

discrete

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Kidd

discrete

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Cover by Emden.

Editorial

The first issue of Discrete was, without malice aforethought on my part, overloaded with poetry. No item failed to receive approbation from one source or another, but on the other hand, there was very little real enthusiasm about any of the poetry. Never one to ignore the Voice of My Public, in this issue poetry is at a minimum, and we have gone all out for art, Art, aht, and peekshas. The intent is still to carry "material of general interest", and comments thereon will be sincerely appreciated.

The dangling adverbial in the paragraph above is one of those extra things which Discrete attempts to supply for the discriminating in its audience. Without charge, of course.

Columns are still open for contributions of any kind.



Kidd

dk

FANTÔMAS

Few books which narrate the course of a major change in society have been successful in the historico-literary sense; Gibbon and Prescott remain the only men who, having set out to tell the whole story of an era, have done so to the satisfaction of the critical reader, and though such books as Ten Days That Shook The World retain topical interest and the ecstasies of officials who find themselves depicted in a favorable light, in the end it is to books of a different class that we must turn for historical illumination: those which deal definitively with one small sidelight, of which a window is made.

The metamorphosis of the heroic is one such window. Kipling's "thin red line" extended only as far as the edges of a single battle; Cyril Kornbluth, in "The Core," chose to make of it a general path, "the heroes' way," rather than the attenuated X which marks some Spot. For us, that line begins at Beowulf.

Beowulf is Germanic. Like the heroes of the Nibelungenlied, the Edda, and the Kalavala, he is created by magnification: he has the strength of ten men, the integrity of a hundred, the courage of a thousand. He is the original Uebermensch, demonstrably better than his fellows, grown taller through the agencies of a sort of literary bicycle pump. In this man is the embryo of the battle hero and the divinely appointed king of a later feudalism; he appears again, in readable English, in Malory's Sir Galahad, moral superman who totes with him, like a cocktail shaker, a Grail from which he is too abstemious to drink.

But Malory is post-feudal, and in his work the vast figures have lost their naivete; if the human attributes have been enlarged, expanded, some of the less pleasant ones must also have grown. It is Malory's Gallic inheritance - "as fet forth in the french Boke" - to make these men of the Round Table gigantically fallible as well as gigantically strong and courageous, and thus beside the Parnassian imbroglios of the others Sir Galahad appears puny. He is a Germanic hero; his merely-human size faults diminish him. At the denuement of Le Morte d'Arthur it is Sir Gawaine who emerges, crafty, nearly amoral, matter-of-fact, with courage born of reason, faith of expediency, and the unruffled dignity of a man with a sense of humor; it is this archetype upon which the whole vast plot-structure turns, and it is with Gawaine's last letter - truly an heroic document, invested with the nobility of the ordinarily-unheroic man in a crisis - it is through the arrival of this letter that the Arthurian cosmos is rescued from the comprehensive Valhalla-burning to which a Germanic hero (Galahad) would have doomed it.

And it is this archetype which, through Tamburlaine, produced Cassius, the most perfectly human human being in literature. His is in essence a god-like figure. No such humanity ever walked, nor could anyone call Shakespeare a realist. This man is a real hero, certainly, and deliberately opposed to the slightly vapid grail-polishing nobility of Brutus; but his uglinesses, like his beauties, have undergone an apotheosis.

Rabelais produced the last of these figures. In modern times only one comparable hero is findable, Sinclair Lewis' Babbitt; and this satiric archetype already

ADMONITION

In the darkened room,
In the hesitant silences,
Suave throat, svelte throat,
Swear me no flicker song, no
Swoon-croon vernality of the ad-man days.

Stir into his streamlined trough
The stomp-rhythm crusts of vorticality;
Thrust forth mademoiselle fingers
And push for him the up-buttons.

He will board the express
And the last step is the right hand of the Almighty.

-- Robert W. Lowndes

###

FOUR VARIATIONS ON A WELL-KNOWN THEME

(Reprinted from Supplement to Futurian Home Journal # Twelve)

I- Maestoso

As the tall and gracious Karen Emden made her appearance upon the speaker's platform, the crowd sprang to its feet, roaring "Ungaby! Ungaby!" in a mighty collective shout, and waving a myriad of banners. The candidate smiled and waited for the uproar to subside a little, the while stepping to the rostrum; then, hitching up her diapers, she spoke. . .

II- Adagio

Ladies and Gentlemen of the radio audience, I wish you could be with me to see the terrible desolation of this little Emden town. As I drive by in my Mark-III tank, I can see to one side and the other a thousand possessions scattered at random about me, and here and there the villagers squat disconsolately in the ruins of their trousers. . .

III - Marche Slav

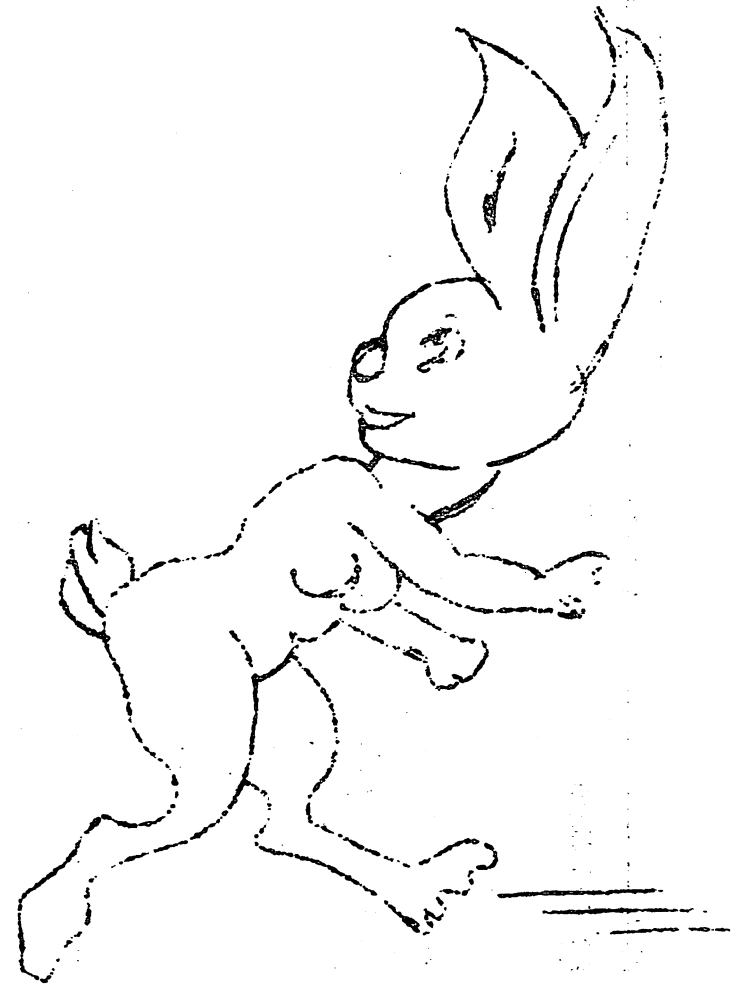
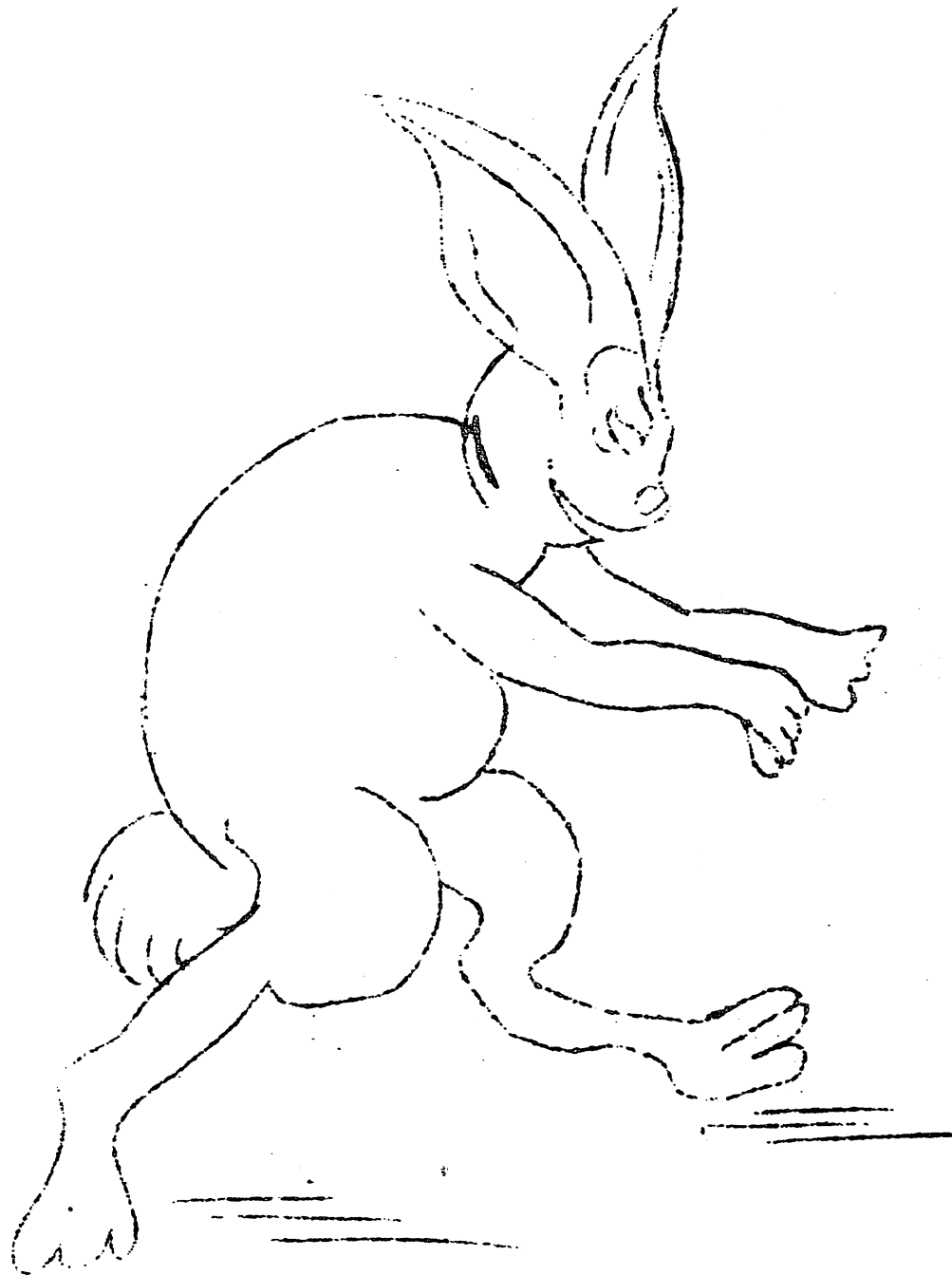
The wind howled and moaned as little Kerensky Emdenoff went through the streets, diapers dragging, holding out a forlorn little bundle of matches. "Please, sir," she said, "Won't you buy some? If I don't sell them all, my mother beats me when I get home. . ."

IV - Glacioso

As the crowds mill in the streets, a distant drone is heard in the East, and after a moment a mighty form looms on the horizon. It is the Karen, majestic monarch of the sky, diapers whirling, flying in tight swastika formation with itself. Thunder of approbation among the assembled Futurians.

-- Jim Blish

###



Peter Rabbit

FAIRY TALE

Once upon a time, you understand, there was a goblin named Jones. Jones was a good law-abiding goblin, well-liked by everybody, but there would be times, of an evening when Jones and his friends were well into their thimbles, when Jones' face would suddenly go long and mournful and he would get up and go away without a word to anyone. Jones, you see, was unhappy on account of his name. All the other goblins had names like Flinhymrrgloffnwhetnik or Yoddlsnfrastimor or even Yarshmybbynsrdtmnmy III. And Jones tried to bear up under it, but more and more as the years went by, he got to feeling that he couldn't stand it any longer.

One morning when he was feeling particularly low, a friend of his came up with another goblin and said, "Jones, I want you to meet Prrrtschyllbybraddleaddleaddlefleeteeneetenschutzgraben-shortbreadski."

Jones felt a big hard sob come up into his throat. "That does it," he said, and he threw down his tools and walked straight down the shop, kicking beetles out of his way and trampling on daisies, until he came to the foreman. "Chief," said Jones, "I can't take it any more. I gotta have my name changed."

The foreman looked grave. "Well -- uh -- Jones," he said, "I appreciate how you feel, but there's no precedent for it, y'know. I'm as broadminded as anybody, but tradition is tradition, and where would we be if everybody started changing their names? Anarchy, that's what we'd have. Why, the whole system would go to pieces."

Then he looked at Jones and saw that a large tear was trickling down his cheek. "Well now," he went on uncomfortably, "don't take on so, Jones. Tell you what I'll do. I'll call for a meeting of the union and we'll put it up to the whole membership. How's that?"

So they called all the goblins of the Milk-Sourer's Union together in a big amphitheatre, and the foreman stood up and said, "Fellow workers, we got an unusual problem before us today. This goblin, name of Jones, wants to change his name. It's against custom, but you got to admit he's got a case there. How about letting him change his name to Smith?"

The goblins muttered together and then, one by one, they got up and talked about it, some speaking up for Jones and others against. After about a half-hour it seemed as if the pro-Joneses were in the majority, because Jones was a good worker and had lots of friends. But just then a nasty little goblin in green pants got up and said, "Just a minute! I hold a lot of talk today about how dis Jones is a good worker, but he don't look like so much to me. I bet I can sour more milk in a minute dan he can in an hour!"

Instantly there was turmoil, ending in shouts of "Contest! Contest!" So two huge bowls of unsoured milk were brought up to the stage and a circle was cleared around them for the trial to take place.

The goblin in the green pants stepped up first, with a confident sneer, and made his passes over the milk. Jones' heart sank within him as he watched, because the nasty little goblin was really pretty good. In less than a minute the surface of the milk had hardened to a wrinkled scum, with green and purple spots.

Jones felt like running away and hiding, but then he took hold of himself. "Jones," he said firmly, "be a goblin!" And he walked up to the second bowl of milk.

But, alas! he was still too nervous, for he had hardly begun when he made a horrible mistake. On his second pass, instead of sticking out his left pinky, he stuck out his right pinky. He knew there was no use going on, but he finished his passes anyway, and then stood looking miserably at the bowl. The milk had not soured at all. Instead, it got thick and creamy, and frost began to form on the outside of the bowl.

The goblin in the green pants laughed long and loud. "Look at dat!" he said. "An' dis guy calls hisself a milk sourer! Why, it ain't even --" He dipped his finger derisively into the bowl, looked at the blob of goo curiously, then tasted it. "Hey, what is dis?" he said slowly. "It's -- it's good!"

The other goblins crowded around, each one sticking a finger in and tasting the new concoction. There were rising murmurs of appreciation, and finally there were so many goblins trying to get at the bowl that the union officials had to line them up and limit them strictly to one dab apiece.

The foreman came last, and when he had had his, he cried, "It's like ice, and it's like cream -- it's ice cream!"

"And Jones -- I mean Smith -- made it!" cried the other goblins. "Long live Smith!"

So they elected Smith President of the Union (only he started spelling his name Smythe, and dared anybody to make something of it) and he lived happily ever after. And that's all I know about the story.

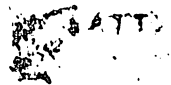
-- damon knight

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[From Canadian Fandom V. I # 8, p. 14, "A Cynidealistic Concept of Fandom - An Answer to Holden Blackwell," by Fred Baker.]

"In the first group, (fen of scientific interest) you do find persons who are led thru the romantic and imaginative tales of pseudo-science to be interested in the factual side of it. They are not deluded. As to believe of stf stories any more than that they stimulate interest and imagination in such, as was once the so-called purpose of stf when the scientific quiz departments sprang up in the pulp mags. Very few are led to the arms of science thry this as fans are prone to be egotistical and disorganized. Notable exceptions to this rule are such scientists and technicians as E. E. Smith, John W. Campbell, Donald Wollheim, Willey Ley, and many technicians of lesser note."

(What appears on the upper half of this page is a small foretaste of the type of thing I intend to put in Sottisier when I get it really started, but due to lack of time and contributions I cannot consider this as the inauguration of the department. Incidentally, Judy's picture landed on this page by sheer chance.)

 wished the lieutenant would quit staring at her. After all, she deserved a little privacy in this sad hour of utter heart-ache." -- (Feb. 45 Gay Love, Heart in Waiting, by India Frances Braden.) I offer you my thyroid and my sympathy, Patty,

John B. Michel was heard by reliable witnesses, including the writer, to state - and firmly, too - that certain Russian scientists have constructed a model of an infinite universe. NO COMMENT.

"Apologies to Norman F. Stanley for our having listed him in the last VA as Norman A. Stanley. We were obviously thinking of Norman A. Knight, one of our favorite scribes in the pseudo-science field." (Lowndes in Vanguard Amateur, Notes, No. LLI.) Norman L. Knight? Oh, obviously.

Traced by
the Emden
and apologies
are hereby
offered to
JZ and dk.

A quick
sketch of
Judy Zissman
made by
Futura's
own
artist,
demon
knight.

Judy



The greener the grass

Outside Dresden (thirty-four miles, as I recall; Spitzwald is on no map, and doesn't deserve to be) we struck the black beer for the first time. Mainacht in southern Germany is like nothing else, anywhere else. I carried back little of it except a memory of a session in a compartment on the Brenner-Berlin Express, and a hunt for the black beer across the Sax-on border.

I was sixteen. We were none of us much over that. Except for der Am'ker (me), we were from the Textile school outside Hildesheim in Pomerania, near enough to cities like München and Nürnberg to expect our beer in Measen. We sat down and ordered the equitable number of beers. We got them in the American oversize, 12 ounce glasses; they were black enough, but they looked a little niggardly. We had been near Bavaria - we began to yap for a Maaskrug, a full liter apiece.

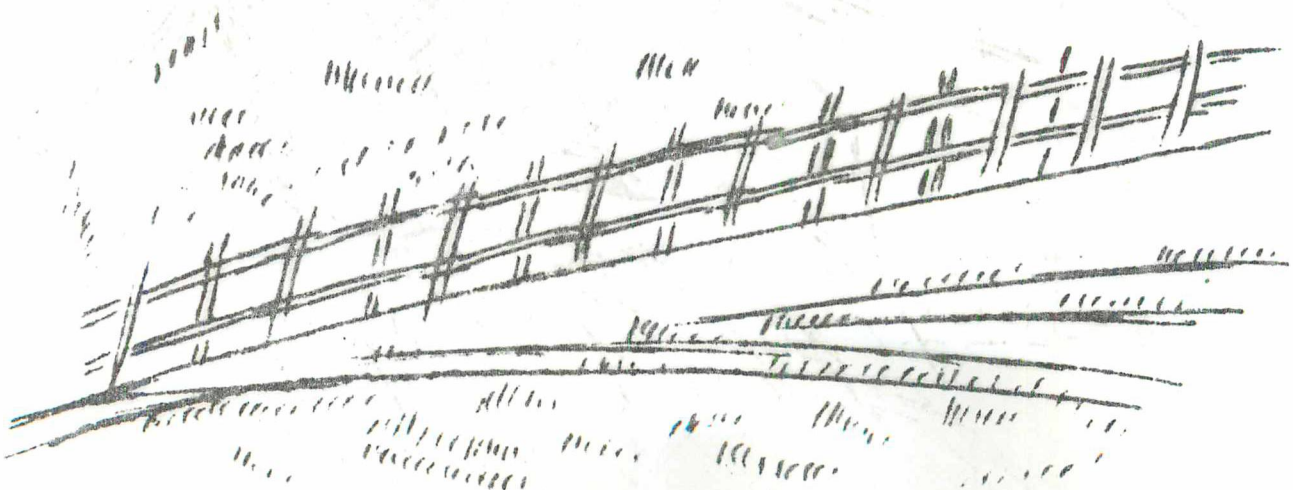
They had none; but over the kegs, as in American bars, was a shelf-load of decorative steins.

"Was is' dort drüben?" Maxl demanded, pointing to the two-liter model.

I drank one. After that I think we drove somewhere else. I don't remember, and neither does he. I suppose we drove somewhere else, looking for something better, something better in the line of beer, quantity, cities, girls, accents, or roads to drive on. Then I came home. Six years ago last month Maxl followed, though I missed him until last year.

We're still looking.

- Marcus Lyons



B R O O D O F T H E
D A R K M O O D - - Reminiscences

II - Parallax

Easter Sunday of last year (windows thrown open once more to the moist air, and the trees wearing sudden green) James Blish was moved to write a poem. It follows:

Consecration of Certain Clouds

Freydis; an omen
deciduous softly on a later deity's
Manhattan spring;

The bedrock pressed
dedicate with traceries, the entrails
of the last year's prophecy,
and the last year's,
and the last;
less fortunate.

Freydis: our hoping,
ancient and foredoomed, pierce not;
bless our houses.

Inscribed thereon was "Kidd, Judy, Doc and me gewidmet." Shortly after, Doc and Jim moved into Blowndsh, and Judy and I took up what was intended to be a few months' residence in a tenement a block from the Hudson.

Music, buttressed by the gently bourgeois atmosphere of appliqued curtains, Axminster rugs, overstuffed armchairs; pervaded by the delicate odor of hydrogen sulphide whenever Curfew (a small cat described by Blish hopefully but in vain as Formed Stool Conway) ate eggs; enlivened by minor battles as Blackout struggled manfully against the encroachment of the Kittens and cats which collect on Blish like lint; pierced by the faintest hint of lye - or is it Lysol? - as Lowndes makes his prefabricated coffee in the kitchen; obligated by rim-shots of typewriters -- but always music. The joint record library is one of the largest, and in some fields most comprehensive, of privately-owned collections. Blowndsh, daily at five, resounds to the clamor of the alarm clock; and there is a mad dash for garbage pails and wastebaskets, the contents of which must be flung down the dumbwaiter shaft before it is closed again at five-thirty. It is recorded that, carried away by this invigorating scene, Henry Sestman once flung a cat down the air shaft. "Outside of things like that," says Jim mournfully, "pradically nothing ever happens at Blowndsh, that's printable."..It is noted in the ninth issue of Futurian Home Journal that the Futurian Sewing Circle and Mothers' Club is working furiously on a cross-stitch sampler which will have an heraldic device of black cat rampant on a bed of roses, surrounded by a delicately interwoven border of beer and gin bottles, over the motto, "God Bless Our Dwelling Machine," and it is regrettable that Blowndsh will probably succumb to the dissolution which threatens before this work of art is ever completed...The musical tradition will be carried on, however, as Lowndes and Blish descend from the monastic heights of 325's fifth floor, to go their separate ways.

Parallax is something else again, and to paraphrase a famous paraphrase, the word bourgeois is not to be mentioned in the same breath as the word Parallax. The dwelling consists of two parallel apartments, about equally distributed as far as sanitary facilities go - bathtub in one apartment and an enthroned commode in the other - and each comprising large front room, two small inner rooms, and a kitchen at entrance-end.

Judy's two-and-a-half year old daughter, Merril, whose springy golden curls earned her the name of Tendrils Conway, and the Emden ten-month-old daughter, Karen Anne, whose propensity for late hours far outdoes that of her mother's caused her to be named Deadly Nightshade, shared a joint nursery. On one wall of the nursery, damon knight drew the mural reproduced below, and on another the touching pursuit scene from the Old Norse saga, Peter Rapi, to be found on page 5 of this Discrete.

The two children and their respective mothers made up the permanent population of Parallax until Karen was deducted from the assemblage, at which time room arrangement underwent radical changes, the exact details of which are hardly pertinent to this history. Suffice it to say that the floating population of Parallax is without doubt one of the largest in the annals of small co-operative
(next col.)

(Con't. prec. col.) establishments.

All of Futuria regarded as its own, individually and collectively, this eight-room palace among tenements.

Naturally, in such an off-trail set-up, parties became the order of the day. Frequent dinners and drinking bouts have taken their place in the participants' memories of the historic summer of 1945; space limitations prevent details on any of these affairs, but sites of famous battles and engagements can be indicated as a quick tour is made.

Many of (over)

The Goose

the most thoroughly enjoyed affairs took place at hangover house, the earlier Zissman residence on Greenwich St. (where the floors slanted, and the walls moved), and the Emden menage, hangover outhouse uptown, on 46th St. Futurian Home Journal was undertaken as a weekly publication on the 8th of February, and the amalgamation did not take place until April.

Regarding the joint Zissman-Emden parties as the beginning of Parallax, rather than the physical fact of moving into and naming of 787 Washington St., that first issue of Futurian Home Journal was a milestone. The project of retelling the story of those halcyon days can best be done by presenting selected quotations from FHJ. Here inserted is the cartoon strip contributed by damon knight to the first issue, as reproduced by Emden, and also in that first issue (The Classified Issue)

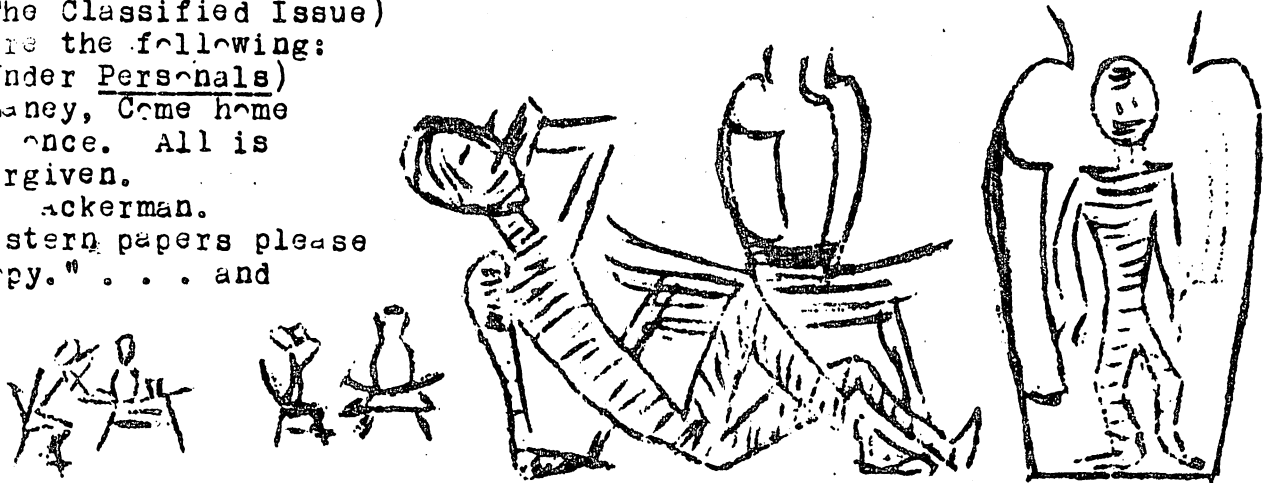
were the following:

(Under Personals)

"Laney, Come home at once. All is forgiven.

Ackerman.

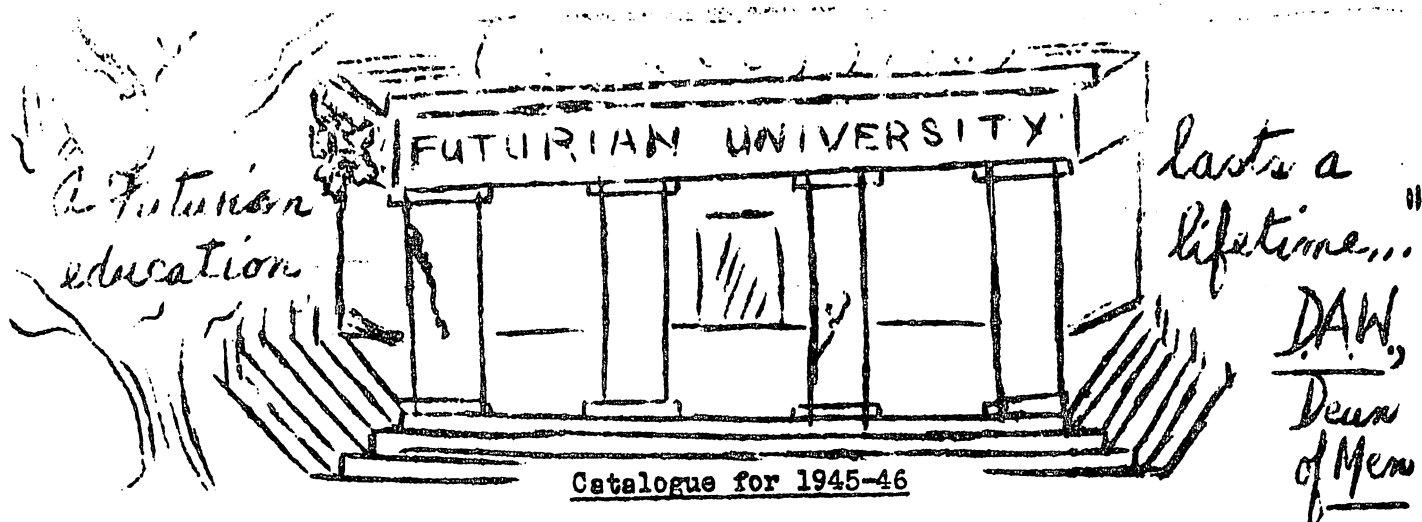
Western papers please copy." . . . and



(Under Female Help Wanted) "Fan, female, 6-8, personality, attractive, fill niche in Arisians. Apply Wollheim, Queens." . . . (Under Male Help Wanted) "Gunslinger, fearless, expert drygulcher to eliminate Husbands. A job with a future! URGENT Apply R W Lowndes." . . . "No-man, experienced battling yes-men. Do NOT apply in person. D. Wollheim (Must be free to travel.)" There was also a plaintive note struck in the agony column, with loud pleas for an unabridged dictionary, and two baby-sitters.

Feb 15: " .. a pleasant time was had by all. The evening was got off to an excellent start over a macaroni-and-ham casserole. L. T. Shaw, the man of destiny, proved himself an invaluable aid in the smaller details of kitchenry-cookery, and then immersed himself in a serious study of the recent philosophical publication, Timebinder. From time to time, Shaw was observed to grunt, "Obscenity!" R. W. Lowndes wept copiously over the dishes in the sink, thus miraculously cleaning them...The assembled company engaged in a swift and brief game of poker, which culminated in coffee, and an impromptu lecture on aeronautics delivered by the famed aviation authority, Kurt Conway."

Most of the scheduled dinners followed the same pattern - much food, generally rather good food, at that, and much conversation. The heavy political arguments engaged in jointly and severally by Blish, Wollheim, Zissman, Michel, and sometimes Elsie Wollheim, became a feature later on, but the earlier dinners were all rather amicable affairs.



HUMANITIES
Department of English

Lit B (2 cr) The Dirty Parts in Finnegans Wake
Prof. Knight

Department of History
Soc 4 (3 cr) Burke's Peerage; The Browder Revision
Prerequisite: Anatomy 1. (Soc 5, the Easter Theorem, and Soc 6, The Wollheim Illumination, not given 1945-46.)
Prof. Cohon

Soc 7 (1 cr) Marx Trisected
Miss Balter (Highchair of Sociology)

Department of Comparative Religion
Rel 3 (2 cr) Applied Miracles
Required texts: "Das Kapital," "If This Goes On - ", and "The Coming American Fascism."
Dr. Wollheim

Rel 5 (no cr this term) Abstemiousness under Ghu
Dr. Michel*

SCIENCES
Department of Zoology
Zoo 104 (4 cr) Mammals, and How To Ignore It
(Graduate students only.)
Mrs Zissman

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
UE 21 (1 cr) A Foreshortened Course in Applied Holystoning
Required text: "Two Weeks Before the Mast"
Mortician's Mate Shaw

CONSERVATORY
Mus D (2 cr) Nursery Chants, Contrapuntal and antiphonal
Cantus firmus: "Wow, wow, wow."
Dr. Blish

No classes meeting in the Women's College this winter. Junior Prom Chairman Emden has announced this activity discontinued. Other extracurricular activities under Dr. Lowndes' tutelage.

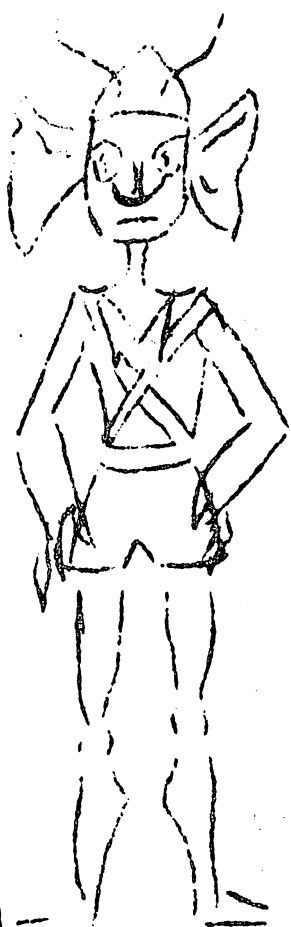
*On sabbatical.

Page 12-B
~~600~~

For the new and inexperienced
reader of the amateur publication —
Stop Press order was received in
order to carry advertisement on
opposite page — of utmost import-
enroll now — no entrance requirements!

For the old hand with a
memory — you know what happened
here as well as I do. I apologize.
And have a good time with your
field day, next mailing, do.

vke »



Martian
Boy-Scout

IN DISCRETIONS

1. - Vagrant Thoughts and a
Random Quotation

Inasmuch as the quotation stands by itself this issue - no one seems to have put himself out to be very clever in my hearing in the past few months, or even very quotable - I shall begin with it. It would be difficult to reproduce the sensation I felt when damon looked up from a sketch and delivered himself of one of those evilly cryptic remarks of his. "Your face couldn't possibly," he remarked conversationally, "be shaped like that."

The reaction to Basil and the Lion ranged from incredulous to an outright denial of its factual basis. May I state here that with the exception of the incident of the dropped "d" in drape (which happened, but to someone else) the story is absolutely true, as it stands.

Radio commentators hash and rehash endlessly the meager "program" available on classical music, and inasmuch as Richard Strauss wrote a number of tone-poems which are standard radio repertory affairs, I have come to associate him in my mind with the term program music. Recent and frequent references to Strauss as a "hireling of the Nazis" and a musical propagandist for Nazi theory gave rise to a labored pun and a passionate conviction. It is true that he made his living under that regime and turned out good work and a couple of abominations on government order but surely it is obvious to the most unthinking that no political theory could, by the very nature of the medium, be taught, supported, or furthered by either the notation or the performance of this music. Conviction: Strauss did not write

music cannot convey political thought. Pun: Strauss did not write pogrom music.

Another and less important aspect of the question: no more truly can it be said that Strauss wrote program music. It is known that he made use of "program" as a framework from which to compose, but not as a crutch for the listener. The programmatic material goes into the discard as soon as the composition is completed and has no further interest for anyone, inasmuch as the music now says all that there is to say. The unfair and infinitely repetitious practice of trotting out the scaffolding adds nothing to the architecture of any musical work I have ever heard.

Corollary thought: down with

radio announcers.

One evening last winter Lowndes and I whiled away the night by compiling a list of music which would be entertaining and/or instructive for the very young listener. The list began with Mother Goose Suite, Carnival of the Animals, Gaites Parisiennes, The Flea, Nutcracker Suite, Children's Corner Suite, Age of Gold, Night on Bald Mountain, Sorcerer's Apprentice, Things to Come Suite, and Zapateado (the swift violin solo by Sarasate which is the favorite

of one three-year-old I know). Do you have any additions to suggest for such a list, or any reasons to offer why one of our choices is perhaps not a good one?

You will note that Adventures in a Carpenter, by John Alden Perambulator (authentic: as spoonerized by a WQXR announcer) is omitted, for reasons which should be obvious.

There are perhaps thirty more names on our own list, but I am not presenting them here, both because it is too lengthy and because I would rather see several specific suggestions from readers and see if any of them had also occurred to us, inasmuch as the list is being put to immediate and practical use by three sets of parents.

The rash of inasmuches spotting this department is another one of those extra things. Nothing but the best for Discrete's readers!

It is probably needless to say that most of the sketches in this issue are originally by damon knight, as copied and sometimes amended by Emden. Contents page sketches of me were made during a music session at Blowndsh; Peter Rapi adorns one wall of our dining room (which used to be the nursery), and The Goose was on another wall of the same room. The Martian Boy-Scout heading off this section appears on the door to that room, and inasmuch (dividend!) as it is drawn over several panels it has a peculiar wavering appearance in the original, like something seen through water. The Treadstool appears on the appropriate wall of the pint-size (Zissman says you should maybe make it a pint and a half) pissoir.

2. - Excerpt from a letter written August 1, by Fran Laney:

"... a comment or two might not be amiss. Generally speaking, I'd call it about average -- neither outstandingly good nor outstandingly bad. Possibly the best thing in the issue was the delightfully nasty crack about Bilbo; it at least surpassed Lowndes' poems. Of the longer pieces, your own was easily the best, though it seems to me to suffer somewhat through not fulfilling the promise of something terrific built up in the first page or so. At least I felt let down -- after all this buildup and palaver the old guy just gave the lion too much sleepjuice. I trust you will refrain from asking me how I would have ended this tale, since I am utterly blank on the subject. (I'm assuming that it is fiction, and that the preliminary squib was merely in the interests of verisimilitude.) Knight's 3 into the Fleshpots I thought atrocious, more for the underlying attitude than for the execution. This glee at dragging people out of the happy tenor of their ways and into Futuria seems untoward. . . . If a jazzman might remark in passing about the record discussions.... It strikes me that if one is going to make a fetish of the mechanical quality of the recording he is missing too much music. Unless the record has serious flaws -- such as cracks or badly worn spots -- the tiny amount of surface noise in the average recording and the inconsiderable shortcomings in tone fidelity should scarcely be any more annoying or distracting than the extraneous noises at an in-the-flesh performance. And, as someone points out, the average record player probably is incapable of giving a completely adequate rendition of any record. In jazz, of course, this problem is just one of those things one puts up with. Aside from the utterly rotten recording jobs on many labels

$\infty \propto \Sigma \infty \int ! \pi \sqrt{\infty} \int \pi ! \int \infty \Sigma \infty$

such as Gennett, Paramount, and particularly (considering their recent issues) the blue label Vocalions; one is glad enough to get a rare and choice old disc, even if it does have a crack going pop-pop-pop for half the record, and a particularly rasping gritty scraping noise where the shellac is worn through. Of course, if one has a recorder he can make a dubbing which will screen out some of the worst features, but these home-grown discs aren't very good either.

I purposely left On Pamphleteering and Puberty until the last. It makes plenty of sense insofar as pamphleteering is concerned, but the remarks on fan and amateur publishing not only fail to approach validity but are an actual insult both to the field as a whole and to the editor which published them. It is true enough that a very limited few fanzines... have been experimental...and also far too many fanzines are egcboo, pure and simple.

"Where Knight slips up, in my opinion, is his failure to recognize the legitimacy of fan publishing as a hobby. If one is willing to admit the place in adult life of hobbies and extra-work interests, then he must be willing to admit fan publishing to that place. It can be abused, of course.

"If Knight and others who scoff at the adults who publish fanzines are unprepared to admit to the value of a hobby, then there is little to be said. A hobby is its own end... Some people feel that they must rationalize any spare-time activity, and many of the fan editors who feel their popguns are cannon fall into this category.

"As for me, I'm quite happy with my popgun. I can handle it, and I doubt my prowess with a 16" naval rifle, particularly in the confines of a five-room bungalow. Fan publishing and allied pursuits are a complete contrast to my job, and as far as I can see I have about as well-balanced and varied a life as a man could ask for. I have no illusions as to the cosmic importance of a magazine with a circulation of 200..."

3. - Through Vanguard with DDT-Gun and Microscope

As a whole, the mailing seemed to me to be somewhat of a piddling affair. There were no publications which were outstanding on more than one count, and several which were outstanding on one count alone, an imbalance great enough to invalidate their material to a great extent, and there was a majority of dull offerings.

Since the night the Gothic APA was first sketched for me in mid-winter of the year which is now drawing to a close, I have heard much gum-beating to the effect that (1) the irresponsible child let loose with stencils and mimeo falls victim to elephantiasis of the fanzine, and becomes both (a) long-winded and (b) boring, and (2) review of reviews of reviews is a pointless practice and contributes nothing of value. I swallowed both of these statements with very few protests, since I was (although an old fan) a newcomer to the field of amateur publishing. At present I should like to say that there is much truth in the first proposition without question, but that it is not only the irresponsible younger element which puts out lengthy and undummed publications, and that I have often found long and informal publications to be of great interest; I should like to see a much larger proportion of them in Vanguard.

With regard to the second point, RWL pointed out to me the fact that I had

failed to make any constructive criticism of several publications, and had simply remarked that I liked them. I put the question to the readers of this magazine: is a simple commendation of a publication which has entailed a great deal of labor on somebody's part not a better and more friendly action (and one more in keeping with the purpose of the organization incidentally) than a button-lipped passing-over of that which does not inspire a paragraph of argument? I do heartily advocate a brief mention at least in every publication of every publication in the previous mailing, with comments when called for by content only. I think a thorough analysis is often unnecessary, but I think a short evaluation is a signpost for growth and change, a healthy part of such an organization's functioning, and just plain common courtesy to boot.

And I proceed with a complete review of the mailing; since it was not a very good one, a majority of the comments will probably be lukewarm yesses and tepid noes - and in my opinion, each one of them is well worth writing down. What do you think?

Sappho is the best-looking job in the mailing, of course, and contains very nearly the most vapid material. With the exception of Lowndes' poem (which even so in this unrevised version is only fair), the Michel poem, the second of Bok's two poems, and a good proportion of Ebay's work, the material is not worth hectoring, much less the lovely presentation that was accorded it. The editorial is possibly the worst adolescent inconsequential impertinent effusion yet to come out of the west coast contingent. I should like to see another issue of Sappho on the lines of the fourth number which was my introduction to the magazine, and which I found to be superior in almost every respect.

Agonbite of Inwit in this issue sinks about as low on the scale as Aoi has so far managed to do; from the phallic Desire for Shape to the second and I hope last installment of Lowndes for Presidente, it is only mediocre. But What, Asked Pilate, is Truth? is marked by such abortive words as extendingly, and while it makes sense is of no great consequence one way or another. The finding that Pound's innocence on the treason charge convicts him of something worse than what RWL calls "statutory treason" seems to me an unnecessary belaboring of a point and an insolent shelving of the fact that Pound's position was the reasoned position of a great and embittered man, who could not conceivably have been accused of stupidity, as Lowndes generously allows his reader to do if he wishes. And except for audio-visual pleasure in the imagery and the characteristic coupling of exact word with exact word, I failed to appreciate the Sostman poem in that I failed to perceive his meaning - over-all meaning, that is. While this can hardly be considered Henry's fault, it is one more detraction from the pleasure to be gained from this issue of Agonbite by me.

Tumbrills has become a sort of catch-all, it would seem, since the inception of Renaissance - a superior catch-all, granted. I should like to see this publication's earlier excellence, however, and regret the visible change of policy. The device of using Pound's own titles in the course of the Pound controversy has been an effective one, and as ever on this question, I have no quarrel whatsoever with what you have to say... I liked the first two of Hart's poems, disliked the rest of the selections, and object to the Lyons note under the numeral IV (whose intent is not clear.) The Lyons comment at the end of the group uncovers new excellences as I re-read it,

and I had liked it very much the first time. /????RWL??? Do you see what I mean, Lowndes? Not one gadham word of criticism, constructive or otherwise. But -- high-paid performers on the radio, for instance, expend huge sums of money to uncover by means of polls as exact a cross-section of public opinion on their work as possible; why should we then who are in a position to obtain and provide praise or condemnation as well as intelligent criticism take advantage of only the third? Whether Joe Dilettante or Mary Fann takes issue with me or not; or has new material to add to what I have said or not; I really want to know whether he or she found it good or not. The warm glow that follows on praise for work well done is a good part of the pleasure to be found in Amateur publishing, I think, or in anything else for that matter. And I find the simple statement that so-and-so found such-and-such good or interesting to be good reading too, since I am familiar with the work being evaluated and can (1) learn fascinating things about evaluator's character and (2) stack up my opinion against his. In short (or at last, if I'm boring you) I like reviews, brief or detailed ones, and I should like to see more of them in Vanguard; I also think everyone who has put effort into producing a publication deserves at least a rating of his efforts by every other member. The Friller is easily one of the most delightful things in the mailing. Third in a Crowd is far better than The Nimble Aeronauts for me, but does not begin to approach The Folded and the Quiet; more, please?

Modern Concept is not a good beginning for a new member. He seems to have little comprehension of the nature of Vanguard, if this is any indication of what he intends to do for each mailing. The material herein is on a fan level -- and on the lowest fan level, at that. So it's printed, so what? Try again, and try a lot harder, please.

Renaissance has made a good, if one-sided, beginning. Der Rosenkavalier is my favorite opera by long odds, and the Knocklein material is of very real interest. I take very little exception to the Mayr performance myself, but find your comments enlightening, and where they define differences in interpretation, evocative. I have of course never seen a Vienna performance, but am familiar enough with the work to envision it as you describe it. The record reviews are also valuable material, but I feel that the department is overlong and not sufficiently discriminating. I would rather see fewer and more detailed reviews of material strongly recommended by Lowndes than continued treatment of everything that hits the market. Also, I should like to see a more complete covering by Renaissance of the field it is proclaimed to cover -- "all the arts". . . material on painting, ballet, the modern dance, and the theatre is in order, is it not? In any event, this will stand up well as a first issue, in spite of its lacks.

A Dangerous Thing is a good beginning for a new member, and as the initial effort of a new publisher it is excellent. Give us more drafts of the Pierian, Bill, often. And thanks for the membership card; it is neatly executed and a pleasant sort of thing for you to have donated to the group.

Fan-Teds, as I find less and less time to keep up with the FAPA mailings, becomes less and less gripping. It is still a good publication, extremely well-executed, but I feel that twenty pages (out of twenty-four) slanted toward fans and Fapans increase the soggianness of this particular loaf, the 3rd mailing. I would much rather see a smaller publication directed

seriously toward Vanguard or at least a somewhat larger proportion of non-finity in Fan-Tods. Gripe over. Wonders of Non-Accumulation is delightful.

Temper is notable this issue for the best cover in the msiling, for the preamble to the discussion of The Responsibility of Peoples and the essay on pipe-smokers (which will probably go unappreciated in a predominantly male audience.) The poem is not notable, and Gansevoort St. did not quite come off, but the issue as a whole is enjoyable, and I am constrained to remark on the remarkable strides Judy makes from issue to issue. Keep it up.

continues excellent. One smt of takes the official organ for granted and fails to comment thereon - but if it were not good, there would be howls of protest. VA has been consistently neatly and efficiently put together; the necessary information is readily available and the occasional bits of thrown in department-while. The section tributed for the delectation by is a joy.

the issue, so it ing, so please know what you think of it? that with my style the teeth, some was Blish! I can Horrors! Do you

@@@@@

odds and ends ally are worth-called Notes, con-entire membership's Norman Q. Lowndes

So that winds up was fun in the do-would yez leave me

And to think staring them in people thought I only say Horrors! understand? HORRORS!

@@@@@

(It has been suggested that a year ago when I was yapping about - what was it? - fanart and fanudes, I wouldn't even have liked this, much less printed it. Mebbese, mebbe.

The Toadstool

Be that as it may, this year I think it falls into an entirely different category, and I LIKE it. I give it to you all with my blessing.)

uk

Ghod bless you all, and to all a good knight.

(Cont. from page 3) has undergone the procedure by which industrial-age heroes are made. Lewis is well aware of it; unlike most critical novelists he has realised that standardization is more than a minor danger to be conquered by writing about it. He has observed our new archetypes with the historical eye which knows the backward reaches of the thin red line...In Germany Henry Ford was a creator of values, the hero of the UFA movie Metropolis; in England he was Progress; Lewis knew him instead as an Alger hero, risen from the ranks to make himself rich, the rest of us happy, and incidentally to contribute one more universally ownable item to the process of subtraction from the individual personality.

No heroism by addition or by magnification is possible in the literary sense, once that comfortable blanket of uniformity which Walter Bagehot foreshadowed so long ago in Sir Robert Peel has settled upon the people in the story. Babbitt was the last, and possible himself only because Lewis understood these matters thoroughly, understood that no criticism, no sarcasm, no petulant complaint could retard the consummation and subsequent worship of the interchangeable, and the associated shibboleths over which Philip Wylie sputters.

The process from that point on is subtraction. The hero is withdrawn from the milieu rather than pumped up to dominate it. The withdrawal at first is physical, accomplished in person by such men as Emerson and Henry James, then for the first time in books by the Byrons and the Poes. The inevitable sequel is a withdrawal of attributes. The hero becomes less human, less than human. Humanism sets in, the cultivation of the interior illumination at the expense of the exterior personality. After only a short period such figures as Huxley's Mr. Propter and Sebastian Barnack appear, feet treading something that might be our Earth if only the author would let us see it, emotions shuttling to and fro among metaphysical labyrinths and moral ambiguities - and bodies acted upon by the outside, passively receiving whatever the unreal vicissitudes of reality might bring.

At the inception of the humanitarian mythos, natural fungoid fuzz on the surface of the blanket, the Germanic heroes have made their last stand in the comic books. When Batman and Doc Savage have disappeared for good, the first circle of the thin red line will be complete.

And the shrewd historian will watch sharply for the beginnings of new archetypes-by-addition, for the figures chosen for this magnificatory treatment will tell him in detail the course of the new epoch.

- Marcus Lyons

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"Himself a pious motorist, Babbitt cranked with the unseen driver, with him waited through taut hours for the roar of the starting engine, with him agonized as the roar ceased and again began the infernal patient snap-ah-ah -- a round, flat sound, a shivering, cold-morning sound, a sound infuriating and inescapable. Not till the rising voice of the motor told him that the Ford was moving was he released from the panting tension. He glanced at his favorite tree, and fumbled for sleep as for a drug. He who had been a boy very credulous of life was no longer greatly interested in the possible and improbable adventures of each new day.

"He escaped from reality till the alarm clock rang, at seven-twenty." ----- Babbitt, Sinclair Lewis

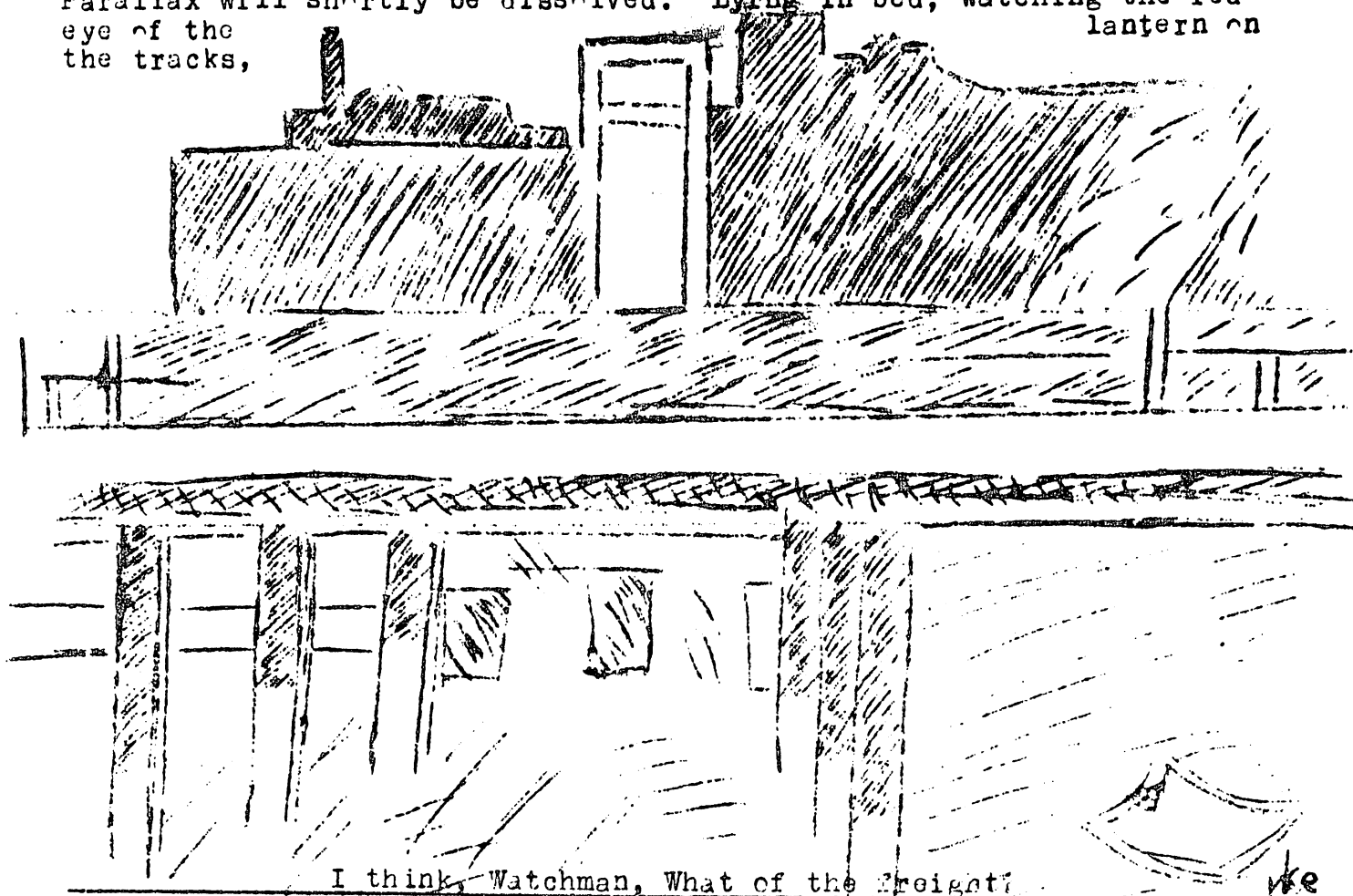
(PARALLAX - Cont.)

Guests from the outlands and out-of-state have been found lying under tables, crouching in corners, and howling beneath the windows -- Russ Wilsey, Williamchick Wilimczyk, (probably), Jane and Russell Chauvenet, John Hollis Mason, Art Saha, various friends, sailors, and red-headed cousins, including Max Knocklein, Judy's father-in-law, the Charlie Colcords, that chic sheik Shaw's chic chick, Rosemary, and also, of course, the Wellheims. Or have I said that?

There have been excursions to art galleries, Coney Island, the pier up on Gansevoort St. (very romantic), South Orange, the Chambers St. ferry, Brooklyn (in this case a hamlet in Pennsylvania), the Dragon Inn, and the Jumble Shop; all places dear to every/some New Yorkers and/or Futurians.

Gaiety has been, to coin a phrase, more than somewhat; and there have also been torrid sweltering dripping days and nights when summer in New York seemed a veritable hell; and the cockroaches, especially of late, have moved in and taken over the area; and the railroad trains directly across from our windows have contributed to the headaches induced by the compressed air drills; but the insomnia and the dirt and the noise and the bugs have always given way to gaiety again. It's been, all in all, a good summer, and the curious construction which I have tried to sketch below, the seeming guillotine behind the railroad tracks across the street, is a sad-grotesque symbol of the end of this incredible summer.

The apparent displacement is about to become real, and Parallax will shortly be dissolved. Lying in bed, watching the red eye of the lantern on the tracks,



Temper! was very good indeed in spots, Judy. Tempe was not nearly as good as its blurb, mostly because I disagree so violently with many of the things you say. For instance, I would NOT have undertaken the translation of the Pound article, even though it was written twenty years ago, unless I believed that in his discussion of Flaubert and Joyce he had something a good deal more interesting to say than the kind of material which fills newspapers. That kind of writing is dead the next day; literature, and literary comment, are not so short-lived. I think you would do well to re-examine the grounds on which you assess the material you read - or dismiss as not "up-to-date" enough to read, Judy. Temporization should have supplied the guidebook. I'm still wandering in the mazes. Tempter? The incorruptible Wollheim and the even more incorruptible Michel seem to have left you walking down those "evil paths" along with the rest of us ordinary mortals - taking a good hefty swing at our budgets as they did so. Tough. Temperament is hardly what I would consider a psychological study; one brief glimpse is afforded of the essential heartlessness of childhood, but that's about as far as it goes: only moderately well written. Temerity, I should say, erected a glass cage, rather than a glass house. Tempora makes up for all the failings, major and minor, in the rest of the issue. "... And the Pursuit of Happiness" is one of the best things I have ever read in this or any other mailing, and you are to be most heartily congratulated, Judy. In spite of my numerous criticisms, an excellent publication, and as always, it shows the most marked and most amazing advance over the previous issue.

As for the Supplement - query: how many replies did you get on Hear Ye!! Hear Ye!!? I'm very curious. I expect that no one with an ounce of true apa blood in his veins cooperated. . . Also, Science*Fiction had better be good, baby. After all these months of suspense. . . I personally expect something terrific.

discrete . . . I thought it was a pretty good issue.

Stefantasy is a source of particular joy to me. Danner has become in a very brief period one of the most dependable contributors to Vanguard; his material is consistently neat and almost always interesting. The advertisements are always funny. Keep it up, Bill; you're doing gooder and gooder.

Renascence

looks good, is good. Hot: An Inquest I found very interesting, but - of course - I differ strongly. This is not to say that I agree with Laney's article, which I carry this issue. I disagree with both of them. And (how Lowndes is going to chastise me for an unspecific comment!) if I get ambition enough I will organize my disagreements into an article. I have not the space to attempt to throw my refutation in here. Beautifully written, as always. Recordia gets better and better, as Lowndes departs from the usual music colyum terminology, and lets his own highly distinctive judgments see print in his own more and more distinctive style. The Workshop cover page is very attractive and effective, and the Workshop section itself has a number of things well-suited to the intent of this publication - which, since it aims much higher than anything else in Vanguard, must be judged by much stricter standards. The Prologue to Masks is as meaningful and tellingly put as Masks I is not. Masks I is not wholly bad, but it seems to me to have major weaknesses: it is wordy, contrived in at least one spot (the "rocket-ships" comparison) and only occasionally effective - as in "tightly-meshed coordinates of day." The short piece by Lyons made good reading. More good fiction, if it can be procured, and a slightly less strong accent on poetry and music would strengthen Renascence; material on the drama and the dance is also certainly in order. Shaft I found unconvincing as I do almost all of Pohl's work . . . good enough but - again I must use the word - contrived. Sostman's The Everlasting Exiles, on the other hand, was a real poem.

Vanguard Amateur

more than fulfilled its function. Lowndes does this sort of thing so well, that I hereby declare that I think he should go on doing it for another year. Now that the back-breaking labor of the organizational year is past, what could be more fitting? O good and faithful manager, well-done! Do it some more.

And that does it for this issue. . .
V. K. Bmden, 787 Washington St.