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P R O L O G U E

The long, hot summer is over, and with the advent of cooler weather, there is a flurry of publishing in Toronto. Since the last issue came out, many freeloaders have been lopped off the mailing list, and various worthy souls added. This mag is distributed strictly on the Grennell system. You have been warned.

How do I know? The Koran tells me so.

Last June Ron Kidder and I spent two weeks in New York, where we were the guests of Larry Shaw. (buy INFINITY - free advert.) We spent quite a bit of time with a number of fans, including some of the Fanarchists, and attended two Fanarchist "meetings." We found the Fanarchists to be, contrary to the impression held by some, a decorous, respectable bunch.

The first time we went to visit Harlan Ellison, we misunderstood some of the directions he gave us, took the wrong subway, and got off somewhere in Harlem, although we didn't know it at the time. We started to walk, pleased to see so many cops about in such a tough looking neighborhood. Next minute the cops had descended on us. "Where are you guys from? You up here to start a rumble? GET YOUR HANDS OUT OF YOUR POCKETS!! Where are you going? You up here to start a rumble? You on the stuff? You know what I mean? You up here to start a rumble? Take off your jackets and let me look at your arms. You up here to start a rumble?" and on and on and on. Eventually they let us go, saying at least three times "Don't forget New York isn't Toronto." meaning, o.k. to start rumbles in Toronto but not in New York. One of them seemed convinced right to the end that we were a couple of young hoods there to start a battle with all Harlem. I guess we just don't look like innocent faaans. John Quagliano (who should know) told Ron at the Clevecon that he looked like a New York hood, a Cleveland storekeeper remarked that the Insurgents looked like pachucos, and then there was another incident with a very persistent cop.....a bas les flics!

Eventually we found Harlan's place. We had been way out in our following of his directions. He lives in a very pleasant neighborhood near Columbia University.

Going around New York with Ellison can be exciting, interesting, exhausting, but rarely dull. I cherish the memory of Harlan Ellison, at the Museum of Modern Art, fishing a penny out of one end of the "wishing well" in order to toss it back in at the other end. The first time Harlan visited the Museum of Modern Art with us, we started at the third floor with the intention of working our way down. Harlan decided it would be in keeping with the surroundings to assume a French accent. The next moment we had an attendant tailing us. He followed us in our wanderings throughout all three floors, and then sat for some time in a corner of the outdoor cafeteria watching us innocently drinking sodas. There weren't any birdbaths around, so I have no idea why he was so suspicious.

There aren't any pansies there, but there ARE some Catholic Workers - Dan Curran

It seems that Derelicti Derogation is one of the most popular features in this zine. Therefore, this issue, there is another Derogation. Somehow I feel that the dash and sparkle (to quote Steward) of earlier Derogations is lacking. Maybe, as Geis grows bitter (according to G.M. Carr) I am becoming more benign and kindly, but possibly one of the reasons is lack of good raw material. Certainly there is no lack of fans being stupid, but they are being stupid in a very dull fashion. There is not that spectacular fuggheadedness we used to find. Oh for the days when Vorzimer was at large, and Harlan Ellison was immature.

This is the first issue of A BAS to contain fiction, but please note that it is not science fiction. In fact, "Old Bill" is a taboo breaker. The taboo it breaks is pretty mild, but it is the tried and tested article. Dimensions talks about taboo breakers, A BAS prints them. I am also very pleased to present an item by Lee (Hoffman) Youngfan....but enough of this pseudo-Ellisonism. Read the stuff yourself.

The post office took a very dim view of some of the writings of (Alex)(Rich) Kirs in the last issue. Apparently it is o.k. to print some things in commercial publications, but not in an amateur duplicated job. I have no desire to tangle with the post office, therefore all original material in this and future issues will be all pure and innocent. I wonder what the postal authorities would do if I started reprinting from newspapers various items which, it would seem, are obscene by their standards.

Once a week the radio and television critic of the Toronto Telegram prints in his column extracts from letters from his readers. Here is one extract, reprinted in its entirety: "You're always blowing about George Gobel. My wife's always blowing about George Gobel. My kids push me out of the way to get to George Gobel. Gobble Gobel if you like him so much, that's what I say!"

The letter columns of the Toronto Telegram often contain fine examples of fugg-headedness. The recent Stratford (Ontario) Shakespeare Festival this year consisted of two plays by Shakespeare (Merchant of Venice, and Julius Caesar) and Oedipus Rex by Sophocles. Regarding this, a reader of the paper wrote: "The Shakespearean Festival is to make better known the works of an outstanding Englishman that breathe a Christian spirit and high standard of morality. Surely it is common knowledge that his works are sufficiently broad and comprehensive in tragedy or comedy to cover every sphere and activity of an actor. It is a degradation of Shakespeare to drag into his festival a Greek tragedy written by a pagan in an immoral age, with standards of morality at a low ebb."

It seems to be the custom of every faned who goes to a convention to put a convention report in his zine. One must be in fashion, so here are my con reports.

MILWESCON: We went to the Midwescon. We had a good time.

CLEVECON: We went to the Clevecon. We had a good time.

Comment on Midwescon: The food at the B & C restaurant was exceeded in nauseousness only by the unidentified garbage served at the "banquet." There is good food served at various places in Bellefontaine though.

The Clevention con hotel seems to have been the best in which a con has been held so far...the only complaint was that the elevator service at times was of the type that Mr. Otis probably regrets. The Toronto contingent did not attend the "banquet" The dictionary defines a banquet as "a sumptuous repast" and I fail to see anything sumptuous about a chunk of roast beef, especially at \$5.00. I know of several places in Toronto and New York where two sumptuous repasts can be obtained for \$5.00

Overheard by Larry Shaw at the Midwescon: "Who is this Georgina Ellis? I don't know, but she can't be very attractive. Everybody says she wears falsies."

She's only a build in a girdled cage

I don't know whether the mystery of the identity of "David Grinnell" has been solved yet, but here is something that may be significant. A paper bound novelette printed in Australia bears on the cover the title "Common Time by James Blish." At the beginning of the story it says "Common Time by David Grinnell." See, I do mention science fiction occasionally.

Some time ago in HARK, Randy Brown announced that the Dallas group was seeking a name for their club, and said a prize would be awarded for the name selected. Last issue I suggested a name. Brown and Mike May have since been using it all over. So where's my prize? Hey fellers, don't I even get an oil well?

A recent scene in Toronto: Gerald Steward leaning out a window and calling excitedly to the driver of a car sitting in the street below "What is it? What is it? What is it?" Driver: "It's a Chrysler, a '56 model." Steward: "Oh, I thought it was a Chriscraft."

From the Manchester Guardian: 'Salisbury police yesterday gave away a pair of trousers to Michael Murphy (29) of no settled address who was found guilty at a Salisbury court of "exposing the posterior of his body, thereby disturbing the peace."'

He wasn't a criminal.....just naturally affectionate.

IN OXFORD, BUT ALSO ELSEWHERE

What is this that roareth thus?

Can it be a motor bus?

Yes, the smell and hideous hum

Indicat Motorem Bum.

Implet in the Corn and High

Terror me Motoris Bi.

Bo Motori clamiſabo

Ne Motore caedar a Bo -

Dative be or Ablative

So thou only let us live:

Whither shall thy victims flee?

Spare us, Spare us, Motor Be!

Thus I sang; and still anigh

Came in hordes Motores Bi,

Et complebat omne forum

Copia Motorum Borum.

How shall wretches live like us

Cincti Bis Motoribus?

Domine, defende nos

Contra hos Motores Bos!

- A.J. Godley

They longed for men to be discovered on the moon, so that they could show that they weren't prejudiced against moon men. - Randall Jarrell.

Spare a thought for the poor opossum

If you ever come across him.

He lives on wood and leaves and nuts

And tin from off the tops of huts

Which constipates his little guts.

Derelict* Derogation* #5

(accept no imitations)

PLACE: The usual Derelict meeting.

Lyons: Boyd, what are you doing?

Raeburn: I'm writing a derogation.

Steward: You can't do that. Jan Jansen won't like it.

Lyons: Why?

Kidder: He seems to think Boyd should stop writing derogations because there have been several imitations of them.

Raeburn: Jansen can go.....

Lyons: Uh uh, watch it.

Kidder: Oh go ahead, don't worry about the post office.

Raeburn: No no, I mustn't let my feelings run away with me. After all, Jansen is a nice guy; as Vorzimer says, he can't help being an extracted foreigner.

Steward: You mean you're not going to say nasty things about him in the Derogation?

Raeburn: Who? Me? Of course not.

Lyons: Who IS going to be in the derogation? The same old crew?

Raeburn: No. Vorzimer hasn't put out anything, so there's no new material from him. Anyway, he makes a big enough ass of himself in the letter column this issue.

Albert: How?

Raeburn: Apparently, amongst other things, Vorzimer suffers from a bad case of Momism. Philip Wylie has written a good deal on the subject.

Kidder: And yet, on the other hand, he says he's not his mother's boy.

Steward: Please, let us keep our conversation free from any trace of scandal.

Albert: Say, I heard something about Browne you can use. Seems he....

Raeburn: No. He keeps yelling that he's quit fandom, so we'll let him stay quit.

Lyons: What sort of treatment are you going to give Ellison this time?

Raeburn: I think we should say something nice about Harlan for a change.

Lyons: Such as?

Raeburn: Well.....something nice.

Lyons: For example?

Raeburn: Well anyway, let's not say harsh things about him.

Steward: O.K. We won't make cracks about Dimensions being supposed to be quarterly.

Lyons: And we won't call him Cheech.

Kidder: And we won't make cracks about swaggering young hoods.

Quagliano: Listen who's talking.

Steward: O.K. Make this the Be Kind to Harlan issue if you want to, Boyd, but you must jump on somebody. Ron Ellik says you're very outspoken.

Raeburn: He says that?

Steward: Yeah. He also wrote a lot of other guff about you in a fanzine put out by some Britisher, but I won't embarrass you by repeating it.

Raeburn: I wonder what made him think I'm outspoken.

Kidder: He said you kicked him around for practice before soaring to bigger and better things.

Raeburn: Well, the bigger and better things are eluding me this time. I can't think of a damn thing for the derogation. Nothing I try comes out any good.

Lyons: . If at first you don't succeed....

Steward: Yes, look at Bruce and the spider.

Albert: What channel is it on?

Steward: Idiot. I was making a reference to British.....

Kidder: Actually, Scottish....

Steward:folklore. The Americans probably won't get it.

Raeburn: Except maybe Grennell. He even knows what a treacle tart is.

Albert: Well, what is it?

Kidder: A tart with treacle in it.

Lyons: What gruesome things these English eat.

Raeburn: Yeah, stuff like bubble and squeak.

Steward: Don't you mean Pip, Squeak and Wilfred?

Raeburn: No, that's a comic strip about Wilfred Myers.

Grossman: Who's he?

Kidder: He's the cross FAPA has to bear.

Evelyn Gold: What is FAPA?

Lyons: LIFE calls it the aristocrat of amateur journalism.

Raeburn: See what happens when you ask questions?

Steward: Who comes?

Grossman: It's a fey wearing stranger.

Kidder: It looks like Ellison.

Steward: Is he savage sullen defiant and contemptuous?

Lyons: Is he swaggering and vicious, eyes blazing with hatred and contempt?

Kidder: No.

Steward: In that case it is definitely Ellison, and not Phil Beldone.

Lyons: We had to be sure. They DO look alike.

Trina: An Ellison! Oh you lovely little Ellison. I adore Ellisons. When I was very young, my mother gave me seven little Ellisons to play withshe loved green things. They were such trouble though. They never ate.

Ellison: You came from nowhere...and you will be here only a short time...before going...somewhere. But you have brought me a small piece of life, and I will hold it in my hand and squeeze it until the juice runs between my fingers and trickles on the ground.

Trina: It all depends on the mood of the peacock.

Ellison: It really is beyond the limit of respectable superstition to confuse my voice with a peacock's.

Kirs: As I was standing on the third rail waiting for the next train to grind me into lifeless atoms various absurd thoughts crept slyly into my highly sexed mind.

Albert: Huh?

Kirs: I was merely being cryptic in accordance with the trend of the conversation.

Raeburn: Oh, pay no attention to Harlan. That's probably the way they talk in his 'sophisticated crowd who have severed connections with fandom.'

Kirs: What goes on, anyway? I thought this was supposed to be a science fiction meeting.

Kidder: Nobody here talks about science fiction. Maybe they do in Harlan's sophisticated crowd.

Kirs: Oh? I seldom read science fiction now.

Steward: Fine. Now you are on your way to becoming a true faaaaaan.

Kirs: Listen, you silly ass. I worked on the N3F Welcommittee for a good long time, and that is the very height of trufaaaaanness.

Raeburn: Oh Ghod NO! Working on the Welcommittee, or even being in the N3F is the height of sercon fuggheadedness.

Kirs: I'll commit bloody suicide as soon as I get home. I cannot bear to live with a smear of such foulness on my reputation.

Lyons: Oh, don't bother. Most of us are willing to forgive these youthful mistakes.

Steward: It's human to err.

Albert: But what is it to 'im?

Raeburn: Claim that it happened when you were young and foolish, and that now you have matured.

Kidder: Sure, if Harlan can use that excuse, why not you?

(Enter John Murdoch, mumbling)

Murdoch: Boy I told him off yes sir I told him off yeah man I really gave him hell my gosh he won't do that sort of thing again now he has me to reckon with.....

Grossman: Huh? Who? What?

Murdoch: I'm talking about Grennell and that thing he had in GRUE. I happen to be one of the multitude who like Lincoln and who think his Gettysburg address one of the finest pieces of literature ever penned by anyone and I think I have a normal amount of patriotism in me more so than Mr. Bloch proves he has by his abominable invasion on another man's work.....

Grossman: I don't see the connection between patriotism and the Gettysburg address.

Murdoch: Well this is a great country we live in and we have rights and privileges that millions of poverty stricken people would give a limb or an eye for and I for one am going to defend those rights.....

Grossman: I still don't see the connection with the Gettysburg address.

Murdoch: If our country wasn't the best I think that I and Mr. Bloch would be trying the best we could to find a way out to better lands....

Lyons: "Trying to find a way out"? You mean through a sort of aluminum curtain?

Kirs: Who is this puling pillbrain?

Raeburn: This is one John Murdoch. He put out one issue of a crudzine named Vagabond a while ago.

Murdoch: What gripes me is the simple fact that Mr. Lincoln has no method of defending himself against Bloch's poison pen and if Grennell and Bloch don't make a public apology in GRUE I'll ask him to take my name off the mailing list and boy that will fix him.....

Grossman: What IS all this about Lincoln and Bloch's poison pen?

Steward: Oh, in GRUE #23 Bloch used an annotated version of the Gettysburg address to satirize the bad manners and general inanity of editorial interruptions in the text in many fanzines.

Boggs: A satire? I am astounded that you would consider that a satire. Where do you get the idea that to do on purpose what others have done through ignorance constitutes a screamingly funny satire on the whole subject? The satirist should show that he is a skilled craftsman in the field that he presumes to poke fun at. The fool who brays at an art he does not understand may have the right to laugh, but he should not expect us to join him.

Kidder: I guess you couldn't be expected to get the point of Bloch's thing, Redd. After all, on your own admission, ill-mannered and cavilling editorial interruptions leave you breathless with admiration.

Claude Hall: I'm convinced that fandom is growing dull. The reason is that science fiction, our main institution, is dying out in the professional magazine field. Professional magazines, in almost every known case, have served as a birthplace for the stf fan.

Grossman: What, no beds to be born in?

Hall: The reason science fiction is dying is that everything you read about in the science-fictional magazines of today has been developed and what's exciting about things which occupy your everyday life and we seek our promise in the future and what can regain interest in science fiction if not some problem or device or occurrence of the future? Maybe another dimension should be discovered. Possibly a great asset toward saving science-fictional professional magazines would be to put a crazy lunatic at the editorial helm of some magazine. An off-tract yes I said an off-tract person could surely bring something new into science fiction.....

Lyons: You mean something on the lines of the Shaver Mystery?

Hall:this might save this great institution and might serve to save fandom and fandom needs saving for while there is today a multitude of fanzines few of them feature fiction and the fan-author now has no territory or realm yes I said realm in which to perfect his talent for few fans of today will admit to liking fan-fiction why I can't understand for most of the fiction in fanzines either equal or surpass yes I said equal or surpass that I've read in professional magazines. Of course this statement refers to fanzines of proven status by that I mean fanzines with editors that can tell the good fiction from the bad because fandom certainly has their portion of bad fiction.....

Steward: Say, any of you seen Muzzy?

Hall: With fanzines condoning yes I said condoning fan-fiction there is no breeding ground for new writers....

Kidder: Is that why you want a con held in Juarez?

Kirs: This character nauseates me. Is his fanzine as revolting as he is?

Raeburn: Quite. The saving grace of Hitchcock's UMBRA #9 was his panning of Muzzy.

Kirs: You don't like UMBRA?

Steward: Hitchcock is a friend of George Wetzel.

Kirs: Oh. I see what you mean.

Ellison: Have you heard that Wetzel's next fanzine item will be 'Selected Grocery Lists of H.P. Lovecraft'?

Dave Mason: How did this unutterable slob Wetzel get to be a fan in the first place, and what's keeping him around?

Kidder: That's an interesting question. I wonder whether Baltimorean fandom is repulsive because of the presence of George Wetzel, or was Wetzel attracted to it because of its general offensiveness.

Raeburn: Probably the former. Judging by the poison-pen letters he's been spreading around, Wetzel would sline up anything he came in contact with.

Kirs: This Wetzel is only about 10 years old, isn't he?

Steward: No. He just writes that way.

Lyons: Yes, although it's hard to believe, he is a grown adult....just a case of arrested mental development, it would seem.

Raeburn: Speaking of such, what has Fred Remus been doing lately?

Steward: Nothing much. The last SAPS mailing was down about 200 pages, having for once little of his scrawling.

Kidder: He's probably busy working on more articles for Frabhead Hall, yelling about how much superior he thinks SAPS is to FAPA.

Raeburn: What? These poor SAPS members are still suffering from their inferiority complex?

Steward: Yes, it won't be long before Remus bursts into print again, yelling "FAPA is where old fans go to die."

Albert: SAPS is where they go to decompose.

Kirs: Who is this Remus?

Raeburn: He's a self-admitted fugghead who fortunately confines most of his babblings to SAPS, an organization most suited to such as he.

Kidder: Did you see the letter he wrote to G.M. Carr? Ecch!

Lyons: He's the last person who should accuse somebody of blathering.

Kirs: How did G.M. take it?

Raeburn: Her reply was very mild.

Steward: Rather untypical.

Kidder: Yes, when dealing with FAPA members her tone is often that of a digital computer nagging at cash registers.

Lyons: One must remember that some FAPA members are a little ribald at times, and G.M. Carr is a Most Respectable Person.

Kidder: When cabbages are embarrassed about the facts of life, they tell their little cabbages that they found them under G.M. Carr.

Raeburn: That double entendre occasionally found in her publications must get there purely by accident, for surely she wouldn't object to certain types of writing by others if she consciously did the same sort of thing herself.

Steward: I hope not. One Redd Boggs type is enough.

Raeburn: We had better not mention those dreams full of filthy Freudian significance.

Lyons: Nor the things she likes to do in the bathtub.

Ellik: I'll not believe it. She's a kindly soul, and mercifully without spots, unlike the cowslip. O heavens, we've all been young.....

Kidder: If I were Herod in the middle of the massacre of the innocents, I'd pause just to consider the confusion of your imagery.

Ellik: Cast not your stones at me.....say Boyd, why don't you do a derogation on Claude Hall?

Raeburn: Why don't you?

Ellik: I'm too unaccomplished. I haven't the talent. But I'm getting sick of all the crud Hall has in fanzines I can write better crud than Hall any day and my hair is red too, reddish-blond after a fashion and I wear bottle bottoms gee I can outhack Hall any day and if any of the Dallas fans print any more of his crud I'll issue a challenge to Benny Sodek to put out a special Ellik versus Hall issue of TACITUM in which we'll both attempt to write worse than the other.....

Lyons: One day I shall burst my bud of calm and blossom into hysteria.

Steward: Benighted brothers in boredom, let us unite ourselves in a toast of ennui.

Ellik: It would be so kind if you didn't notice me. I have upset myself.

Kirs: O tedium, tedium, tedium. The frenzied ceremonial drumming of the humdrum. Where in this small-talking world can I find a longitude with no platitude?

Grant: We should be like stars now that it's dark; use ourselves up to the last bright dregs and vanish in the morning.

Raeburn: But it's morning already.

Kidder: Good. Let's vanish.

(And so they did)

- BR

Do you suppose Boggs is too cultured to have a sense of humor? - Geis.

Gertrude and Sydney had, instead of pictures, two reproductions from the Museum of Non-Objective Art, in frames or containers half of plastic, half of mirror. One was romantic, and showed a kidney being married to the issue of a sterile womb, amid trailing clouds of mustard -- or Lewisite, I am not sure; the other was classical, and showed two lines on a plain -- or plane, perhaps.

"Is that a Mondrian?" Constance asked politely. Gertrude looked at her as if she had asked whether it was a Landseer. It was plain that Mondrian's day was past.

Gertrude was sitting in a chair exactly like a sweated cocktail sausage on skewers. Sidney sat on a felt hassock, and I was distributed, rather generally, over a broken plywood beaker, a giant one. How I wished that it had had skewers! -- then I should have been nine inches from the floor, not three. A man with heart disease would have found climbing the staircase of the Eiffel Tower scarcely more dangerous than getting up from Gertrude's plywood chair; I heard, or fancied that I heard, a ghost muttering to his fellows: "It was Gertrude. She did it with a chair."

- Randall Jarrell "Pictures from an Institution"



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

a slightly prejudiced bistory—

by Jim Mourning

Whenever the conversation drifts to sports cars and their beginnings, a lot of names and places are bandied about. Invariably, however, the name of the true founding father is overlooked. He is the man who not only coined the term, "sports car," but designed the first car to fit the new title. He is the man who came within a spark plug gap of inventing the most popular sports car in this country. He is my great-grandfather on my mother's side - Sir Thruppence Cadwalliger III.

One day around the turn of the century, in a quaint English village named Crumpets-on-Thames, Thruppence was standing talking to Fortisan Thermothrockle, his loyal and trusted friend.

"By Jove, Fortisan," Thruppence said, "I think I'll invent a sports car."

"Good show!" Fortisan exclaimed. "But what is a sports car?"

"How should I know?" demanded Thruppence. "I haven't invented it yet. But I shall, you know."

Being a man of his word once he made a decision, Thruppence immediately retired to his work shop and locked himself in. For several days no one saw him and only the sounds of pounding and his voice raised occasionally in a demand for another tankard of ale or another roll of scotch tape indicated he was still alive. At long last he called for his loyal and trusted friend, Fortisan Thermothrockle, to announce that his project was completed.

"Fortisan," he announced, "my project is completed."

"Your completed project is indeed a fine looking car." replied Fortisan. "What will you call it?"

Thruppence gave this matter his serious consideration for several moments and then announced, "I think I'll call it the MA, which is an endearing nickname I use in speaking to my mother."

"That is indeed a jolly good name." Fortisan agreed. "But will the vehicle perform?"

"That is what we shall find out today," replied Thruppence. "And you will come along to help me check its operation."

So saying, they hopped into the car and proceeded to dash hither and yon across the countryside with a great deal of enthusiasm and speed. But, pulling up in front of the workshop, Thruppence had a frown upon his usually jovial features.

"You have a frown upon your usually jovial features." observed Fortisan.

"Fortisan, loyal and trusted friend," Thruppence said, "what was our time from zero to sixty?"

"Slightly over four seconds." replied Fortisan, who also wore a frown upon his usually jovial features.

"And our top speed?"

"An honest 100 miles an hour."

"And how did you feel that she cornered?"

"Like she was on rails."

"But still I am not happy." said Thruppence.

"I am not happy either," replied Fortisan, "For the car rides much too softly for a true sports car."

"Then you noticed it too." said Thruppence sadly. "I'm afraid the MA does not have the classic ride."

"What," asked Fortisan, "is the classic ride?"

"How should I know?" demanded Thruppence. "I just invented it. But I'm afraid the car is a failure. No true sports car will ever be successful without the classic ride."

And so Thruppence Cadwalliger III gave his car away to a struggling young mechanic named Bugatti and retired to his workshop to perfect a new car.

In the months that followed he turned out a series of automotive efforts. But his next attempt, the MB, was much too quiet and was abandoned. Then came the MC, but this was discarded when it was discovered that it was not windy enough in the cockpit. The MD had too much luggage space, the ME had too much leg room.

At last Thruppence invented the MF and felt that he had finally achieved the ultimate. But when he put the top up he knew the car was doomed to be another failure. To his horror, he saw that the car still looked good with the top in place.

Broken in health and spirit, Thruppence Cadwalliger III gave up the sports car business and retired to raise warts on his little country place in Sussex.

Now it was mentioned at the beginning of this story that Thruppence came within a spark plug gap of inventing the most popular sports car in this country. And he nearly did. Stop and realize that if he had built just one more model it would have been the MG and great-grandfather Thruppence Cadwalliger III would now be famous and his descendants would all be wealthy.

OLD BILL

by Bob Tucker

His name was really Homer Bigg. Neatly lettered on the outer office door three rooms away was the gilt legend; Mr. Bigg, Second Vice President. Homer Bigg was Second Vice President in charge of Sales, certainly a key position in any organization and positively the key position in General Shaving. And if old B.S. upstairs didn't stop trying to crack ninety in his golf score, he, Homer, just might wake up one of these fine days to discover himself the President.

General Shaving didn't have a First Vice President. Not any more, not for the last decade. The gentleman who had formerly occupied the post up and walked out one morning with a quarter of a million dollars and a blonde secretary. Old B.S. upstairs had never forgiven the bounder; they had been classmates and in the eyes of old B.S. the absconding gentleman had sullied the name of the university.

Homer Bigg rocked silently in his chair and scowled at the letter. Drat the thing, anyway!

"Drat!" he said.

Beside him on the broad expanse of polished desk an amber eye came to life, and the robot secretary said, "I beg your pardon, sir?"

"I wasn't addressing you." Homer replied with some annoyance.

"Thank you, sir." The eye winked out.

Homer read the letter for the fourth time, and for the fourth time noted the numerous initials scrawled across the bottom of the page. By tracing the correct procession of the initials and fitting each to their owners, he could follow the upward chain of command by which the letter had come to him.

One of the mail clerks first received it and stamped the date and time of arrival; it was perfunctorily shunted to a sales clerk in the Western Division because the letter came from the Busy-B Drug Store in What Cheer, Iowa. The sales clerk passed it along to her supervisor, who also initialed it and sent the letter across the corridor to the Western Branch Manager. Western Branch Manager promptly unloaded it on Western Division Superintendent. There was little else the Superintendent could do but send it upstairs to the Assistant to the Second Vice President. And the Assistant, a neat and meticulous man, had added his initials and brought it in to Homer Bigg.

Homer Bigg glanced distastefully at the robot secretary and withheld another drat. Instead, he turned his chair around and stared through the windows at the giant neon sign on the rooftop across the courtyard. The sign was not alive now, but just at dusk it would flash into red brilliance, blinking the magic name General Shaving across country and town. The plant was huge, the employment rolls staggering, the annual payroll rivalled those sums mouthed in Washington, and the sales report --- his sales report --- was a thing of joy forever.

General Shaving was to a man's face and a lady's limbs what General Foods was to the breakfast table, the dinner table, and all the kitchen snacks in between. Weekly and monthly, General Shaving produced an unending supply of electric razors, vibrator razors, the new radio razors, straight razors, safety razors, blades to fit all models and makes, canned aerosol creams, brushless creams, scented lather creams, bottled creams, and the now booming depilatory creams as well. If it were a shaving article, General Shaving manufactured and sold it.

Except this.

Homer smacked the letter down on the desk and exploded another "Drat!"

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

"Go to sleep!" he roared at the amber eye.

"Thank you, sir."

Homer considered a moment, and thought of Charles Wells. Good old Charles would surely find an answer. Good old Charles had been the one who had wisely cautioned him against prohibiting jokes involving his name. Mr. Bigg. Fine for plant morale, good old Charles had said. Our men and women need an outlet for their occasional emotional outbursts; they need someone upstairs to blame for their own shortcomings and frustrations. Let them generously take it out on the easiest name to come to mind. Let them take Mr. Bigg's name in vain. Be really big!

Good old Charles had been right that time, and now he doubtless would find a solution to this---to this preposterous letter from the Busy-B Drug Store. He cleared his throat.

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

"Find Charles Wells. Ask him to come in."

"Thank you, sir."

Charles Wells held the title of Public Relations Advisor. He was Ninth Vice President of General Shaving.

* * * * *

Good old Charles scanned the letter. Dear Sirs: it read, and poorly typed at that, I am writing to order one cup of Old Bill's Sure Shaving Soap, you know, the round bar of shaving soap that comes in a dark brown mug with a handle on it. The salesman here said he didn't have it any more and tried to make me buy a can of Feather-Fly Cream but my customer don't want Feather-Fly Cream. My customer has been using Old Bill's Sure Shaving Soap for seventy-two (72) years now and don't want nothing else but. Please send one mug, with handle.

"Well, bless me!" The Public Relations Advisor to General Shaving put the letter down on the desk and drummed his fingers. "I hardly know what to make of it. What in the wide world is the man talking about?"

Charles Wells was like Homer Bigg in that he was conservatively dressed in the best of fashion; they wore identical white shirts that were the uniform of their kind, their neckties were quiet but sincere and had come from the same store, their shoes were shined each morning. Unlike Homer Bigg, Charles was still in possession of all his hair and lacked that tell-tale bulge around the middle. And he was younger. Still in his fifties. Much too much of a stripling to ever hope to replace old B.S. upstairs.

"Soap," Homer retorted, eyeing the younger Ninth Vice President. "Old Bill. An old fashioned mug with an equally old fashioned cake of shaving soap in the bottom of it. Let us not forget the handle. You dip a wet brush down into it, diddle it around, and brush the lather on your face. Hopelessly old fashioned---out of date! I used one when I was a mere boy, but it went out with high-button shoes."

"Dear me." Charles perked up, astonished. "Is that Old Bill? My goodness; I've never seen one. I didn't know we made it."

"We don't," Homer told him wearily. "We haven't manufactured that item in nearly fifteen years. No demand for it. Lost in the forward march of progress."

"Really? Now fancy that." Wells put a thoughtful finger to his lip. "But see here, this Busy-B establishment has been serving Old Bill to their customer for---Gracious me! Think of that. Seventy-two years." He lapsed into an awed silence.

Homer slapped the letter. "Of course. They have been selling it off their back shelf, and ordering it from the back shelf of our Chicago warehouse. The supply lasted this long because no one else wanted it. Last year---or the last time the Busy-B ordered from our warehouse, they were undoubtedly sent the very last mug in stock. There simply isn't any more. Old Bill went off our active list fifteen years ago." He raised a stern finger at the Ninth Vice President. "But what are we going to do about this account? We may lose it."

Charles failed to directly answer the question. Instead he said dreamily, happily, "Imagine using one shaving soap for seventy-two years. What a venerable and contented old man that must be! Brand loyalty, Homer, brand loyalty."

"I appreciate brand loyalty as well as the next man, but what are we going to do about this?"

Charles reached for the letter to read it again. "Wonderful! Positively precious and wonderful." And then, surprisingly, he asked, "Homer, do you remember vaudeville?"

"What?"

"Vaudeville. The sweet, honest-to-goodness thing. Not the variety acts we feature on our television program each week but the real old time vaudeville. The clown on the small tricycle. The high-wire act. The pretty girl and the bears. The soprano who couldn't quite hold the pitch. Homer...have you ever walked into a theater and climbed the stairs to the balcony? Perhaps with a sack of peanuts or candy?" He closed his eyes. "Wonderful, wasn't it, sitting up there in the darkness watching live actors on the stage below you?"

"Well, certainly I remember it, but....."

"Wasn't it fun?" Charles insisted quietly.

Homer Bigg contemplated the other for a moment and dropped his eyes to the polished desk. The mirage came. He seemed to see reflected on the waxy surface a bespectacled orchestra conductor, a man who raised one hand for a second of suspense, dropped it, and the music rang out loud and brassy as a red velvet curtain went up. The opening act was always lively.

"Yes," he agreed softly, half reluctantly. "It was fun. I miss it."

"Bless us, Homer, we're missing a lot of fun, a lot of the old things; things lost to that forward march of progress you just mentioned." With his eyes still closed he reached out into space before him, pointing at something. "I can remember seeing Maude Adams, and Mady Christians, and....."

"I remember them! I saw Weber and Fields when I was a boy. Eddy Foy, Matt Fox. Charles --- I used to go to the ball games and watch Babe Ruth put them over the fence."

"Lovely, lovely. Oh, really lovely! People don't go to ball games any more; they stay home and see them on television." The Ninth Vice President sighed for their loss. Impishly he admitted, "Homer, I can still walk on stilts, can you?"

"No." Homer Bigg laughed loudly, a bit enviously. "I never could. But I used to go down to the brewery and steal barrel staves for hoops. My mother wouldn't let me keep them long when she found out." He leaned across the desk and prodded Wells with his finger. "But I can milk a cow. Can you?"

"Goodness, no, Homer. Can you really?"

The future president nodded from his superior heights. "Spent every summer on my uncle's farm, from the age of nine to fifteen."

"Bully for you, Homer. Oh, bully!"

"What ever happened to the good times, Charles?"

"They went out of production."

* * * * *

Homer Bigg sat up straight in his chair to brush a finger over his eyes. The cobwebs of time were hesitant in leaving. He glanced about the office, saw the unlighted eye of the robot secretary and then looked fully into the two, now wide-open eyes of his Public Relations Advisor.

"I wondered what you were leading up to, Charles."

The younger man smiled. "Really now, we can't lose that account, can we?"

"I despise losing a customer, however small."

"Gracious, yes. And we aren't going to lose the Busy-B Drug Store nor allow them to lose their customer. Homer, have you really considered the full import of this touching letter? For goodness sake, the same brand of shaving soap for seventy-two years? Assuming that the lad was sixteen or seventeen years old when

he began shaving, he must be every bit of eighty-eight today. Isn't that remarkable! And he still clings loyally to Old Bill. Homer, we simply cannot destroy the faith of the eighty-eight year old gentleman!"

Mr. Bigg rapped his knuckles on the desk.

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

"Go away!"

"Thank you, sir." The lighted eye went away.

"You were about to say, Homer?"

"Drat that thing. I was about to say, my dear Charles, that we haven't any stock of Old Bill left. Not a single mug."

"Ah---But we are going to make Old Bill again."

"Preposterous!"

"Oh, heavens no. Bear me out, Homer, if you please. We are going to produce one mug of Old Bill. With the handle. We are going to shut down an entire production unit, change it over, and manufacture the biggest, best mug of Old Bill Sure Shaving Soap the world has ever seen! We are going to make a lifetime supply all in one giant mug for the eighty-eight year old customer. And we are going to promise him that if he lives to be a hundred, we will do it all over again and give him another mug. Free gratis, with the best wishes of General Shaving."

Homer Bigg looked at his Ninth Vice President with glowing eyes. "Charles!"

"Isn't it lovely!"

"It is beautiful. Where do I fit in?"

"You, Homer, will walk into the plant waving this letter. You will approach the foreman and order a unit shut down. You will show him the letter and order him to prepare immediately for one giant mug, with handle, of Old Bill Sure Shaving Soap. My newsreel and television cameras will be stationed nearby, watching you and listening to you."

"Magnificent!"

Charles Wells leaned across the desk and snapped his fingers before the robot secretary. It came alive.

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

"Take a wire to the Busy-B Drug Store, What Cheer, Iowa. Message follows: As a special surprise to you and your valued customer, General Shaving is preparing giant mug of Old Bill Sure Shaving Soap, free gratis to you both. Desire you and longtime customer to appear on our television show for gala presentation ceremonies. Our expense of course. Please ascertain and wire acceptances for you both. End of message."

"Thank you, sir."

Homer Bigg beamed. "I feel better already. It would be a sin to lose that account. When do we start, my dear Charles?"

"Gracious, we already have. I will have my cameramen ready in a few hours and we'll take the opening scene this afternoon. Do run down and have a barber shave you, Homer. Have him apply an extra layer of powder. Must be at your best for the cameras."

* * * * *

The opening scene was shot. A rather startled foreman read the letter and read it again, to reluctantly obey the order to close down the unit. In the sudden silence of its closing several employees turned around to openly gape. And also in that sudden silence, Homer Bigg read the letter aloud and explained to the foreman just what General Shaving intended to do for that long-lived, long-loyal customer dwelling out there in What Cheer, Iowa. The gaping employees did not break into spontaneous applause as the Ninth Vice President had expected, but he consoled himself with the thought that the applause could be dubbed in later.

That was all that could be done then. Later when the necessary machinery had been installed, Homer Bigg could give another order and a giant cake of Old Bill Sure

Shaving Soap would spew out, to be tenderly placed in a large brown mug bearing a handle. And then two of the prettiest girls on the production line would come forward to wrap the gift in cellophane and tie it with a gay ribbon.

In a few weeks' time the presentation would be made on the television program. The films now being shot would be carefully edited and spliced together to give a brief documentary explanation, the finished mug would be unveiled, and Homer Bigg would hand it to the proprietor of the Busy-B Drug Store and his eighty-eight year old customer.

The world would know General Shaving had a living, breathing heart.

Homer Bigg and Charles Wells laughingly shook hands in the office, the polished desk top reflecting the smooth movement. The robot secretary's amber eye flared into light and the metallic voice said, "I beg your pardon, sir."

"Of course, what is it?"

"Telegram received from the Busy-B Drug Store, What Cheer, Iowa. Message follows: Darned nice of you but my customer refuses to be spectacle on television. What about my order? End of message. Thank you, sir."

"Oh dear."

"Charles! He can't do this to us!"

"Terrible, that's what it is, terrible." The Public Relations Advisor was already pacing the floor. "Oh my, such ingratitude. Something will surely have to be done."

"Blasted right something will be done! General Shaving won't stand for this nonsense. Spectacle on television indeed!" Mr. Bigg pounded impatiently on the desk and the robot secretary once more responded to his call. "Take a wire." he roared before the secretary could ask the opening question. "No---don't take a wire. Call the airport. Book passage on the first plane out for What Cheer, Iowa. Today --- now! Make a hotel reservation in the town for Charles Wells. Get busy!"

"Thank you, sir."

"To be sure." The Ninth Vice President responded. "I'll go out there myself and talk to the fellow. Persuade him to see the error of his ways. Goodness yes." He paused at the desk. "Homer, you'll have word the first thing in the morning."

"Definite word!" Homer Bigg demanded. "You'd better go home and pack a bag. There might be a plane now."

"Bless me." Wells said.

* * * * *

The first thing in the morning Homer Bigg sat at his desk staring out the window. The bright sun caught the letters of the red neon sign on the rooftop across the courtyard. All night long that sign had been flashing the magic name General Shaving over country and town, but now it was at rest until the coming of another dusk. Old B.S. hadn't arrived at his office upstairs, but then he seldom appeared before ten. Homer decided to tell him nothing of recent events, and if by chance he should learn of the presence of the cameras in the plant, it could be passed off as some promotion stunt.

Dispiritedly, Homer Bigg turned his head toward the secretary and grunted.

"I beg your pardon, sir?"

"Repeat that telegram from Charles Wells."

"Yes sir. Message follows: Cancel ceremonies. Aged customer definitely and irrevocably refuses to appear on our show. She, repeat she, highly indignant at proposed spectacle. Am staying over to have doctor treat black eye. Send the mug. End of message."

"Drat!"

"Thank you, sir."

PENTHOUSE PASSION

I wander through the horrid halls
And weave among the wrought-iron chairs
And bark my shin (it almost breaks)
And spill my blood upon the bath-mat
Sneered at by the mirrored walls,
While in the other rooms are found
Framed so they seem to lurk in lairs
A Ma Jolie and Harlequin
Family (and both are fakes)
And in the dining-room, a twin
Of Floating Figure bulges fat
Recumbent on the etheric
And immaterial trampoline
("Force of the Universe".....Oh, fine.)
".....divorced from the laws of space and time!"
Till, feeling more than slightly sick
I turn and grope among the drapes
To find a modern decor door
"Decor'd in sea-gray, white, and lime;
And find my hostess eating grapes,
Sprawled naked on the Kentiled floor.

Once I forgave, and oft forgot,
But not in this apartment where
The oft-by-nude-descended stair-
Case vibrates upon the pink-flocked wall.....
So obvious by amateur
Quite poorly copied, polyglot
With God knows just how many schools
(It shows the artist's on the ball)
Snarling from plane to Goddamn plane
With disharmonic clash of tones insane
And worst of all, each one so sure
That it is Art, the rest but fools.
.....Is it compassion makes her act
(Young starveling artist in his garret)
Like every daub of puce and claret
With great enormous names like Fact
Of Universal Love, or Screech
Of Birthing Mastodon, or Child
With Toe-nailed Purple Nymphoman-
Ia, is worth the name of Art?
It matters little I beseech
And wail and beg in accents mild
That "non-repres" is done to plan,
Impressionism based on math,
And abstract art a little more
Than three-eyed fish tacked on a sheet
Of gossip from the Daily News-----
She merely sighs and draws a bath,
Perfumes the air with bath-salts sweet,
And sprawls upon the Kentiled floor
Reading Les Faux-monayeures.

- Alex (or Rich) Kirs

HOLLYWOOD LIFE

OR

GEE, YOU KNOW, AN' THAT

Honest, I nearly flipped when I saw that Joan Crawford had married that millionaire. I says to the other kids, I says: "Some people have all the luck," I says. What do you girls think about it? No, honestly, I mean? Actually, whoever heard of Joan Crawford except a few old crocks and people like that?

I says to my boy friend last night, I says: "Did you see where Joan Crawford married that millionaire?" and do you know what he says? He says: "Who's Joan Crawford?" and I says to him, I says: "Don't you know who Joan Crawford is?" and he says; "No, who is she?" he says.

That proved to me one thing, namely that a lot of people don't even know who Joan Crawford is. And still it's supposed to be a big thing when she marries a millionaire. You never saw her in a movie? Neither did I. Did any of the rest of you kids? My mother and father used to see her 20 or 25 years ago; you know, away back in those silent picture days, I guess. Anyway, she was supposed to be big stuff then, to hear them talk.

And can you imagine that she tells the marriage license people she's 47 years old? Why, my mother isn't even 47 years old and she was grown up when this Joan Crawford was around in the movies. She must be more than 47, if you ask me.

And can you imagine why a millionaire would want to marry somebody 47 years old anyway? Or perhaps older? Gee, a guy with all that dough could practically marry anybody at whatever age; you know, get somebody real cute or something like that. And he has to go and marry somebody as old as that.

Honestly, kids, would you kids marry a rich millionaire if he asked you to? You know, I mean a person with one or two million dollars who asked would you marry him, would you do it? Yeah, you bet I would. Sure I would. Honest.

What'd be wrong with that; you know like if the guy really wanted to get married to you and all that? You know if the guy was really cute looking it would be better, of course, but even so.

You don't think I'm mercenary, do you, for thinking like that? Believe me, I'd give up a rich millionaire any time if a guy came along I could really fall for. You know a guy I could fall for? Rock Hudson. Gee, don't you think he's cute? So do I.

And the incomes of some of those Hollywood people, you wouldn't believe it. Gee, imagine being married to Rock Hudson and having a swimming pool all of your own and everything like that.

But, believe me, you'd have to be careful or you'd soon get spoiled, you know with all that money and glamor and all that.

You know what can happen? You get spoiled with that soft life, and, you know, get sort of soft.

Well, believe me, I wouldn't let that happen to me whether I was married to a Hollywood millionaire or not.

Because if there's one thing it's important for a person to keep it's her ideals.

Let's get another cup of coffee.

- Frank Tumpane

How The Other Half

Which is by way of being extracts,
printed by permission, from the
letters of Alex (or Rich) Kirs.

- - - - -

Oh for the coolness of October and the sere brown of November, when the bridle path resounds with the happy laughter of the well-dressed riders as they canter under the historic elms. Oh for the dull thud of the body hitting the sharp cinders as the beginner finds out too late that merely saying that he is an experienced rider means nothing to the horse. Oh for the sharp, piercing scream of the girl being dragged along the concrete road by her car-shy horse which has thrown her, she having meanwhile put her foot through the stirrup so that she is now helpless and quite unable to prevent herself from being dragged to death. Oh...well.

- - - - -

As a small child, it was the habit of my parents to get rid of me in the summers by sending me to a place called a "summer camp", in which the helpless inmates were subjected to a constant round of ten mile hikes, handicraft, and female councillors called Bunny. I'm afraid I rather liked it. Well, one's social status with the counsellors depended on how many and how much of the local animal life one tracked down and brought to them, writhing, as in the case of snakes, scratching and biting as in the case of shipmunks, or howling, as in the case of farmer Jones' youngest. Sort of a training school for immature Frank Bucks. One's rank among the inmates depended on how much and what kind of candy one's doting parents sent one, and how liberally one distributed it. Well, my parents, lolling amid the green fastness of a mid-Manhattan cocktail lounge, must have had a fit of conscience about me, sweating through the trackless jungles of upstate NY, because twice a week, there arrived at camp, addressed to me personally, a box of about four or five pounds of assorted candy bars, lemon drops, and bubble gum. Now I had, and still have, little use for such stuff, and you can easily imagine how I put it to use. Within an hour of the first shipment I had a couple of personal manservants, a bodyguard, and the Lodge Chief himself was making my bunk and tidying up my used socks and underwear. In plain English, I was living high.

Each morning, after church and breakfast, I would sally forth accompanied by my retinue, the game-scouts harrying back and forth across the track, carrying butterfly nets and collecting boxes, and the bearers and bodyguards bringing up the rear. Spotting a likely looking member of the native fauna, I would snap a crisp command, and the poor beast, be it newt or rattlesnake, skunk or toad or tree-frog, would almost disappear under the horde of avaricious bodies that catapulted upon it. Only twice that I can remember did my faithful attendants balk, once when ordered to get a hornets' nest with hornets in it, and again when ordered to capture alive a six foot rattlesnake which, when approached with a forked stick, instead of allowing itself to be pinned, struck at the stick with marvelous force. On the whole, however, we were most successful, or rather I was, since I had the foresight to dismiss the hunters and bearers when returning to camp, having first taken the now filled collecting jars and boxes. My counsellors rather admired me, expressing wonderment at my ability afield, since I always returned with at least ten times as many animals as my nearest competitor, a fat b*st*rd of eleven, given to nude communion with the sunrise and Bunny. As near as I can remember the prices, a box turtle of a diameter of at least six inches was worth two Babe Ruths, a snapping turtle of eight inches was worth three nestles and a pack of gum. A rattlesnake was worth six Hersheys,

three packs of bubble gum, and a box of hard candies. No size minimum was imposed on rattlesnakes.

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About the nude communer in the summer camp...the ghee was real weird. This kid all the time kept taking off his clothes and wandering all over stark naked. He was several times reprimanded by the counsellors when the parents of the other inmates were visiting, but still continued to do his nature boy stuff. He was CRAZY as I remember it. Every night, when us normal types huddled around the ceremonial campfire with hankies wrapped about our faces to keep the millions of skeeters and bugs and things out of our orifices, this guy would loll on the grass and not a one of the millions of bloodthirsty bugs ever lit on him, and the rest of us scratching and itching like mad. In the dewy twilight before dawn, he would hop out of bed, and naked, dance into the near subzero outdoors (this was in the mountains) and as soon as the sun popped up, he would go into a ritualistic series of leaps and bounds hither and thither in the ponderous manner of La Duncan. All this stark naked nude.

Well, was this female counsellor named Bunny, who was of the type of outdoor girl given to rising to look at the sunrise with tremulous sighs at the beauty of it all and goose pimples at the enchantment of the murmuring pines, or something. Well, one day, she got up as usual, and what does she see but a fattish faun or satyr or thing cavorting amid the dewy glens. So she runs out and the kid sees this pajama'ed she stalking him and makes a bolt for the woods, and loses himself therein. This happens for about five days, and Bunny is just at the point of building a box trap and baiting it with peanuts or some such thing, when the kid at last gets enough courage to stand still and let her catch up with him. I don't know what he told her, but the next day Bunny is reading a book about modern ballet, and the subsequent mornings find the kid dancing, now jockstrapped, to an audience of one, namely Bunny. We others knew about this because it was a sort of sport to get up early enough to watch the kid in his gyratings, and so, when he'd dance to the sun, we'd crouch among the bushes and fronds muffling our shrieks of maniac laughter.

- - - - -

Don't you know that everybody in NY, when drunk, orates on the futility of existence and the need for true friendship in this sorry world etc.? I have been known to weep uncontrollably into my Old Forester, bewailing the fact that all my friends are of the type, cynical sadistic bitches and bastards all, to whom it is impossible to unburden one's heart of those things it is on occasion necessary to unburden one's heart of. I mean, it is quite impossible to say to them with a sob in one's voice: I'm a failure, dammit, a failure, or, I'm in love, dammit, in love, or, I got piles, dammit, piles, since they would burst into loud, coarse laughter and advise one not to make an ass of oneself. So, when drunk, I invariably corner somebody I can beat up, and suffer him/her to listen to a two or three hour discussion of why I hate him/her and what foul false values he/she has, and dammit, I'm drunk, drunk dammit, and I gotta tell the truth when I'm drunk, and really, he/she is different, and I'm sorry, but I can't help it and that's the way I feel, boohoo.....

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I am amazed at the number of books about homosexuals in the library. These masquerade as novels and/or collections of short stories, and some of them are terrific reading. I, personally, am not one to be much influenced by what I read, at least in the line of acting on it, and yet, having in the past year or two read about a dozen such books painting homos as (a fact of which I was well aware on my own) nice and sometimes interesting guys, I feel occasionally a rather strong urge to seek out some bohemian bar and spend the night in one of those intricate duels of verbal play and counterthrust which lead to a night of

spiritually uplifting, psychically broadening, and physically stimulating homo-sexually voluptuous tomfoolery. One only wonders at the numbers of "normal" men more easily influenced than I who must actually follow through the urges inspired by these books. I have a horrid vision of the following contretemps:

SCENE: A bohemian bar. A cute homo sits alone, drinking an Alexander and preening himself. A clean-cut All-American type lounges up to him, thus:

C-C A-A: "Got a light, buddy?"

Homo: (Flusteredly dropping comb, mirror and lipstick) "What?--yes, of course--just a mo'." (Paws frantically through pockets and drops pack of Pall Mall however retaining matches which he hands to C-C A-A) "There you are."

C-C A-A: (Lighting cigarette and giving homo long, meaningful look over the flame) "Thanks a lot. Can I buy you a drink?"

(He hands back matches, and their hands touch. The C-C A-A prolongs touch. Homo snatches hand away, looking worriedly about him, and pockets matches.)

Homo: "Oh no---I mean---I've got one. Let me buy you a drink instead!" (Forcibly restrains himself from fluttering eyelashes and instead takes long appraising look at C-C A-A. Is visibly enthused.)

C-C A-A: "Fine!" (To bartender, who blanches.) "I'll take an absinthe frappe." (Drink arrives. C-C A-A looks at it with awe. Takes a tentative sip. Shudders. Turns to homo again.)

Homo: (Equally awed at C-C A-A's drink) "Do you always drink those? It must be awfully dangerous."

C-C A-A: "Dangerous? What do you mean?" (meanwhile seeking madly correct interpretation of subtle subsurface meaning which he has been conditioned by the books to expect.)

Homo: "The absinthe. It's supposed to make one insane."

C-C A-A: (convulsively dropping drink, which splashes turgidly on the floor and sends up fine white smoke.) "How clumsy of me! Is that a fact?"

Homo: "Oh yes. In fact, the importation of it has been banned. Of course, places like this always have some on hand, for people who want it. But you've dropped yours. Shall I order another?"

C-C A-A: "Oh no. Nonono! Don't bother." (Seeks frantically a valid reason for switching drinks. Finds one.) "The stuff it was made of was an off-brand. Inferior. I think I'll have a dry martini instead."

(Homo orders drink, which in due time arrives, and resumes conversation according to accepted pattern. Author's note: Personal research, as well as readings, indicate that the seduction patterns of homos vary from year to year, and in some localities, even from month to month. Whereas one type of gambit may be all the rage one month, it is considered passe the next. Therefore, the C-C A-A was acting on 1949-50 information, while the homo proceeds to use the genuine 1955 article, which is as completely incomprehensible to the C-C A-A as his gambit was to the homo.)

Homo: "What do you think of 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle'?"

C-C A-A: "Oh, it's fine. Fine." (Quite Jung-less, he has not the faintest idea of what the homo is talking about. However, he senses it may be a gambit, and offers encouragement.)

Homo: (Quite angrily. It is obviously a sore point with him.) "Oh, indeed? Let me tell you, my man, that I disapprove of libidinous investment. Secondary narcissism is quite distasteful to me. I want the real thing, and nothing else."

C-C A-A: (nonplussed, but sensing he has struck pay-dirt.) "The real thing. Of course. There's really nothing to beat it. Emotional purity, the--- why---the sheer brotherhoodness of it all! A guy wants to be able to communicate, to share. Sometimes I feel my wife doesn't understand me."

Homo: (Sitting up straight and slightly edging away from C-C A-A) "Whatever are you talking about? I meant nothing of the sort!"

C-C A-A: (Completely losing patience) "Look baby; you're a homo, a fag, a queer, right? Okay. So, do you or don't you want to go to bed with me?"

Homo: "No!"
(A sailor enters the bar. He is a muscular, hairy, snub-nosed yuk dressed in skin-tight whites. He waves at the homo.)

Homo: "Billeeeeeee! You darling! So you've finally arrived!"

Sailor: "Hiyah, Randy. Who's this creep?" (nods at C-C A-A)

Homo: "Oh, a repessee who wants to use me in experimental bi-sex or something like that. I can't think where he gets his dialogue, unless it's from Finisterre! He's been annoying me. Do bash him a couple of times, darling.

Sailor: (wreaking bloody havoc with C-C A-A's teeth) "Try and make time with my punk, will ya? Take that! And that!"
(Leaving the bleeding C-C A-A on the floor entangled with the rail, homo and sailor start for the door. They pause in the doorway. Homo looks back at C-C A-A who is starting to come to.)

Homo: "Emotional purity, pooch! Animism, my dear, is all the rage! Toodle-oo!"
They leave, and after a couple of moments, the bartender makes C-C A-A pay for the drinks and then throws him out, muttering, "Lousy queer! Bother my steady customers, will ya?"

-----CURTAIN-----

(Ed note: I consider it bad practice for an editor to point to a certain item and say "This is meant to be funny." However, for the benefit of any readers who may suffer from the degree of obtuseness exhibited by a certain schizophrenic fan of Minneapolis, I feel I should point out that the following is a satire on a contemporary literary style. - BR.)

APRÈS MIDI DANS LA SALLE À MANGER

or

TO HELL WITH TRUMAN CAPOTE AND THE WHOLE LOT OF 'EM
THIS IS MY ART FORM!

Such a beautiful afternoon! Wan gold sunlight painted cubist symphonies on the apartment building, and, below, Mister Widdershins passed in hesitant promenade, bending over each child in its pram, leaving behind him a ripple as of a swimming mink, the waves, however, sonic rather than aquatic. Calligraphy of light on calligraphic verdure framed his eventual departure, enclosed him, as, leaving, he passed through the archway, becoming for a hesitant, diluted minute a curved black exclamation point in a golden orb --- gold of sun on dun concrete beyond the arch --- alike to the enlarged pupil of the eye of a cat, and as glowing, darkly.

Into the small, evil and defiant eye -- small, black, age-old -- of the parakeet, by the precisionist called the Budgerigar, I stared, and, as it opened its horny beak, I took a long drag on my cigarette and carefully, with precision, with a lover's impassioned delicacy, blew the smoke in a thick, slow stream into the gaping crow. The bird shook its head (O smooth sleekness undisturbed, ever undisturbed) and shuddered, almost as if I had vulgarly violated some private and restricted part of it, opened the eye in shock, widely, and then closed it with incredible tightness, convulsively relaxed the grip of its claws on the perch, and slowly, slowly with a terrible finality, toppled stiffly backwards, to fall to the gravelled floor of the cage upon its head, making a small, cushioned thump.

"La, la," exclaimed my mother, slapping her thigh, "Regarde le pauvre, il y git! Formidable!" Droplets of beer flew as she pounded on the table with her tankard, amber-sharp and incredibly swift in the sunbeam, reminiscent of urination in a forest. Quickly (into the terrified stagnation of the afternoon, quickly) she bent to the lip of her glass, her nose touching the opposite rim of it, and arose moustachioed whitely, making my sister say

"Alex, regarde-la! Marman! C'est drole!" almost retching with contained laughter, so that our eyes flew, limpid-limping, alike to crippled gulls from the beams of each other's vision into the dark corners of the room, rebounding from the polished surfaces of table and couchant faun upon it---agony of masturbatory ejaculation captured in ceramic---to retreat from the obvious cul-de-sac back to the parakeet, which, arisen, was staggering about within the cage.

"You shouldn't do that!" The gas-man, there to do something to the kitchen pipes, framed himself in the doorway, impassioned eyes in search of a reason, a reason, a memory of a voice calling in an autumn dusk---among the smells of smoke and fallen corpses of leaves and damp and pressing fog while the stars tried to shine---in search of what is to be search for, so symbolized, even in the color of the bird, a blue, oh, a blue, and the cigarette in his mouth, when extracted, had a straggle of tobacco crumbs hairing the tip, so that the act of inserting it again was made sexual. "You shouldn't!"

The moment, the purity of invasion---rape of silence and communion, of mutual misunderstanding at its highest point---the purity of invasion shattered all before it, the shards a multifaceted catalyst causing a reacted speech, making us chorus, without continuity, sharp and stabbing, a forest of spearlike words---Did you fix the pipes? ---Is it all right now? ---Que voulez-vous? Baksheesh?---Why, only the other day, I was preparing a Roccus Saxitallis, only a rat, mind you, a throwaway, but still, firmly fleshed and admirably formed, and so fresh, and with even a stuffing of wild rice and chopped celery, and it was impossible, quite impossible, to adjust properly the oven so that it took.....! These drove him back, by perceptible degrees, through the doorway, as would a phalanx of shields, and what an intimidation! Of such perfection that he did not even dare to slam the door, nor could we hear his feet upon the stairs.

But without time for the moment, the triumph and all it implies, we wheeled on, oh, even as the earth, the stars wheel (for the sunbeam had moved, tracking the floor) we returned, and my mother had noticed the bird, now swaying drunkenly again upon its perch, and my sister, not needing the implied command, had fetched a straw from the closet, the plastic straw, which my mother dipped in a glass of water, siphon-wise, to fill it with the liquid, capped and held by pressed and throbbing thumb, which, poised, soon released its load upon the head of the bird, which trembled.

"Moisten him, oh moisten him!" chanted my sister, and so frenetic the impulse, my mother grew incautious, responding to the cachinnation, and, blindly, plunged on its return trip the siphon into the tankard of beer, unseeing, even unto the release of the amber stream upon the upturned skull of the parakeet. "Oh now we shall have to wash him!" said my sister joyfully, smiling, while one hand clasped and unclasped in a tic, the tendons leaping and swelling and sinking---a rhythm learned at the sea, in a time of fog, fog and great waves that came in, in, making one feel so small---but I caught the hand before it could enter the cage, restraining it, saying,

"It is insufficiently stupified." And the words echoed, over and over and again, insufficiently stupified, insufficiently stupified, insufficiently stupified, complicated by the fact that I lisp. I took another drag on my cigarette, and, as my mother and sister, united in frustration, were prohibited from removing the bird by the fact of its biting when not under the influence of nicotine and so removing the frustration, I undertook to blow again the smoke into the mouth of the bird, which, throughout the whole episode, had said nothing at all, and said nothing now.

THE B.N.F.

by Lee Youngfan

"I am a BNF." Ambrodroke said. "Good humored and condescending, and a trufan. I am a BNF." He said it loudly to the mirror every morning when he woke. He said it to the typewriter as he sat down to write. He said it to his correspondents in each letter. He published it in his fanzine and had it printed on his letterhead.

He was applauded, yea, lauded, from coast to coast, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Sussex to Middlesex, from Florida to Oregon, from the Yukon to the St. Lawrence. His name was mentioned in every well known fanzine. His letters were published in the prozines.

His joy was boundless.

With a single word the BNF vanquished his foes. LNFs trembled in fear of him. Neofen stood in awe of his name in print.

And then it came to pass that Ambrodroke went to a convention, and it came to pass that at this particular convention there were assembled a number of unlikely people, even unto such unlikely people as the fictitious Boyd Raeburn, and the anti-fan, Francis Towner Laney. These two and several similarly unlikely persons were standing grouped in the convention hall, as Laney earnestly tried to lure Raeburn into leaving the convention and going to look for some good jazz. Raeburn swayed indecisively, listening to Laney's enticing voice.

And as he swayed, Ambrodroke approached. In awe of himself Ambrodroke paused, waiting for Raeburn to kneel in respect. Raeburn did not kneel.

"I am Ambrodroke." the BNF said, giving Raeburn the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps, he thought, Raeburn could not read and therefore did not realize the word engraved on his i.d. badge.

But still Raeburn swayed to Laney, not even glancing at Ambrodroke.

"I," Ambrodroke said loudly, enunciating with care, "am a BNF."

Raeburn turned lazily toward him and asked, "What the hell is a BNF?"

Shocked, Ambrodroke stared at him. Sacrilege!

"Why, I am a Big Name!"

Raeburn nodded in appreciation. "I can see that." he said, "B for big and N for name, but what does the F stand for?"

Laney looked Ambrodroke down with an expert eye and said simply, "Fugghead"

PATÉ DE : FAUX PAS

or

WATCH THAT VERB

If you lay in the gutter you only get stepped on - Jim Harmon

While laying in bed we started whispering.... - Dave Rike in Orgy #2

People laid on the beds, floors, furniture, and anything else we had around. - Rich Elsberry in Quandry #15

THE VICE

by Richard Geis

"Aw, go on...tighten it a bit more!"

"Yeah, but look whose zine it is in the vise this time: Claude Hall's MUZZY. If I really cut loose and exert the pressure, he'll bleed all over fandom! Think we should risk that?"

"Why not? What fandom needs is new blood. It's being said every year."

"Yeah...but...Oh, all right. I'll operate. Stand by with the artificial respiration."

"I hope you see fit to mention the 10,000 words of FICTION he ran in issue #7. I mean, for a fan who's been around for a long time, for Claude to use three stories in one issue is...is...well, it hardly seems credible."

"Yes, I was going to mention that 26 out of 58 pages are nothing but amateur fiction. I wonder if Hall has delusions of promanship?"

"Dunno about that, but he sure has sex on the brain."

"You refer to the 13 nudes in the issue, I presume? I rather thought they were nice stuff. By far the most interesting items in the issue. Indeed, the only thing that saves it from total extinction is the policy of lots of nudes, for, in addition to all that fiction, Hall also used two poems."

"He sure did. The one by Aga Yonder was lousy in the first place, and I hardly blame somebody for using what seems obviously a pen-name. And I still say he has sex on the brain. Consider the "jokes" he perpetrates on page 16 below the Yonder poem."

"Heh...yeah, they were pretty old, weren't they?"

"Well, on to the other poem. It was by Garth Bentley, read well, but was woefully trite. A waste of time for him and the readers."

"Ummmm. What else was in the issue?"

"There was a short column by Nancy Share which struck me as rather "cute". And there was a column by Fred Remus that had to do with the alleged superiority of SAPS over FAPA. I should think that after screaming for years about how much better they were, the SAPS would begin to believe it. But no, they feel impelled to repeat it over and over, hoping perhaps that time and reiteration will actually convince both themselves and fandom. A pity they feel themselves so inferior as to have to adopt such transparent superiority devices."

"I would like to mention the two letter sections in the magazine. There was one of old letters, and one of new."

"Would you also like to mention that Hall used up eight pages doing editorials?"

"Yes, now that you bring it up, I would. He reviewed his previous issues, interestingly reviewed a lecture on sunspots, tried to be funny while creating his idea of a perfect "man", and interestingly reported his experiences with the Southwestern Rocket Society."

"Go on....there's more."

"Well....he also reviewed fanzines."

"And in the process revealed an almost total lack of critical ability. He is of the "Boost, don't knock" school. Every fanzine he reviewed in the issue he considers to be either a top zine, or easily able to be a top zine within a few issues merely by making a few trifling changes. He probably liked FANFICTION."

"May I break in to quote an "ITEM" of his on page 12? He says: 'Mad Comics, after being banned as a comic book.....'"

"Did he really say that? Here, let me read...."

"Yes, the inaccurate stupid fool actually did say that. I guess he is just naturally an exaggerating fellow."

"Hah. And I bet he declares war when he reads this review. The Geis-Hall feud will rage again. Yippee!"

"Sadist!"

"What on earth is THAT?"

"This? This is WHIMSY. It is a magazine which features rather nice printing and rather lousy poetry. It is edited by Ronald Voigt."

"You mean he has given up FANFICTION and is now putting out a little little "little" magazine?"

"Yep, all of 11 pages, half-size. And this is only the third issue. Why, beginning with the 5th issue the price goes up to 15¢ per copy and \$1.25 per year!"

"Why?"

"Why does he charge so much, or why does he publish it?"

"Why is he charging so much?"

"I thought it was obvious. He wants to keep his magazine pure and virginally amateur. Thus the high price; he figures nobody in his right mind would pay 15¢ per copy for such inane drivel and thin content. But I personally expect him to wind up with at least ten subbers."

"Echhh!"

OBLIQUE #4. Clifford Gould, 1559 Cable Street, San Diego 7, Calif. 15¢

Believe me, there's nothing oblique about this mag. It features some extremely effective satire. The two items that fractured me were Cons Are Fun by Peter J. Remizrov, a neat little item which should either bring Vorzimmer out of his gafia or permanently laugh him into that place where fuggheads go when they've been stomped on by fandom; and the utterly devastating rewording of that insulting asininity on the back cover of the September GALAXY. Gold deserved Looking Fer Us Prof? and should apologize for running such a downright sneer at the intellect of his readers. I wonder how many caught the insult to themselves? Cliff's beautiful rewording of the ad was masterful and should be commended. I laughed aloud all through it and was only sorry I hadn't thought of doing it myself.

In the letter section Vernon McCain strokes his beard and in effect prophesies that OBLIQUE will be "the" fanzine soon. I agree, but Cliff will have to come out more often if he expects to make it.

The cover deserves some comment if only for the fact that it is a beautiful photo-cover of our Ghod Bloch caught in an unguarded moment during a convention.

SCINTILLATION #4, Mark Schulzinger, 6791 Meadow Ridge Ln. Amberly Village, Ohio. 10¢

After the editorial, the reader is staggered by a C. Raye Hall story. C. Raye Hall? Who he? Ah...of course; that old hack Claude Hall of MUZZY fame. This story of his, What Was...Is is very bad. Editorial something or other is evident when, at the bottom of the first page of the story, Schulzinger dutifully informs the reader: "(continued on next page)". Gee.....I wouldna known.

Ray Schaffer, Jr. is ramblingly incoherent in a column type thing called The Fiend. He (as I understand it) defends Harlan Ellison's right to make known his opinions and says those who rip into Harlan for voicing his opinions are wrong. Then Schaffer turns about and seems to rip into Harlan (using a peculiar version of psychology all his own) in exactly the same way the others have. Schaffer mentions that surely "Harlan knows his popularity is ebbing away" and is only keeping up the "mud-slinging" in order to achieve egoboo no matter what the cost.

Well....apparently Schaffer is among those who consider "popularity" a very important thing. And it would seem that to hold an opinion that isn't popular with other fans is sheer insanity....at least in the mind of Schaffer, Jr.

Gad, just think...I might not be popular when this issue is distributed. Oh worry worry worry worry.....

This mag is badly mimeed and badly....well, just badly.

OOPSLA #18, Gregg Calkins, 2817 Eleventh St., Santa Monica, Calif. 15¢

Aside from a totally undistinguished cover, this mag is one of the most enjoyable fanzines being published today. The material is uniformly excellent. I think anybody who doesn't receive this magazine should have his head examined for rocks and extra holes.

KAYMAR TRADER #96, Gary Labowitz, 7234 Baltimore, Kansas City, Mo. It has folded, so you couldn't get a copy by now if you wanted one. After about three or four issues Labowitz has done the inevitable: he has tired of it all and folded KT without even having the decency to TRY to find someone to shove it off onto.

I don't know why Carlson gave up the mag after umpty-ump issues under his management and gave it over to a neofan with no reputation at all for consistency or responsibility, indeed, with no reputation at all for anything. So I suppose I shouldn't leap on Gary for folding the mag so quickly. Carlson probably knew this would happen.

So Labowitz wants to pub another mag in place of KT. But I thought he said that "Due to circumstances beyond my control" the zine was dying. He can't continue KT, or make arrangements to see that it continues, but he can damn well plan a zine to take its place! If KT were just another crudzine without a tradition or a damn good purpose, I wouldn't scream like this. It just seems irresponsible to me.

The Short and Sweet: MERLIN, Lee Anne Tremper, 1022 N. Tuxedo, Indianapolis, Indiana. 5¢. Well worth 5¢, with several clever features and undistinguished but readable material.

CALIFAN, Dave Rike, Box 203, Rodeo, Calif. Available for trade, comment, or by way of contribution. Strictly a fan's fanzine. Good stuff of narrow esoteric interest mostly. Never too well duplicated.

CRY OF THE NAMELESS, Box 92, 920 Third Ave, Seattle 4, Wash. 10¢. Rather spotty, with some issues very good, some bad. The editorship is shifted from member to member of the club.

INERTIA. C.A. McMahon, Jr. 110 Olivier St. New Orleans 14, La. 15¢. A beginner and a vlnl. Not too well duplicated or edited. Indeed, there wasn't much to edit.

ALICE, Kent Corey, Box 64, Enid, Oklahoma. 15¢. An overpriced and unreliable item that seems to exist only to promote the yearly Oklacon. Lots of illos, not much material.

UMBRA, John Hitchcock, 15 Arbutus Ave., Baltimore 28, Md. 10¢. This one keeps improving with each issue. Dittoing has improved 100% and is now entirely readable. Skipping a space between paragraphs would help break up the solid pages of thick purple type. Some thought provoking material.

ECLIPSE, Ray Thomson, 410 S. 4th St. Norfolk, Nebraska. 10¢. Gad, Ray has mastered his machine and at last has issued one issue of his zine that is pleasing to look at, and that can be read. 24" paper no less! Good fanzine reviews and a smattering of other material.

THE ACTIVEFAN, Maurice S. Lubin, 14 Jones St., Worcester 4, Mass. 10¢. Mostly forgettable, with old news and unfunny cartoons. Rather pretentious, I thought. A poor imitation of Magnus' now long dead SF.

VOID, % Lt.Col. J.A. Benford, Hq. 594th F.A. Bn., APO 169, New York, N.Y. 10¢. Readable, barely, because of a good article by Joe Gibson. What this one needs most is a capable artist and a bit more work on the mimeo.

NITE CRY, Don Chappell, 5921 E. 4th Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 10¢. This tenth issue has the best cover it's ever run...a nicely done space scene by Bob Alpaugh. A good story by Ellison, and an incredibly stupid column by Claude Hall are the standouts of this issue. Not much personality to this zine, but it is competently edited.

SPECTRUM, George Jennings, 11121 Tascosa, Dallas, Texas. About 10¢ I guess. Still not blessed with good material, George makes do remarkably well. The layout of this zine reminds me a bit of VEGA and QUANDRY. Watch this one.

ISM, Rosin, 163 West College St., Oberlin, Ohio. A trade-zine. Rambling by the editor on everything that strikes her mind. Amusing, readable.

- ROUBIDOUX, Jean Young, 12 Sumner Rd., Cambridge 38, Mass. A one-shot, and good, being mainly the effusions of Jean's mighty mind.

CANFAN, William D. Grant, 11 Burton Rd., Toronto 10, Canada. An interesting, rather pedestrian zine. Worth reading, but not spectacular.

ANDROMEDA, Pete Campbell, 60 Calgarth Rd., Windemere, West, England. 10¢. It ain't worth it. Some amateur fiction, an article by George Wetzel, a stf crossword puzzle.

ORION, Paul Enever, 9 Churchill Ave., Hillingdon, Middlesex, England. 35¢ per year. A darn good little zine which is vastly improved by the many illos by Atom.

SATELLITE, Don Allen, 3 Arkle St., Gateshead 8, Co. Durham, England. One prozine for two issues or a letter full of comment. Again in 1955, as in 1954, it seems that every fanzine in England will be running a looooong convention report. There is one in this zine, there are two in HYPHEN, and I expect more every day. This is a good job though, and there is other material.

SLANDER, Jan Sadler, 219 Broadmoor Dr., Jackson 6, Mississippi. 10¢. The name isn't original; I used it for reviews in TNFF a while ago. Don Susan dreamed it up. The issue is mostly Agacon reports by various and sundry. Shows promise though.

NOW & THEN, Turner, 10 Carlton Ave., Romiley, Cheshire, England. A tradezine...no price that I could find. Delightfully worth a trade, too, since it features the art of Pat Lyons and...uh...I think Turner or Eric Needham. A wonderfully free and easy zine. Also very good are the Widower's products advertised in this zine.

EISFA, Buck and Juanita Coulson, 407¹/₂ East 6th St. North Manchester, Indiana. 5¢. Rather corny and insipid and mediocre, but for 5¢ it isn't a bad deal.

BEHOLD THE NAKED COW, how now
One, two,

Three, four,
Not too far, existence, the
estimation of; mine
By you, off it was, but
Nearly on the button, kid.

Pluckest thine eyes, but not
With grapes of a sourness
formidable,
O thou kid, ma cherie!

Throbbity throb, ya slob!

- Kirs

THE SOUNDS

by Roger Feather

The observer or reviewer of the arts has two main responsibilities; to offer constructive criticism and/or praise where it is due, and to evaluate the current product in terms of importance to the art. The latter, which I believe to be the more important, also includes judging the trends and thoughts of the schools or individual artists. With a view towards public consumption, the reviewer must recommend or not recommend the various commodities of the art, which in our case is primarily records and the musicians who make them. I may add that the productivity of the recording companies has overwhelmed me, so that I will be able to mention only a small portion of the recent releases.

From the New York recording studios there has developed, in the last six months, what could almost be called a new style in modern jazz. The style is dictated by the fact that a certain group of musicians, and more important, composers and arrangers, reappear on record after record. This 'East Coast Jazz', or better still, 'The Guys From Charlie's Tavern' (a musicians' gathering place in New York) style was first produced as such by Creed Taylor, late of Bethlehem Records, and further developed by Jack Lewis at Victor Records. The musicians come mostly from the bands of Count Basie and Woody Herman, possibly explaining the many similarities between these groups, the Basie style being predominant. The leaders of the movement seem to be Al Cohn and Nat Pierce, and around them they have gathered a group of regulars, for recording purposes at least.

The latest release from this sect is an album under the leadership of Joe Newman titled "All I Wanna Do Is Swing." Trumpeter Newman, from Basie's band, playing both open and muted, has never sounded better on record. Also playing well in the group are Milt Hinton, Freddie Greene, Nat Pierce, Al Cohn, and particularly Shado Wilson, a very underrated drummer, who seldom gets a chance to play in such good company, although he certainly deserves it. The writing by Al Cohn, Ernie Wilkins, and Manny Albam is very loose and swinging, giving the men plenty of room to 'wail'. And 'wail' they do, particularly on "Limehouse Blues" and "Corner Pocket." This album, I think, is one of the best examples of this style - a style characterized by its swinging freedom and faithfulness to jazz forms as opposed to the superficiality and pretentiousness of the current West Coast style. In the same field is Al Cohn's "Mr. Music", in which Cohn and Joe Newman star, and Dick Collins' "King Richard The Swing-Hearted", which is much superior to his previous album, "The Runaway Herd."

The Sauter-Finegan organization has two new releases, of which I think "The Sons of Sauter-Finegan" is the better. "Concert Jazz" has some pretty and pleasant music on it, but not much excitement. "The Loop", "Where or When", and "Solo for Joe" (Venuto) are the only even mildly interesting tunes. On "The Sons of Sauter Finegan", an eight piece group from the orchestra, I think the trombonist, Sonny Russo, comes off best. This is a good, sometimes exciting album. I had an opportunity of seeing the band last summer and three things come to mind; pleasant dance music, a well disciplined and rehearsed band, and a swinging number with kazoos!

I also saw the Count Basie band and I am quite willing to confirm the reports that this is 'the swingiest band in the land'. Which brings us to a new LP titled "Basie". Although not as good as "Dance Session #2", it's still Basie, and it seems that everything he does is great. Again it's 16 men 'wailing' on tunes such as Blues Backstage, Two Franks, Perdido, and others. Lots of Frank Foster and Frank Wess on this, much too little of Thad Jones and Joe Newman. But it's Basie, and that's enough.

Also recent:- Dave Brubeck "Jazz; Red, Hot, and Cool." It's good Brubeck, but to me, the group lacks vitality.

"Ralph Burns Among the JATPs" This is very good, particularly the bands "Oscar" "Roy", and, surprisingly, "Flip."

"Milt Jackson Quartet" (with Horace Silver sounding like John Lewis.) Milt remains, in my opinion, one of the great half dozen modern jazz musicians.

Toronto houses a unique jazz spot in The House of Hambourg, an atmospheric cellar establishment devoted to modern jazz. At present they are operating on a 4-night-a-week basis, with regular groups, food, drink, and admission charges. But it wasn't always this way. Six or seven years ago it was operating as an after-hours house for musicians. It may have been going longer, as the Hambourg family is very musical, and Clem Hambourg, as he would say, 'has always loved these boys that make modern music.' Clem is almost as colorful as his house, but a description would be useless, you must see him and know him to appreciate him, and, I might add, he is greatly appreciated by people on the 'scene.' I think every musician in Toronto and area who plays jazz has, at some time or other, played sessions at 'Clem's.' Herbie Spanier's 'Jazz Society of Canada' founded and floundered at Clem's. The 'New Jazz Society' made its headquarters there. Various local musicians at various times have lead the 'scene.' Herbie Spanier, Bill Goddard, Hughie Currie, Jack Lander and others have at different periods been organizers.

Many, many out-of-town musicians fondly remember the basement at Clem's. On one stay in town, Dave Brubeck spent more time there than at the club where he was working. I remember a session with Lee Konitz playing tenor - I've never heard Lee play better. I could go on, but the point is that the halls of the various 'Hambourg Houses' (there have been three or four moves) have heard a lot of great jazz from both "local" and "name" musicians.

Of the groups working under the present policy, the 'Sunday night group' is the most impressive. The quartet is lead by ~~Rex~~ Cologrosso, a good trombonist, both valve and slide, and a very good composer and arranger. Roy Smith on clarinet, alto, and particularly, baritone, is the star of the group. Doug Bennett on drums and Carne Brae on bass very adequately fill out the group. The quartet has a well-rehearsed and well-balanced sound, and by the use of standard and instrumental tunes, variety in instrumentation and tempos, they do an extremely good job in presentation. The strong points of this group are two; Roy Smith's baritone, and the writing by Cologrosso and Norm Symonds. Smith has a big full tone, reminiscent of Mulligan, and with the same quality of vitality which Gerry and maybe a dozen others in jazz possess. I think Roy Smith is one of the better musicians in jazz today. Cologrosso's writing is fluid, swinging, inventive, and always interesting. He is highly original, and given an opportunity to be heard, should become a major writer in jazz. In fact the whole group, given the opportunity to be heard, could offer a large contribution to jazz and become a major attraction. This is a better group than many of those touring clubs and concerts, and recording on name labels.

Both Jack Lander's group (Lander, bass, Ed Bicket, guitar, Norm Amadio, piano, and Archie Alleyne, drums) and the 'rehearsal orch' under Roy Smith were heard recently by Leonard Feather. He claimed both were better than many working groups and that they were worthy of recording. It would be heartening to see some of this town's great musicians on record and recognized by the public.

AD LIB: I had prepared a bit on Norman Granz, but it seems that Bill Coss and friends at Metronome said it all. I am in accord with about 90% in the articles. When are people going to start to realize the greatness of the Modern Jazz Quartet? They played 10 days in town last summer, and I have never heard a better group. I will finish with a few other questions. When are the 'cats' going to start appreciating the greatness of Art Tatum? When are modern jazz fans going to study and listen to some of the background of jazz. When am I going to make a deadline?

- Roger Feather

SCUTO BONAE VOLUNTATIS TUAE CORONASTI NOS

WALT WILLIS, BELFAST, N. IRELAND

Delighted to learn that you have objective existence; at one time it seemed that half fandom was following the diminished Seventh into solipsist subjection. It seems to me that you, Raleigh E. Multog, Jacob Edwards, John Berry in Ireland and Mike Wallace in England are now a group big enough to get together and cease to believe in the existence of the rest of fandom. I love these Derelicti Derogation things. They almost make me believe that fandom is still the way I used to like it in the old Quandry days - a homogenous society with a shared culture, where allusions and references peculiar to one group are comprehensible to another. Nowadays it seems to me we have a lot of little dunghills each with its own cock, firmly convinced that they are all there is of fandom. No longer is there a central group who get all the fanzines, and a fan columnist, for example, feels that his terms of reference are horribly circumscribed. A Bas seems to me a symptom that the old central nexus is being built up again and that the shifting chaos of the 'Seventh Fandom' interregnum is happily coming to an end. Anyhow, I like these conversation pieces with their sly digs at everyone and you could quadruple the space given to them without me feeling it was too much. You might save it by cutting down on this pseudo avant garde stuff, which went out years ago without anyone lighting a candle in the window for it to come back. At any rate, those two Kirs poems seem to be just two wasted pages, of no more value than the scrawling of the fan artists which you so rightly condemn. Kirs' letters, on the other hand, were well worth printing. I don't know what connection they have with reality--some of the episodes read suspiciously like adolescent day dreams --wet and dry--but they're interesting reading. Anyhow it's nice to see Kirs back. I won't say I'd missed him because to be honest I'd forgotten him entirely, but his name rang a pleasant-sounding bell in my memory. He seems to be a sort of East Coast Shmoyer and this type of fringe-fan is well worth holding on to. Get him to write some more letters?....in prose, preferably. Grennell's puns about cars remind me of when we were staying with Pamela and Ken Bulmer in London after this year's British Convention. I was shaving in the kitchen with my Rolls Razor (the Bulmers have a bathroom but I'd put the washbasin out of action at 3 am that morning by trying to unscrew the outlet on the waste pipe to clear a stoppage) and Bulmer said, "You use a Rolls Razor?" "Yes," I said, "I hate hairy cars." "Oh," said Ken. "Aren't you afraid you might Jaguar skin?" Liked the readers' letters, especially Donald Susan--not only because of the nice crack about Kyrie Ellison, but because he taught me a new word. How could I not have known about "caprine"?....I'll bet I come across it about ten times in the next two weeks now.

GREG CALKINS, SANTA MONICA, CALIF.

It's getting so you don't know who's for real and who's for fake nowadays, but I've finally decided you're for real. It was a bit puzzling at first, but the latest A BAS decided me...Steward, Kidder and Lyons never produced anything as good as this in their lives, singly, jointly, or collectively. Your cover this time was very, very nice looking. I didn't quite understand the significance of the subject matter, but the color was beautiful, and it was a nice job. The rest of the issue was superb in spots and outside my sphere in others. I liked your first couple of pages very much, but only passably cared for the rest until I came to Kirs' poem. There I am stopped. The first stanza was wonderful...much better than I expected of Kirs...and the next three were great. After that I thought it deteriorated quite rapidly. Leaves me with mixed feelings--it could have been a magnificent poem if he had finished as well as he began. The other poetry in the issue was good, but Kirs still leaves me with that in-between feeling. 'The Traffic' was very good. Poetry fascinates me, and occasionally I try to write it but get lost somewhere and instead of the fabulous schemes I plan I wind up with good old

iambic pentameter and simple rhymes. I aspire to Omar, but I fear the talent is lacking. As for Kirs' 'How The Other Half'...I, frankly, don't know if he is trying to b-s the troops or not. Screwy things happen all the time in that part of the country, I know, and they just might as well happen to him as anybody else. These excerpts from his letters are great reading, and I can't help but admit enjoying them.

JEREMY MILLETT, PARK RIDGE, ILL.

In line with your previous policy of the reader paying whatever he thinks the magazine is worth, I am herewith sending you a dime. This is not because I think your fanzine is worth a dime, but because I am kind-hearted. Derelicti Derogation wasn't bad, but I'd like to know just what was so great about it. Here in Park Ridge us fans have funnier conversations than that every day. Incidentally, who the hell cares if George Frazier wants to go to bed with LP312? The Modern Cinderella wasn't bad, but it is not stf nor does it belong in a magazine that is supposedly a stfanzine. Emanon could stick closer to stf. As for the poetry, it can be dispensed with at any time and there will be no tears shed by me. So it all boils down to the idea that I don't particularly enjoy your fanzine. Nice try, old man.

/["Supposedly a stf fanzine" Huh???]

PETER J. VORZIMER, CALIFORNIA

This latest (#6) issue of your little magazine, A BAS, to hand, and I surely have some comments to make on it. The cover, the derogation, the Sounds, the filth, all are noted. What is of the most important importance to me is the letter section wherein my name is attacked, I am insulted sometimes subtly, sometimes not, and some formerly very nice people turn against me. I speak mainly of Our Boy in the Service, Marine Calkins. I never suspected that Gregg could be so downright, unmitigatedly MEAN to a person who has always been his very best fan-friend, who has even defended him in personal correspondence when such time could very profitably have been spent on more important things--at the time I thought Gregg's reputation was important to me. Yes, when Harlan Ellison wrote to me, complaining against Calkins, I took some of my valuable time and explained Calkins to him, as only someone who has known Gregg, who has enjoyed his friendship and confidence, can. Harlan thanked me muchly for straightening him out on this--I was glad to do it. "Little Peter Vorzimer" is a title I detest. Gregg knows that, and knows that it was the cause of my throwing Ron Ellick out of my room here at the college last October when he visited me. Ron used it jokingly, he may have thought, but it aroused something in me that I couldn't quell by reason. Ron took it hard, as he takes anything his ego doesn't approve, and started his silly name-calling. "Mother Vorzimer's Boy" is one that Gregg must have been in a terrible anger to think up -- if he was thinking at all. I violently oppose anyone's right to use my mother's name in any derogatory way whatsoever in any ghod damned fanzine or letter I should ever see. Certainly Gregg can have little respect for his own mother if he uses other people's mothers against them. I am not my mother's little boy. I am not anyone's little boy. And should anyone, in the future, even so much as mention my mother again in A BAS, I will not be accountable for what happens. I will not drop Calkins from my trade list--I want him to read my full length reply in my next editorial which is going to press in a few days. I will not say nasty things about him--I will state facts, facts concerning him and other Southern California fen (are you listening, Ellick?) that these fen did not know I had remembered. I know enough about Calkins to make him eternally shameful he ever so much as mentioned me in such a manner. When I met Ed Cox last year I was proud to know him--he is a BNF. But it seems even BNFs can make mistakes, and this is Ed's most serious one. He is overstepping his alleged unlimited scope by saying such things, and will most sincerely feel the repercussions.

[This letter was dated May 23, 1955. Those editorial repercussions seem a long time coming, but still, better brace yourselves. This letter was not cut, changed or altered in any way.]

RON ELLIK, LONG BEACH, CALIF.

I can't wait to see this letter from Vorzimer you were telling me about. This business of his throwing me out of his room at college is exaggerated, I imagine, in the usual Vorzimer fashion. I did visit him at the University, mainly because I was up in Santa Monica with my mother, visiting my aunt, and after saying hello to her I called Calkins and Wilson, neither of whom were at home, and resorted to Visiting Vorzimer. I asked in the administration building where Peter J. Vorzimer was, and they told me how to get to that particular dormitory. He does not live in a building called Toyon Hall, by the way. He lives in dormitory 17, which holds its dances, etc., and is served postally by Toyon Hall, along with Dorms 18, 19 and 20--a total of one hundred students in all. The college is quite spread out, 25 students to a dorm, and so forth. I went over to Dorm 17, anyway, and went up to the second storey where his room is. Knocked, and heard a familiar voice bellow "Who is it?" "It's Ellik, Little Peter...may I come in?" Polite as the devil. The door sprang open in front of me, revealing Little Peter in all his masculine glory --dressed in shorts and his fat. He stared at me in disbelief and then invited me in. As soon as I walked in I started saying "Little Peter" at every opportunity. I could tell he didn't like it. He demanded I stop, and when I didn't he tried to slug me. Naturally, altho I'm younger than he, I'm bigger and blocked him. Frustratingly enough (to him) I didn't slug back, but just told him "Sit down, Littul Peter." His face got red. His mouth opened cavernously, and he bellowed "GET OUT!!!" Well, I can take a hint...I got. Not in a hurry, naturally--except once, when the door slammed, almost on my rump. I strolled leisurely downstairs to the car and just before I got in I cried "So long, Little Peter." The window of a certain room came down so fast it shattered. I drove off, back to Santa Monica.

NORM WENDROWSKI, NOTRE DAME, INDIANA

The pages that really packed a wallop in my book were George Frazier's words about Lee Wiley. The description of her personality etc. made me borrow a piggy bank and start saving my pence to buy Storyville LP312. Derelicti Derogation #4 also hit the proverbial. The least I can say is that it is the most. But one thing rubbed my grain the way nature didn't intend it to be rubbed. I violently disagree with Redd Boggs' insinuation that A BAS is basically inferior because it is anti-serious-constructive. If he honestly holds this idea as gospel, he's probably the type who would have stood up before Parliament and denounced Swift's Modest Proposal as too asinine to consider. What I'm trying to get across is this -- when someone starts criticizing good satire because it tries to do something in a painless -- even enjoyable -- way, that someone should turn himself in for a 100,000 mile check-up because he's lost his sense of humor. He wouldn't have said it to Willis.

ROBERT BLOCH, WEYAUWEGA, WISC.

I congratulate you on being real. Furthermore, I congratulate you on A BAS #6. It is full of goodies, and in Rich (or Alex) Kirs you have uncovered a likely rival to William Rotsler's Gerald FitzGerald. But of course, all pales into insignificance beside the sheer impact of your cover illo. This guy G. de Chirico is a real discovery...positively the best fan artist to come along since Terry Carr! Of course, he lacks Carr's authority, but I'm sure that with a little practical experience (and probably, a few words of advice from Norm Browne and Ellison) he will go a long way. Of course, I am taking a great risk here -- who knows, "Chirico" may merely be a pseudonym for Pat Patterson? There are any number of bright young fan artists of similar talent you might investigate.... guy named Juan Gris, fella name of Max Ernst, somebody called Paul Klee, or Joan Miro, something like that.

[I wish I could rise to the dizzy heights of #6 on cover work, but I am on an economy kick, both in money and time, with this issue. You probably won't see another cover like that on A BAS for a long long time. Sob]

MAL ASHWORTH, BRADFORD? ENGLAND

Ghod! Not only that but - Ghod, Ghod, Ghod, Ghod, Ghod, Ghod!!!!!! I might even say - Ghod! A de Chirico cover yet! And in about six or seven colors. Ghod! It was terrific - utterly, unadulteratedly terrific. I flip for gradually less and less nowadays in fannish matters - a part of the process of becoming an o-o-old and hardened fan I guess - but this I flip for. F L I P. The curses I called down on our poor postman for the tiny cracks on that cover; must have been effective too - we had a new postman the following week. Derelicti Derogation was, as one comes to expect, the funniest thing in the issue. And all that poetry - even though I don't usually care for the genre particularly (in fanzines especially and I never encounter it elsewhere, hardly) - I very much appreciated. Don't know which piece I liked best but I liked it all - even unto the most ultra-modern. Strangely, since I know sweet censored all about cars, The Modern Cinderella also went down well. Enjoyable even unto a motoring ignoramus like myself. Kirs was fascinating, and eminently enjoyable, though I wish to hell I knew just how much of it was true. The story about his party fr' instance and the Psychology Major miss who hypnotised the issue and relieved them of their inhibitions. You know I'd even be prepared to believe that story - but one little thing niggles at my mind. If, after telling them to go ahead and do whatever they liked, she could just calmly walk away and leave the party and not stick around to see what happened, Man was she a Psychology Major!! She probably wasn't even human.

CURTIS D. JANKE, SHEBOYGAN, WISC.

Come, come, now, my good man - don't you consider it just a bit ostentatious to run Picasso originals as covers on a simple li'l ol' fanzine, huh? Or are you just trying to kill off the rest of us? Jesus Christos und Maria man, that must have set you back a Pretty Penny! You'll either have the rest of us bowing out entirely, or 1955 will go down as the year of The Battle Of The Covers. I'm already muttering darkly into my beard. I, too, find myself entertaining vaguely the notion that Canada is a larger edition of Greenland, and the news that it is relatively far south in portions comes as a sort of upset of pre-conceived notions on the subject. Bloody provincialism, no doubt. Thanks for the geography lesson, teacher. Frazier writes up a pretty fair storm - he used to be a sort of Ellison-Laney type character, but has improved, if this Wiley article is any criterion. Of course, he is still addicted to the use of certain Anglo-Saxonisms for their shock value, which detract a bit from the general effect, but the gestalt does not suffer too greatly. Frankly, I don't worship Wiley to that extent, Fitzgerald being my choice for all-time great, but the article was good. Kirs' description of the hypno-session was amusing, in a horrid sort of way - but I thought you didn't use fan-fiction - and man, this IS fiction. As for the several Brubeck reviews, I'm afraid that I agree with Steward rather than Feather, though Feather probably has heard him more recently than I. Though Brubeck himself is witty rather than swinging, I've never felt it necessary to complain on this score. Let's not go LOOKING for clay feet on everyone - let's wait until we can no longer ignore the muddy footprints. I'd be very much inclined to doubt the likelihood of Brubeck's going tired and commercial as have so many of jazzdom's wonder boys before him. His approach was always rather more intellectual than emotional, and this in itself should be a protection. Too many morning glories in jazz depended upon "inspiration" over which they had no control, and when that was lost, so were they. I prefer to believe Brubeck is was of a different breed of cat.

BOB SILVERBERG, NEW YORK

I'd like to express my delight at a fanzine as free from fuggheadedness as any around - and when you do succumb to fuggheadedness, and the de Chirico cover was a fuggheaded thing to do, it's a glorious brilliant sort of fuggheadedness that even Laney would love. I liked particularly Derelicti Derogation #4, which is as brilliant a satire as I've seen in the fan press yet.