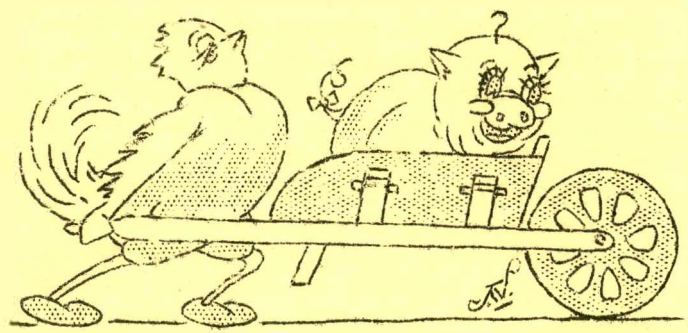


WALT'S



WRAMBLINGS



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ABOUT BIBLIOPHILES STUFF: The increase in the number of bibliophiles in FAPA has gladdened the old rooster's heart considerably. Recent additions to FAPA such as Scarles' mags, Lancy's Lovecraftiana, and Mike Rosenblum's "Browsings" seem to indicate that at least some FAPAns are actually interested in fantasy, and what's more, have the intestinal fortitude to write about it in their Fapazines. I hereby give three hearty cheers to the new trend, fantasy in FAPA, long may it last.

There is no truth to the rumor that Claude Degler is Eleanor Roosevelt in disguise. Or is there?

ALL THE YEAR ROUND - by Robert M. Coates -published by Harcourt Brace & Co. \$2.50.

Not strictly fantasy, but a rather enjoyable collection of psychological short stories, some of which are mildly terrifying.

THE LOST WEEK-END - by Charles Jackson - published by Farrar & Rinehart. \$2.50.

This one is hard to classify. I would call it fantasy, some wouldn't. Tis the story of a drunkard, his mind wanderings and his problems. This is not a pleasant book. Morbid and at times, Poesque. Reviewers are calling it one of the greatest books of our time.

Just in case someone might be interested, there is a new book by Alexandre Dumas on the stands. First American printing, that is. Tis entitled "The Journal of Madame Giovanni."

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MR. MIRAKEL - E. Phillips Oppenheim - Published by
Little, Brown & Company.

Excellent Utopia yarn. (See full review in Chanticleer).

The Modern Library recently dropped "Jurgen" from its reprint list. Too few sales.

BOOKS TO BE REPRINTED: "Donovan's Brain" by Triangle Books, 49¢; "I Live Again" - Warwick Deeping to be reprinted by G&D, \$1.00; "The Uninvited" - greatest ghost story of our decade - to be reprinted by Sun Dial Press, \$1.00.

W. W. Jacobs, author of that horror classic, "The Monkey's Paw", died recently.

A GARLAND OF STRAW - Sylvia Townsend Warner - Published by Viking. \$2.50

A collection of short stories, some of which deal with warped minds, malforms, etc. Not fantasy, but interesting.

THE LANDSLIDE - Stephen Gilbert - Published by Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

A landslide occurs in Ireland. Prehistoric eggs, animals long extinct, come to life. A boy and an old man discover the trick of communicating with these animals, who roamed the earth when all creatures on earth lived together happily. The superstitious villagers force the old man and boy to take refuge in a cave with the dragon. When summer ends the dragon voluntarily buries itself and the other creatures. A fairy story for grown-ups, sort of in the Unknown vein. Satirical.

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BOOKS TO APPEAR SHORTLY

CANAPE'-VERT - Phillippe-Thoby & Pierre Marcellin.

Eerie novel of Haitian Black Magic.

A HAUNTED HOUSE AND OTHER STORIES - Virginia Woolf

A collection of short stories by an author who excels in 'stream-of-consciousness' writing.

DEFY THE TEMPEST - Sylvia Dannett & Edwin Bennett.

A good old fashioned gothic horror novel for moderns.

GREAT TALES OF TERROR AND THE SUPERNATURAL - Edited by Herbert A Wise and Phyllis Fraser - to be published by Random House. \$2.95.

DRAGONWYCK - Anya Seton - Houghton, Mifflin.

Horror tale in the Rebecca vein. This one to be filmed by Twentieth Century Fox.

GOD'S FRONT PORCH - Ketti Frings - A humorous fantasy, probably in the "Cabin in the Sky" manner.

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BUT GENTLY DAY - Robert Nathan - Published by Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.00.

Another wonderful Nathan novel, incorporating that peculiar time sense he used so successfully in "Portrait of Jennie". This author has a gentle sense of fantasy that's oh, so satisfying. (See review of "Day" in Channy).

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MIRACLES AHEAD: Better Living in the Postwar World
Published by Macmillan. \$3.00.

A preview of what the world will be like after the war. Illustrated with drawings and photographs.

MIRACLE IN THE RAIN - Ben Hecht - Published by Alfred A. Knopf. \$1.00

Beautiful moving fantasy. Small book, big story.

FORTRESS IN THE SKIES - Peter Mendelssohn - Published by Doubleday Doran. \$2.50.

A wow fantasy novel concerning a group of people and ghosts that took refuge from world disorder in an old abandoned village built on top of a mountain. The author of this one is a master of words. One of the most unusual and satisfying books I've ever had the pleasure to read. (See complete review in Channy).

EVIDENCE OF THINGS SEEN - Elizabeth Daly - Published by Farrar & Rinehart. \$2.00.

A detective novel with a touch of the supernatural.

TRIO -Dorothy Baker- Published by Houghton Mifflin.

A delicate study of sexual abnormality.

NONCE - Michael Brandon - Here is a book for those who like virile fantasy. Black magic is it's theme but don't let that scare you away from it, that is if you expect it to be just another horror story. Just to give you an incentive to read it I shall elucidate for your edification that every member of Slan Shack has read it and pronounced it good. By all means read this one. (See review in Nova).

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ABOUT H. P. LOVECRAFT

The following is a culling from Vincent Starrett's column, "Books Alive", which appears in the book section of the Chicago Tribune.

"He died in Providence, R. I., on March 15, 1937, one of the strangest figures in American literature. If there were any mystery about the facts in the life of Howard Phillips Lovecraft, which there is not, a plausible solution might relate him in some queer way to Edgar Allan Poe, whose pupil he was, altho he was born 40 years after Poe's death. It is simpler to say that temperamentally, he was endowed to carry on the Poe tradition and did so, with single minded devotion and artistic integrity, for a quarter of a century; then he died, aged 47, and became a legend and a cult. He may end---who knows?---as a solar myth.

Lovecraft, a semi-invalid, a recluse, and an anti-quarian, was until his death America's premier fantasist in the field of the macabre. Thousands of readers of "Weird Tales" and similar occult fiction magazines know his work and believe it to be a work of genius. No book by him was published in his lifetime, but since his death two have appeared, edited and produced by his friends, August Derleth and Donald Wandrei, under the imprint of Arkham House--a private publishing venture, inaugurated, in the first instance, solely to publish the complete writings of H. P. Lovecraft. A trilogy was planned, the second volume of which has just appeared--"Beyond the Wall of Sleep." An earlier volume of tales, "The Outsider and Others," is still available, I believe, and a third volume of Lovecraft's letters to his friends is now preparing. When the task is completed, the three handsome books will mark as notable a tribute to friendship as the history of our letters can offer. Arkham House is situated at Sauk City, Wis., under

His Most Fantastic Creation

In his introductions, Derleth speaks of Lovecraft as "the late great master of horror stories," and nobody is likely to dispute the characterization. Readers who revel in Poe and Lord Dunsany, Arthur Machen, and Algernon Blackwood are pretty certain to like the charnel fairy tales of Howard Lovecraft. But to me Lovecraft himself is even more interesting than his stories; he was his own most fantastic creation --a Roderick Usher or C. August Dupin born a century too late. Like his heroes in Poe's gigantic nightmare, he fancied himself as a cadaverous, mysterious figure of the night--a pallid, scholarly necrologist--and cultivated a natural resemblance until it was almost the real thing, altho he was first and last a "literary cove". Like Dupin he created the illusion of darkness, when day appeared, by drawing down his shades and turning on the electric lights, and he ended up looking rather like the sepulchral hero of "The Fall of the House of Usher."

But if Lovecraft was a self-conscious poseur, a macabre precieuse, he was genuine too: his poses never had any relation to commercial success, which he didn't achieve, and there is no question about the sincerity of his artistry. In his field he was important. He pretended to be modest and deprecatory about his work, and perhaps he was; but I have no doubt he was a considerable egotist in reverse. He wrote himself--as Poe did--into many of his tales describing himself carefully and accurately in the haggard, romantic portraits he drew of his central figures.

A Mechanistic Materialist

His major premise is best described in his own words: "All my stories. . .are based on the fund-

amental lore or legend that this world was inhabited at one time by other races who, in practicing black magic, lost their foothold and were expelled yet live on outside, ever ready to take possession of this earth again." Did he believe that? I don't know--he claimed to be a mechanistic materialist--and probably the question is beside the point. I am reminded, tho, of a remark once made by Arthur Machen. We had been discussing Blackwood's work and his own, and at length I asked: "Well, what do you believe?".

"Tennyson," Machen replied, "says 'the cedars sigh for Lebanon,' and that is grand poetry. But Blackwood believes the cedars really do sigh for Lebanon--and that, Starrett, is damned nonsense!"

It is supposed to be unfair to relate a fiction writer's product too intimately to his life; but I have little doubt that most fiction is auto-biography of a sort.

It is the misfortune of most "weird writers" that in large part they must gain their effects by rhetoric--Poe was no exception---and that significant words and private symbols and allusions lose their effectiveness when they are too often used. Lovecraft was not the equal of his masters, and I think he would have benefited immeasurably by a little more humor in his makeup; but that is carping. He was a born eccentric, a dilettante, and a poseur par excellence; but he was also a born writer, equipped with a delicate feeling for the beauty and mystery of words. The best of his stories are among the best of their time, in the field he chose to make his own."

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And so, a great reviewer's views on the works and life of a great writer. Hope you likes this. I did.

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OUR COVER IS DEDICATED TO NORM STANLEY
who
sez

Rooster booster, do not burp
By my yobber valentwerp.

Which, in my humble estimation, is the choicest
hunk of sentiment cast our way since I became al-
lergic to toothpicks.

Cherubically moribund Norm has appointed himself
Lod Hi Axecutioneur of the Anti-Roosterites, a dia-
bolical organization similar to the Cosmic Circle.
He would chop off my beloved roosters head, and de-
capitate him at the same time. Like the head of
that other organization, Norm has taken to steal-
ing other persons ideas. To whit: Ending his let-
ters with "Remember the sheep in the jeep" and o-
ther phrases, which are only puny ghosts of that
epitome of all classical utterances, "Remember the
rooster that wore red pants". As a result of mean
inanities such as Norm gushes forth--ALL FANDOM IS
ABOUT TO BE PLUNGED INTO WAR. So gird your loins
for the conflict, fandom, Norm Stanley is about to
usurp the throne of Abdul Al Ashley, high potentate
of Slan Shack and Supreme Fubar of the National
Fascist Fan Federation. But beware putrid Norm,
when the rooster rouses it's ire, the eggs begin
to roll, and they gather no moss. Remember this-
Mr. Stanley--YOU BUTTERED YOUR BREAD--NOW SLEEP IN
IT. Oogy isn't it.

Canary through meat grinder - shredded tweet.

So the truck was in a ditch and the driver asked
the lady if he could borrow her Pomeranian pooch
to pull it out. She said her little dog couldn't
pull a truck out of a ditch. "Oh yes he can", said
the driver, "I GOT A WHIP".