

M	M	EEEEEEEEEE	ZZZZZZZZZZ	RRRRRRRRR	AAAAAA	BBBBBBBBB
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Opinions expressed by the editors are not necessarily those of the readers.

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Opinions expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of the company

AT THE FORK IN THE ROAD

Now that MEZRAB has entered the field of commercialized journalism, where by accepting paid subscriptions it contracts to distribute a specified number of readable issues, some formal decision is necessary both by the editor and by the reader of its mimeographed pages. What kind of material does the editor feel best qualified to handle, and what kind of material reimburses a subscriber?

Although we received subscription orders from a greater percentage of readers than was expected, MEZRAB is far from being a self-supporting publication at this writing. We did not expect it, and we did not plan it that way. MEZRAB was placed on a subscription basis simply because our mailing list had outgrown our ability to distribute it freely, and we were compelled, willy-nilly, to devise some means for determining which names were to be dropped and which names were to be retained. We feel complimented by the type of people who have responded with cash subscriptions and we hope that the line of thought MEZRAB's editor has decided to pursue will not alienate our rather meager audience.

For MEZRAB is about to dip its snooty nose into the fields of pseudo-science, and to take therefrom such doctrines and teachings as, in the opinion of the editor, deserve fellowship with more acceptable companions in more acceptable fields. We cannot, for example, swallow the whole of Astrology any more than we would think to eat a banana without first removing its skin; but we find it equally untenable to disregard and throw away the meats in Astrology simply because we dislike the flavor of the skin in which it is packaged.

And what has just been said about Astrology is equally applicable to all the other oxies and isms we find wandering about the world more or less aimlessly and homeless except for that small faction which regards it as the ism of isms. Science itself, whether it be the science of mathematics, or physics, or ideation, should be eaten only to the core, or cob, and the cobs of science placed with the banana-skins of pseudo-science.

Since the editor of MEZRAB is neither super-intellectual nor super-infallible in any particular field he is quite willing to share the cost of editing and publishing this ambitious little journal, feeling himself adequately repaid if the readers and contributors of material continue in their support of his insatiable appetite for strange bits of knowledge. If we were catering to the whims of the readers, then we would expect the readers to shoulder the entire burden of costs, including office space and editorial salaries. Actually, we are catering to the whims of the Senior Editor even though one of those whims is to gather together the scattered few who are interested in the things he finds interesting.

While SCIENCE is engaged in the business of splitting atoms, MEZRAB will engage itself in the business of splitting points. The difference between Nuclear Physics and Unclear Physics is only a matter of spelling.

At the fork in the road, faced with the necessity of making a final decision as to which road he will take, MEZRAB's editor has decided that he will travel neither of them but that he will take to the field that separates the roads from each other, and thereby perhaps discover just what it is that both roads seek to avoid so strenuously.

Robert A. Bradley

STRANGE AMOUR

Whenever the night blows dark and wild,
I open my windows wide,
My lover, the Wind, is calling me,
And I am his eager Bride!

He cradles me deep in lusty arms,
My couch is a downy cloud,
His amorous sighing fills my ear,
His wooing is fierce, and proud!

Together we scorn the sleeping Earth,
Till morning stars are singing,
Old Sol vaults over the mountain top,
And ends my lover's clinging.

But other nights will be dark and wild,
He, at my window calling,
And drugged with love, we'll whirl through space while
Stars are wheeling and falling!

No alien Earth Man knows my heart,
How simple, my thoughts to hide!
And whisper to Him, my lover Wind,
For I am his wild, glad Bride!

Marie-Louise

KNOW YE THE TRUTH

by Richalex Kirs

Many and strange are the tales of the last war, oh Mezrab. Strangest of all are those that reach your ears, though death be the penalty for those who are the defilers of thy temple. And yet there is another tale, told in the silver-towered Temple of Truth for the Song of the Death-world. Now am I summoned from my eternal night of rest, now no longer may I know the blissfulness of utter peace, for my name has been questioned and trodden into the muck of untruth.

Thus it is, and thus THEY called me, they who sit in the ivory thrones of the palace of the Ruler of the Universe, and bid me assume mortal shape once more, that I may tell the tale in its truth, or be sent forever to the domain of He Who Sits upon the Hill of Skulls. Know ye, oh Mezrab, that this is the task set before me, and woe unto him who sets himself in my path, for my path is that of the righteous, and 'tis said they have the strength of ten.

'Twas in the year of nineteen hundred and seventy-three, on the morning of the thirtieth of May, that the first hydrogen bomb fell, in all its wrath, into the harbor of the City of N'Yok. Know ye, oh Mezrab, and the readers of this tale, that on the moment of the explosion I was seated upon a pneumoport, watching my video.

Long had men planned the doom of his fellowmen, and as long had they been planning their escape. So it was that the screen I was watching turned a deep and bloody red, even as the whistles and sirens announced the warning of the attack, for thus had it been planned. Wasting no time --- for when the H-hour arrives there is that which makes life a flicker of the shade of time --- I sprang to my escape-ship and pressed the button of the robot pilot.

Little know I of what passed in the next few moments, for the acceleration of an escape-ship is so great that no man may press that button and remain conscious. It was not long after that that I regained control of my senses, and perceived that I had, in truth, escaped. Know ye, oh Mezrab, that while I slumbered from the grip of the Earth, my ship bore me unto the City of the Sky, prepared for the people of N'Yok, that they might have a haven from the wrath of the hell-bomb. Know ye that this city floated five hundred miles above the Earth, and that it had in its halls and galleries space for ten million people!

Thus it was, and soon I arose and crept from out my ship and looked about me. Know then, that my heart sank within me and my spine grew cold, while the icy sweat of fear stood out upon my brow. **FOR THE CITY-SHIP WAS EMPTY.**

Not a person, oh Mezrab, not a single soul other than I was there in that colossal ship. Empty were its endless rooms, its mighty courts and promenades, and not a one lurked within its pleasure-halls. I swooned upon the spot, as the awful realization of the fate of the City of N'Yok fell upon me. Long lay I there, upon the cold steel floor of the space-lock, and presently, when I had once more regained pitiable control of my befuddled faculties, I went into one of the rooms and bathed and refreshed myself, for it was many days that I lay upon that steel floor, and the blood

had flowed freely from my nose and mouth during the trip in the escape-ship. Know ye that then, having finished my toilet, I went into the control room and caused the ship to be sent over the site of the city of N'Yok. Desolation had I expected, oh Mezrab, but not such as this, for, beneath my saddened eyes there was no city, nay, not even land, but an expanse of water broken only by the tops of hills which protruded from the surface like the ribs of a wrecked ship.

Thus know I the fate of the City of N'Yok.

Like a madman, for indeed I was mad, I caused the great ship to fly over the earth, over and around, seeking some sign of life, but all was in vain, for of life there was none, and the great ships of the sky also were gone, I knew not where.

Ever I crossed and recrossed the mutilated face of the earth, oh Mezrab, seeking again and again for so much as one man, one animal, to share with me my loneliness. But there were none; and finally I was forced to turn my gaze to the heavens, and, as I looked, there came him who bears the sword, known to men as Azrael, the death angel. For, when I looked for the familiar sights of the heavens, the intelligence of what I saw smote my brain --- and thus I died.

For the stars were GONE.

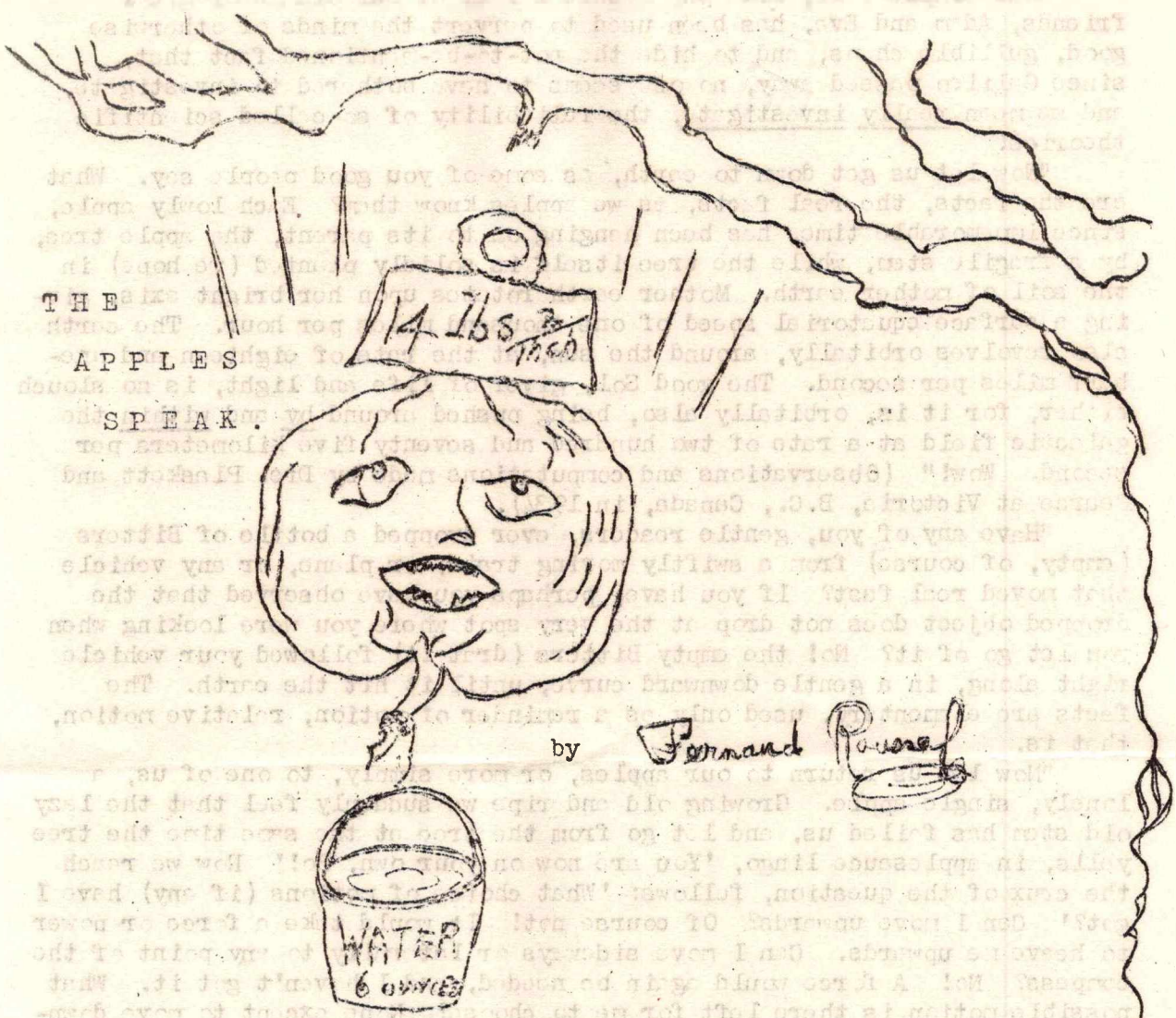
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If Mr. Watkins can do better, Mezrab will find space for the printing of it!

.....
B E K I N D

To see a rocket flare across the sky,
And yet stay earthbound, stabs a poignant wound;
One feels a lonesomeness as though harpooned,
Or stagnant as a wingless butterfly;
When starships sail the void of lazuli,
And once the soul has been to space attuned,
A nameless sickness pierces when marooned,
While part of you begins to slowly die.

Uneasy darts will thrust until you crave
To break your living sepulchre with flight,
And reascend the stellar architrave;
When you return from some far satellite,
Be kind to one who dreams within a grave,
If he has flown beyond the untombed night.

Orma McCormick



THE
APPLES
SPEAK.

by *Fernand Pousaf*

"Strange," mused the apple, as it watched an approaching boy with a stout stick in his hand, "but ever since Isaac Newton cogitated upon the event of our fall from our parent apple trees, every Tom, Dick and Harry who, apparently, never undertook to think about the matter, and worse still, never tried to fathom the lack of rationality in the cosmic gravitational 'hokus-pokus', has believed what he was taught in school about gravitation being the gosh-awful truth, so 'elp us all! No one ever thought of asking the apples.

"Of course, being just plain apples, we are not considered bright, and we do not claim to be. Nevertheless, every season, we apples are doing that simple, silly thing (unless somebody picks us up) of falling. Now the odd part of it is that we always fall downwards. It has been our misfortune, ever since Newton (forming no hypothesis, mind you!) advanced the postulate that we possessed in our make-up the mysterious power of drawing the earth towards us, and vice versa it is a libelous postulate and we resent it, for we never have had such power and, as a factual matter, neither has the earth had such power except at its mag-

netic poles to fall, earthward.

"Our simple fall, like the mythical fall of our old theological friends, Adam and Eve, has been used to pervert the minds of otherwise good, gullible chaps, and to hide the not-to-be-mentioned fact that, since Galileo passed away, no one seems to have bothered to investigate, and we mean really investigate, the reliability of so-called scientific theories!

"Now let us get down to earth, as some of you good people say. What are the facts, the real facts, as we apples know them? Each lowly apple, since immemorable time, has been hanging on to its parent, the apple tree, by a fragile stem, while the tree itself is solidly planted (we hope) in the soil of mother earth. Mother earth rotates upon her bright axis, giving a surface equatorial speed of one thousand miles per hour. The earth also revolves orbitally, around the sun, at the rate of eighteen and one-half miles per second. The good Sol, giver of life and light, is no slouch either, for it is, orbitally also, being pushed around by and within the galactic field at a rate of two hundred and seventy five kilometers per second. Wow!" (Observations and computations made by Drs. Plaskett and Pearce at Victoria, B.C., Canada, in 1934).

"Have any of you, gentle readers, ever dropped a bottle of Bitters (empty, of course) from a swiftly moving train, or plane, or any vehicle that moved real fast? If you have, perhaps you have observed that the dropped object does not drop at the very spot where you were looking when you let go of it? No! the empty Bitters (drat it) followed your vehicle right along, in a gentle downward curve, until it hit the earth. The facts are elementary, used only as a reminder of motion, relative motion, that is.

"Now let us return to our apples, or more simply, to one of us, a lonely, single apple. Growing old and ripe we suddenly feel that the lazy old stem has failed us, and let go from the tree at the same time the tree yells, in applesauce lingo, 'You are now on your own, Be!' Now we reach the crux of the question, fellows: 'What choice of notions (if any) have I got?' Can I move upwards? Of course not! It would take a force or power to heave me upwards. Can I move sideways or laterally to any point of the compass? No! A force would again be needed, and I haven't got it. What possible motion is there left for me to choose? None except to move downwards, which is a natural notion, needing neither force nor power to operate. I assume that everyone reading this has noticed that I used the words 'move' and 'motion', because that is what a free (relatively) object does in a universe of motions. To most people the apples fall; they never MOVE.

"Hah!" I hear the savants say, 'you had to fall down, didn't cha? Gravitation, ne boy, Gravitation!' And getting up my Irish I smack right back 'Gravitation ne eye!' If you, the people, have not yet grasped why I moved downwards, lissen!

"My fully grown weight is around six ounces (mostly water, and water in its liquid state does not float in the air). I displace around two hundred cubic centimeters. In other words, I am a fairly heavy object of relatively small size, let loose into the air, a fluid medium so tenuous in density that it cannot support my weight. So I move naturally (mind you) or sink (if you prefer it that way) through the medium. As the parent tree and myself possess (relatively) the same rotational velocity as the surface of the earth...and another thing, chappies, as, at sea-level,

atmospheric pressure presses down upon my poor body with a weight of around fourteen pounds seven ounces per square inch of my tender surface, I ignominiously sink or move down to the earth. Try lifting yourself by your boot-straps, fellows, and you shall realize my predicament.

"I know! you will again exasperate me with your gravitation malarkey. But unless you are able to differentiate between gravity (specific gravity) and the gravitational phenomenon referred to by Newton, we might as well go home and continue our interrupted sleep. However, before you Rip Van Winkle again, hear what the tiny little hydrogen molecule has to say upon the subject."

"I wouldn't butt in, dear apple, but the gravitational joke has become so utterly boring that I must have my say. Tiny as I am (unable to resist the great big hug of the earth if we had the gravitational power they claim for both of us) I have defied that ghostly force (ghostly farce?) for billions of years, and umptillions of other gaseous fellows like me have done the same. If the mass of the earth could pull us down, as we are supposed to pull its mass upwards, no life could ever have existed, from the dawn of evolution to our days. We would have all been glued together from the inception of our birth. No siree! To believe in cosmic gravitation one must be entirely blind to the facts of experience, and shame upon those human know-it-alls, they still are!"

This is the story as told by an apple. See if you can make something off it. Pip-pip!

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Note by the author.....

Notwithstanding Cavendish and Heyl's experiments, J. Grauer, German physicist, demonstrated, in 1902, that any gas placed in a very narrow vacuum tube in contact with the earth, and restrained from to and fro motion, will, nevertheless, rise to the top of the tube, thus defying the law of gravitation. Only atmospheric pressure, caused by the impingement of contiguous planetary, stellar and galactic fields, can cause the relative downward motion of gaseous substances. Any scientist willing to do so can figure out the required velocity of a gaseous particle necessary to escape "gravitational pull" if it so existed. Such velocity of escape would reach the tremendous number written down as follows: 17×10^{730} (17 followed by 730 ciphers) miles per second. This sort of fantastic velocity needs no further comment.

Fernand Roussel.

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Note by the Senior Editor.....

This semi-serious article by Mr. Roussel shows WHY he has not received the attention he deserves from scientific bodies. Those of you who are firmly convinced that gravitational attraction is a force in itself will see nothing unusual in the article except an objection to the use of a standard word. Those of you who are not so firmly convinced that gravitational attraction is a force in itself will note the points wherein Mr. Roussel shies away from standard teachings, yet not sufficiently to make the distinction noticeable.

Standard courses in Physics teach that from any point on the earth's

surface, the earth's gravitational attraction is directed approximately toward its center. But since the earth rotates, the "weight" of a body is somewhat less than the earth's attraction for it, because of the centrifugal force, and is, furthermore, not in general directed toward the earth's exact center. This is in complete agreement with Mr. Roussel's contention that gravitational (excuse it, please, Mr. Roussel) attraction is related to the earth's rotational and orbital motion. A plumb-line ten feet long in the latitude of New York, or San Francisco, departs about a quarter of an inch to the south from a line in the direction of the earth's geometrical center. The same influence is said to account for the oblateness of the earth, and these two facts together, for the variation of gravity from equator to poles. Here the breach between Science and Roussel widens to a more noticeable degree.

At the equator the weight of a gram mass is 977.99 dynes, while at the poles it exceeds 983 dynes. Science says that this is due to the slow rotational speed of the poles, so that the weight of an object is nearly equal to its gravitational attraction by the earth. Mr. Roussel says that the greater weight at the poles is due to magnetic rather than gravitic forces. If you look sharply you will see why Mr. Roussel and orthodox science repel each other with a force equal to the square of their distance.

And at this point it might be well to introduce the Reverend Father Glazewski, who says that gravity is the effect of mass in motion. The Reverend Father is also frowned upon by orthodox science because he wants to change the definition of gravity from a cause to an effect. However, he speaks rather favorably of A. Einstein, and for this reason MEZRAB doubts that Mr. Roussel will accord him recognition as a fellow-scientist. For the time being, we will allow ATLANTIS to popularize the theories of the Father Glazewski while MEZRAB endeavors to popularize those of M. Roussel.

Robert A. Bradley

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M A S S v s W E I G H T

The mass of an object is the quantity of substance or stuff of which it is made the weight is the mass multiplied by the acceleration (tendency to cause motion) of gravity.

The mass remains always the same. The weight varies according to the place at which it is weighed.

.....

Says an astronomer:
 "We talk of the weight of the heavenly bodies, but since it is recognized that weight decreases in proportion to the distance from the center, it becomes evident that at a certain distance, that weight must be forcibly reduced to ZERO!"

The nucleus of a COMET, wherein its mass centers, moves closest to the sun, whereas its tail, the thinnest of substances, spreads fanwise away from the sun. Why should the heavy substance swerve quicker than the light?

THE BOGEY MAN WILL GET YOU

if you don't watch out!

by Ken F. Slater

Even in this "enlightened" age the threat that heads this article is still used by some adults to dissuade children from some action or other. The origin of the threat is not hard to find, it arises from the days of child-sacrifice, and the "changeling" myth, in the main, with one or two side tracks.

Before we go deeper into this particular aspect we must first look at the whole question of sacrifice to gods, spirits, and such creatures. I think it fairly obvious, and generally accepted, that the basic idea behind sacrifice of any kind was, that although men admitted gods, and spirits, to be powerful -- in some cases all-powerful, and in others of limited powers -- they also agreed, or considered, that the god must have an agency through which to work. Something to enable the spirit-power to affect the material world, much as a dynamo can generate an electric current, but needs a conducting medium to make the current effective. A poor simile, I admit.

Hence the sacrifice -- food for the god. There is the obvious example of "sympathetic magic", the spilling of blood to cause rain, as practised in ancient Mexico, among other places. This is in accord with the ancient formula "do ut des" (give that you shall receive), and instances are innumerable, and need not be recorded here.

Now I will leave the sacrificial viewpoint and give attention to the more modern of the "changeling" myths, but I would like you to remember that aspect of "sacrifice", as it is important.

Stories of changelings are world wide, but in this article -- as in all the articles which I hope MEZRAB will publish -- I shall draw my material from the fertile field of the Gaelic mythology, with an occasional parallel from some other field.

"A changeling is an aged elf, left in the place of a child", says J. G. Campbell (1). Martin Luther, in TABLE TALK, describes a changeling who he records as eight years of age, and who had the appearance of "a real child", but ate sufficient for four grown men, and was of a very contrary nature, laughing when things went wrong, weeping when all was well. In Germany, an extremely large head was considered a certain sign of a changeling, and a typical description of a Scottish changeling recorded by J. G. Campbell, reads: "Large teeth, ... inordinate appetite, ... fondness for music, powers of dancing." In Wales, the "plentin-newid" or change-child is described as developing: "its face grows ugly, its body shrivels, its temper becomes vicious and it wails continuously." (2).

Descriptions such as these are common, but vary in details. In Lapland, the changeling is frequently noted to have abnormally long hands and feet; Teutonic myth records often an inability to walk. From these facts Lewis Spence concludes, and rightly I feel, that whenever a deformed or cretinous child appeared, it was termed a "changeling". This must be distinguished from the separate class of children who were born deformed.

These were probably the root of myths in which the mother is seduced by some god or demon. Only rarely does the case of a changeling having been substituted for "true" child before birth arise -- although such myths are not unrecorded. It must be born in mind that cretinous children, Mongolian idiots, and similar unfortunates are usually normal at birth, and their peculiarities -- lack of growth, deformity, appearance of age -- do not develop to the lay eye until some considerable period later.

So much for the very plausible explanation of the "changeling". But why such an explanation? Why should the "fairies" steal children, and replace them with their own kind? There are many myths of "fairy-theft" where the child is not replaced, or if replaced, the substitute is not living, but a puppet, a stock of wood, given the semblance of life.

Firstly, it must be admitted that fairies and gods are all of a kind, the fairy being a degraded god, probably descended from the "Men in the Oak", the giver of life and all things in many parts of Western Europe, and similar classes of being. Then we turn to the basis of sacrifice - the fact that the "spirit" needs "material" power. Although the fairies, and other class of sprites, had descended from their high state of godhood before the rise of Christianity, they had been thrust out by a later "god", in each case. At this late date it is hard to separate the various strata of the "orders" of fairyland, especially when it is considered that many of them recently accepted by one people were originally "worshipped" by an entirely different people. But it is easy to see that having been robbed of their rightful dues by a later order of being, they should attempt to steal what they had previously been given as a due.

A typical example of the confusion that has arisen is the case of the fairy "kain" to the Devil. "Kain" is variously translated from the Gaelic as: a fine; a payment in kind; a tribute; a tax, toll, or rent. (3). All very similar terms, and all implying a penalty, or payment of due. Sir Walter Scott, in his "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" has informed us that people who come under the power of the fairies may only revisit the places of men after seven years have expired, and then after seven more years they disappear and are never seen again. He continues that according to certain accounts, although the places wherein they dwell are pleasant enough, once in every seven years one or more of them are rendered as sacrifices to the devil. This sacrifice is in lieu of a sacrifice of one of the fairies, "the Kane to Hell", which the fairy folk would otherwise have to pay.

In support of this, Lewis Spence renders a quote from the old ballad of "Thomas the Rhymer and the Fairy Queen", in which the Queen tells Thomas to leave as speedily as may be, because:

"To-morowe of halle ye foule fende
Among our folke shall chuse his fee;
For you art a larg man and an hende,
Trowe you wele he will chuse thee."

From this and similar legends it can be seen that a confusion has arisen between witchcraft, in its true sense having nothing to do with fairies, and the fairies; in that the latter must now be subservient to the devil, and pay him tribute. This has perhaps arisen from the sacrifice of a child to the Great Goat by the coven. In fact, in one instance, the term "kain", which specifically is used in connection with the fairy tribute, is quoted as the coven sacrifice to the devil: "It is hinted (...by watchers

of the witch Sabbaths...) that "kain bairns" were paid to Satan,... These were the fruits of their yombs; although sometimes....the (stolen) unchristened offspring of the neighbors."(4). But fairy lore is much older than Christianity, and the confused "devil-worship" of the witchcraft, a degraded fertility worship of an earlier god.

To summarise so far; "changelings" have a natural explanation in the belief that "abnormal" offspring were actually fairy replacements for "normal" children they had stolen. The necessity for the theft arises from the fact that the fairy is partly dependent on the human for his power -- I shall enlarge on this in a later article -- and the "theft" replaces the earlier sacrifice.

Now for a fairly simple explanation of some of the cases where the "bogey man has gotten" the child, and left no replacement. Theft for sacrifice is obvious -- and may also have given rise to various legends of the fairies' ability of transformation. In actual fact, the wild beast had a much simpler object in mind than the primitive man generally attributed to the "fairy". All the animal wanted was a nice easy lunch. At that, thefts by other humans may have had to some reason, quite apart from sacrifice, and theft for slavery must not be overlooked. Some of the habits of primitive man were no "nicer" than those of his modern descendants.

The "bogey-man" is the thief, obviously, again. But not always the thief. He may also have been the witch-doctor, or high priest. Sacrifice of children of the village, or tribe, was common. Near the present village of Ballynagauran, Co. Cavan, in Ireland, there was a place called Mag Slecht or "the Place of Adoration". This was a stone circle, where was worshipped the bloody god Cromm Cruaich, and the normal sacrifice rendered to him was infant children. The sacrifice occurred at "Samhain", November the 1st, or "Hallowe'en" as it is popularly known today. This period was the commencement of the Celtic year, when the power of blight, of "destruction", was becoming ascendant, but the return of the power of life, or growth, could be assured, by appropriate sacrifices. It may have been a harvest festival, connected not with the reaping but with the storing and threshing.(5). Such sacrifices also took place at the feasts of Beallteinn, and Lugnassad, (May 1st, and August 1st), and in the main healthy children were always demanded. A possible contradiction to this is quoted by Alfred Nutt in a Hebridean proverb "Pity her who is the mother of silly children when Beltane is on a Thursday", which Nutt considered to be reference to the sacrifice of "silly" children in preference to healthy ones.(6). Nutt was, however, undecided on this point, and later makes a contrary statement to the effect that defective children were not suitable sacrifices. Lewis Spence suggests that "silly" in this case is misused for "solig", meaning "sacred", a term that could be applied to children marked for sacrifice.(7)

Nutt, at least, puts the reason for sacrifice in a nut-shell(!) when he says "The practise of carrying off human children has its roots in the conception of the fairy as lord and giver of life..... the fairy must be fed as well as the mortal."(8). This opinion is supported by "the same reasons which induce fairies to steal a child would probably render it an acceptable offering to a pagan divinity", i.e., the belief that supernatural beings require human help.(9). That point I have mentioned before. It is a most common belief, ranging back from pre-history, through the Graeco-Roman legends, up to the current day beliefs of poltergeist phenomena, and spiritualist mediums. The god, ghost, or sprite, cannot operate

without human aid. You may say that gods of Romans and the Greeks helped the heroes. A close examination will reveal that in most cases the god or goddess got something out of it, and that the human, apart from doing all the work, offered up sacrifice of some kind. The labours of Herakles may be taken as a fairly typical example.

I think I have covered fairly well the "Bogey-man" subject, in its two major phases, that of the "changeling" and the "sacrifice". Always, some families are more prolific than others. A "changeling" could arise when the bereaved parents of a "selig" child were given the offspring of another family, within the same tribe or group, in "part exchange". Much depends on the type of tribal life. It is obviously impossible in the case of certain primitive Indian tribes where family groups were not recognized, and where a child was the child of the tribe, and not of a specific father and mother. It would be highly probable in tribes, or more correctly, tribal groups where the family represented a sub-unit of the tribe, and the tribe as a whole was a "family". An orphan would be allotted to a family who had lost their child, by selection for sacrifice, or by theft by a "fairy" (wild animal or human marauder). One has been taken by the gods (or fairies) and a "changeling" given to replace it. I am not able to quote any authority for this supposition, nor can I produce the slightest evidence to support it. It is purely a personal opinion.

In conclusion, the "bogey-man" of our present threat is (a) the "fairy" or supernatural being who will "steal" the child, and (b) the priest who will sacrifice the child. A distortion is apparent, because it may be conclusively accepted that primitive parents would be more likely to tell their children to be "bad" to avoid the bogey-man, while today we tell them to be "good".

References:

- 1) J. G. Campbell; SUPERSTITIONS OF THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS p. 38
- 2) Lewis Spence: THE FAIRY TRADITION IN BRITAIN p. 232
- 3) GAELIC DICTIONARY: McAlpine, and GAELIC DICTIONARY: McLeod & Dewar.
- 4) R. H. Cromieck: REMAINS OF NITHDALE AND GALLOWAY SONG p. 225
- 5) J. A. MacCulloch: THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT CELTS
- 6) A. Nutt: THE VOYAGE OF BRAN
- 7) Lewis Spence: as above, p. 272
- 8) A. Nutt: FOLKLORE Vol. XXXII, p. 47
- 9) E. S. Hartland: THE SCIENCE OF FAIRY TALES.

.....

Captain Slater has promised to write us a series of articles dealing with Myths and Legends of the British Isles and the European Continent, of which LEGENDS OF THE BANSHEE is already in our file and ready to be stencilled for appearance in MEZRAB VIII. Although Ken probably intended for us to use it ahead of THE BOGEY MAN, we switched them about in the belief that some of the material in THE BOGEY MAN would explain THE BANSHEE better than THE BANSHEE would explain the BOGEY MAN.

Captain Slater is loafing around "somewhere in Germany", doing nobody knows what, and steeping himself in the mythological lore of the ages. His next article, if he doesn't do a switch on us, is a collaboration entitled THE SOURCE OF FAIRY POWERS.

NOBODY KNOWS NOTHING

From eternal non-existence we serendipitously observe
the mysterious beginning of the Universe;
From eternal existence we clearly see the apparent distinctions.
These two are the same in source
and become different when manifested.
(LAOTZU; Chapt. 1.)

Suppose you were handed a sheet of paper to study, a paper on which no marks appeared other than an untouched circular area surrounded by a field of impenetrable blackness. You are informed that this paper will explain not only Laotzu's cryptic statement, quoted above, but that it will reveal the mysterious causeless-cause which is parent to all caused-causes.

You are further informed that the circular area represents the nothingness (eternal non-existence) out of which the universe was formed, and that the field of impenetrable black is a deliberated addition placed around the circular area to represent the somethingness (eternal existence) into which your thoughts must not stray until you perceive the causation (source) of existence.

You are assured, in a barely audible whisper, that the answer is clearly written somewhere within that blank circle, and that you will surely find it if you will concentrate upon the meaning of the circle and enter it with nothing but your mind. The door closes behind your mysterious visitor, and you are left alone, in a zone of silence -- alone with your thoughts and a sheet of paper which means almost nothing at all.....

Nor does your informer ever again knock upon your door to see how you are progressing with your studies. If you seek him out, and ply him with questions, he will study deeply both you and your question before making reply, and his replies will be soft and gentle-- as though they were coming to you from some great distance. But if you ask him for the answer to the problem he will reply quickly and sharply that there is no answer, and for you to return to your studies.

If there is no answer, then there can be no problem; and if there is no problem, then there can be no questions. But there was a question, and there was a problem, and the answer was supposed to be written upon that piece of blank paper -- not upon the tongue of the instructor. For those who are unable to perceive the answer there is no answer. For those who find the answer, where it is written, there is no problem, no question --- no answer.

It was at one time customary to lock the student in a cell that had been stripped of everything except a stone on which he might seat himself, and there he remained until he could make mental contact with his instructor..... or until he died of starvation. The method has certain advantages. Either the student finds the key to the mysterious language in which the symbol was written -- or the instructor finds himself relieved of the necessity for swearing his student to secrecy. There is no record showing how many died in their cells, nor the number of students who became telepathic in order to escape starvation. What most probably happened was that an occasional instructor's love for his student caused a lessening in the rigors of study, with consequent loss of the deeper truths hidden in the symbol.

If we begin our Cosmogonies with absolutely nothing, then a beginning is an absolute impossibility. Nothing begets nothing. There must be something to start with, no matter how inconsequential, but the very nature of that somethingness must be eternal and unimpeachable. Empirical knowledge can trace back a portion of the way, but not all the way. Scientific knowledge is confused and lost when it reaches that maze of circles which cross and recross in seemingly chaotic abandon, each circle complete in itself, but having no apparent origin. There is always something beyond--- and that something lies hidden within the blank circle which is surrounded by its own field of darkness.

Nothing begets nothing. It goes right on producing nothing at all, unable to increase itself because it cannot diminish itself. It can never be less than nothing. It can never be more than nothing without becoming a something--- and if it becomes something it ceases to be nothing. Nothing is always nothing--- an eternal non-existence of unfathomable depth. Nothingness is the simple absence of existent things--- the blankness of the circle, before it was surrounded by the field of darkness.

How, then, can a universe evolve out of nothingness? Once we accomplish the transition from nothingness to somethingness we can find plausible explanation for all things--- but the manner in which that transition can be accomplished is the problem the student must solve before he can leave his cell! Is it any wonder that his instructor imprisoned him, in order to force his mind to take hold of the one and only conclusion? The blankness of the circle was matched by the darkness that clouded the mind of the student..... the white and the black merged into the one greyness from whence they had come.

For between nothingness (non-existence) and somethingness (existence) there stands THAT which is neither nothing nor something because it is both something and nothing in one and the same breath. It is that causeless-cause, which is and is not; forced by its very nature to become something even though it be nothing; prevented by its very nature from becoming something because it is, intrinsically, nothing. Like Laotzu I hesitate to name or define it, but if forced to name and define it I would call it NAMELESS, because it has no need of name, and define it as Nothingness trembling on the brink of Somethingness.

We have here a rather inadequate description of an Only Cause for a First Cause, located where it becomes a Causer of Causes. BEGINNING, or rather BEING (I think it is called SAT in the Archaic Wisdoms), had but one way it could go, and must go. For between being Nothing and being Something there exists only the possibility that it can, in time, become Something IF it can ever part itself from being Nothing. This being impossible, it must remain an eternal nothingness which will become an eternal somethingness in whatever instant it receives the power.

But just where and how do we find all this written in the symbol of a blank circle surrounded by darkness? By analysis.

Nothingness is not an objective thing, therefore it can have neither a center nor a circumference. The deliberate addition of a circumference to Nothing, beyond which the student was warned against straying, could only be interpreted as a command to find the exact center of Nothing. But this implies diameter and radius, attributes of material things, and there was also a warning against bringing extraneous matter into the field of study.

The one tool permitted the student was his MIND..... and with his mind he must find the center of a circle which was only the representation of something else which the instructor had called Nothingness. Until there is something to number there can be no numbers.....

And what is MIND, that it can travel through nothingness and somethingness without opposition and without points of rest? Surely not Eyes, for the eyes are substantial objects for the perception of substance. Without the aid of his eyes, how will the student perceive location for the center of a symbolic nothingness? He had been told to enter the circle with nothing but his mind..... implying that the MIND is older than the body, and its five physical senses. Also, by implication, the mind was given priority to the field of outer darkness which was, admittedly, a deliberate addition from the mind of the instructor to imprison the mind of the student within the circle until he thought his way free of the circle..... and established contact with the mind of his instructor long enough to cause him to release the student from his physical prison.

We have the form--- but not the substance. The student has not yet had time to do enough thinking to think himself free of the circle. He has yet to think of a way in which to make the beginnings of a universe.... but he has found himself possessing a knowledge which is keyed to all knowledge.

I would not lessen the value of this article by giving you the answer at this time. If you already KNOW the answer you will say that I have said more than I should. If you do not yet know the answer you will say that I have stopped before giving you the key.

But if I said less it would only annoy the reader. If I said more, it would have no value to the reader. As it now stands-- you can take up the thought where I left it.... or leave the thought where I found it.

.....

FRAME OF REFERENCE

Truth is a transitory make-shift thing
Devised to serve a purpose but an hour
And then flung far from off the outer ring
Of Reason's progress to a newer flower.
A petal withers here and duly dies,
And Truth is marred through lack of beauty fair;
But with the dew of morning's cloudless skies
Another bloom puts forth its golden hair.

We live from day to day and take for truth
Our fill of things as they appear to be,
And dreamily aspire for the sublime
Conceptions held so sacred in our youth;
But Thought has put within our grasp the key
That Truth lies ever on the edge of time.

R. Flavie Carson

H H U U EEEE CC RRR Y Y
 H H U U E A C C R R Y Y
 H H H U U EE N C RRR Y
 H H U U E D C C R R Y
 H H UU EEEE CC R R Y

"Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war..."

"For some ridiculous reason, to which however I've no desire to be disloyal....." HUE & CRY this issue is a trifle less serious and meaty than usual. So if you developed intellectual indigestion from the scientific kaffee-klatsch last time, you can relax this season with a few of the choicer tid-bits culled from the dubious slush-puddle of correspondence which wriggles through Box 246's narrow door into the Mezrabian domicile. We'll begin with our much-murdered young Bronx terror, who complains about....

FLATFOOTS IN THE POST OFFICE ???

1441 Overing Street, Bronx 61, N.Y.

MEZRAB #6 arrived today, slightly affected by the journey, looking something as if it was trampled by multitudes of flat feet. Odd, to say the least. The contents were O.K., up to your standard, which is to say they outrank all the fanmags of this dimension. F. Roussel's Easter Island tale was marvelous, could almost see the place with his eyes. I nominate him for the title "Man-who-I-would-most-like-to-have-as-many-adventures-as-when-I-grow-up." Enclosed find a story by none other than I, which I do hope you can use... Purty pleeze? Signing off now, as nothing else to talk about.

Richard Kirs; T.C.O.T.

.....
 That's funny.. We thought all the flat feet in New York were on the Police Force. We're very glad to hear that you plan on growing up some day. Having Roussel's kind of adventures might present a few problems, however. I doubt very much if you would enjoy spending thirty years in study to form a hypothesis, then spending the rest of your life having your sincerity and even your sanity questioned by unruly sophomores who don't know ether from (C2H5) O. But if you would, more power to you.

A TREE GROWS IN WEINBAUM

Box 182, Canton, N.C.

Just a while ago came across MEZRAB under a batch of convention gloop on my desk. When I read it the stuff seemed familiar to me. It may be that I had already read it once and sent a letter to you, but I don't think so, because the material this time was really memorable.

Print more fiction, damn you! Lin Carter's story was the best thing you have yet printed in any MEZRAB (with the possible exception of Ossie Train's Haggard article in #5). Both poems were enjoyed equally. EASTER ISLAND was pure adventure.

MEZRAB is becoming FATE-like, though. Ether...Inertium...Rapa Nui... Vapor Canopies...Gravitational Wave Theory.....Gaah! "I have a theory that

grass, trees and people do not grow taller at all; they grow by pushing the earth away from them, which is why you keep hearing that the earth is growing smaller every day.." -- Stanley Weinbaum in THE CIRCLE OF ZERO....

.....

Fred Chappell by Ghod and Esquire too.

By Ghod and the grace of Ghu, we won't print more fiction, and damn you, too, sir! Typewriters for two and breakfast for one?

And MEZRAB will probably get more and more FATE-like as time goes on, so here is your chance to crawl off the sinking ship with the rest. But why not stick around? After all, there's only one Lin Carter in captivity. As for Weinbaum, we've got nuttin' to say, so we'll say-- nuttin'.

O K FROM THE U K

144 Boresford St., Moss Side
Manchester 14, England

Phew! Was I disappointed; I felt sure you were a couple of wild Westerners! When I saw your names in AMAZING, I said to Fran "Look, there's a couple producing a fanzine in Texas! I suppose this Robert character is a big broad galoot with Colts hung all over him-- he probably writes his copy with an arrowhead dipped in rotgut whiskey while Marion brandishes a Winchester out the shack window to scare away the Comanches, General Santa Ana, cottonmouths, road agents, etc."

"You," she accused, "spend too much time gawking at second-feature Westerns from the projection-room portholes!" And what do I find? One of you is from New York and t'other from Chicago! I am more than somewhat mortified, as Runyon says. And now for MEZRAB. Let me say firstly, and this goes for both my sister Fran and myself, that your policy is just as it should be. Keep out the weird, the gory and the sexy stuff. It's easy to be cheap and sordid. MEZRAB has an intellectual-cum-wacky tone which is just right. Robert's LOST CITY OF CARCOSA was interesting and nicely turned-out, as was Eva Firestone's MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF HISTORY. Marion's SEEKER OF ARRATH was a worthy offering, the handling of language therein being first-class.... "the spring scattered diamond droplets across the silver skies..." for instance, was a delightful piece of alliteration. E. Townsend's LOST TRIBES OF ISRAEL was thought-provoking, but it would have been more so in its entirety. I should like to study all the arguments leading to this rather startling conclusion that the lost tribes are on some other planet. My query is-- how did they travel through space? The use of any man-made vehicle is out of the question, -- so we must conclude that the people of the lost tribes were transported bodily through space -- and this is an illogical conclusion. There may be those who say that I am here doubting the Omnipotence of God. But I hold that this Omnipotence works within the framework of Law -- i. e., Nature. Since it is unnatural for humanity to survive in airless space and since it is unlikely that a Supreme Lawgiver would violate his own Laws, the conclusion becomes illogical.

Lin Carter's THE CITY IN THE SEA was the best of the poems. The letter-section is probably the most entertaining part of MEZRAB, because it gives your readers a chance to get their pet theories off their chests.

If this should find its way into HUE & CRY (ah, vain hope!) please give our full address --- all FAN-atical correspondence is welcomed from everywhere.

Tony Glynn

.....

We hope this brings you a flood of correspondents, Tony. By this time you've probably received your belated foreign copies of MEZRAB 5 and 6, in which our attitude about the Townsend piece is made clear, but for the benefit of later readers I'd like to point out a flaw in your logic. Of course, the article in question postulated that the "Planet of the Lost Tribes" was at that time attached to the earth somewhat like the other end of a dumb-bell, and all the Lost Tribes had to do to get on it was to walk across the bridge. But why should "the use of any man-made vehicle" be out of the question? The fact that no space-travelling vehicle exists at present proves nothing except that no such vehicle exists at present. We cannot honestly assume that no such vehicle has ever existed. We have no idea what things prehistoric science may have produced; or, to avoid confusion with the monkey-myth-mongerers, maybe I should say pre-pre-historic science. It is a peculiar fact, peculiar because it is a fact, that Egyptian history, the first written history, has no beginnings in savagery like other primitive civilizations. All their traditions point to a PAST which was far brighter than the civilizations which flourished under Amenhotep and Akhnaton... brilliant though the latter were. The farther back you travel into the past of Egypt, the more civilized Egypt seems to have been. The same holds true for the Incas and Aztecs, for the ancient races of Cambodia and India, for most of the primitives of South and Central America, even the somewhat savage Druids of Gaul in Caesar's day being generally conceded by Bardic traditions to have been the degraded nature-worshipping remnant of an ancient Mystery cult of a stature equivalent to those of the Egyptians or Athenians. So you see, there is really no telling what kind of vehicles may have been current in traffic at the time of the migration of these supposititious Lost Tribes!

It may be that they saw the savages taking over, as the Romans saw in the year 400 A.D., but unlike the Romans, instead of sitting and waiting for the barbarian hordes to overrun them, they took their science and got out. That might explain why such remnants remain as legends and folk myths ... and why most ancient mythologies have their Ragnarok or their Gotterdammerung. Anyhow, write us again, Tony, and all you English fans: we'll try to print some letters from you folks Over There, even if they do come floating in a few weeks or months too late for inclusion in the issue to which they refer.

AND WHAT ABOUT PSEUDO-CRITICS ?

754 E 23rd St., Brooklyn 10, N.Y.

I liked Number 6, especially your neat use of typing in headings, and Lin Carter's CRYSARION OF ITH. The map of Easter Island was fine stenciling. Have only one admonition: shun pseudo-science, pseudo-scholarship and pseudo-intellectualism. They differ from a healthy and sincere interest in things intellectual and cultural. While I lack ten degrees-- have only three so far, including a Ph D from Columbia University-- I would mod-

ify what Paul Ganley has written to read "No one, be he who he may, is 'entitled to formulate' an hypothesis unless he has first mastered the pertinent material and evidence -- possession or non-possession of degrees has no relevance". It has always seemed advisable, to me, to learn what has already been done in any field before "pontificating". In my humble opinion, and not in my opinion alone, the urge to invent a system ought rather to be shunned.

O. Raymond Sowers
.....

We can agree with nearly everything you say, Dr. Sowers, with only one difficulty, which is this. The man who "masters all the pertinent material" before formulating his hypothesis is usually, by that time, so indoctrinated in the rut of well-worn thoughts that he is unable to strike out in an original direction. Colleges don't usually produce geniuses, for the reason that they have collected so much of knowledge and so little of wisdom. They can produce excellent scholars, but few thinkers, for the reason that a good scholar is seldom an original thinker. Consider this, and you'll see that it is true. The person who spends his life in research into what others have thought, gains a good deal of second-hand information. There are only a few real live thinkers in any given age, Rodin to the contrary, and when one appears, be he a Solon, a Descartes, a da Vinci, Wagner, Einstein or Roussel, he demands and should be given serious attention, even at the cost of eschewing a college degree and repudiating the mile-high stack of books about thinkers. We don't say a college degree is useless; we do say that colleges usually refuse to grant their degrees to anyone except those who are willing to accept, sheep-fashion, the current scholarly fads, psychologies and isms of the moment. As a Ph D of Columbia, we don't expect you to agree with us, however. It wouldn't be safe. The Editors of MEZRAB do not hold any degrees, in any of the sciences, and are therefore not obligated to accept the current fashions in education.

PAGING MISTER ROUSSEL !

5232 - 28th Ave. South
Minneapolis, Minn.

Fernand Roussel's article on Easter Island was very interesting, and your request for additional information makes it more so. Ask him if he noted any signs of hieroglyphics on the island, because I have read that "the cuneiform and the Egyptian Hierglyphs had a common origin, and that origin was undoubtedly the land of Mu... the connecting link is found on Easter Island." I was also wondering if there were any signs of ancient roads, because somewhere I have read about certain islands in the Pacific that had roads traversing them constructed to serve a continent, not just an island.....

Anton Kronstedt.
.....

Consider him asked. We'd like to know, too.

Madame Blavatsky, who claims to have visited all of the islands of Polynesia, states that a large city, built of stone and lava, inhabited by Lemurians, once stood some thirty miles to the WEST of Easter Island..... the point of the compass towards which the huge statues on the ledge faced.

THIS MAN COLLECTS SAUCERS

4118 W 143rd St., Cleveland, Ohio

A new group has recently come into being, and I have been chosen to write you about one phase of our work.

This group, the Extra-Terrestrial Research Organization, is at present investigating the Flying Saucer question. The E T R O would like to start a fanzine, and as an aid we are getting various established fanzines to use for the general idea of how they rate.

We don't know too much about the publication of fanzines, so if you have any suggestions we'd appreciate it if you'd pass them on to us.

Jim Schreiber

Charitable publishers take note... and all you flying-saucer addicts might join in to give these boys some egoboo and co-operation. MEZRAB, as a matter of policy, steers clear of organizations, but we like to keep our readers informed of those they might be interested in. Good luck, kids.

FORECAST FOR GOOD READING

13 Gp. R.P.C., B.A.O.R. 15
c/o G.P.O., England.

Moons past I received No. 4 of MEZRAB, with the cryptic wording "You're reasonably safe in assuming that you will....." etc., further endorsed by some beautiful purple-ink words "Exchange Copy". Not wishing to trust too far to luck, I'm forwarding a possible contribution. Nothing spectacular, just a few comments on a British myth (LEGENDS OF THE BANSHEE). Should you like some more on the same lines, I've got most of the notes prepared to cover the following:

THE BOGEY MAN WILL GET YOU... a short essay on changelings and child-sacrifice.

CELTIC FAIRY LAND... a rather lengthy item, but which can be cut.

BROWNIES AND ASSOCIATED SPRITES... domestic spirits.

I'm in no great hurry to have the stuff appear, and I'll send it to you as it gets done; then you can use it as required. Unless someone makes some devastating discoveries, I don't think it will suffer greatly from the passage of time. And I consider "devastating discoveries" in the field of mythology rather unlikely.

Your comments that this type of material is not getting the attention it deserves have my hearty agreement. I have noted, on occasion, some really horrible rehash of a Greek or Roman myth in FANTASTIC ADVENTURES and felt slightly sick at the distortion of the legend. I feel that the subject of mythology, and its kindred, are fields most productive and fertile for the imaginative mind. It is probable that the next essay to reach you will be a joint one by Mavis Pickles and myself, on the subject of THE SOURCE OF FAIRY POWERS. The others are far from complete, owing to lack of necessary references. It is not easy to get hold of books out here in Germany, short of buying them, so I have to rely on other folks to look them up and send

me notes. All the best for now, and keep that duplicator handle turning!

Ken Slater

Readers of MEZRAB will see the series in future issues... in fact, the first holds a star place in this number. And though its probably somewhat belated, the Managing Editor of MEZRAB, one Hotshot by name, sends his felicitations to young Michael in accession to the Managing Editorship of your Operation Fantast. If English youngsters are anything like the American variety, he probably already has both Editors wrapped around his pink little thumb.

AND STILL THE ETHER DRIFTS ! !

Monarch Lodge 5642 Dalhousie Rd., U.B.C.,
Vancouver 8, B.C., Canada

So that's where you are now! I thought you had taken off in Roussel's Magneto-Dynamic Space Ship or something!

I am curious to know whether Lin Carter ever had any dealings with victims of Dementia-praecox. The character of Crysarion appears to me to be the most perfect case which I have yet encountered. I will assume that somehow Mr. Egerton Sykes of the Research Centre will read this epistle, and I would like to ask him, please, to send along the information which he mentioned in his letter in MEZRAB. I also wish to inquire into the nature of the "research" which the "research centre" undertakes. I am not at present familiar with either the Hoerbiger or A Glazewski theories, but I can assure you that when I emerge from the maze of texts prerequisite for the Christmas exams, I will read their works.

I would like to say a few words to Mr. Paul Ganley, if I am fortunate enough to have this letter chosen from the myriads which no doubt reside in the Bradley residence. Mr. Ganley states that he believes that most scientists "are familiar with what things do and how they behave". I wish to remind him that, were he to investigate the fundamental sciences and trace their postulates back to the individual bases or foundation stones on which these sciences rest, he would discover that these bases are themselves NON-DEMONSTRABLE. The only means which we have to investigate these phenomena are to investigate the tentative results. HOWEVER, we have no guarantee that these tentative results cannot be produced by some other means. The fallacy in science exists in the fact that a phenomenon is considered to occur as a result of a certain series of events (it may even be proven to occur as a result of these events--) but the phenomenon is NOT proven to be unique as a result of this series of events. That is, the phenomenon is not proven to be a result of ONLY these series of events. You state, Mr. Ganley, that because a man hasn't graduated from high school he isn't competent to formulate a scientific hypothesis. I wish to draw your attention to the fact that one of the leading professors in the American College of Physicians and Surgeons never "graduated" from High School, received all his knowledge from mere observation of laboratory technique. For confirmation of this I suggest you write to TIME magazine. As for the statement that the "narrow-minded scientist" could never hold a scientific position very long, I could give you a list a mile long to the contrary.....

So Mr. Krunstedt is still existing in 3-dimensional space, is he??? And seeing stars yet!!! I wonder if he has given up the Inertium as a bad job, or as being one of the myths? We tried to talk him out of it, but when last heard of he was still gesturing incoherently and mumbling something about Inertium being non-existent because a moon goes around the geometrical centre retrogressively.

I must close now, so will thank you once again for your mag and await the next issue with tense emotions...

Don K. Edwards

As we understand it, the RESEARCH CENTRE investigates evidence, both archaeological, linguistic and legendary, of the existence of ancient continents, with an eye to discovering their location and getting an insight into their probable culture; that is their primary function. They also have several scientific protegees, among whom is Father Glazewski of the Gravitational Wave Theory, and they publish a supplement on the so-called science of Radiesthesia.

We appreciate your comments on non-demonstrable axioms, and are sorry we had to delete the remainder of your letter in order to make room for...

THE GUY WHO STARTED THE WHOLE THING

Lasqueti Island, B.C.

Comprehensive criticism and appraisal of THE ROOF OF THE WORLD would necessitate a much larger write-up than I am prepared to extend at present. As is the case with most orthodox explanations of Ice-ages and Floods advanced to date, Fra. Vail's and yours suffers from the same old disease; Sun-and-Moon's gravitationalitis. The main point of objection on my part is that most people seem to give the Earth a bare existence of 2 or 3 billion years, whereas the position of the Solar System (born all in one fell swoop) indicates that it has been in existence for something more than 50 billions of years. (30,000 light-years from the centre of the galaxy). The conditions necessary to bring about phenomenal Ice Ages, Floods and other cataclysms, do not occur oftener than every ninety million years, which is the mean period of orbital overtaking of our solar system by another solar system of the next shorter radial distance from the centre of the Galaxy, or by our own overtaking of the solar system next to us in the next outer orbit. At such conjunction all the calamities you mention have happened, and shall happen again when those conditions re-occur. Canopies cannot be formed except when a thermodynamic upheaval of gigantic proportions takes place, and this occurs only under the conditions outlined above. It is undeniable that these canopies have existed many, many times in those 50 billions of years since the creation of our Solar System, in a large variation of sizes and degree of coverage. Venus, although its surface is shrouded in solid ice, has likewise a very large envelope of water vapor. The Vail theory applies there now.

I am getting some ribbing from some of your short thinkers and readers. These fellows, we dare assume, have never predicted anything more devastating than that tomorrow shall follow today. And I cannot but smile at Mr. Deans using my theory without mentioning where he got it. Such is life, I suppose.

Fernand Roussel.

Such is science, anyhow. Incidentally, if you don't recognize this letter, it's because I have tried to spatchcock together two of your letters in order to make your meaning clear. If there is any error in the above, I trust the readers will blame me, the editor, instead of the writer of the two original letters.

A WISTFUL LITTLE CHIRP FROM ROBIN STREET

203 Robin Street, Dunkirk, N.Y.

You probably thought you'd never hear from me. What your reaction to this thought was, whether joyful or sad, my bride will not let me contemplate. I like to think that editors wait eagerly for my letters and begin to haunt the mailbox when they don't show up. A silly thought but it makes me happy. And what is your reaction to trading FANTASIA for MEZRAB? I haven't heard from you about that. Are you afraid you couldn't contain your bellows of rage at the thought? No doubt you feel that such a deal would be a rob-job? What think you?

I can't comment much on this issue of MEZRAB. All I've read so far is the fiction and poetry and a few letters. CHRYSARION OF ITH and THE VISIONARY were alike in that they're both C. A. Smith imitations, and unlike in that the latter was a good imitation while the former was not. And that is about all that one could say. In my last paragraph I was going to put in my two-cents-worth about the various things that people are HUEing and CRYing about. But I suddenly realized that the best way to appear intelligent is to shout what you know at the top of your voice and when in ignorance fade into the background. So, if no-one minds, I'll fade....

David English.

No doubt you've heard by this time that we're dropping most of our exchanges, accepting no new ones. This isn't because the fanzines lack merit, but simply because the only way we can gauge reader-reaction to certain policy changes is by putting everything on a subscription-basis. The fanzines we want, we'll subscribe to, too. We may not be, financially, any better off, but it simplifies the bookkeeping no end.

And now, if nobody minds, we'll fade, too.....

MEZ.

HUE & CRY will henceforth be edited by MEZ, whose ability to judge what the average reader likes and dislikes is much better than mine. The selection of stories and articles will be mainly by RAB, whose chief ability seems to be that of speaking obscurely whenever he thinks himself to be speaking quite plainly.

This will probably result in HUE & CRY taking a different turn as to the type of letters received and selected, and by having MEZ handle the conversational letter-section, RAB hopes to learn just where he falls down in making himself comprehensible when writing about things esoteric and exoteric. Bi-focals on sale at the Corner Drug.

RAB.

HOMER AND HOPALONG

by Joe Kennedy.

When I was considerably younger, fifteen cents would get me into the Saturday matinee at the local Grade B movie house, where the bill was invariably Buck Jones or Tom Mix or sometimes Hopalong Cassidy. Around the same time I came across a book in the public library titled Picture Stories from the Odyssey or something such. The author of this book had taken several of the juicier episodes from Homer--- Cyclops' cave, the voyage to Hades, the Sirens--- and retold them in a style shrewdly calculated to appeal to adolescents, each story being liberally sprinkled with pictures.

At first I was skeptical of the book, for I wondered why anybody in his right mind would care what happened to a bunch of Greeks who lived three thousand years ago. However, when I started browsing through it, I found that it was pretty nearly as good as Hopalong Cassidy. I had a feeling that between the epics of the wandering king and the adventures of the six-gun-slinging plainmen, there were certain identical elements. It was not until ten years later, when I was in college, unsuccessfully trying to write cheap fiction, and doing some serious reading including E. V. Rieu's translation of the Odyssey when it first came out in a Penguin Edition, that the similarities became a little clearer to me.

Does it seem derogatory to compare Homer to those moderns who admittedly write only for money? It is not meant to be. In every age there is going to be a mass audience which demands an adventure story about a heroic wanderer who passes through the clutches of several women but who remains faithful to his One True Love, who travels with a band of usually faithful companions, who battles stormy seas (or dusty deserts), who is lavishly feted by royalty or aristocracy--- and somebody is going to supply this demand. Homer, at any rate, has no monopoly on the plot. I have read this very story by Somerset Maugham at least twice, and once apiece by Nordhoff and Hall, Jack London, and Edgar Rice Burroughs.

And is not Cassidy himself a wanderer, roaming with his faithful comrades across the western plains, boosting whatever is good and squelching whatever is evil, and possibly searching for some lost, half-remembered home? At the end of every Hopalong picture I ever saw, there is a pink-cheeked prairie belle who grabs Bill Boyd by the arm and unsuccessfully tries to persuade him to stay.

Calypso couldn't hold her man either.

In the Odyssey, the goddess Athene serves as a device to rescue our hero from the opposing forces that threaten to crush him; and however excited we may become while Odysseus is facing Scylla and Charybdis, we know deep down inside that he is going to triumph, just as we know that Hopalong--- to consider the modern epic figure--- is not going to cash in his chips before the cattle rustlers (or suitors, in Homer's version) do. Yet the storyteller must provide obstacles galore for the hero to overcome. These obstacles must come flying at the hero with the regularity of bullets from a carefully oiled Garrand; i. e., no sooner does Odysseus lose a lot of men at Ismarus than contrary winds come up and blow him off his course, his men eat lotus and have to be dragged back to the ship, and on and on.

Every time one of these obstacles comes up, the hero must either quash it or be quashed himself--- at least temporarily. As everybody who has ever tried writing a long plotted narrative knows, it is a good idea to have your hero lose out once in a while, or else your reader will say to himself, "Aw, this guy is too good--- he always wins", and go back to watching television.

While of course the great Greek bard did not have to run competition with the roller derby, he nonetheless possessed a keen story-sense and knew how to use it to advantage. And so Odysseus inadvertently fails to prevent his men from eating the sacred oxen of the sun; all his men perish with the ship; he is stranded on Calypso's island for seven years. One can imagine Homer's listeners sitting around their tables, their winecups forgotten, as they listen intently to the strumming of the lyre, captivated as the story unfolds, perhaps nodding their heads and wondering to themselves whether perhaps Odysseus isn't going to lose out after all.

It seems likely that our presentday magazine and movie writers have learned a good deal more from Homer than they care to admit--- including that valuable storytelling device, the flashback, as employed in the Odyssey's narrative at the Phaeacian banquet. This device is, of course, extremely common in the current popular mystery or western. And personally I find Cyclops a far more believable human being than the wax-moustached saloonkeeper of the movies, who is really the varmint that's stealing the gold.

The difference, it seems to me, lies not so much in the elements of which both the Odyssey and its modern imitations are made, as in the fact that Homer--- unlike whoever hacks out Universal's out operas--- was a consistently good writer. He sympathized with his characters, sympathized deeply. He even pities his villains, as Mr. Rieu points out in his highly readable introduction. Witness the compassion of the storyteller for the blinded Cyclops, alone and helpless, sadly fondling his last remaining ram.

Above all, the epic figure with whom the reader/listener can identify himself is highly important. It is no accident, I think, that the literatures of varied cultures have produced Beowulfs, Siegfrieds, and Perry Masons. Without the hero embodying everything that the frustrated reader would like to be, an epic becomes something else again. This even holds true for a modern adventure story, as a highly-paid pulp magazine editor explained to me one time as he mailed back a brighteyed hopeful story of mine. For after all, an Odyssey without Odysseus would not have lasted twenty-nine hundred years.

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W A N T E D

A reliable source of supply for paper and mailing envelopes, one where we can obtain a uniform grade of paper at a reasonable price. We thought we had a paper and paper-source--- until it came time to start mimeographing this issue. Our supplier jumped his price from \$1.40 per ream to \$2.35 and so this issue is being printed on paper obtained from Montgomery Ward, priced at \$1.20 the ream.

I F

If I had some silver slippers
To grace my dancing feet
When I go out on the doorstep
My own true love to greet.
If I had a golden circlet
To bind my long, black hair,
He would take me for an angel;
For him, I would be fair.
And if I had a Spanish shawl
With fringes inches deep,
I would go dancing in moonlight
While others were asleep.
Or if I had a mermaid's form
Covered with silver scales,
I could dive to coral grottos
Hide in dulse-ribbon veils.

Then for a pair of white-soft wings
To soar to heights unknown,
To planets whirling far in space
Where our sun never shone.
But I know I would be lonely
So far away from him,
Therefore I shall remain on earth
And let my visions dim.

Isabelle E. Dinwiddie

THE LAST WORD

A rather well known BNF commented recently on our editorial custom of keeping our Mezrab readers informed as to the growth, manners and general cussedness of our Hotshot (who, for the record, now has eight teeth, blue jeans and several cute little tricks such as whacking the spacebar while Mommy types, pulling inky stencils out of the trashbasket, and smearing chocolate kisses all over the front pages of new epic novels).

"Why," he demanded, belligerently, "Should an amateur magazine be filled up with blather about babies?"

Well, why shouldn't it?

Anyhow, all this makes us think of the editors of our local weekly, the ROCHESTER REPORTER: a nice young couple, Dale and Gay Graham, and their young "Managing Editor", a curlyheaded two-year-old named Brick. They seem to have managed the trick of keeping Brick's small fingers in the professional pie.... his playpen is the first thing you see coming in the office door, and its proximity to the linotype makes me wonder wistfully if it's really a rubber doll tossed into the keyboard which creates that high percentage of etaion shrdlu? There's usually a teddy-bear or a couple of clean diapers on the copy desk; and a few weeks ago, dropping by the newspaper office in quest of mailing envelopes, I saw a large, neatly-printed sign beneath the usual one, reading: "Quiet; Baby Sleeping."

We've got OUR Hotshot trained to sleep right through the noise of the thundering mimeograph !

After many discussions, pro and con, MEZRAB has finally settled the question of who will do what editorial chores around the magazine. As you read up front, Rab selects fiction and articles; arranges material; cuts stencils (Mez is the worst stencil-cutter in Texas, which is a big state) and does the practical headwork and handwork of putting the thing together. Mez edits and answers letters; stencils our semi-occasional artwork; gives unasked opinions on Rab's editorials and articles, and generally does the heavy looking on. The next issue of MEZRAB will see the inception of a new feature, to be handled by Mez; a review column, generally along the line of the moribund "Mezrab Recommends", but devoted almost entirely to such amateur publications as seem, in our opinion, worthy of recommendation, publicity and critical analysis. This will not be a "Fanzine review Column", but a department devoted to analysis, constructive criticism, and egoboo for any amateur publication, in any field, which we consider worthy of our readers' serious attention; and the inclusion of any publication in the new department will constitute a whole-hearted recommendation on the grounds that we think the readers of MEZRAB will enjoy it. Publications for review should be sent directly to MEZ and marked somewhere "Review Copy" but don't write personal notes on 'em, please! I've had to pay first-class postage on several fanzines because the editor scribbled a few words on the margin. I know the penny post-card is dead.... but Postal Regulations aren't... and so if you want to propagandize me, you can afford an extra penny!

F L A S H ! ! Hotshot has just put Teddy-bear to bed on his crib-pillow, and appropriated my pillow for napping purposes in the middle of the parlor floor. They both look quite comfortable indeed!

Mez.

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