

STENCIL*SHORTAGE*SPECIAL

(Not recommended over Congress Playing Cards.)

Published by Virginia K. E. Blish, 787 Washington St., New York 14, N. Y.

If this publication appears in a

FANTASY AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION mailing

FRAPPÉ is its name, and it will not

(in the discernible future)

be ---

discontinued

1964
July 27

discontinued

discrete is (temporarily) --

mailing, its cover serves to announce that

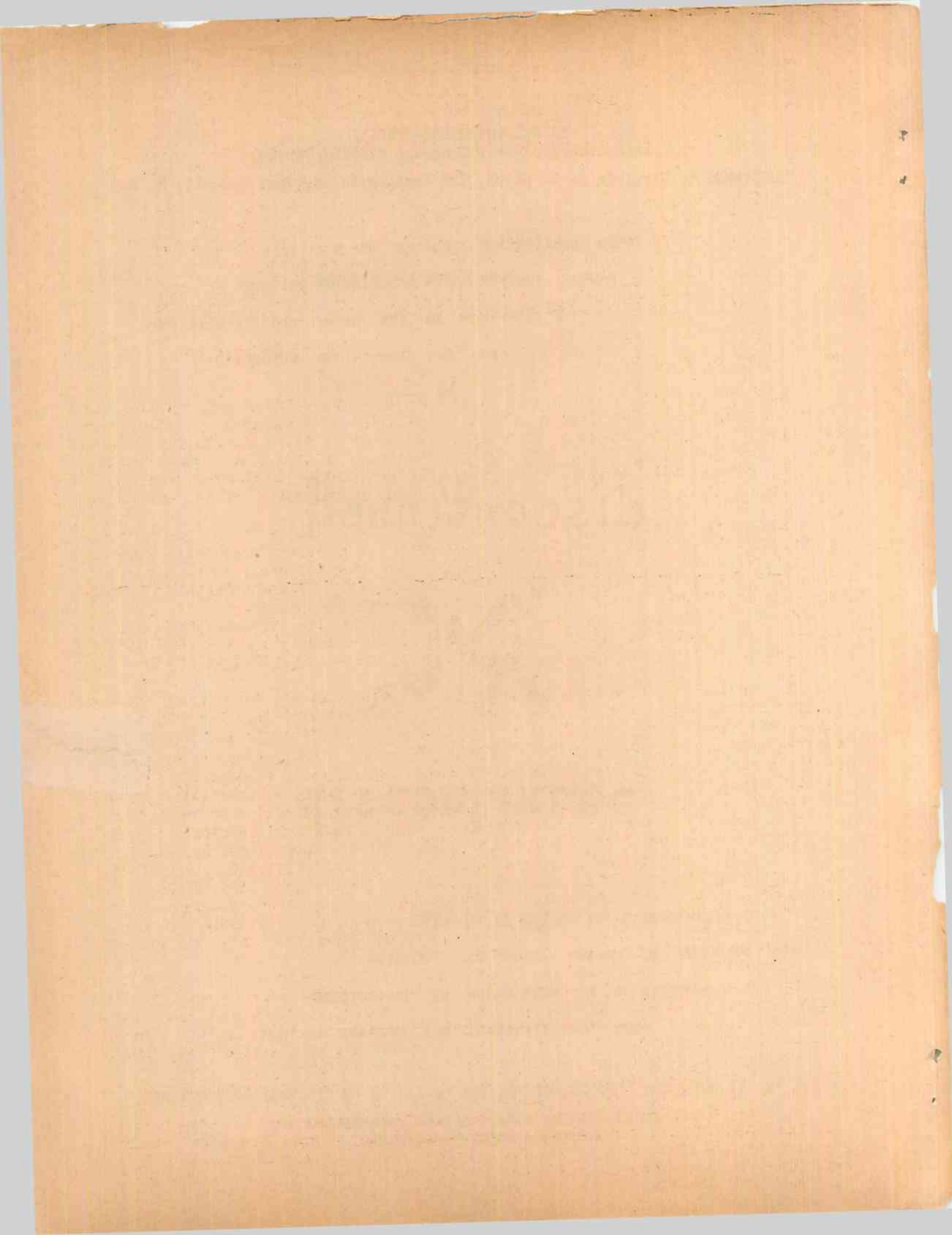
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If, to reverse the possibilities, this

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RECOMMENDED READING

Lord of the World, by Robert Hugh Benson. Dodd Mead & Co., New York. 1940

Preface. I am perfectly aware that this is a terribly sensational book, and open to innumerable criticisms on that account, as well as on many others. But I did not know how else to express the principles I desired (and which I passionately believe to be true) except by producing their lines to a sensational point. I have tried, however, not to scream unduly loud, and to retain, so far as possible, reverence and consideration for the opinions of other people. Whether I have succeeded in that attempt is quite another matter.

Robert Hugh Benson

Cambridge, 1907

Lord of the World is a novel of the future, written in 1907; such trappings as Esperanto, "volors" with flapping wings, the dwelling arrangements, and acceptance of Euthanasia make it a science-fictional book -- and it is, incidentally, splendid science-fiction. Lord of the World is an excellently written book, notable chiefly for fine characterization and for sustained and convincing atmosphere. Finally, Lord of the World is a Catholic novel, whose theme is the coming of the Anti-Christ.

The science-fictional aspect, while it is of interest, is so only in passing. I shall not treat of it here, except to say that Benson's forty-year-old ideas of the future in terms of technology (by which I here mean gadgetry) and in terms of the startling, will not hold the attention of the younger element for ten minutes. The book was written to shock, but it will shock only the mature.

Again I would say in passing -- persons who do not like tiresome Prologues need not read Benson's. It is essential only to the situation, not to the story, to which science-fiction devotees will have no conceivable difficulty in adjusting.

As a novel, the book sets the stage for the coming of the Anti-Christ and then treats that coming as a variable stress. The characters of Father Percy Franklin, Oliver and Mabel Brand, and of Julian Felsenburgh (even before he is limned) constitute a three-way tension. The Brands, representative young citizens of a materialistic future, slowly diverge to end in total opposition of viewpoint, and the tension becomes a sort of web with four main strands. It is spine-chilling, whether the reader identifies himself with the orthodox Catholic viewpoint of the author, or stands outside the basic concept and is acted upon by its handling alone, to watch the deadly shimmering of these strands while Felsenburgh moves upon his own line toward the center of the web. Benson makes it clear that neither Oliver nor Mabel is a guiltless but doomed fly. Each by his own character and actions makes the coming of the Anti-Christ inevitable, and is therefore (to change the image) a cornerstone of the new church. In the concluding chapters of the book, the stress narrows -- and broadens thereby -- to become, in the persons of Percy and Julian, the battle between Christ and Anti-Christ.

Oliver early encompasses his own doom, by his willingness to go along with the new Compulsory Divine Worship. Mabel, at first equally complacent about life in its new aspects of Maternity (Christmas), Life (Spring), Sustenance (Midsummer), and Paternity (Winter) festivals, with their attendant graven images, is increasingly troubled by the extermination of the "Supernaturalists". She sees too straight to be taken in by the expedient reasons offered in several forms over a five-month period for the wanton slaughter, even though she is to some extent under Julian's personal spell. Then, when a "Catholic plot" is made known to the inflamed masses and mob rule breaks out (as planned by Julian), Mabel witnesses as brutal a crucifigional night-riot as has perhaps ever been written. /I make this somewhat extreme statement on the basis of the extent to which horror here communicates itself; with me, it was as intense as it could possibly be short of actually seeing the three

figures borne by, dangling and flapping from their crosses, in the erratically torch-lit darkness./' Mabel is forced to find her own way out, and in the process -- as far as Benson is concerned -- may have saved her soul.

In spite of his religious bias and in line with his downright inability to cheat the requirements of the novel by moralizing, Benson makes such points as these, always by indirection. First, Father Francis' (a minor character) apostasy is made credible, but no less certainly the wrong choice. Secondly, due to the shortness of time in which the new religion has swept over the world, the graven images mentioned above are for the first year to be made of clay: commonest clay. Thirdly, Father Percy's metamorphosis into the complete representative of God on earth moves without any forcing through his being invested in embattled Rome with the foreshortened but glorious papacy to his establishment in a whitewashed hut, in historic Nazareth. Perhaps the most obvious touch in the book is this passage:

He /the Pope/ nodded across to a dim patch of white walls
glimmering through the violet haze of the falling twilight.

"That place, father," He said, "what is its name?"

The Syrian priest looked across, back once more at the Pope
and ~~ab~~cross again.

"That among the palms, Holiness?"

"Yes."

"That is Megiddo," he said. "Some call it Armageddon."

But Benson goes no farther than this with the obvious. All the brooding horror of the last chapter is conveyed by the bloody sun, which rises red, and by the en-crimsoned atmosphere as the end inescapably approaches. The violence remains implicit, and the conclusion is a tour de force, as the reader suffers every moment of the world's

"set, motionless, noiseless, breathless effort to hold itself
in being ... "

It is difficult to discuss the genre, the fact that this is a specifically Catholic book, outside of the book as a novel. One can, at least, say that only a powerfully religious man could so convincingly portray the establishment of a religion; neither a Protestant nor an unbeliever could so convince -- because he could not care so much. He would be incapable of amassing the necessary detail in the necessary order. One can say that only a believing Catholic could portray the encounter between Percy and the then Pope, his Papa Angelicus, so that it comes across as a genuinely religious experience and is never at any point ludicrous. Perhaps only a Catholic could make so perfect a minor Judas Iscariot-type out of Cardinal Dolgorovski, in so few words, without the caricaturist's crutch of a label. Be it understood, this book is not caricature; it is not satire; and it is never funny. It is the frightening and realistic record, seen through the eyes of a man to whom the question ~~is~~ one of eternal life or death, of the death of God through the murder of God's regent on earth.

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Virginia K. E. Blish

Doom

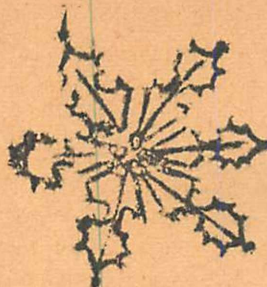
Contempt was a
frozen city

I was safe --

Until your soul
put forth the first
forgiving star

And pity opened
like a summer sky.

r.d.



Lament for Now

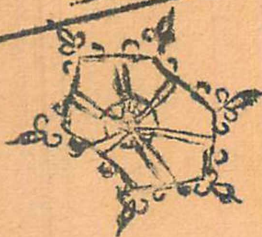
Nothing so circular as stairs, reflective balustrades;
Our heights are sharply gained, and squarely sat on.
We learn with clinic speed, in capsule clarity.
Our logic stapled, neat, unblown by dream.

Refuting sunsets with a melted watch,
We stamp out skies on mathematic feet...
And leave no moons to yearn for.

We mark the Spring with pat parenthesis.
Engage in insulated passions,
And apply detergent smiles to love.

Perennially sure the switch is set for death.

-- Rita Dragonette



Memory is no
crystal prison
for your flawless keep.

Corroded
by accumulated noon

You are as
indistinguishably dust

as any other
night's disordered traces
underfoot.

r.d.

THE WORLD OF fap
A

(Winter)

Glom -- Cover cute. The Rupert Saint-Georges so overpoweringly bad it is funny; so intended? Preface to Wellman letter ingratiating but the stuff as a whole is a little too high-powered for me. I shrink from Ackermanese in inverse ratio to my leanings toward Joyce, I'm afraid -- and that's pow'ful inverse, suh.

Matters of Opinion -- In spite of one initial impression to the contrary, I have learned that Speer can always be depended upon for intelligent material. Even when it seems (to me) wrongheaded, he does such a fine job once he has stated his basic premises, that I can't help being interested. The Animist exposé pains-taking and devastating. I'm afraid I shouldn't've bothered to do it myself, but I tend to forget how many people inhabit the lunatic fringe and choose to ignore them rather than root them out. The Speer stand, here, needless to say, does not seem to me wrongheaded. Some of the footnotes, particularly the 35th, tickle my risibilities. I suppose I shouldn't find the neo-g.o.p., adolescent- (which is to say: idealistic) fascistic tone of this whole thing amusing but but until it turns into a menace, I shall. I'm yours for a renascent Renaissance, myself, Mr. Madole. The Crane letter very interesting indeed. I don't know enough marginal stuff to say whether he's right wrong or the eternal Times man, but insofar as I feel that it was a crucial mistake to purchase gold rather than goods some years back, I expect I probably go along with him on much of the rest. When do we stop thinking in terms of a nation's standard of living and start doing concrete thinking in terms of the world's s.o.l.? Or do we all get blown to our stubborn atoms first? The recent congressional elections indicate that perhaps Speer rather than Crane assesses the "changes" in our foreign trade policy accurately.

A Tale of the Evans -- received and noted. Thanks, I guess, for the card. The lead article seems to be a great deal of fuss about nothing. From a reading of the FA last mailing, I thought Elmer's two entries awfully funny. Contrary to later indications, not only funny but in order. Hilarious pomposities and good interlineations can suitably go along with competence. Sloppiness and treasury troubles, of course, cannot.... He may of course have added the second one after shrill cries from EEE -- but even so, I think it's a joke and a good one. ... Ant-ics is awful. Such phrases as "contaminate the air" reveal why EEE is no closer to true serenity than he is, perhaps. A man whose mind is cluttered up with such tags might have a great deal of trouble evaluating ideas and events. He's probably seldom bored, though.

Plenum -- Don't worry your head, Milty. Libel suits are just good clean fun; if it's a civil suit, there's not even any possibility of a jail sentence; and if you've got five hundred dollars or so in the "recreation" envelope of your budget, why, you're all set, for a few gay crowded months. ... Your remarks certainly seem justified by the listings you make of the two magazines' contents. Since I am a stickler for absolute merit I will admit that while what you say ~~is~~ seems justified, Warner's article was shorter, more interesting, and accomplished most of the same job. I've drawn my own conclusions, thank you. ~~XXXX~~ They include a gold star for you on account of your discrimination. One mark of the fan (and believe me, Stanley, I don't hate fans -- I just don't think much of most of the younger ones I have had any contact with -- and for, among others, the following reasons) is: a distressing willingness to read anything that he has found in his mailbox and an equally distressing lack of critical acumen in judging it. It is, to come back to your worries again, a little foolish to worry as to whether you're going to be sued. The situation is just the opposite from

being accused of a crime, you know. Anyone can sue you for libel, and it is then up to you to clear yourself of the charges if you can. I should think intentional libel, with deliberate intent to spread untruths about someone and thus affect his earning powers, standing in the community, etc., is actually rare. We see it mostly in this country during political campaigns, such as those of Grover Cleveland --- James G. Blaine campaign of 1884 and the more recent and almost as shameful example of Republican tactics during the 1944 campaign. I would venture to say that a libel suit operates in the other direction from the law's intent. Charges are instituted more often to vent rage at criticism than to clear a good name of infamous charges. It is a pity, but then much of our legal set-up is antiquated; and I suppose it is better that changes come slowly. ... On Part III of General Semantics I have little to say. It is interesting, including the end. At the risk of making myself very unpopular, I will say that I have observed in this mailing a startling evidence of a sort of irresponsibility from you (in the split-second detumescence of a carefully undertaken project) from Widner and Perdue (in the gross departures from any semblance of formality in the rendering of reports by elected officers) and from several others (in whom it surprises me less.) Don't misunderstand me; I think Elmer's needles are beautifully sharp and well-aimed, but I don't think the Amateur is a legitimate place to razz anybody. The question of funds is something else again. ... I am too new a member to register a sharp protest against misuse of the organization's funds, or even temporary misdirection of such money. ... The World of T thing was only fair. I like your fiction less than anything else you write, Milty. Coda, for instance, I liked. There informality is entirely okay, and disorganization a virtue. You write so directly when you speak as Rothman that I cannot quite understand why your fiction leans toward the cliché and a rigidly undistinguished stylization. (I do mean stylization, too; as for style, it is lacking entirely.)

Horizons -- reviewed elsewhere. Much liked, although I regret having duplicate Horizonses instead of two separate Warner publications. Briefly, the Gardner poor, all editorial material good.

ForLo Kon -- I presume this is the kind of material that is described as "promising." Therefore, I shall make an effort to list good points: the Shanghaied illustration is a pleasing little decoration; all other things considered, there is an unexpected amount of well-used white space; the last line of Bud Dakat Kamba' amused me out of all proportion to the nuisance reading the thing is; and the December cover is cute. If breezy youth is a virtue, that can be added to the list. Nonetheless, ForLo Kon is not worth the time it took to read it, by any standard. The padded contents page particularly burns me.

Eight Pages -- I would have thought better of this, Russell, if you had written more and reprinted less. I think awfully highly of you, anyhow, though, so it hardly matters. For myself, I am surprised and pleased that FAPA has survived its last few mailings, which have -- to say a kind least -- not been good. I expect the organization either to improve radically or to fold this coming year. I sincerely hope the former will be the case; my opinion of earlier mailings seems to be higher than yours. I like the informal material just about as well as anything, providing it's well-done, and do not gray my hair over the future reference I shall or shall not make to what is after all only mimeographed material, presented as a hobby. If you think so little of FAPA, Eight Pages seems rather more work than the one or two essays a year which you expect to get as recompense. I wish you would make another half-hearted stab at putting out a good publication -- whether to improve FAPA or just for the hell of it because it's fun! Another Fantasy Critic would be undiluted pleasure. ... As for your reprints: Paul Engle has some little gift, but not much, to my ear. Too diffuse to carry the length at which Orion is treated, and insufficient technical proficiency to make up for (or lessen) diffuseness in writing. ...

F R A P P E

Tennyson occasionally compels my unwilling admiration, and The Kraken is a good enough example of his skill. The Henry Miller quote is something else again. I've not read Sunday After the War, but would like to. Miller has his dottyisms (the New Statesman and Nation reviewed him under the head of Potted Miller!) but he's seldom uninteresting. The Collapse of Homo Sapiens seems to be treated at cruel and unusual length. Judging solely from what you seem to me to indicate of your own feelings about the book, I would say that you could have served your critical purpose better with nothing but the last sentence of your last paragraph, adding "Hardly worth the trouble," and by then going on to extended analysis of some book that was worth the trouble -- instead of preceding that sentence with all its foregoing.

Moonshine -- abominably reproduced. I have sinned on this in the past, and may again, but it hardly makes me any kinder toward out-and-out sloppy work. LJM = Len = Len Moffatt, I presume? One Fan's Outlook does seem to me to justify the title of the magazine but it hardly justifies anything else. I don't mean to be cruel, but this stuff is not even good enough to have been accepted for some high school annual. The rest of the issue I am afraid I had better pass over with no comment.

Exposé!! A Kennedy's Eye View of the Philly Conference! -- This fan is enlightened as to the conference, true enough, but not much edified, Joe. The piece has a few true Kennedy touches, but for the rest it seems an awful waste of your considerable talents.

Sustaining Program -- One hell of a good issue, from the miniature illustration on the cover to the concluding cartoon -- as was to have been expected. Speer is practically never breathtaking; he's always dependable; and even when he bores (he) he is usually doing a competent job on whatever the item might be. Why did you exclude Chaos Coordinated from CuWC, Jack? I thought these reviews were completist, or I'd attribute it to the simple likelihood that you just didn't care for the story. So I'm asking: oversight or what? I shall refrain from any comment on any of the meat in SusPro. Before I get into any of the running arguments in FAPA /if I'm not, indeed, immediately Deglerized for having left my party manners to home/ I shall stick to brief comments on the mailing as a whole. ... In line with which: I gather FAPA is in doldrums of one sort or another. It's an awful disappointment, though, after having read all the mailings I could get hold of for several years, to get a collection like this in the first envelope that is mine as a member. Anyhow, congratulations on past achievements, boys, and best wishes for a future. ... To cavilers: I am not boring from within. I like FAPA. I am now a member of FAPA, and have spoken above as one. Acknowledge my certain loyalty to the organization before you resent my possible cheek, please. Thank you one and all. I am glad to be with you.

Fantasy Amateur -- Objectionable features discussed elsewhere. For the rest, fine.

ILL WIND DEPARTMENT

You earned my gratitude, Elmer, by not throwing Light
on the subject of this mailing.

THE WORLD OF fap

A (or) Not bad for two bits, the man said.

(Spring)

Burblings -- moderately funny. Whether reportage, parody, or transcribed from a damp dream, no matter how you view it, it does make Ashley out to be such a sap. Cf Elmer's quote: Ashley on Ladd, FA this issue, which achieves the same purpose and a little more; makes Ashley out to be an unethical sap. Now I've never been much taken by Ashley (since the amazing amendments exchange, when they both succeeded in making saps of themselves without any assistance) but I've never thought Ashley stupid. I wish he himself had been represented in the mailing. ... Burbee's introduction -- the "I don't want to give up my membership but I'm damned if I'll make any effort" attitude -- destroys my possible belief in his possible good faith, in spite of the fact that I gather he's a good guy with a fine sense of humor and so on. Burblings, this once at least, leaves an unpleasant taste in my mouth.

Blitherings -- The face is familiar, and I will have told you in another place what I think of its lineaments. One thing I failed to mention (and maybe didn't read until just now) is the delightful parable of the Skeptics. Your own?

Glom -- I enjoyed several things therein, which, unfortunately, is unusual.

Moonshine -- Uninteresting.

Horizons -- Interesting, but a twice told tale.

Plenum -- Best in the mailing. The first half of the editorial is to the point, and the point is well-taken. Second half strikes me personally as eyewash. From as much of it as I've yet read myself, I would recommend that you try Spengler. The era wouldn't stick in your craw -- you could perhaps enjoy watching the dissolution if you knew the probable why -- particularly a joe like you, Milty. The sophomoric asceticism of your remarks will make you a very unhappy guy someday, I expect, if you don't at least make the effort to broaden other aspects of your Anschauung.... I'm no mathematician, but I presume the article was no less directed at me for that. I give you, at any rate, the dubious benefit of my reactions. At the top of page 9 (which goes to prove how lucid you've been up to that point) you lost me. I don't see why what you say is so is so -- unless a comma serves a mathematical purpose. Does it? the =, -, / in previous statements I understood well enough to tag along, but does " , " do the same kind of a job? If not, what happened? Then we got together again but at the bottom of page 9 you lost me again. ... I would say, to you as a prospective teacher, don't say "interesting." Say elegant if you like; this tends to make the student perk up and realize "My God, Rothman enjoys this stuff. Maybe there's something in it." But when you say "This is interesting," you might as well say "This is good for you, dears." ... I found the whole article, including -- especially including -- the pointed little cartoons, fascinating, and am particularly grateful for the explanation of the Cartesian enigma. You should make a good teacher.

Tator & Snix -- Why Coswal? Why not Terlet? The second of these publications is doubtless commendable. I found nothing of interest in either one, other than an occasional ingratiating phrase -- as in Snix on tears. /At least, that's what the notes in front of me say. At this remove, I can't see why I found it ingratiating./ But as for the overly profuse use of Snix -- Nix.

EAParition -- Like Coslet, you show a faint promise. For instance, last line in Mopsy comment, which I found very funny. Speer seems to affect some people that way in spite of his sterling worth. Moonshine's doggerel was not worth comment but I do find it interesting that several (Speer, Jewett, others?) picked up the women's fashion angle. 'Snow Use, when I finally managed to read it, turned out to be very funny. ... For a first publication, this is, after all, good, and likeably honest.

Fan-Tods -- Seen you before, too. Don't like it any less the second time around, and have no valid objection to offer people who distribute the same magazine in both of the apa's to which I belong -- but nothing could induce me to comment twice.

Sus-Pro -- good. My only comment is gratitude for the three quotes. It had been a long time since I had last seen the first two, and I welcomed the third. Lack of comment does not indicate lack of interest, incidentally, but just that I found nothing to add or subtract from what you had to say.

Willie Acquires An Italian Hand! -- This time the face is as familiar as an egg that slipped into a corner of the cupboard and stayed around much too long. ... How funny is Joe Fann supposed to be, and how many of his poetic dicta were humor as unconscious as Van Vogt's eyeballs?

Harold W. Cheney, Jr. -- I am sorry, I truly am, but I can't read this stuff. Just made the supreme effort and gave up. /Decided I was being unfair, gritted my teeth, and made it: The "story" was funny, and the article had a point, but it was hard going./

Fantasy Amateur -- In spite of the fact that the cover is a howl and that I've loved Elmer's stuff for years, I think he's a lousy OE. Irresponsibility is not amusing when it wears responsibility's pants.

H-1661 -- post-mailed, I presume on this mailing. ... What does crifanac mean, and why? ... While it is not an unbreakable law, it is pretty generally true that the art of the cartoon lies in the drawing, and the better the cartoon, the shorter the explanatory text; from which it follows that the best cartoon is self-explanatory, without any tag-line. This would seem to -- and for me, does -- militate against the popularity of the guy who staggers into the room, crying, "Ho ho ho! Say, did you see the one in -- ho ho ho -- Collier's two months ago about ..." If I didn't (and if I had my druthers) I druther not hear about it.

INSIDE INFORMATION

Argasy, which has not (as far as I know, anyhow) published any science-fiction since it went slick, has just purchased a science-fiction opus from A. Bertram Chandler: THE OLD SHIP, a short novel. Sale was made by the Scott Meredith Literary Agency, which is not surprising, since it's the only large agency that specializes in s-f. Meredith is an ardent fan from way back, albeit a silent one. Argosy's editor, Rogers Terrill, plans to publish more science-fiction in the near future. I wish I knew publication date on the Chandler, but it hadn't yet been decided when I got the tip. Anyhow, watch for it -- THE OLD SHIP. It should be good, if it's up to GIANT KILLER.

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