentation and cosmological understanding which appealed to the modern writer. As source material in modern mythological fiction it shows itself in constant speculation on early races, on planet and star forces, and in quotations from documents often used by Blavatsky.

In regard to the whole of the scientific-mythological movement in modern literature, Theosophy may be but a small factor as far as direct influence goes, but the extent of its use is great enough to show how well it epitomises the problems which are worrying modern writers. Whether its dogmatic answers are right or wrong does not enter the question; but the approach to unbounded ancient sources of knowledge with the possibility that what we consider purely modern information on both mass and personal psychology, is expressed within these supposedly unscientific writings, makes an appeal to a larger and larger group of thinkers. In both cosmology and symbolism, Theosophy is rich in material; and it is these that the modern writer, confused by the many ideologies of the present world, seeks to find in hope that they will end his questionings.

In the next chapters modern mythological literature has been divided into three types. As was stated at the beginning of the paper, the aspects of the mythological have become common enough in both the popular and the intellectual to justify a study of the influences and cross-influences among them. The first type appears mainly in pulp magazines, comic strips, and the moving pictures. This is "futuristic" fiction, complete with rocket ship and power-rays. The second type is produced by both pulp publishers and the legitimate press. It is "fantastic" fiction, which, with its "things," witches, ghosts, and spirits, forms a mean between the futuristic and the third type, the "mystical." The mystical is by far the most popular with intellectuals because it develops a complete philosophy of life, instead of dealing with only the suggestions and partial explanations of the futuristic and fantastic types.

Through all three types runs the struggle for a new mythology which will fit science to the soul of man, and the soul of man to science.

## CHAPTER II

Will appear in

a future issue

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Quotations and Comments  
by  
The Outsider

FROM THE GREAT GREEN BLIGHT BY EMMETT MCDOWELL  
IN PLANET STORIES - WINTER 1945

"Go on", hissed the Duchess desperately.

No wonder she was desperate. Author McDowell should try that hiss on something other than a typewriter.

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"Vermeer, shuttered and lay still".

Now I know the origin of the expression "He was carried out on a shutter".

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FROM THE MAD DANCER BY ROGER S. VREELAND  
IN WEIRD TALES - NOVEMBER 1945

"That would doom you forever" hissed Hynek.

That hisless sentence should have been directed at the author, Roger Vreeland and the Editor of Weird Tales.

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FROM THE GREAT GREEN BLIGHT BY EMMETT MCDOWELL  
IN PLANET STORIES - WINTER ISSUE 1945

- Page 5 - "Who could have done it" breathed Jennifer
- Page 5 - "An agent of the Terrestrial Intelligence Service",  
breathed Norman
- Page 10 - "Vermeer." breathed Jennifer
- Page 10 - "Jupiter." he breathed
- Page 12 - "Jupiter." breathed Norman
- Page 14 - "Jupiter." breathed Norman
- Page 21 - "Norman" breathed Jennifer
- Page 33 - "Now" Norman breathed
- Page 35 - "Jupiter" Norman breathed

There is one of the most breathingest couples I have encountered in my travels around the planets. A fine display of originality and imagination on the part of the author. I do not believe many tears would have been shed if McDowell had stopped Jennifer and Norman from breathing on-say-Page 5.

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FROM THE LAST OUTPOST BY ROSS ROCKLYNE  
IN ASTOUNDING STORIES - JULY 1945

"So?" he almost hissed.

That's the last straw. For years I've campaigned against the hissless hiss only to have someone almost hiss "So". What have I done to deserve this?

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GENERAL DELIVERY

Mr. Norman F. Stanley  
43 A Broad Street  
Rockland, Maine

Dear Stanley:

Re your recent comments on the last issue of The Reader and Collector, I won't argue about your statement that "The very extreme situation of the FAPA mailings becoming 100 per cent non-fantastic is not a logical conclusion." The fact remains that under Ashley's ruling it is a possibility.

However, to keep the records straight, I do not object to the inclusion of non-fantasy items in the mailing. Many of them are interesting - and welcome. My objection is to the preponderance of such items in any one mailing. As I have emphasized repeatedly; ours is a Fantasy organization and as such (I believe we should expect that the major part of each member's contribution to the mailings should be devoted to that subject.

Leslie A. Crutch in his first issue of "Voice" expressed much the same idea in his article on Page 3; and I'm sure many other members feel the same way as I do.

E. E. Evan's philosophical magazine, "The Time Binder," is an interesting, readable magazine. But, I for one, question the propriety or justification for its inclusion in the FAPA mailings. I wouldn't object to the magazine if friend Evans devoted half of each issue to fantasy. But, to have the entire contents of each issue - 25 or 30 pages given over to discussions of "All Men are created Free and Equal"; "Conscientious Objectors"; Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," etc., etc. -- is too much for me. If the magazine came to me through the channels of the National Amateur Press Association, I would not raise a single complaint. But as a regular contribution to the Fantasy Amateur Press Association - I can't see it.

Cordially yours,

H. C. Koenig