

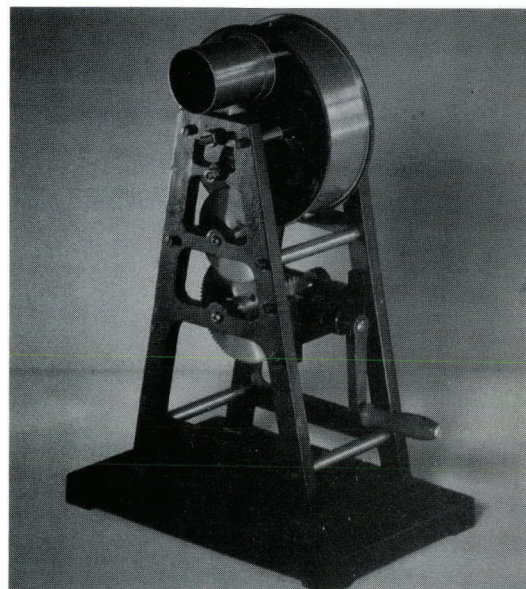
CORRECTING A PERSISTENT ERROR

Despite the extreme diligence of Georg Füsslin's research, Laurent Mannoni has pointed out an error of attribution. Füsslin, though, is in good company: the same mistake occurs both in Emmanuelle Toulet's *Cinematographe...* and in the Ariel catalogue.

On page 57 of his book, Füsslin reproduces a full-page colour picture of an elaborate and handsome device in brass, which is described in the caption, and in a paragraph on the facing page, as a Projection Phenakistiscope by Deyrolle of Paris. Perhaps Füsslin had his suspicions, for he notes that further information on the method of using the device is "unknown to the author".

The apparatus was originally discovered by the distinguished Parisian collector Maurice Gianati, from whom it was acquired first by Peter Ariel and finally by the Frankfurt Film Museum, where it now remains.

Subsequent research at the original manufacturers, who still exist in Paris, revealed however that the apparatus is in fact described in the firm's records as "Grand Phosphoroscope de M. Ed. Becquerel, monté sur batis en fonte, socle en acajou. Système d'engrenages hélicoïdaux. Cet appareil sert pour l'observation des cristaux. Le premier appareil de ce genre a été construit par la Maison, en 1853, sur les indications de M. Becquerel. 450 francs." (Large phosphoroscope of M. Ed. Becquerel, mounted on cast-metal frame, mahogany base. Helicoid gearing system. This apparatus is used for the observation of crystals. The first instrument of the kind was built by the firm, in 1853, to the design of M. Becquerel. 450 francs.) A wonderful find for a gemmologist, perhaps; but its attraction for pre-cinema collectors now appears distinctly limited.



THREE HUNDRED LANTERNS

The Lantern Image, Iconography of the Magic Lantern 1420-1880, compiled and with an introduction by David Robinson, Magic Lantern Society of Great Britain, 1992, £19.95.



Produced for the 1993 Convention of the Magic Lantern Society, *The Lantern Image* provides a comprehensive record of printed illustrations of the magic lantern before 1880, together with the earliest-known manuscript representations, which date back to the 15th century. Almost every one of nearly 300 images recorded is illustrated, where relevant in full colour.

The entries are arranged chronologically, each with a reference number, and a classification according to the type of illustration – for example, caricature, technical drawing, mythological and fanciful representations.

The result is a unique reference source, tracing the evolution of the magic lantern from a quaint "magical" toy to frighten the superstitious, to a sophisticated scientific device.

The Preface says that the book "is intended to be both enjoyable and useful – enjoyable as a vivid, visual survey of the evolution of the many-faceted device which is the most direct forerunner of the cinema, useful as a first point of reference for collectors and students endeavouring to identify an engraving or the progression of some particular style of lantern illustration."

The work has already received a warm welcome from international researchers and archivists; in a review which appeared in "1895", the journal of the French Association for Cinema History Research, Laurent Mannoni writes: "This kind of research among international collections is indispensable... The catalogue records 300 engravings. The author has no illusions though: this can only represent a part of what actually exists, but the work constitutes a very solid base for new research and provides a host of information... This marvellous catalogue... will delight collectors and historians, but also all lovers of painting and engraving."

The Lantern Image is available (post free to Society members) from John Finney, 61 Desford Road, Newbold Verdon, Leicester LE9 9LG. Telephone 0455 823952. Mr Finney can also supply a list of other Society publications, back numbers, badges, teddy bears, stickers, Christmas cards, etc.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS LANTERN IMAGES SUPPLEMENT

The introduction to *The Lantern Image* says: "We have aimed for completeness, knowing that we never could and never will attain it. ... Even while the final proofs were being corrected a score of hitherto unrecorded images turned up, and others will continue to do so. It is likely that if we could trace every printed image of the lantern from this period, the list would be at least twice as long as it

is now, but we have to begin somewhere and set down what we already know. ... It is intended to publish periodic supplements in *The New Magic Lantern Journal* and the editors will always be grateful for reports of errors and omissions and new discoveries so that these may be recorded."

The first supplement will be issued shortly, and we urge all readers who are aware of any lantern

images printed before 1880 which have eluded the book to report them, with photocopies if possible (preferably laser copies) where they are prepared to permit reproduction in the supplement. Any such additions and corrections should be sent to:

David Robinson, Flat 6, 96-100 New Cavendish Street, London W1M 7FA.