

1925-2025

UN AN AVEC HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT

#132 | 14 MAI 1925

Je ressentais exécrablement qu'il soit si tard — de pleines semaines se sont succédé sans aucun soulagement de mes migraines et vertiges, & tout ce temps jamais pu travailler plus de trois heures en continu. (Cela va mieux maintenant.) En plus de mes problèmes habituels je souffrais d'un trouble oculaire inaccoutumé qui m'interdisait de lire tout livre de gravures — un curieux tiraillement des nerfs et des muscles qui m'a vraiment alarmé pendant les semaines qu'il a duré. Et du sein de ces ténèbres a surgi le cauchemar des cauchemars — le plus réaliste & horrible dont j'ai fait l'expérience depuis mes dix ans — dont mon imagerie écrite ne peut refléter la force hideuse & l'épouvantable oppression. Cela s'est passé après minuit, comme je m'étais mis sur le canapé après une lutte avec la « poésie » de ce vieux fou de Bush. La première phase en a été l'impression générale d'une appréhension indéfinie — sentiment vague de terreur qui devenait universel.

Il me sembla que j'étais assis sur ma chaise, revêtu de ma vieille robe de chambre grise, lisant une lettre de Samuel Loveman. La lettre était incroyablement réelle — mince, papier au format habituel, encre violette, signature & tout — et son contenu semblait de mauvais augure. Ce que me racontait le Loveman rêvé : « Ne manquez pas d'aller voir Nyarlathotep s'il vient à Providence. Il est horrible — horrible au-delà de n'importe quoi que vous puissiez imaginer — mais magnifique. Il vous hante ensuite pendant des heures. Je tremble encore de ce que j'y ai vu. »

*Seul chez soi avec ses livres, son canapé et les lettres qu'on envoie ou reçoit ? Cela suffit à faire un monde. Ici lettre à Reinhardt Kleiner, 14 décembre 1920, avec rêve initial qui sera transposé en récit dans Nyarlathotep. Aujourd'hui, Lovecraft ne voit personne, et, hors brève sortie provisions, restera toute la journée et la nuit enfermé au 169 Clinton Street.*

[1925, jeudi 14 mai]

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Up late — read — write — out shopping & c — WROTE AEPG/////read  
— stayed up till 5:30 a m — retired.

*Levé tard. Lu. Écrit. Dehors pour des courses. Écrit à tante Annie.  
Lu. Resté debout jusqu'à 5h30. Couché.*

« Lisez des choses faciles dans les moments creux, mais choisissez de bonnes tranches de temps — quand vous avez toute liberté sans risque d'interruption — pour des lectures qui demandent concentration et compréhension. Ne vous forcez pas à continuer de lire quand la fatigue commence à ralentir vos facultés d'assimilation. C'est perdre son temps que de le consacrer à ce qui ne produira pas de résultat. D'un autre côté, ne pas vous inquiéter ou décourager si vous ne parvenez pas à vous souvenir de tout ce que vous lisez. Personne ne saurait retenir tous les faits et images qui lui sont entrés dans la tête. Il suffit que ce qui reste soit en proportion raisonnable — assez de repères basiques pour vous donner une idée générale de la chose, rendre les phénomènes et allusions du quotidien intelligibles, et vous autorise à partir en quête d'une connaissance plus détaillée quand vous en aurez besoin. La principale qualité de la lecture c'est l'exercice et la discipline qu'elle permet à l'esprit — la façon dont cela nous apprend à penser, à déployer une curiosité intelligente envers les choses, à identifier les principes généraux sous la variété individuelle de surface, à comparer à corrélérer des sujets et des événements apparemment lointains, à savoir où et comment obtenir de l'information, à apprécier et comprendre l'histoire et notre environnement, à savoir manier le jugement et les proportions, à percevoir intuitivement l'art et la beauté, et à déplacer notre intérêt du trivial et du non-sens, vers ce qui signifie. » Howard Phillips Lovecraft, *Suggestions pour un guide de lecture*, extrait : fier de proposer, ici même dans ce dossier, transcription complète de ce texte, dont l'organisation, l'arborescence ou la cartographie, la démarche et les classements plutôt que les choix en eux-mêmes, n'ont pas tant d'équivalent. Et Lovecraft avalé par sa propre matière, incapable de plus la restreindre ? C'est aussi une question liée à l'écriture en tant que telle. Kirk pris à temps plein par les préparatifs de l'ouverture de la librairie en association avec Karmin, ses stocks de livres démenagés Orange Street, depuis combien de jours, dans ce journal, avons-nous vu Lovecraft entièrement solitaire ? Et si ces temps sans même d'écriture (sinon la lettre, mais celle-ci aussi perdue, encore quelques jours avant de pouvoir s'appuyer sur le « journal » transmis tour à tour aux deux tantes de

Providence), faisait aussi partie de l'écriture même ? Bientôt, Lovecraft revendiquera ces traversées de silence, et d'heures seul, pour marcher ou pour lire et écrire — il n'est pas sûr qu'aujourd'hui ce soit choisi, le sentiment cependant que, depuis le (faux) déménagement de Kirk, cette transition s'amorce, elle sera liée bientôt à la mise en écriture de son essai sur le surnaturel en littérature. Dans le journal : la mort dans le théâtre, on dirait un Agatha Christie (dans son *Guide*, Lovecraft a même une petite — toute petite — mention pour le roman policier). Le théâtre Henry Miller deviendra bientôt le premier cinéma à projeter des films uniquement « mâles » (trouvé des photos de John Webster sur scène, mais sous droits Alamy ou Getty). Archéologie du tourisme de masse : 4 000 touristes à bord des cinq paquebots poussant vapeur ce jour vers la Californie (via Panama) ou Cuba, et ce n'est qu'en prémice aux voyages d'été.

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*New York Times*, 15 mai 1925. John Webster, 45 ans, acteur dans la pièce *The poor nut*, a été retrouvé mort dans sa loge du théâtre Henry Miller, 43ème rue Ouest, la nuit dernière, quelques minutes avant le baisser de rideau. M Webster, qui jouait le rôle de Coach Jackson dans cette comédie universitaire, n'est pas remonté sur scène au moment du salut final. Un des garçons de régist fut envoyé pour savoir ce qui le retardait, et le trouva allongé sur le sol. Le médecin de l'hôpital Bellevue venu avec l'hôpital a déclaré qu'il était mort d'une crise cardiaque. Son rôle sera repris par Patterson McNutt, le producteur. Marié, l'acteur vivait à Douglaston, Long Island. Il était le fils de Nellie McHenry, une actrice renommée de la génération précédente.

### ACTOR DIES IN THEATRE.

**John Webster of "The Poor Nut"  
Found Lifeless in Dressing Room.**

John Webster, 45 years old, an actor and member of the cast of "The Poor Nut," was found dead last night in his dressing room at Henry Miller's Theatre, in West Forty-third Street, a few minutes before curtain time.

Mr. Webster, who was playing the part of Coach Jackson in the college comedy, had failed to respond to the final curtain call, and the call boy who was sent to see what delayed him found him lying on the floor. Ambulance surgeons from Bellevue Hospital said he had died of heart trouble. His part was taken by Patterson McNutt, the producer.

The actor was married and lived at Douglaston, L. I. He was a son of Nellie McHenry, a well known player of the last generation.

## 4 LINERS TO DEPART; 1 SAILS AT MIDNIGHT

Total of 4,000 Tourists Com-  
pose Advance Guard of  
Summer Travelers.

### ONE SHIP TO THE FAR EAST

Shriners to Leave on President Gar-  
field for Los Angeles Con-  
vention—Two Liners Due.

Three steamships leave today for Europe carrying the advance guard of the Summer tourist rush and one liner sailed at midnight with a big list in all three classes. One steamship leaves for the Far East via the Panama Canal and California with a large number of tourists on board. A total of 4,000 was on the five steamships.

Among the notables due to sail today for Cherbourg, Southampton and Hamburg on the Deutschland of the Hamburg-American Line are:

Dr. Ernst Foerster, consulting engineer for the Hamburg-American Line, who designed the Leviathan as the Vaterland; Dr. Wilhelm von Meister, who was the Governor of the Province of Frankfurt-on-Main from 1905 to 1913; Baron Moritz von Benthman, banker, of Frankfurt, and the Baroness Bethma; Baron Cornelius von Berenberg-Gossler, banker of Hamburg and the Baroness; Count Rutger, I. E. Schimmelpenninck, A. Stoll and P. M. Ohmels.

Among the passengers sailing today for Oslo and Copenhagen on the Hellig Olav of the Scandinavian-American line are:

Mrs. Eli Dahl, Miami, Fla.; Mrs. Dagmar Bencke, wife of the Brooklyn musician, Professor Victor Bancke; Captain A. Lindberg, commander of the Danish steamer Norden; C. Nielsen and John E. Meehan, Mr. and Mrs. I. W. Heyman of New York City, Mrs. O. Miller and daughter from St. Thomas, V. I., and Mrs. A. P. Andrews of New Britain, Conn.

The list of the French liner De Grasse leaving today for Havre includes:

Laurence Stallings, co-author of the play "What Price Glory," and Mrs. Stallings; Mile. Germaine Tailleferre, French composer and pianist; Garrett Putnam Serviss, scientist and author; Mrs. Serviss and Miss G. Gatter Serviss; P. Harvey Middleton; Samuel E. Goldstein of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; Albert Revelli, Minister from Guatemala; Count Orazio Sanjust, Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Christie, Miss Carol Tredell, Dr. Ralph Hamill, surgeon of Chicago, and family; G. J. Helber and family, Miss Vivien B. Whybren.

Among the notables who sailed at midnight for Plymouth, Cherbourg and Bremen on the North German Lloyd liner Columbus were Lee Shubert, play producer; William Klein, W. F. Phillips, George B. McLean of Chicago, Mme. E. Schoen-Rens, former operatic singer, and Adolf Stadlaender, passenger director of the North German Lloyd Company.

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## N. Y. U. Editor Threatened With Expulsion Over Story That Students "Crib" in Exams

Wilson C. Gillespie, editor-in-chief of The New York University Daily News, was threatened with expulsion yesterday by the Faculty of Washington Square College when he refused to divulge the name of the author of statements in the comic column of his paper to which Faculty members objected.

His refusal was based upon the contention that the paper was an all-university matter, controlled by the Chancellor's Committee on Undergraduate Publications, and that any action taken against the paper or its staff should come through that committee. Gillespie also maintained that since the committee or its representatives personally supervise all publications, he could not be held responsible for anything appearing therein.

The controversy arose out of the pub-

lication of an article on "cribbing," in which the writer asserted that students at the university copied freely from one another's papers during examinations. Although the article did not specify any particular college or class, the Faculty of Washington Square College decided that the article was aimed at that branch, and insisted that the editor should reveal the name of the writer.

Gillespie's stand was endorsed by almost the entire student body, which resented an attempt by one college to censure or supervise an activity which embraces the whole university. Professor Henry Cook Hathaway, Chairman of the Chancellor's committee, said last night that while every college had disciplinary powers over its own students, any matter relative to publication was under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Publications.

This committee, which includes both students and Faculty, will meet today.

## LORD MILNER DIES OF SLEEPING SICKNESS

Viscount's Death Is the First Due to Present Epidemic of Malady in England.

### HIS CAREER SPECTACULAR

Helped Smash Governing-Class Tradition—Great Figure in Africa—Served in War Cabinet.

LONDON, May 13. (A. P.).—Viscount Milner, former Secretary of War, died today of sleeping sickness at his residence, Sturry Court, near Canterbury. He had been ill three weeks. His death removes one of the prominent figures in British South African affairs.

Lord Milner's is the first death in the epidemic of sleeping sickness which has attacked several hundred persons throughout Great Britain. Physicians have been unable to explain the sudden appearance of the disease. It has been of a mild form, the patients usually recovering after being in bed only about ten days.

The Viscount had been reported im-



VISCOUNT MILNER,  
Ex-Secretary of War of Great Britain,  
Who Died Yesterday of Sleeping Sickness.

## FRENCH WOMAN SPENT 14 YEARS IN TIBET

Mme. Alexander David Tells of Being Two Months in Lhasa in Disguise.

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By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PARIS, May 13.—A frail looking little woman, accompanied by a tall young Tibetan youth swinging a strange carved staff, attracted the attention of passing travelers arriving at the St. Lazare Station last evening. She was Mme. Alexandra David, formerly of Paris, who said she had lived for the last fourteen years in the unknown districts of Tibet, including two months in the forbidden city of Lhasa. The youth was her adopted son, a student of ancient Buddhist parchments and scrolls.

Mme. David's return was something like Rip Van Winkle re-entering a world full of strange things, for during the whole period of fourteen years she never received news from Europe. Now she has returned home without stopping from the moment she was able to cross the boundary into British India.

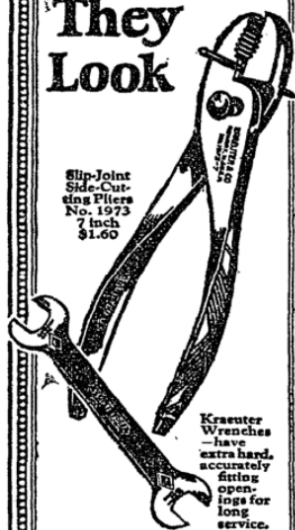
"What are those scraps of paper, yellow tokens, people are handing around?" she asked when she received some unfamiliar paper money and coins.

Mme. David tells an amazing story. In 1911 she went to Burma on a mission for the French Fine Arts Ministry to study Buddhist manuscripts, she said. Taken with an ardent desire to see the forbidden city of Lhasa, having made the acquaintance of Dhalai Lhamo, who was driven from the country by Chinese, Mme. David crossed the border and for two years lived in a cave 10,000 feet up in the mountains. Gradually, having studied the customs and dialects, as a disguised beggar she worked her way northward.

Again and again Mme. David was driven back by untoward happenings, hostility of the inhabitants and other dangers, until finally, in the Spring of 1923 she was able to reach the capital of Tibet and remain there, disguised for two months in the company of her adopted son.

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