

CELEPHAIS

I had intended to get the reviews of the 77th FAPA mailing done much sooner than this - the week before the deadline, -but things just went wrong, or rather just didn't work out the way they might. First, I went home for Christmas - my first in 10 years - and that created complications, especially at work. I had work that had to be done for publication before the first of the year - and that meant extra work at night. Then, when I got back from the West, there was a pile of work on my desk, in addition to some that I had left when I left, and which I had put aside for the special work. I've finally managed to get down to my desk-top, but it has been a long grind. (Are vacations worth it? I sometimes wonder. I seem to have the same amount of work to do, whether or not I'm there; there isn't anyone else to do the work, so it piles up. Every time I take leave, I work harder when I get back. But at least it's a change.)

I'd things pretty well lined up, tho, to get CELEPHAIS mastered, when I came down with a cold. That left me behind at work again, I I just didn't feel like typing in the evenings. Finally, I took an evening off that had been earmarked for FAPA and saw a movie. It was one I didn't expect to make the local movies, and was to be in Washington only 6 days. So, since it was a production of my favorite opera, Boris Godunov, I went. It was worth it.

Boris has always been one of my favorite operas - I know of only five or six others I'd as lief listen to, including Mozart's Marriage of Figaro, Zauberflöte, Die Entführung aus dem Serail, and Don Giovanni, Verdi's Otello and Falstaff, and Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier (Richard) and Die Fledermaus (Johann). Boris is a magnificent study in human nature and the breakdown of man and society. It is probably the only opera - at least any well known one - with no real hero, except the Russian People. Boris is not the hero, nor is he the villain. If there is a villain it is the false monk Gregori, who impersonates the murdered Tsarevich Dmitri Fedorovich, and who arouses the Russian Boyars to revolt, with the attendant troubles for the common people. The music is striking, and in several places reaches a psychological depth untouched by most composers. The scene where Boris sees the image of the murdered Tsarevich and has a fit is most powerful; even more so is the last scene (in the original version, coming after Boris' death) where the invading Dmitri rides past a group of peasants on his way to Moskov, leaving behind him a trail of dead and dying, burned buildings, and famine. The peasants show that they fear they have exchanged only one bad master for another; the scene closes - as does the opera - with a fool, seated on a stump, whining "Flow, flow tears. Weep ye honest souls. Soon the enemy will come and darkness will fall. Woe then to Russia! Weep Russian people. Weep hungry people!" Most effective - more so than many of the grand climaxes of other operas (including Mozart!).

The picture was a Russian (Bolshoi Theatre) production in color. It was a production of the opera, with nothing but singing, but made use of the ability of the camera to bring in the out-of-doors scenes and to give a much more realistic staging of the action. The settings, costuming, and crowd scenes were terrific; the principal singers were very good, with the Boris excellent. The casting was better than any I have heard of the Met doing, even when they had both Kipnis and Pinnas available. The roles were not only well sung, they were well acted - and the singers did the acting. The fool, the monk Pimen, the beggar monk Varlaam, The innkeeper, Marina, all were well cast. The photography was excellent, the sound very good, the English subtitles unobtrusive. Only the seats in the theater were poor - it was the one that usually shows "burlesque" movies! But I want to see it again - and again, if I can.

I seem to have used up one page rambling why I couldn't do any reviews as I'd planned. Now, I'll try to get thru the stack - probably a little less fully than usual - there may be more "noted" type comments.

LOOKING BACKWARD

A glance at the 77th mailing, with the post-mailings that I can unearth, using the order in which the pile now is, except that, as always, I start with

The Fantasy Amateur: There isn't much I can say against this one, is there? That's the trouble of being one of the officials; you have no one to take potshots at (but see this FA). I hope you all made the appropriate correction in the constitution, as indicated on the postcard I sent. In passing, this is the first FA I can remember that was been printed, mimeod, and dittoed, all in one issue. (Incidentally, we are doing the Mimeograph people and the Ditto people an injustice, and may cause them to loose a trademark (each) by using the lower case mimeo and ditto, where we mean stencil duplicator and spirit duplicator. Mimeograph and Ditto are trademarked names, like Coca Cola, and if they are allowed to pass into the lower case realm, they will no longer be the companies' trademarks. (The government printing office manual does just as bad. In a section on capitalizing trademarked products they refer to printing, mimeographing, etc, using the lower case m!) I have been tempted to point this out to A.B. Dick sometime.

Speller: I thought I was reading Stellar - although it was awful thin, until I found a few too many misspelled words on the toc page. Not world-shaking; I enjoyed it.

By chance I come to the echte Stellar next. To make the full circle, here White is doing a takeoff on another zine. Not being familiar with the original I can't really appreciate it. I would recommend the publisher of the original Abstract read the little squib in the Remembrance of Things Past in this mailing about fanzines. The fiction in Speller - I mean Stellar - is a little better than the first group; I still don't warm to it - the attempt to be serious is merely amusing and annoying.

I still think Ted is the best technician in FAPA; more experience could make him the best publisher. (Imagine a Warner zine by White.)

One/Fourteen: I enjoyed Eney's Con report - it has that tongue in cheek attitude, the sure-this-isn't-serious air I like. I'm keeping my record intact - I have not gone to more conventions than (I think) almost any active US fan, except Warner. Again, the government messed up my plans - this time by rearranging my vacation so that I didn't have a chance to plan for it.

Spindizzy: May I say "Amen!?" to the statement on page 3 re the "novels" in the present mags. Only Campbell and Gold in their serials (and Joucher ditto) give novels. Even Gold calls long novelettes "novels!" I can remember the old Quarterlies, that actually did have a book-length novel, plus several short stories; they were worth reading if you wanted a long story. Even FTN in its last decade or so used "book-length novels" from books, but cut them by thousands of words. Otherwise, I liked Lurdock's ramblings.

The True Fan: Eney did it, but I don't know who did the pics. He shouldn't have.

AAA AAARGH!
As a one-shot, this is almost a half-shot. The reverse is at least laughable.

CHOOOG b/w WOBI & CONDAAFB: Phew! Now how about a few pics of the offices?

Lucifer/Nike: I'm listing both titles, since the election was really a stand-off, altho I expect that Jack feels Lucifer is correct. (I wish Jack could do something about his ditto - I hate to have to miss any Speer, yet some of the pages are impossible to read.)

Jack, read the constitution again. There is nothing that says the credential must be published within one year of becoming a member. It merely says it must be published within one year of the application being accepted. It could be argued that the application is accepted when the Sec-Treas puts the guy on the waiting list. Want to put in an amendment to change this to make it more definite?

Isn't Washington and surroundings a "big city." Or am I just being hypersensitive? (pg 28/3). And, the thickness of a razor blade is several times that of the wave length of visible light - 6000 Å. This is 6×10^{-4} mm or 2.4×10^{-6} inches, roughly. A sheet of thin paper is about 3000-4000 wavelengths thick.

We have a captive audience for radio here in Washington (pg 21/10); although there are no commercials, you still get the music they like. A lot of the restaurants, stores, etc, have background music via fixed Fm radio. Not as bad as the buses we used to have, but I have heard better.

In almost any other fandom there can be people with well-established reputations who have never been met. I'm thinking specifically of the street-car-railroad group. But I don't think they go in for pen names, fake personalities, etc.

Jack, one of these days I'll try to dig up something in German on the no-cat-has-nine-tails- theme, if I can find it. It would take a German to do the job, I imagine; I could construct such an illustration, but it would probably not be good German. I'm still going to try to get the English mags indexed; the foreign stuff - no. I still think your photostatter is wrong re coins. I've seen coin books published years ago - 50 at least - and up thru the years - and they had pics of US coins. It may be that the pictures had to appear in a recognized field of numismatics, but I don't think that a picture of a coin would lead to counterfeiting. Paper money, of course, is different. I think you've misread the telephone I described. It wasn't one of those with handset and a wall box to hang on it. It was a box with a transmitter sticking out of the front, and a separate receiver at the end of the cord. You had to stand in front of the box and speak into the transmitter. When I went home this winter, the old phone was gone; we now (the folks) have a a French type. Or did I misread your comment?

I wonder if the union (pg 16/15) would welcome the introduction of enough automation to recoupe the wage raise? Sure it would be good for the workers who kept their job, and in time would result in more jobs, but there would be men displaced and that means union trouble. I've seen it happen where I worked summers.

Re advertising (I've now reversed and am reading the Lucifer section); there is one class of ads that are useful - I'm referring to the announcement type of ad. This is more common in the technical fields, where often data (factual) on new materials; new equipment; new uses for old products, etc. are discussed. Look up the Eastman Kodak ads in Scientific American for a good example/ of the kind I mean. Otherwise, I agree in general with you. And amen to Educationalese - it's even worse than Governmentalese. They are trying to ape the physical/biological sciences with a profound-sounding speech, and actually say nothing. But try some of the German philosophers...

Ghad - a page to Speer alone - and this is to be a short review section.

Gezine: For some reason this issue of J.C.'s opus doesn't tick with me; probably the heavy emphasis on religion - I'm tired of going thru this for the third time in F.A.A. Actually I read it, but wasn't stirred to comment.

Sambo: Your dog story reminds me of a true one. One of the fellows at the office has a Boxer bitch who is firmly convinced that she is a male. This of course has a number of complications - when other males come around, she won't cooperate; when the females are around, she is interested. She also hasn't learned (1 1/2 yrs) to go down stairs like a normal dog will. I wish Samoskowitz would get down off his crifanic horse and do a little fanning. Sure, he's interesting, but I much prefer the Sam I once talked with for hours at Julie Unger's.

Shlagoom: You ask if "you think environment could turn a potential Einstein into a moron?" I wouldn't go so far as that, but I do think that a large number of super-intelligent people or rather children have been turned into low grade average Joe Blows by environment. If the intelligent and inquisitive mind is continually rebuffed and hounded by those around it, it will decide that it is no use, and quietly become the average person. There is no interest in exerting oneself, and this is required to develop the ingrained potentialities. Hey, plant cells multiply by fision, don't they? Fusion would have them all globbed into one big one-celled mass.

Ask Spear or Warner whether any of fans -and specifically FAPANS were ever radical. During the late 30s (38-38) there was a tremendous influx of Communistic material in fandom, since a number of the prominent fans of the day were members of the Young Communists League. This includes one of FAPA's papas.

Ugly Bird: Enjoyed was not commentable.

Sundance: Jean, I wonder if the reason you like Tolkien's writing and can't stand C. S. Lewis' is the care that T. takes to develop both characters and backgrounds. His characters aren't merely cardboard figures speaking lines placed in their mouths by the author; they have personalities of their own. Remember the Hobbits? Notice how T makes them speak simply, compared with the others, as befitting a humble people? For some reason I don't know I liked "Unstrung "elody" - against my better instincts to dislike all fan poetry.

Science-Fiction Five-Yearly: Do we have to wait 5 years for the conclusions of these deathless serials? I just can't wait. The Tea Duel sounds like fun - but do you have to take milk with it, or can you drink it green? And Young does a beautiful job on the Temperature of Space. Remember the Weinbaum story (Red Peri) where for the first time - or first emphasised time - a man was supposed to be able to go in the cold and airlessness of outer space without freezing or blowing up.

Tyke: Jack, if Celephais: lent time as a late postmailing, what would an early one be? That issue was mailed out the week after the mailing date, except for a few where I had to check in the FA for addresses (Your's may have been one). In any case, all went out within two and a half weeks of the mailing date. Or is the post-office that bad. Jack, you could get a Fancys from Coswal without breaking up a FAPA mailing - it didn't appear in FAPA. I enjoy Jack's comments, even when I don't agree with them. I'll leave the answer to the comment on Foo to AndYoung.

The Science-Fiction World: Noted.

Null-F 3: I suggested this, so that there wouldn't be outcries from some who had already gotten a copy, but didn't realize it was a pre-distribution, and hence they had gotten their FAPA copy.

Isoner: I wonder why Terry doesn't like Teagarden vocals on jazz. To my mind, T is one of the very few good male jazz singers - Armstrong, Rushing, and the blues singers. And they aren't that numerous, are they? I have only a couple, but that's because I collect

certain bands (mainly Ellington) and hence miss the sides Teagarden is on. I certainly prefer him to any of the others you list, except Bessie. Josh White has gone completely commercial - so has Burl Ives - and I don't like him any more. Have you tried Leadbelly? or the wonderful blues Rushing did with the old Basie band of the 40s?

How do you define pops - including jazz or not? If you so expand the definition, I certainly like it, otherwise, I leave such as Elvis and Fats Domino for the birds.

Birdsmith: #14. This is mostly ancient history now, isn't it?

Target-Fapa!: The FAPA poll was interesting - and shows that FAPA isn't infallible. Didn't the pants originate as a consequence of having to ride horse-back? I seem to remember that the first ~~xx~~ pants were those used by the nomadic horse societies. Since the men rode the horses, they wore the pants - and since they had only one pair at that time, wore them always. During the early middle ages, men often wore robes and such, when not engaged in active, and certainly horsebackriding, activities.

Null-F: Ellick gives one more of the typical fan tales of wanderings on a shoestring. Interesting, but... Ditto Ted's con report. Once read, then filed.

BIRD SMITH: I WISH MCCAIN WOULD USE A MACHINE THAT HAS BOTH UPPER AND LOWER CASE LETTERS ON IT. THE TYPE OF THIS ISSUE IN THIS FORM IS SOOO HARD TO READ. Page four was a relief, with lots of nice lower case letters. BUT AFTER THREE PAGES OF RELIEF, BACK TO THE SALTMINES. (I wish this machine would space properly) I agree fully with Vernon re classical musicians trying to play jazz. Some of the examples I've heard were enough to turn a jazzman's stomach. But I've said a lot about his in the last issue of Celephais:

Delgon: No comment.

Boyd Laeburn for TAFF rep. Noted.

Torrents:

Another that I read, and enjoy, and come back to with nothing much to say.

Skwutch:

And ditto.

Horizons: But please see the note re signers as members at the time the petition is submitted in the V² message last time, Harry. That should take care of that. May I add to your demolishing of the statement re the text of the Bible being the most certain, etc... the question - "Which version?"

Washing-

ton supposedly has a "good music station" but actually it is now the Mutual outlet and the good music is out to a few live programs that they can't drop. We get more good recorded music from Baltimore. What will happen to Hagerstown as the typical average American city when people there realize that they are being so extensively polled? Won't this tend to make it a non-typical city, and destroy its usefulness?

You might also add, re the time of the creation, what time zone? This opens up several interesting ideas for humor. Only the cables that are TV coaxial can carry hi-fi; ordinary telephone lines are no good above 5000 c/s - too much hi frequency loss thru capacitance coupling.

What's the

mater with the current "tape" for the process of recording material on tape? It corresponds to the "film" used for picture recording.

The car that so many sane people (who are fed up with Detroit abor_tions) are turning to is the small foreign passenger car, which is only a cousin of the sport car. They are not high power, and may be a little like a 1940 American car in style, but they are easy to drive, and probably safer than the American car, with its lack of braking power. (And did you see the item in the paper recently about the new American car thatk litterly fell to pieces on the road, killing the driver!)

Some of the Washington theaters - the ones I've gone to recently - have indicated there is no tax on the tickets below 1\$.

"Why would it be the FCC's problem to decide how much time and air-space religion shall have on the air? This should be up to the individual station - if he gets enough complaints about a given program, it will go off. After all, there are a lot of people who go for that type of material, and who feel that this is the real thing.

Does Hagerstown have a red light district or not? You don't seem to be certain on pg 4, and very sure on pg 7.

I enjoyed the fiction, tho the plot was apparent after the first page. And I'm glad someone has finally demolished the C.S. Lewis myth - I've been told too often how great he is. A very nice review of these books.

Phamphrey: Gradually I'm learning about this Willis, who sneaked into fandom during my enforced retirement from it. Most enjoyable.

Bandwagon: Jottings most interesting and readable, tho not comment arousing.

Greetings: Welcome, but please, a name. Am looking forward to more material with which to disagree.

TAFF 1957 Voting Form: Noted.

The Happy Traveller: (Damn, how do you underline without cutting a downstroke, when the word is all downstrokes?) Noted, but unread, in most. If you can be a little more legible, it will be worth looking into.

Yrautibo: No comment.

Phantasy Press: I'm afraid the idea of fixing dues based on expenses for the preceding year would be hard to do, since FAPA doesn't have one dues year, but four, one each quarter. So, when would the change in dues be effective? Much simpler to change them by vote. "asf" is and so forth; "usy" is and so weiter, meaning and so forth, etc. I wonder if the reason I don't find much to mention in your reviews is that they are all favorable - you never seem to get a bite in your comments. If you just agree with everyone, there isn't much to be added by anyone else.

Rien: Jean alone is no substitute for Jean and Andy, but this will have to do, apparently. Nothing that stirred me up; I'm just too tired or too old (the first I hope!)

Lark: I don't agree with you on the yellow between the red and the green. There is too much temptation for a driver to start on the yellow, while a second is going thru on the tail end of his yellow. It's bad enough the way it is, with cars starting on the first tinge of green, but the few times I've driven where there red-yellow-green cycles I hated it. Around here it's the Buick drivers who are the bad ones. When I see a Buick in the offing, I expect trouble - mostly sloppy driving, but this includes too often turns from the wrong lane, etc... (White drives a Buick). Around here young drivers (under 25) can get away without the surtax if they are female or married. Depends upon the state, I guess.

Seven Sonnets: I didn't expect to like this, but I did.

Unearthly: Noted.

Phlotsam: Last but not least, if the label on the franks worried you, you should work in a food cannery for a while. ~~It~~ I did. It took me a long time to learn to eat certain canned/frozen foods again. Otherwise, I enjoyed Phlotsam; it will be filed and reread.

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