

PROSPECTUS 13

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PROSPECTUS is the irregularly published newsletter of the Fantasy and Science Fiction Society of Columbia University. It is available to dues-paying members of the Society (dues are \$1.00 for the academic year). Edited by Eli Cohen. For information about the Society and its activities, contact:

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I Spent a Week in Philadelphia One Night Dept. — Remember,
Philcon will be held November 13th, 14th, and 15th, at the
Sheraton Hotel
17th and J.F.K. Boulevard
Phila., Pa. 19103

Guest of Honor will be Larry Niven. If you have a car and can be persuaded, bribed, or coerced into going, please let me know.

Fred Phillips and Dorothea Nissen were married on Oct. 31st. I would like to extend the club's congratulations and best wishes to both of them.

My spies inform me that after the meeting last Thursday (which broke up at 2 A.M.), a vicious feghoot war broke out on the IRT. A concentrated barrage of puns reduced three subway cars to a shambles and totally devastated the 59th street station. One result was a series of successively worse feghoots on the same line, of which three were rescued from the wreckage by the intrepid Yarik P..Thrip. This is the first. There are many more to come. The list is long. — Dirac Angestun Gessept.

THE ADVENTURES OF GRAYSON GREENSWARD

Centuries before, the planet Volstead had witnessd a violent war between the newly arrived Terran settlers and the native sea-serpents. The Institute in charge of colonialization had hoped that the serpents, an intelligent, highly civilized and very friendly race, would form close links with the settlers -- both species had seemed agreeable when the settlement was originally proposed. But when the puritan settlers landed and discovered that the oceans of Volstead were over 50% alcohol, and the remaining percent did nothing to impair drinkability (rather the opposite) ... Well, even though the Institute's scientists assured the Volsteaders that the serpents were biologically incapable of being affected by alcohol the way humans were, the colonists never really trusted the "snakes" after that.

An uneasy peace prevailed for the first few years. But then the two leaders of the expedition, Jean Planchomme, a sternly moralistic judge, and Frederique Etudiant, a hellfire and brimstone preacher, were found drowned by the scotch-and-water's edge, and no one believed the serpents' explanation, that those two upright men had drunk themselves insensible and fallen into the waves. The Volsteaders erected two magnificent sepulchres for them near the spot where they were found, and then embarked on a bloody war. As anyone might have predicted, the serpents

were victorious, and the Volsteaders came very near to being completely destroyed before their tattered remnants fled to the mountains to start anew.

But all that was centuries ago. With increasing prosperity, the Volsteaders became more relaxed and tolerant, and in time expanded outward till at last they had reoccupied their original seaport settlements. The serpents seemed ready to forgive (if indeed they had not already forgotten) their unhappy first encounter.

The two thousandth anniversary of planetfall approached, and the people planned a massive celebration. Interest in history ripened, and one scholar dug out of flaking records the location of the memorials of Planchomme and Etudiant. Government officials visited the spot, thinking of incorporating the discovery into the festivities. But they found nothing. Some suggested that the sepulchres had been washed into the sea. It was even proposed that the government should inquire of the sea-serpents to see if they could find them. But the officials feared reviving old memories, and turned down this proposal. Instead, they called in Grayson Greensward.

Greensward, however, favored the idea. "Surely no harm can come of it. They must have forgotten all that by now."

"We don't choose to take a chance on that."

"Oh well," said Greensward, "in that case I think I'll go for a dr--- swim." And before they could stop him, he was gone.

Anniversary day found Grayson seated next to the President's daughter on the dais atop the giant sandbar in the harbor of Hic, Volstead's capital. The president was trying his best to give his speech while catching all the dirty jokes that Grayson regaled his companion with. "And so," said the president, "as I think back upon those courageous salesmen, travelling from one farmhou-- ah, well, whose final resting place remains unknown --"

Suddenly, out of the sparkling sea rose two giant elongations, carrying ancient, slimy marble upon their backs, racing for the bar.

"Tee what I shole you," murmured Greensward indistinctly, "Wine eels haul tombs."

----- Yarik P. Thrip (with thanks to Mike Weiss)

SALE! Limited supply: Oddly shaped clouds, thermal inversions.
Also 2 doz. plasmoids and one (1) slightly battered
flying saucer. --- U.S. Air Force

If Sterling Moss turned into a werewolf, would it be a case of lichenthropy?

FANTASTIC MONEY MAKING SCHEME!!! Get rich quick! For details, send name, address, and one dollar to:

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And now, in a belated tribute to Halloween, we have an article on witchcraft by Fred Phillips.

DE NATURA GNOSIS PROFUNDIS

Witchcraft has its roots in a number of proto-cultures from the Middle East and Late Neolithic Europe. Its contemporary adherents claim that it is, or is part and parcel of, the oldest living religion in the world. This is an ambitious statement and verification is difficult. (See "Stone Age Religions and Their Influence on European Thought," G. Rachel Levy, Harper/Torchbooks, 1948). There seems to be a high probability, certainly open to further display of evidence, that the pattern which Dr. Margaret Murray, in her God of the Witches and The Witch-Cult in 16th-century Europe, traces back to Eleusinian and Apollonian Mysteries, was directly affected by nomadic migrations of Celtic and Hunnish character. They "picked up" fragmentary religious usages through every region which they passed until they began to settle in what became the early "barbarian" states of the late Roman Empire, and ultimately emerged from the Middle Ages as the first modern national states.

There is ample evidence to support the theory that the "Old Religion" meaning Graeco-Roman-Celtic-Scandinavian and even Slavic, never really succumbed to the advent of Christianity, even after episodes like the Albigensian Crusade. The mestizos of certain backwards parts of Mexico continue, when the local priest turns his back at the altar, to express the names of their ancient gods and outwardly make every display of devoted Catholicism. There is no reason to believe that force or the threat of force can completely alter the religious attitude of a culture, even though symptoms of assimilation are profound in all other respects.

"Witchcraft," at least as defined by the Christian Church of Europe, was at one time a powerful rival religion. When it was driven underground and its adherents put to the sword, it lost the dimensions of an organized religion and devolved to a number of sects. Some of them came to the New World and are seen as Obeiahism and Voodooism; some of them stayed where they were, although their records tend to be fragmentary and scant, since it was once worth a witch's life to write anything pertaining to his or her worship down on paper -- it comprised capital evidence in most European countries, as late as 1836. This was the year that the Holy Office, known as the "Inquisition," the first tribunal to attempt to define the motive for crime (Inquisitio: I question), was finally relegated to the duty of suppressing heresy in books ONLY.

When a religion which is on the ascendant drives other religions underground, it is the easiest thing in the world for

LOST: Broomstick, on or about Nov. 1, vicinity of Low Library. Answers to the name of "Plywood." Reward. Call 280-1754

it to label them as "sects" or "cults." If Witchcraft had been formalized and institutionalized as the state religion of Europe, we might today refer to Christians and Jews as members of the "Jesus Sect" or the "Jehovah Cult."

A number of books on the subject which are worth reading, besides those already mentioned, are:

Witchcraft -- Pennethorne Hughes -- Pelican A 745 \$1.25

The Black Arts -- Richard Cavendish -- Capricorn Giant Cap, \$2.45

Witchcraft Today -- Dr. Gerald Gardiner -- Tandem Books, about

.95