

Stefantasy

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"Everyone's queer but thee and me, and even thee's a little queer sometimes."

THE FIRST PAGE

"You can fool some of the people some of the time, and you can fool some of the people some of the time, **but you can't fool some of the people some of the time.**"—AMBROSE J. WEEMS

BUCKLES

A WHOLE GENERATION is growing up completely ignorant of the friction-type belt buckle. While not in any way disastrous this is as hard to understand as the present bulbous, overpowered trend in U. S. automobiles.

I suppose that ever since men began wearing pants the belt and its old familiar one-hole-too-tight-next-one-too-loose buckle has been around. When, in the late twenties or early thirties (which, curiously enough, is the period when most of the "classic" cars were built) someone came up with a new type of buckle that is more attractive (with plenty of room for initials or monogram) easier to use and *infinitely adjustable* I took it for granted that the old type would disappear forever. Until WW₂ they were made in everything from silver-plated brass for 49¢ complete with genuine leather belt at any 5 & 10, to sterling silver, solid gold and, for all I know, platinum.

Try to buy one now! The 5 & 10 doesn't have men's belts at all. The ritzy men's shop has a wide variety of them, all with the antiquated tongue-and-hole buckles. I had to buy one of these at two bucks to get a new belt for my four-bit pre-war buckle. The old-type buckles last indefinitely, too, so it's not a manufacturers' plot. Can anyone explain this fine example of progress in reverse?



THE MAIL BOX

EGOBOO AND OTHER STUFF

September 17, 1954
Stormfield, Conn.

Dear Bill:

You will understand why I haven't replied to your last letter or acknowledged the issues of *Stef* when I tell you that I have been completely absorbed in restoring an 1858 Studebaker to its original shining magnificence. I was lucky to get it—from an eccentric collector in Placerville who recently gave up most of his collections in order to concentrate all his energies on pre-Columbian wash boilers.

When it fell into my hands, it was in sorry condition indeed! The singletree was so cracked as to be utterly unusable, and I have had to turn a new one from Madrone wood. The tires had to be welded in several places and the whipstock was so badly rusted that I gave up trying to fix it and made a new one in the shop.

The chief difficulty has been in moving it. I have been towing it with my car because my wife steadfastly refuses to let me stable the double team, for which it was originally designed, in our garage. It is a terrible blow to my desire for complete and authentic restoration!

When I get the old rig sanded and painted and, in short, restored as it was when it was new, I will try to organize a society for other collectors of old vehicles like this. Might call it the Century Carriage Club or the Vintage Wagon Society, eh?

* * * * *

Because of my preoccupation with the Studebaker and other factors that I shall try to explain, you will probably never see a copy of *Suds*, my long-awaited entry into the amateur publishing field. However, in case you would be interested in my projected publishing methods, here is what I had planned.

I was planning to whittle each letter on the end of a wooden Diamond matchstick—for large letters I was going to use old Tinkertoy sticks—and set them in honeycomb. When the page was all set up in the comb, I would then make an impression of it in a bar of soft, fresh, Fels-Naphtha soap, spray the impressed soap with powdered graphite, and then copper-plate it. (When nearly finished, the electroplate solution would probably get very soapy, which is why I planned to call the magazine *Suds*.) I would then ink and print the plate in one operation in an old Ajax, Model 755, clothes wringer. As I may have mentioned before, I planned to print on a loose weave paper torn from hornets' nests.

Two factors combined to destroy this printing method. The DDT, sprayed by the local Mosquito Abatement Commission, also killed the hornets around the house. And, in order to get the Studebaker, I had to give the Placerville collector my entire collection of pre-Columbian copper wash boilers which I was to use in electroplating my printing plates. So, with no plates and no paper, it looks very much as though *Suds* has gone down the drain—so to speak.

With all my very best wishes for the continued well-being of both your Nash and Stef, I remain,

y're ob'd't serv't,


Sandy McWilliams

From A. J. Franck

8/16/54

Dear Bill

I don't know whether I am suffering from conclusion of the brain or what, but I don't recall having acknowledged receipt of the definitely outstanding May 1954 issue of "Stefantasy". Anyhow, I got around to reading it and a load of other long-stacked-up puublications today inasmuch as I am confined to quarters with a touch of flu or I dunno what, but, anyway, my schnozzie makes like the bathroom tap with the washer gone. I can't go to work in that condition and risk being called a drip by my fellow-peons.

One of the reasons I didn't get to reading that issue of "Stefantasy" as promptly as I usually do was that I was in the throes of taking off for foreign parts. I got back only a couple of weeks ago after having done a bit of flying around, as well as some surface traveling, in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Great Britain and Eire. I saw and rode on a wide variety of railways—steam, electric and diesel—street, interurban and regular international—and all kinds of gauges, including that $7\frac{1}{4}$ " thing you and Rau seem to be so enamored of. You will find it on top of a mountain called Great Orme, near Llandudno in North Wales. It is owned by a retired heavyweight pugilist who, by the looks of it, owns about everything else on top of Great Orme, including an outdoor prize ring. I imagine he uses that to keep in shape to take on any characters who cast covetous eyes over his $7\frac{1}{4}$ " gauge pike.

Incidentally, I suspect that you got no cooperation from Pittsburgh Railways because, in all probability, they figure you will finally break down and buy their whole damn $5'2"$

gauge network. That's still narrow gauge by Irish standards. Cora's Iompair Eireann, the Great Northern Railway (of Ireland) and the tramway up the Hill of Howth are all a big, fat 5'4" gauge. The Hill of Howth tramway is the only electric street railway left in the Emerald Isle. The cars were built in 1901 and mounted on trucks manufactured by Brill in Philadelphia. The motors are Westinghouse.

The video tape discussion in the May "Stefantasy" is downright common sense, too. I hope you will tear into the hi-fi bugs in the same way. Some of those lads can't visualize the possibility of realistic sound reproduction without more switches and knobs than you find in the cockpit of a Strato-cruiser, and 2,465 pounds of crushed rock in the 75-foot speaker enclosure.

Sincerely,

Al.

[In my reply asking permission to reprint this letter I mentioned, among other things, that my speaker enclosure (an integral part of the house) contains a good bit more than 75 cu. ft. (but *no* crushed rock at all) and that my rig has a total of 12 knobs though of the nine on the amplifier only three are used regularly, the others being for the stereophonic system. (And isn't that a lulu of a sentence?) I suggested that Al tear into the hi-fi bugs (since I'm a little too close for a clear view) and received the following reply.—wmd]

9/28/54

Dear Bill:

The August "Stefantasy" had some of the best material yet, in it. I liked the stuff about the vogue of outsize automobiles in particular. People, in general, are terrible meatballs and will fall for just about anything, regardless of whether they really need it or whether it will serve a beneficial end in practical fashion.

If there is any scrawl or screed of mine you may wish to

print, go to it. Any time I send you anything of a top secret nature, I shall plainly label it so.

On the subject of flu—I have harbored the theory that germs and viruses undergo evolutionary changes on a greatly accelerated scale as compared with other life manifestations, and that their toxic characteristics vary as new, different forms are attained. On the other hand, susceptible creatures tend to develop tolerances or immunities; so, if these germs and viruses are endowed with some unsuspected measure of sentience, it may be fair to assume that they may be anticipating such difficulties and, so, are altering their means and methods of attack. There was a time, you remember, when flies used to die like flies when the DDT cloud enveloped them. Nowadays they smack their lips in critical appraisal of the stuff and its potability. Some time ago I aimed a cloud of DDT at a horsefly and all he did was pull the throttle back to the firewall and climb out of it. Then he radioed back to his buddies, "Minor turbulence encountered at nine feet".

About Europe—To date, I have set foot on the soil of, in turn, Ireland, Wales, England, Scotland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark. There isn't one of them I regret having visited. My first glimpse of the Emerald Isle was from just under the clouds. We broke through the overcast at about 6000', and below us lay the prettiest, greenest land you ever laid eyes on. The water in the foreground was the Shannon's mouth, fringed by wide marshes. Beyond, the little farms, marked off by stone fences, lay draped over the low hills, each in a different shade of green, like a patchwork quilt over the form of a slumbering giant. What our pilot had referred to as "a light rain," was falling in Shannon. It nearly drowned me in the two hundred feet from the plane to the

transit room of the airport! But the next time I flew into Shannon the sun beamed on the countryside and the land smiled back, and that *was* good!

Along with Ireland, as far as emotional impact goes, we have to consider Finland, a clean, well-run, thoroughly modern and proud country. Finns, on the whole, are a long way from being rich, but there is no avarice in their nature. They are not a particularly lighthearted people and it seemed to me that, in music, at least, they tended toward lugubriousness. They are industrious and efficient. Their courtesy is effective but not effusive. Except for coat room and wash room attendants, practically nobody accepts a tip. The Finns boast, "A Finn cannot be bought."

Europe is still a wonderland for the railroad and trolley fan. Almost every city of 100,000 or so has its trolley network. In Sweden I rode on narrow-gauge interurbans of excellent characteristics. Cars with FCC riding qualities are common in Oslo, Gothenburg, Stockholm and Copenhagen. . . . Zurich runs cars with six wheels.

Contrasts in regular railroad equipment are extreme, too. Some of Cora's Iompair Eireann's rolling stock seems to antedate the American Civil War, but their diesel train is the last word in modern travel, except that they don't keep the chinaware in the johns clean. Finland's latest is almost futuristic, but I got a snapshot of a balloon-stack engine horsing double-truck freight cars around in Helsinki. The French National Railroads, using one of their standard 4,000 HP electric locomotives and a string of standard stainless steel cars behind it, chalked up a world's record of 156.1 m.p.h. on repeated runs, bettering Italy's very best by a good 30 m.p.h. The French are far ahead of the rest of Europe as to good railroading in the larger sense. In the more compact field, the Swiss excel. Swiss

equipment and facilities are absolutely spotless and as spic and span as a Catholic kid on the way to his first communion. But it was on the Bergen-Oslo Railway that we encountered a clean-up woman who swabbed and dusted as the train ran along. It glistened!

I knew about the Erie's 6' gauge. In those days the Erie ran out onto a long spit of land at Piermont, N. Y., on the Tappan Zee portion of the Hudson which is now being disfigured by a Thruway Bridge so that riff-raff from the Bronx and Brooklyn can push their jalopies along that much faster in their haste to go nowhere and do nothing when they get there. From Piermont the Erie carried its passengers down the Hudson by boat to New York.

I knew about Britain's Great Western's 7' gauge, too. In fact, I talked about it with Frank Eaton in London and, again, with Eric Clough (principal compiler of "World's Encyclopedia of Recorded Music") at his home in North Wales.

Well, anyway—I doubt that I shall venture to animadvert on hi-fi for "Stefantasy". Hi-fi is an affliction, like being born with twelve toes and no fingers. It's irremediable. I am around to the point now where I keep one machine for the microgrooves and another for the 78's. Almost none of the machines devised for microgrooves do justice to 78's. It's idiocy to say that such machines are "too candid" when the fact is that we often got magnificent results from the 78's, before hi-fi. [Hi-fi was with us long before lp's and with its aid *some* 78's *seemed* to give magnificent results—until the advent of lp's. With a couple more knobs in an adjustable equalizer, Al, you'd find one machine ample.—wmd] But neither from the 33's and 45's, nor from the 78's, do I want the whole 102 men of the N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony doing a tutti fff in my living room. I am far from deaf—yet.

Sometimes I wonder whether this phenomenon of hi-fi and massive volume may not have psychological implications. Does it give the operator of the instrument a sense of power? Is he an exhibitionist—like the characters who buy motorcycles or who put Hollywood mufflers on their hot-rods or ground-hugging foreign cars, just so that they can blast by like fighter planes on strafing runs? I have often wondered whether enforced ordinances requiring the effective total silencing of motorcycle and automobile exhausts wouldn't just about put the people who make motorcycles and noisy automobile gadgets completely out of business! [[No! Strange as it may seem, there are those who prefer motorcycles to cars; the other mfrs would merely switch to *quiet* gadgets.—wmd]] For the nuts who scream around corners on such things silence would completely cramp their style—like Cinemascope sans sound, the epitome of futility!

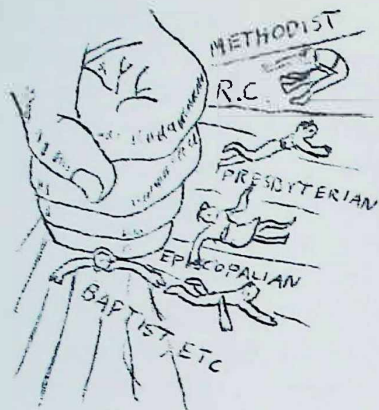
I can savvy three or four knobs on a set, but twelve...! What comes from the other eight or nine? Beer, ale, coke, hot and cold fresh and salt water, tar, or what? [[Cinemascope sans picture—wmd]] What you really need on one of those outfits is a filter which will pass nothing which isn't a fact. How about that? [[Check! That's a partial definition of a true hi-fi system, the rest being that it must pass *all* the facts.—wmd]]

If I get around to it, I may send you one of my essays on dogs.

As ever,

al.





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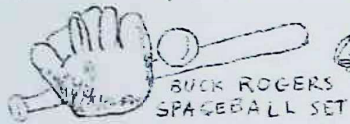
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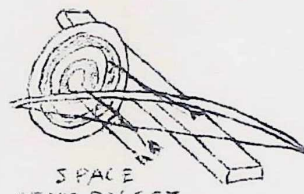
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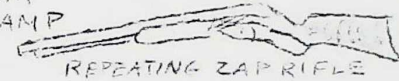
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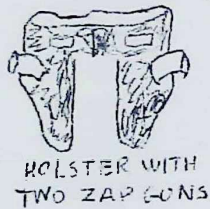


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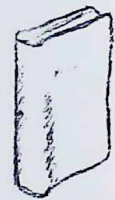


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HOLSTER WITH TWO ZAPLONS



WHITE ZIPPER DECAMERON



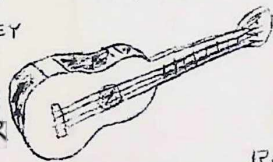
DICK SPACEY CAMERA



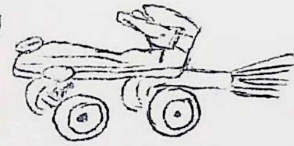
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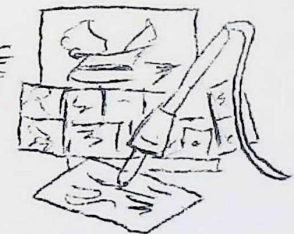
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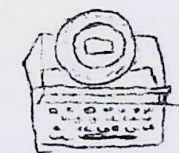
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PO'TRY PAGE

"And did not the philosophic Coleridge say that the object of poetry was delight?"—W. S. MAUGHAM

YOU HAVE PROBABLY had the experience of composing, in your sleep, some beautiful melody or great poem or perfect story idea only to find upon awakening—if you can remember it—that it is utterly banal and worthless. Robert Louis Stevenson appears to have been an exception, for in one of his essays he said that his "brownies" did much of his work for him, acting out in his dreams stories which he remembered and wrote down.

I'm no exception, though. My subconscious must be a complete dope or else a lot smarter than I am, because it's no help at all. Not long ago the following lines sprang into my mind as I woke up, so that I was able to remember them until I got some clothes on and set them into type. They rhyme and one contains the word "love" so, to judge by a lot of poetry I've seen, they constitute a

Pome

I have just noticed, with ponderous shame,
That the seat of love and the seat of fame
Are the same.

Don't ask me what it means. I've thought and thought but I can't find a grain of sense in it anywhere. But I'm not losing any sleep over it. After all, when I'm asleep I can always dream up plenty more just as good or even worse.

STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE.

Yep—they're from TYPO GRAPHIC again.

The true value of horse sense is clearly shown by the fact that the horse was afraid of the automobile during the period when pedestrians were laughing at it.

A man who discovered the joys of fishing rather late in life became even more insistent than ordinary anglers upon recounting his triumphs to skeptical acquaintances. Enraged by their thinly veiled hints that he was a liar, he bought a pair of scales, installed them in his library, and made his friends watch while he actually weighed the fish he caught. One evening a neighbor burst in and excitedly sought permission to borrow the scale. He was back in ten minutes, his face flushed with delight. "Congratulate me," he cried, "I am the father of a forty-eight-pound baby boy."

Times have really speeded up. In the old days folks were content to wait three or four days for a stage coach. Now they let out a squawk if they miss one section of a revolving door.

"Can you read the third line?" an oculist asked his patient. "Sure," answered the man. "CWDK. I'm no good at pronouncing it, but I think he was left tackle at Notre Dame last year.

A colored man was brought before a police judge charged with chicken stealing. He pleaded guilty and received sentence. Then the judge asked how it was he managed to lift those chickens right under the window of the owner's house when there was a dog in the yard.

Negro: Hit wouldn't be of no use, jedge, to try to 'splain dis thing to you all. If you was to try hit, you like as not would get your hide full o' shot an' git no chickens, nuther. If you want to engage in any rascal-ity, jedge, you better stick to de bench, whar yo' am familiar.

Johnny Pramesa, Cincinnati salesman, entered the book department in one of the large stores and asked the young girl clerk for the book, "Fun in Bed" by Jackson. The girl looked for it and couldn't find it. Finally she called to the manager at the other end of the department: Oh, Mr. Jones, we haven't had any "Fun in Bed" for a long time, have we?

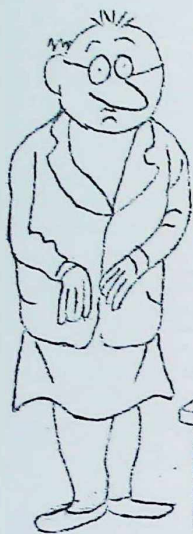
Wife: I can't sleep.

Husband: What did you have to eat before you came to bed?

Wife: A glass of milk.

Husband: That explains it. The milk changed to cheese, cheese to fat, fat to sugar, and sugar to alcohol—you've got a hangover.

Buresch



MEATS



"SO YOUR PLATE GLASS WINDOW IS
CENTER FIELD — DON'T WORRY, I'M HERE!"

—TYPO GRAPHIC

Of Dunne and Dreams

MAYBE YOU HAVE READ J. W. DUNNE'S "An Experiment With Time" and/or "The New Immortality". I've read most of the first and a little of the second and found them pretty dull going despite the interesting idea behind them that many

dreams are really glimpses of the future.

Recently I dreamed that famous scientists predicted the Earth would be completely destroyed by some undisclosed disaster during the night of —sday, June 24. When that day came, though our imminent end was the only thing talked of, there was no hysteria or panic and people went about their work as usual. They went to bed and when they got up in the morning it was with the conviction that the catastrophe had somehow been postponed, but not for long.

It's too bad I can't be a little more specific about that date, and if ever I should dream up the year I'll be sure to let you know. Since —sday could be any one of three days of the week there is little use looking it up in the 2000-year calendar.

Anyway, if ever it is announced by recognized authorities that the world will end on —sday, June 24, you might remember to introduce into the conversation the idea that perhaps J. W. Dunne was right.

N. L.'s KORNER

LEARN A NEW FRENCH PHRASE EVERY QUARTER

(If N. L. K. comes through)

Be admired (or envied) by all.

Coupe de grace: Hay; literally, "cut of grass". *Il n'y a pas un coupe de grace!*: "That aint hay!" Literally, "It has not there a cut of grass!"

REPULSIVE PUN DEPARTMENT

TAPIOCA (*Noun*) The carioca as performed by a tap-dancer.

Sad Tale of the Lady Gym Teacher And the Blind Piano Tuner

THE SAD TALE of a beauteous young lady gym teacher from these parts was making the rounds here this week—mostly as a warning to other young lady gym teachers, some of whom might have a piano that needs tuning.

The young woman in our story, who teaches athletics and such in a nearby school, shares an apartment in town with another young lady teacher.

Recently she engaged a blind piano tuner to come on a certain Saturday morning to give her piano the necessary attention. On the Friday night she and her room-mate and still another teacher attended a concert or something and as the hour was late, the third teacher decided to stop overnight with the other two girls.

Next morning, as girls will, the three slept late and it was almost time for the blind craftsman to arrive when our gym teacher-heroine looked at her clock and discovered that she would have to hurry if she was to finish her bath before he arrived.

She hustled around and into her bath and had just finished when the doorbell pealed. Trotting into the bedroom, she snatched up a robe only to discover that it was not a robe but a rather short thing of about waist length. She had slipped it on and started for the door, however, when one of her friends said, "You're not going to the door in that?"

"Oh," she said, "it's all right, he's blind."

She then opened the door, took the man by the arm, and led him in to the piano, at the same time asking, "Don't you have your dog with you?"

"I don't take him along all the time," the "sightless" one replied, a most peculiar expression covering his face. But he started to go to work right away while she went back to the bedroom. The girls meanwhile sat around talking for sometime, our gym-teacher having located her gown—a very filmy creation this time and certainly not a thing to be worn if you expected the house to catch fire and wanted the firemen to save it.

After a while, the piano man hollered out that he was finished and asked would she like to try the rejuvenated instrument. Still clad only in this filmy cloud, she went to the piano, ran her fingers over the keys and played a few notes and told him that it was fine, indeed.

As he stooped to the floor and started to gather his tools in his bag, she was quick to help him, after which she helped him on with his coat.

As she tried to lead him to the door, he put on his sunglasses and said, "I'm not the blindman, lady. He couldn't come and sent me in his place." And with a smile on his face, he went out and softly closed the door.

Her fellow teachers had quite a time reviving her.

—PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Which reminds me of that genius of the piano, Loverboyn—I mean Libberachi. Some time ago I heard part of a broadcast, described by an announcer in hushed, reverent tones. Apparently Mr. L was riding in triumph around some vast arena while a band played a brief, uninspired fanfare over and over and the crowd cheered itself hoarse. His playing? Well, I haven't heard such pianism since the days when two-reel silent comedies were accompanied by just this sort of pianistic cliches. Gah!

How Did YOU Do?

Dr. Rosted Guber has submitted the correct forms of the test-sentences Nos. 5, 7, 9, 10 and 11 which were published in the May issue under the heading "Test Your Knowledge of Good English".

In an accompanying letter he explains that he cannot supply similar information with regard to the remaining test-sentences because he has lost his notes, which he jotted down on a paper bag. Subsequently he tore open the bag and used the inside for casting the horoscope of a race-horse named Aqualung which was foaled while the sun was in the constellation Aquarius. Dr. Guber thereupon deduced that the horse should be a good mudder and placed his bets accordingly. The nag failed to verify its horoscope; it ran seventh. In a fit of petulance Dr. Guber threw the paper bag into the incinerator and the corrected forms of sentences Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 were lost.

The corrections published below, however, were written with indelible pencil on an unpainted joist in the basement of the Doctor's residence and therefore are still available.

The corrected forms for Nos 5, 7, 9, 10 and 11 are as follows:

5. The old house has been torn down, so the rats are no longer there.
7. English spelling could be greatly amplified by the use of a pornographic alphabet.
9. His eyes protruded like a pewter dollar in a mudhole.
10. Since the Siberian Steppes are behind the Iron Curtain the correct form of this sentence is not available.
11. The publican is a bird with bags under his eyes.

Important announcement for . . .

ROUND PEGS IN SQUARE HOLES

● IF YOU wobble around on your job, are dizzy from the senseless rounds of entertainment and sick of the merry-go-round of the future—don't despair. We're all in the same goddam boat and surveys tell us that NINE out of TEN people realize that there is nothing to be done about it—NOW or any time. But surveys show also that MISERY loves COMPANY and WE can do something about THAT. If you will send us your name and address and a nominal fee we will send you a simple questionnaire to be filled out. When this has been accomplished we will add your name to the long list we already have. BUT—DON'T DELAY! MAIL YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS—AND A MEASLY \$25—AND JUST SEE WHAT YOU GET!

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THE LAST PAGE

By W. MILDEW DANNER

Typos

IN A RECENT LETTER Dean A. Grennell gave me a shock by stating that he he had found a typo in the last *Stef*! Well!

In a quick run through the same issue I found no less than ten. This is probably about par and indicates that Dean's observatioal faculty could stand a little dusting off, though it is nice of him to imply that *Stef* is usually that rarest of things, a typo-free publication. Reading and correcting all proofs as I do it is quite a trick to turn out a whole page without an error, to say nothing of an entire issue.

This issue, of course, will provide a field day for typo-hunters. It is, by the way, the *November* issue, so don't pay any attention to what you see at the bottoms of all too many pages. I should talk about Dean's observation!

In June, 1949 I reprinted a "Typo Symposium" from *Typo Graphic* which proved that no matter how carefully or how often proofs are read errors are bound to creep in. Edwin H. Stuart, publisher of *TG*, used to have a standing offer of a dollar to the first person to inform him of a typo. He had to discontinue it. Too many typos were showing up.



Fig. 43PC7 Typo-Grapher

ANNOUNCEMENT

Fishel & Burper take pleasure in announcing the acquisition of the Potts-Undergunk Chemical Co., whose slogan, "Just Say P-U" is so well known throughout the West. We intend to give its clientele the same fine service to which they are accustomed. A few selections from our 1954 catalog follow:

A-1947	Azobazoom (ous) Pentoxide (Tested Purity) (N.M.) M.W. 149.2	4 oz. .75 1 lb. 1.80 5 lb. 8.72
C-149A	Cornosqueezyl Alcohol, completely denatured	1 pint .35 1 gal. 1.75
D-1775	1,2-Diphenyl 3,4-dinitro 5,6- dimethyl 7,8- shutadigetylhydroxyglycothymonaphthalene Disulfonopropanoic Acid M.P. 294.1° Highest Purity M.W. 577.1	1 quart .60 5 gal. 8.25 10g. 1.25 25g. 2.75 100g. 6.25
J-492	Junk	1 lb. .10 10 lb. .60 25 lb. 1.00
P-177	Paradamfiroxyargonmethyl 1,2,3 amomasamatoluidine M.P. 196 ⁷ / ₈ ° M.W. 106.6	25g. 4.95 100g. 17.7
P-214A	Punk, C.P. M.W. 15.69	1 oz. .13 4 oz. .39 1 lb. .89
T-42	Tschaikofothymol-n-2,2',4,4',6,8 & 10 all others correct as stated	1g. .69 5g. 1.97 10g. 3.45

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