

CELEPHAIS

This could well be termed the resurrection issue, inasmuch as a whole year and a half have gone by since Celephais was in a FAFA mailing. Teaching, in addition to my regular job, moving, a new car, a trip of a month west, and mostly a general laziness have all contributed to the non-appearance; I hope the next issue will come sooner. In fact, I find that it is easier to publish every three or four months - when things are fresh and arguments are running through your mind - than once every lustrum. But, time will tell.

Turn Backwards, O Time....

A look at the 61st mailing.

Tailchen: Not having watched the conventions - being one of the few hold-outs in Washington sans television, merely radio and phono - I can't comment specifically on Dignity. However, I believe what is objected to more than anything else is the lack of respect that a lot of delegates seem to have. After all, they aren't at a convention for fun - fun is incidental, but not of prime aim - but to choose the men from whom the voters of America will have to select the leader of the country for the next four years. (I'm typing this just after the actual inauguration; the last few days have been a mixture of whoopla and crowds in Washington, with a lot of the native residents staying out of the down-town area. The actual inauguration, tho, was very simple, very sincere, and with none of the carnival atmosphere.) Informality in a convention is all right; in fact, informality is a good idea, since it will keep things opened up, and prevent a "steam-roller" action (most of the time). But the delegates should have some sense of proportion and not turn it into a circus. The reviews are too short and too few; I realize that the Appalachian Trail is a big inducement to stop typing, but in winter.... The "poetry" on the last page doesn't register with me. It reminds me of the definition of prose and poetry I once read. This is prose; This

is
poetry.

(White space and poetry at once!) Generally, I liked the tone of the mag.

Lark: Noted and interesting reviews. One little note in the review of Bait Box intrigued me. "In 78 recordings, it (interpretation) was not very noticeable. Possibly because the 78s were only popular or folk music." I know that others besides Bill will jump on this from the classical point of view (three full cabinets of 78s are staring me in the face) but I guess Laney and I are the only jazz collectors in FAFA. Anyway, folk music, which includes jazz, depends even more on interpretation than classical music; since it is folk music, it portrays the feelings of the people, and requires a real interpretative skill to do right. I know a lot of people can't see jazz, the blues, or such, but when someone like Louis or Johnny Dodds, or Bessie turns loose on a blues, you really feel it. There is a comparable situation in opera. Take the clock scene from Boris; I've heard it sung, over the air, in person, and on records, a number of times. In general everyone got the right notes; only twice have I heard a singer who could make you feel that here was the Ozar Boris, seeing the image of the murdered Dmitri. Chaliapin could do it; the new recording of Boris with Boris Christoff does it. Or consider Carmen. How many singers make you get the idea of the real Carmen? Very few. Most of them just sing. The same is true in jazz and folk music - not in popular dance music, in general.

Anyway, I like Lark.

Revoltin' Development: The saga of the trip to Portland reminds me of the trip last summer - to the same region, but further north and south, and 9000 miles of it. Otherwise-noted.

Horizons:(52) Again the old standby of FAPA. I enjoyed the Hoffmann article; one of these days, when I seem to have a little spare time, I'm going to dig out the Tales and read them again. Harry's experiences with Russian remind me of some of mine. In my work I have to read chemical and physical articles in any and all languages - or at least make a stab at them. So, I decided that Russian would be a good place to start, since there is a lot of stuff in that language. I dropped it after a few months, since the effort of trying to unscramble the grammar wasn't worth the results as far as the job was concerned.

Light (52!): Les in one of his anti-religious - or better might be anti-church-moods. Actually, I think that you'll find that the most commonly accepted belief among lay Bible scholars is that the text as we have it is actually several different things: a code of laws, ethics, morals, etc for the ancient Jewish races; a history - partially legendary and partially actual - of the same peoples; poetry - the Song of Songs - and religious prophecies and sermons. That would be the old testament (should be capitalized). The NT includes the histories - Gospels - written many years after from second-hand sources (an analysis of the four Gospels as to source was quite interesting way back in a college course); the sermons and admonishments, etc. These are of course selected from other similar material, the selection being made about 300-500 AD (a guess, it may be as late as 700). Anyway, there is not the tendency today to take the Bible as a literal thing, but as a human document.

Discussion on sex in sf interesting - but aren't a number of the magazines awakening to the fact that something more than the cover must be included. Startlings' "The Lovers" is a very high class illustration of the trend; de Camp has covered the field somewhat too. There seems to be a trend away from the word Spicy - it has too obvious a meaning and such magazines would be pounced upon in many places by women's groups, etc.

Tucker Hotel: Noted. It lacks the elan of LeZ.

Unasked Opinion: If the last (60) mailing was due to a semi-defunct organization, what would some of the years-gone-by mailings be due to? I can remember mailings with 100 pages, and with only a dozen contributors. As one of the old-timers denounced I feel that the 61st mailing - although I missed it (see post-mailings, tho) - is a good mailing, and there are several of us represented - Warner, Croutch, Tucker (gad, am I that old a member; must be, since only Speer, Warner, Tucker (in and out, like me), Train (do), Moskowitz (do?), Perdue were in when I joined first.) - are represented, and several more are admittedly just as dead as a number of the new ones. And yet there are some who publish only once a year, whose single effort is more enjoyable than the vast reams of material spewed forth by others.

An anti-Pogoist in our midst! I can assure you that at least one FAPA doesn't put on an act about liking Pogo. I will agree that there are times when it drags a little, but most of the time it is full of delightful sly satire, and several times has hit the nail on the head with very pointed comment on American morals. Actually, in our office there are four out of nine chemists who are Pogo fanciers (make that five, I forgot to count myself!). It has much the same effect that little abner (capitalize, please)

has when Capp takes some of his swipes at American customs. Pogo, tho, does it in a much gentler way. I like Pogo.

Anyway, I still enjoy reading G. Carr; I always have to stop typing to reread.

Stefantasy 25: Amen to page 3; otherwise, beautiful to look at and enjoyable.

Shortcircuit Noted, enjoyed, but nothing to comment on. I guess I'm just having a little trouble getting back in the swing of commenting on comments on comments on....

Trouble's Child: I'm not a poet, and I don't appreciate most of it. Noted.

Matter of No Moment: Two of Ken's puzzle lines have me tumped; the key word is easy, tho. One of these days I may get enough time and energy to finish the Weird Tales index I've got started. More chatter, Ken.

Glorious Spool: Noted and interesting.

Pottery Leaflet: Noted.

Flook: It looks as if we have in Winne a new and interesting writer. Confusion prevailed did exactly that for me when I read it - for the first couple of pages I was wondering "What happened to Amber?" Very enjoyable rambling comments on the last mailing - there seem to be several good mailing reviews in this mailing. I'll be looking for more Winne.

Tambor-hi: Another interesting first issue; one with promise of even more to come. Which for no good reason brings up an interesting point. (At least it's interesting to me) Why should we expect new FAPAns to jump right in the mess the first or second mailing they're members. The first mailing they get is probably so close after their notification of membership (remember that 45 day grace period) that they have no time to get anything in. The second mailing deadline finds them woefully perplexed as to just what-the-hell goes in the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. Is this the goal of fan publishers; is this group of rambling discussions, articles, poetry, etc, etc, most of which has nothing to do with stf doing anything? What to do? So the second deadline passes, the second mailing is read, some of the discussions and comments begin to make sense, and here comes the third deadline. All those grand plans for a big FAPA mag in sixteen colors have by now faded away; the actual magazine-to-be is still a glimmer in the eye. And suddenly here comes the last deadline - do or get. So, they do, and we have a new FAPazine, filled with the usual FAPA junk, for by now he has assimilated the FPAP FAPA spirit. Hence, good mags after a year; none of the cruddy things that so often appear at first. By which I imply I like Larry's first effort - but why so formal with the Mr KZEN? We're all friends here (usually!).

FAPA File: Noted: Read: Filed. Thanks, Eney.

Oblast: Typical Eney - Serious and otherwise. Enjoyable; reviews ditto.

Grifapac: Another new one. Format somewhat unneat - time will take care of that I guess - but the material worth reading. Comments on 100 mailing - By accident I turned two pages and missed the title - took a little while to sink in. Come again, David.

Fair Hair: A one-shot (X) that is worth reading. Now all you have to do is produce the book. But why object to nonstopparaphrasing?

Drill Press Style Sheet: I find it hard to keep to any one style on one stencil!

Looking Backward: Too small for really ample reviews - and in parts almost unreaable. I see we are going back into that "definition of stf" roundabout again. This business of cotradicting science is a little open for debate - on both sides of the question at the same time. First, the definition must be applied against the science of the period during which the story was written. An example, from a story that a large number of fans will admit as being stf - in Skylark Three Seaton has a ship filled with cubic miles of uranium. At the time the story was written, this violated no known science; today, the question of what happens to the neutrons would make an awkward appearance. Science doesn't contradict itself; like all explanations of natural and social phenomena it is in a state of growth, with changes as new data are available. The data, if valid (not misreadings of instruments, etc) do not contradict science, they merely contradict a theory (or in extreme cases a "law") which are merely ways of describing the data. There's a big difference. The quantum theory, the relativity theory, etc, upset theories of science; they did not invalidate the data upon which the theories were based.

Sky Hook 15: Full of meat. Blish on series stories most interesting. One might add for the record that Ray Cummings used three templates in his writings - plot, gadget, and character - all his girls were the same (unless they had wings, in which case they were the same) and a many of the characters carried through stories. And then there is ERBurroughs....

Lost

World of Mu looses its force by the contemporary series by de Camp, although here one doesn't have to get the rest of the crud that goes with OW. Atheling most interesting; this is one of the most reasoned views of the place of stf in literature and of the critic in stf that I've ever read. Again that matter of definition of stf pops up, with no less than Sturgeon this time. This also I think is not satisfactory, although it is better than most; it leaves out a large number of stories that are accepted as science fiction, and would include some that are not usually so considered. The first one that pops to mind is "Arrowsmith" by Sinclair Lewis. The reviews themselves are good - much more than the usual "soandso stinks" type. At least here we have someone stating exactly why he objects to a story. "specially enjoyed the review of Big Planet.

Boggs has one of the best review columns in the business - a file of his, Warner's, and one or two others would give a good picture of FAPA. The quote from Whitehead in "...." is most apropos to the discussion above in Looking Backward. A most enjoyable thought-provoking issue. FA and Poll: noted.

The Stragglers Arive

Fan Crittur Comical Books: The fan's POGO. Arriving before the mailing, this is worth reading several times for the sly-po Pogoish details. Shaw has really caught Kelley's touch. Even my non-fan friends like it.

Crux Ansata: Noted.-

Fanzine Index: Any additions to this? Maybe you are the only fan alive who knows the missing data; give out with it.

And thus concludith the 61st mailing.

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The "Basic" Fantasy Library

In the January 1953 ASF P. S. Miller reports the results of a survey on the Basic Science-Fiction Library and the Development of Science-Fiction Library. Some time ago a group of us at the Washington Science-Fiction Association (WSFA) got together in a semi-informal meeting - otherwise known as bullsession - and got up a list of a basic fantasy library. There were several restrictions on this - it was assumed that the person for whom this was being developed had been reading since about 1948, hence collections of the best of recent years (Galaxy, and MFSF, Best SF of) were omitted (This corresponds with the actual case for several WSFAites, who were the ones who thought up the idea in the first place.) In general an attempt was made to select books available in hard or covers, and readily available in either new or easily found, inexpensive second-hand condition. In a few cases alternative selections are listed, where the preferred one is almost impossible to obtain.

In the thought that some members of FAPA might like the list, here it is: (Compare with Miller's and with the earlier one of Berleth's in Arkham Sampler)

Balmer, Edwin, & Wylie, Philip	When Worlds Collide & After Worlds Collide (available in one volume)
Benet, Stephen Vincent	Tales Before Midnight & 13 O'Clock (available as Twenty-five Short Stories)
Bradbury, Raymond	Dark Carnival; Martian Chronicles
Burroughs, E. R.	Moon Maid (The <u>best</u> Burroughs) The Princess (Gods, Warlord) of Mars (Really one story in three volumes)
Campbell, John W. Jr	Who Goes There; Cloak of Aesir
Cabell, James Branch	Nightiest Machine; Incredible Planet
Carroll, Lewis	Jurgen (and many others!)
Collier, John	Alice in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass.
de Camp, L. Sprague	Fancies and Goodnight Lost Darkness Fall; The Incomplete Enchanter
del Rey, Lester	...And Some Were Human
Doyle, A. Conan	Lost World
Dunsany, Lord	Time and the Gods; Plays of Gods and Men; The King of Elfland's Daughter
Groves, Robert	Hercules, My Shipmate
Haggard, H. Rider	She, King Solomon's Mines, Allan Quatermain (Available in one volume)
Heinlein, Robert A	The Green Hills of Earth; The Man Who Sold the Moon
Howard, Robert E	Skullface (The new volumes of Conan are also worth having)
Hubbard, L. Ron	Final Plackout (and Fear, if you wish)
Huxley, Aldus	Brave New World
James, Montague Rhodes	Collected Ghost Stories (thus avoiding several small books)
Leiber, Fritz	Conjure Wife (<u>in</u> Witches Three; the rest are average, but Leiber makes the book.)
Lewis, C. S.	Out of the Silent Planet.

Lovecraft, H. P.

Machen, Arthur
Merritt, Abraham

Mundy, Talbot
Moore, C. L.

Poe, Edgar A.
Quinn, Seabury
Saki (H. H. Munro)

Simak, Clifford D.
Sloane, William M.
Smith, Clark Ashton

Smith, E. E.
Smith, Thorne

Stapledon, Olaf

Sturgeon, Theodore
Stevens, Francis
Taine, John
VanVogt, A. E.
Weinbaum, Stanley
Verne, Jules (out of orderhere!)

Wells, H. G.
White, T. H.

Williams, Charles
Wright, Austin Tappan
Wright, S. Fowler

Poetry

Dark of the Moon - Derleth
Star-Reader - Clark Ashton Smith

Anthologies

Campbell, John W.
Conklin, Groff

Healey and McComas
Derleth, August W.

The Outsider and Others (Beyond the Wall of Sleep) (Until you ship comes in, try Best Supernatural Stories of H. P. Lovecraft)

Tales of Horror and the Supernatural
The Ship of Ishtar (If you can find the Face in the Abyss, add it)

Full Moon; Jimgim; Mine Unknown
Judgement Night. (Even though it omits both Northwest Smith and Jirel of Joiry)

Collected Short Stories

Roads

Short Stories (also look up When William Came in his novels)

City

To Walk the Night; The Edge of Running Water
Out of Space and Time; Lost Worlds (no cheap version here, unfortunately)

Skylark of Space; Spacehounds of IPC
Stray Lamb; Turnabout; Night Life of the Gods; Rain in the Doorway; Skin and Bones
(In fact, get the three collections and have them all.)

Last and First Men; Starmaker; Odd John
(Odd John in Viking Portable Reader of SF is a bargain, with HPL Shadow out of Time, Taines Before the Dawn, and Wells First Men in the Moon (I think).)

Without Sorcery

Heads of Cerebus

Time Stream (see Stapledon)

Slan

Black Flame; Martian Odyssey

20000 Leagues under the Sea; From the Earth to the Moon

Seven Famous Novels; Short Stories

Sword in the Stone (Witch in the Wood, Ill-Made Knight)

Many Dimensions

Islandia

The World Below (The complete version)

Wine of Wizardry & Testimony of the Suns - George Sterling

The Astounding Science-Fiction Anthology
The Best of Science Fiction and A Treasury of Science Fiction
Adventures in Time and Space
Sleeping and the Dead

A few words about some of the selections; since the list is admittedly a personal list - most of the titles were originally suggested by me, with others adding their own favorites - it will emphasise authors and types of writing which I prefer. In several cases books are listed which may not appeal to

several of the collections are mainly of historical interest. However, I have read and enjoyed most of the books on the list (there are one or two that I've never been able to finish, but which others assure me are wonderful - since in general their taste is good, I've included these books) and feel that anyone who is interested in the field should at least look at most of them. They represent all styles, from frankly space-opera to very profound fictional dissertations.

In specific cases I've included items I'd like to say a few words about. Burroughs - these aren't great literature, but they do move, give a vivid picture of his imaginary world, and in the Moon Maid at least, Burroughs does some of his best writing. I've read all several times and still enjoy them. I've included JWO's Nightiest Machine and sequel as examples of space opera at its best and/ worst. These are typical examples, except perhaps a little better plotted and written, of the cosmic school; super science with the emphasis on the science, characters at the minimum. The other two of his included are the Don A Stuart stories, influential in changing from machines to humans; although some of them are overwritten to a reader now, the best still pack a terrific punch. Cabell should be better represented; most fans I've talked to don't know much about him, and don't realise that in Jorgen (and several others) he has written wonderful (and quite literate) fantasy. No apologies for including Alice; who hasn't read it. Doyle isn't known for his science fiction (Sherlock Holmes is his monument) but The Lost World is good. Dunsany is another rather neglected writer nowadays, at least by fans, but one whose stories, short and long, and plays are among the most fantastic and wonderful in the English language. I have included only a sample of his writings; I recommend almost everything he has written.

Robert Groves Hercules My Shipmate appeared, made a little literary splash, and disappeared quietly, with never a notice after from any fan. However, if you like mythology, here is a wonderful retelling and reworking of the old myth. Also worth looking into is his Watch the North Wind Rise. Haggard nowadays is looked down upon in literate circles as old-fashioned, wordy, and other more telling adjectives, but his best works still read well, if somewhat liesurely. Howard makes no claims to being anything but entertainment, but Conan, King Kull, Brian the Spearbreaker, etc, are heroic in the style of an old epic. Howard was one of the few writers who gave you a feeling of action. And don't mention Mickey Spillane! James' quiet little ghost stories, in the classical vein, are perhaps the best of their class.

C. S. Lewis and Charles Williams have much in common - both are intensely religious. However, Lewis uses his stories as lectures in theology; his characters stop to explain theology much as the old stg hero stopped to explain his gadget. Williams, tho, writes in a world in which the so-called supernatural is entirely natural. His writings have a misty quality about them; you hardly know whether you are in the material world or the spirit - and neither do his characters. To be taken in small doses.

Talbot Mundy wrote about India - India the mysterious, Tibet, the exotic East. His earlier stories were laid in the Near East, but later he moved on to India. His later books are filled with mysticism, but never to the exclusion of story. He had a curious fast moving, but slow style. I prefer him to Haggard or to Kipling, although I realise that Kipling is a much better writer. C.L. Moore is one of the best present day writers - would that Kuttner would let her write. Judgement Night contains none of her most famous characters - Jirel of Joiry or Northwest Smith, the two principal - but does have some of her best writing.

Someone may question Quinn's Roads, but I think it is a story worth reading; after all, too, Quinn has been one of the more influential of Weird Tales writers, and this is almost his only book presentation.

Saki is not all fantasy, but several of his short stories are, and the rest are just worth reading for themselves; a border-line book, but one I personally like very much.

Clark Ashton Smith is another writer who has been neglected recently, and most undeservedly. Although some readers find his prose too purple, the best of it can evoke alien pictures as can few other writers. Unfortunately the best Smith stories are available only in the scarce Arkham House editions. Smith No 2, E.E., deserves to be on any list of influential science-fiction books. The Skylark of Space, for all its corn, its wooden characters and black-and-white morals, set the stage for the development of the science fiction story into the cosmic, interplanetary, interstellar domain. Actually, his best story, or at least my favorite, is Spacehounds, with some wonderful scenes of non-humanoid life. Smith No 3, Thorne, is usually considered to be "erotic," "spicy," "sexy" and other such adjectives. True, he did have an erotic bent in most of his stories, but I find that his comments on human conduct, on the morals of the middle-class society of the '20s to be the more significant part of his work. Some of the scenes in Stray Lamb - the cur dog at the wild party and the dying man, for example - are most effective. The true fantasies include Night Life of the Gods, Turnabout, Stray Lamb, Topper, Topper Takes a Trip, Skin and Bones, and Glorious Pool. Rain in the Doorway lives in a wonderful world all its own, while only the Bishop's Jaegers is non-fantasy. The final volume, left incomplete at Smith's death and finished by Norman Matson - The Passionate Witch - is not to be mentioned in the same breath. It is only erotic, with none of Smith's candid comments on society as he saw it. Apparently Matson did a thorough job of editing when he finished - literally - the book.

Taine posed another problem. The Time Stream was neither liked or hated; no one was lukewarm towards it. Before the Dawn was much better thought of by everyone, although those who liked the Time Stream preferred it. Personally, I like the Purple Sapphire better. Weinbaum is another who has shaped the course of sf. A Martian Odyssey set the pace for many other writers, and the book contains most of the best of Weinbaum's stories. The Black Flame is, of course, his most famous long story.

Wells deserves his place for the pioneering work in making science fiction acceptable as a literary subject, and also for his writing - his characters are apt to be real, even on rereading - I'm doing this right now. Islandia, by Austin Tappen Wright, is an overlooked book; it is the best imaginary country story I have ever reread, I've introduced it to several others here in Washington, and with one exception - he likes Amazing - everyone has raved about it.

The poetry classification may come as a surprise, but I feel that poetry belongs in every fantasy library. Derleth has selected the best of the weird poetry in general. One of his omissions - as I remember - is George Sterling, who wrote some of the best, most vivid fantasy poetry I know. Try Wine of Wizardry for an example. Any of Smith's poetry books is worth having; all are scarce, the Star-Treader less so than the rest (An acceptable substitute is Arkham's Dark Chateau.)

Anthologies - the better ones are listed; others could be added, especially in the weird and fantasy section. These are only a start.

Good Reading