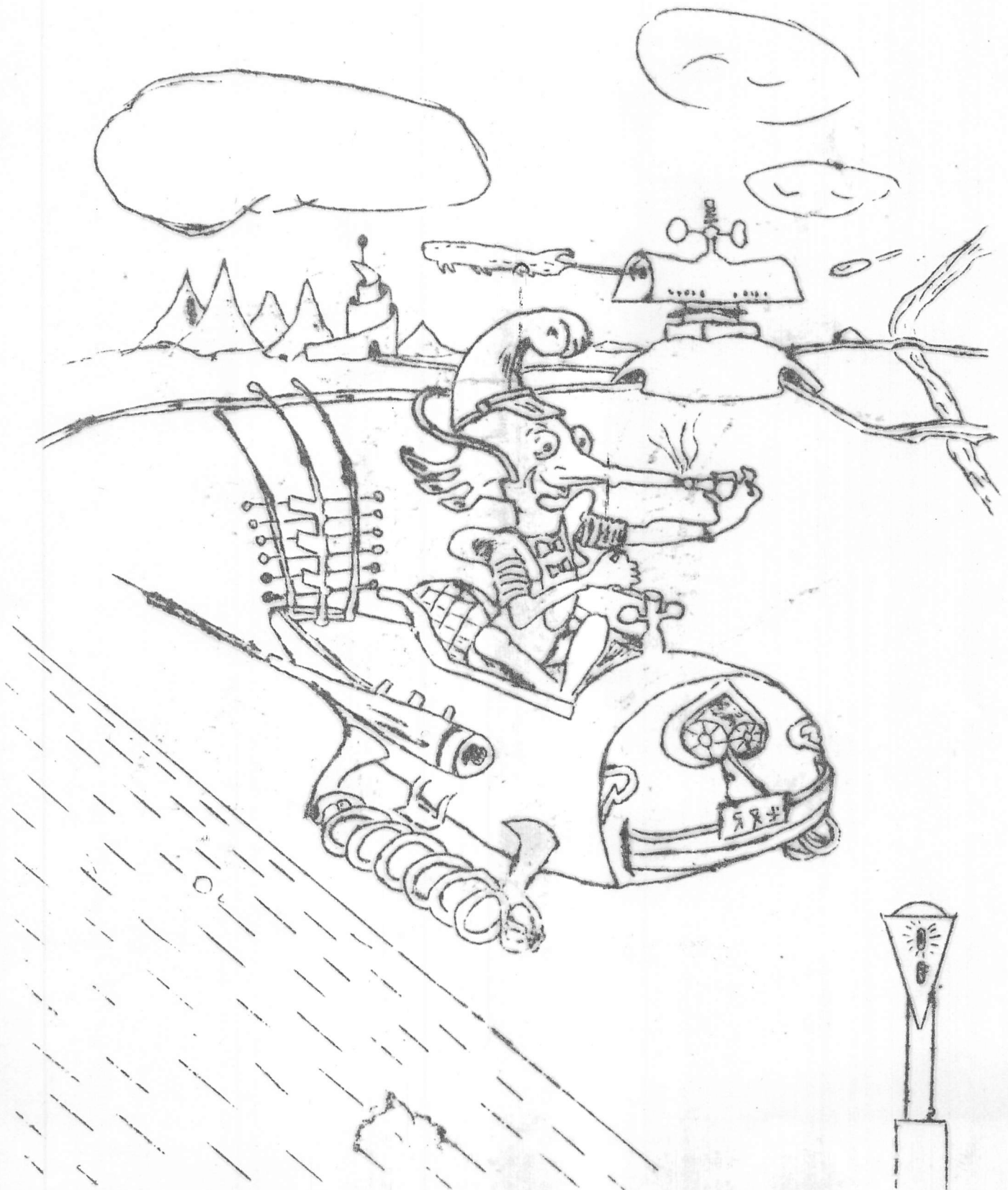


THE GROTESQUE

MARCH '46



PRESENTING THE MAG THAT AIN'T A ONE - SHOT

THE GROTESQUE

5¢

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- March, '46 -

"The Grotesque" is published quarterly at 1870 East 33 St., Brooklyn 10, New York; Editor and Publisher: Ron Christensen. Will consider trade of "Groggy" with other fmz, or back issues of them. Sub please?

WEARY CAN'T

The second issue of "Groggy" is here, whether those who forecast its early doom like it or not. I've tried to do just as was suggested by you dear, dear readers (all five of you), and I've done most of what I promised in the "We Recant" department of issue #1.

The whole issue is of one color paper, with only pink covers to break the monotony. I've written only one piece of fiction myself; the departments I started will be taken up by some other fans, I hope. As is usually the case, all sporadic or one-time contributors will get a free copy of the issue their work appears in. Those who take a department and contribute to it fairly regularly will get a life-time subscription.

I bought a stylus, but after experimenting decided a writing plate is not necessary for good effects. This editorial is written after completion of the issue.

I let good artists do the artwork. In fact, I had one of the best professional artists do our cover. That is, we copied his work from a Casco Lighter ad which appeared in magazines throughout the US. The artist, incidentally, is Boris Artzybasheff.

If I have any cash left after buying paper, etc., I'll invest in a shading plate. That is a tangible promise, though.

"Why Does a Chicken?", by Larry Shaw, frowns on outmoded and over-used fan customs. Since I sympathize with Larry entirely in the Wollheim suit, I recommend it highly.....

"That Lemurian Cabal", by Milt Lesser, is another blast at RAP, in a different direction, though, than has been followed by most of fandom. The artwork is by one of the fellows who does sketches for Milt's fanzine, "Cepheid". Milt typed the stencil for us....thanx, Happy G. "The Lair of the Darkling Mold" is also by Milt.

"Fmz Impressions" is our fanzine review, which we hope somebody'll captain next issue, and the same goes for "All's Well and Fuzzy", which is just patter, patter, patter.....

And send in your letters of comment to "Roaring Trumpet".....

Yerz,
Chris



WHY DOES A CHICKEN?

by LARRY SHAW



The other evening Damon Knight and I were walking across a large open field through the falling snow. Without warning, Damon stooped, and with his finger printed the words "Yngvi is a louse!" in big block letters on the virgin whiteness. He arose and gave his handiwork a brief, admiring glance; and we walked onward. There was some small talk between us about Yngvis and fandom and lice, but we soon dropped the subject. But it occurs to me now.....

There are fads in the world of fandom, just as there are in the great big world around us. A lot of these fads are genuinely amusing. Saying "Yngvi is a louse!" was amusing for a while, until some fans carried it too far, and other fans were annoyed and said so, and the thing was gradually forgotten. Some of the fan-fads assume larger proportions than others; from some of the large fads spring smaller ones. It was funny, for quite some time, to say loudly, "I have a Cosmic Mind!"

But Yngvi isn't funny any more, and Cosmic Minds aren't funny any more -- except, of course, in the left-handed retrospective way that people like Damon Knight and I are sometimes partial to. And in the light of these, and numberless other fan-fads that have vanished as Damon's lettering in the snow has already vanished, it would seem to be an item for some fanzine's "Believe It Or Rot" column that fans still talk about Ghu.

For Ghu, so help me, isn't funny any more. The only way a trace of humor can be detected in it is to remember the connection of Ghu with Donald Wollheim -- and that is more tragic than funny, anyway. On top of that, most fans don't know what the true connection of Ghu with Wollheim is. Or that some other fan might just as well have been the one to call himself Ghu; it happened purely by chance to be Wollheim, and since it was Wollheim, the gag persisted a lot longer than it should have, as all of Wollheim's gags do. But the fans don't even have the same personal interest in the thing Wollheim has.

The Futurians, even before they dropped Wollheim, were pretty well bored with Ghu. And while I'm fairly sure there are two of the three original and only copies of the Gholy Ghibble somewhere around Futuria, you'd have to call in the bloodhounds to discover that fact, these days.

But the fans go right on grinning at Ghu, laughing at Ghu, giggling at Ghu, snickering about Ghu, howling with glee about Ghu -- and doing anything else they can think of to show their lack of sense on the subject. And Ghu, I repeat, isn't funny any more. The original mythology having disappeared, every individual fan has his own ideas of who Ghu is; well, one or two of these ideas might possibly be funny, but any that are could undoubtedly be applied to a man named Jones as it could to a something named Ghu.

-----WHY DOES A CHICKEN? (continued from page 2)-----

A joke is a joke, but an original joke is certainly better than one that has been kicked around, buffeted about, flung to the winds, jumped up and down on, and been torn to shreds and scattered in every conceivable direction as much as the Ghu-fad has.

Jack Speer once said that he could remember any odd fact, idea, or bit of information until he wrote it down somewhere, at which point he forgot it completely. So, let's all go write "Ghu" in the snow, and try hard to be like Speer. How about it?

--THE END--

((It seems an explanation is needed for the naming of our news-zine. "Ergerzerp" as such. Here it is.....the poem came first.))

THE ERGERZERP

Little Ergerzerper, with your coat so blue,
Stop that squawking, or I'll hit you with this shoe.
Many are the times I've heard you screech your song;
Now all I hope is that I won't hear it long.

Little Ergerzerper, sitting on my fence:
Your silly little twitterings; they don't make any sense.
Twitter, twitter, twatter, twit.....
Can't you stop a little bit?
I haven't slept the whole night through
'Cause of your stupid "Twitter tweeo."

Little Ergerzerp: a warning now.....
Go somewhere else or.....Pow!

Do not emit another squawk or
You'll be sprawled upon the walk.

What? You dare to stay upon the wall???

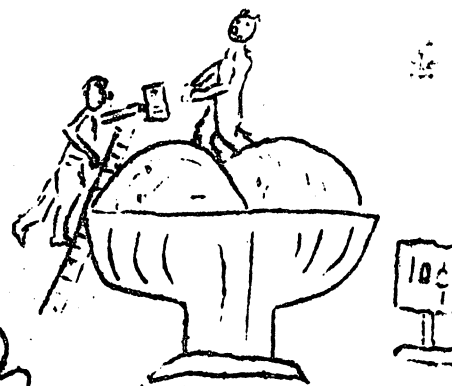
Zing! Pop! Little Ergerzerp: that is all...

--THE END--

RECRUITS NEEDED FOR

Fandom's new fan-finding bureau. Larry Shaw and Ron Christensen find themselves too shy or bashful ... or something ... to approach any of the prospective fans in NY's second hand bookshops. In one night of about 20 minutes, 3 hunched figures laboriously peeped thru the stf-racks. Petrified, the two stood, unable to say a word, even when one customer asked for several Merritt's and FFMs. Anybody????

L.S. 46



With all due apologies to the perspiring Ray Palmer and the fact that he had a pro-Shaver opus in a recent CEPHEID, we will herein attempt to discuss the demerits of the affair, heaping plaudits on, and banging certain parties and banging ((haven't we said that before?)) rather strenuously upon their touted craniums with this rather lusty verbal barrage.

You might be interested to know that Palmer is not the first editor that "Sharp" has barged in upon with a hearty attempt to revolutionize the all ready revolutionary field of science-fiction. John W. Campbell, Jr., of the very overrated cream of sf's crap, was the first to gaze, rather cynically, we imagine, at Shaver's two-type caves, dero, gnomes, giants and quaint Mantong. He looked and pondered a bit, no doubt, and then handed the whole affair back to its creator with a literary shrug. Shaver's next step, and the right one for him, as things turned out, was to bring the language, the novels and the theories and dump them upon the lap of Bill Stoy's "man with the polka-dot shorts on the double-scoop of strawberry icecream. Palmer was fascinated by the lucrative possibilities that the various aspects that Shaverdom possessed. He was so utterly fascinated that he convinced himself, and part of fandom too (at which point we take no sides) ((we too!)) its daring, straight from the shoulder truth. Palmer progressed. Shaver progressed. Amazing Stories progressed to the tune of forty thousand new subs. And a good-deal of the semi-fon were taken in lock-stock and barrel by the ridiculous affair.

Now, the point is this. With so many of fantasy's pot loves stepping boldly out of the pages of the bizarre and pretentiously into the lime-light, where the public could gaze, a bit incredulously, perhaps, at the monstrosities of man's ingenuity, Palmer comes along and inserts that Shaver stuff into our microcosm. Thus, when the world was looking seriously at the things we had retold, and at a time when they were almost ready to accept at least a portion of it, Palmer threw his bomb in all our faces, making the public more scornful than ever before, and putting s-f once more on the shelf with ghosts and vamps and spooks.

And thus I am forced to look sadly, and angrily upon our dear RAP, for whom I once did - and perhaps again can cultivate - a soft spot in my heart.

FMZ IMPRESSIONS

((GROTESQUE'S OWN FANZINE REVIEW))

I'm starting this department in hopes that I shall be able to hand the reins of authorship to some other worthy at some future date. Until then, here's a challenge to all fanzine editors throughout the country..... or world: I dare you to send me your fmz to be reviewed or as a trade! If you won't part with your nickles, or with new copies of your mag, how about some back issues we haven't got?

1945-46 FANTASY REVIEW

from JOE KENNEDY
84 Baker Ave.,
Dover, New Jersey.

Joe must have felt awfully ambitious to have started this 48 page project, with no apparent outside help. The REVIEW is divided into seven distinct sections, plus an introduction. The major events of 1945 are in the form of a monthly diary, but a bit of favoritism, or maybe just a slip, is evident here. There were many publications which sprang into being in '45, but THE SCIENTIFICITIONIST, by H. Elsner, was the only one that received a place in the review of that year. Tsk, JK. But, nevertheless, the format is quite neat, and the blue covers and gray pages harmonize very effectively. At the end of each section is the results of the VAMPIRE Poll in relation to the various topics. I often wonder why Joe never bought lettering - guides, though. 25¢.

WITHOUT GLEE

from RAJ REHM & JOE MORO
2837 San Jose Ave.,
Alameda, California.

Raj and Joe actually do compare to Rick Snoary, but maybe that worthy one has been tutoring our friends? #1 of their magazine contains beautiful artwork hekto-graphy. None of the original color or its shoen seems to have been lost in the sticky process of duplication, but the printed matter is only average hekto work; and average hekto work is a bit weak. Two representations of Sargo Saturn per issue does seem to be a rather large representation, but it can be overlooked. 5¢

RAPID THOUGHTS..... FANEWS has been absent from fan mailings for nearly 2 months now; CEIPHEID #2 (Milt Lossor) will be out about March; WITHOUT GLEE #2 already in throes of publishing; ERGERZERP may disappear from publication after #26; GALAXY (R.J. Gaulin) doubtful; #2 of AMEN (Gaulin) out with report of second meeting; VAMPIRE #5 (Kennedy) out in late January or early February; #3 of COUNT WAGULA stamped, addressed and unmailed since November; PHOENIX (Splawn) changed to STAR ROVER with red mimeography on one side; Gerry de la Roc quits FAPA because of disgust for same; NYFA publications (New York Fantasy Association) list reduced: CEIPHEID, GROTESQUE, ERGERZERP, and Shag's pubs.



LAND OF THE DARKLING MOULD

by MILT LESSER

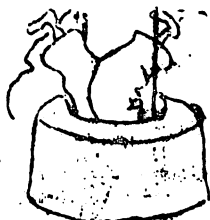
When the night was a-bright with the moon-glow
And the world was asleep with the cold,
I arose and knew I must soon go
To the lair of the darkling mould.

The flesh is so white and so gloaming
And the blood so warm and so red
And you stir ... and think you are dreaming
And you cry and get up out of bed.

Then you see that face before you
And you reach out with a murmur or two.
But: "Leave me alone, I implore you!"
And you know she is not for you.

Then you turn on your heel to leave her
Sobbing and quite forlorn;
And you know that though you deceive her
You'll be back in your bed by the morn.

Those footsteps behind you could she?
Closer and closer they float!
Oh, Lord in Heaven would she?
Then you feel strong teeth in your throat!



ALL'S WELL AND FUZZY



Yeah, all's well and fuzzy here, and everywhere. Things are continuously fuzzy, and right now that seems to be the situation here, in this column. Maybe I'll keep it, or maybe I'll add it to some poor unfortunate who likes to get his "Groggys" the hard way.

This space differs from our labeled editorial in that anything, except this magazine will be discussed. Sayvey?

* * *

First amusing point is the matter of radar reaching the moon.... Do you know it seems to have had an even greater effect on fans than the Atomic bomb? I think the reason for this is that fans, regardless of what type of tale they like (or say they like) best, have always kept an eye, and the corner of the other, toward the planets, and outer space. It's just about the earliest theme, and by far the most popular, in fantasy circles. And all these fans now have:

1. A discovery that not only promises space travel, as the atomic bomb, but which also actually went out in space and
2. Disproved the popular notion, which had been bothering fans for quite some time, that radio waves could not go past the Heaviside-Kennelly Layer, and that space communication was impossible.

Again we must consider the "Outsiders": the non-stefnites who adorn this earth for no plausible reason, according to Degler. They say:

1. We're Supermen: the Germans will be afraid to attack us.
2. A lot of people are going to go insane upon pondering the news and, in fact, it's worse than Orson Welles' "War of the Worlds" dramatization; not awed particularly at fans this time, though.

The possible uses the government has suggested are radio controlled spaceships, mapping of the surfaces of the planets, weather forecasting and future communication with other planets or spaceships.

* * *

The Mollé Mystery Theatre, on the CBS network Fridays (at 10 PM on the East coast), presented A. Merritt's fantastic novel, "Burn, Witch, Burn" on January 25th. Personally, I think, considering the time limit of half-an-hour, the group did a good dramatization of a pretty bad tale. "Burn, Witch, Burn" is the story of a doll-woman who possessed a super-means of hypnosis, and used it in witchery.

The witch is killed finally by our story-teller, the hero, who blanks his mind by thinking of and concentrating on a foreign phrase.

* * *

Doctor Christian (CBS) filled his half-hour with a 4th dimension tale, which was already reported in Ergerzerp # 19.

U

ROARING

TRUMPET



((IN WHICH CCLYUM, THE READER BLOWS HIS OWN HORN))

JOE KENNEDY sends in a tempting.....er.....

"Groggy is the answer to the prayers of fans, who for years have been longing for something original and different. Groggy is it. Groggy is like a breath of spring on a morning in December -- it is a spark of brilliance in the darkness of the fathomless night. It is a fiery torch sweeping across the despairing minions of the fan world. It is a pinnacle of excellence, a criterion of perfect taste, and a model for refreshing originality.

"Groggy will reform the world of fanzines, bringing fresh enlightenment into the morass of worthless, peurile fan maunderings. But the coming of Groggy will change all this. One look at the superb quality -- the dazzlingly hyper granifranuciousness that is Groggy -- and all other faneds will junk their mimeograph machines and retire to a life of solitude, to ponder their sins, to reflect that if they had possessed the genius of a Christensen, then their publications, too, would have been one-tenth as good as Groggy.

"But Groggy is a magazine matchless in perfection of form -- it is the literary triumph unique! Groggy is the dawn of a new era of journalism. Shakespeare, Milton, Chaucer, Aristotle, Freud -- puny adolescents, whose futile strivings to turn out decent literature have been paled into insignificance by the arrival of Groggy. Groggy will be taught in kindergartens, and staid universities. Groggy's every scintillating, coruscatingly lucid syllable of grammar will be immortalized in literature for aons to come. Each infinitesimal word published in Groggy will be carved into the face of mighty mountain peaks -- to insure the fact that future generations will not be deprived of the gorgeous, utter magnificence that is Groggy.

"Unfortunately, my copy hasn't arrived yet, so I haven't read the damn thing....."

joke

((Joe! Wo, too, have readers under 3. No. cussing no more nohow, nowheres))

CHARLES BURBEE says mournfully

"Groggy finally arrived Friday. It seems everybody had read the thing before I got my copy---I got a copy of Stofnows and Groggy was reviewed in there...before I'd even gotten the mag myself! The contents weren't too good or bad. I almost concun with Speer's remarks on the mag. ((Speer said Groggy stunk pleasantly, roadors)) I hope the mimeography improves next issue. All in all, a fairly entertaining eleven pages."

Burb

ROARING TRUMPET

While GERRY DE LA REE madly taps out

"Groggy struck me as having a good future ahead of it, providing you don't lean too heavily on that supposed humor. You made your first error when you wrote an editorial before the issue was completed. Always do your edit last. Cover wasn't great, but was neat, which is what really counts. Articles by Kennedy were the best items in the issue. A few departments would be nice if you could dig up some intelligent fen to do them. Steer clear of dribble like the "Spaceman's Song" and "Quest of Ga". Also might invest a quarter in a stylus to do your heads with. Also you had too great a variety of paper. Try sticking to one or two colors....."

P. SNEARY advises Serutan, and

"Well I got CHRISTALD a week ago, but just finding time to answer it. Been doing a doz. things lately. And seeing you name is not on the honered rolls of NFFF I guess Joke of the Jersey Jokes told U about me. Tell him thanks.

"You cover didn't deserve the title of "Grotesque". It wasn't bad for future art. In fact it was quite good. Could not make much out of the rocket ship though.

"The letter on page two was one of the best, but I couldn't make out the name.

"Hemmel's article was very good as always. Being a reader of his mother zine, the LASFS'er Shaggy Laugh, I was very pleased to see this old friend again. I have learned in the past that it takes a great deal of thought to penetrat the meaning of his masterfull articles. One has to learn to analyze each and every word of his, thus one gets a clearer meaning of the great plan he is driveing at. It is plane that the great man takes great pains to lower him self to the level of his readers mind. So that he my grasp it more readily, and understand it's hidden meanings. Only one that allready has a vast knowledge can hope to under stand it tho. So will some one Pleeese explain it to me. @?????

"Prof. Kennedy's article on the use and care of the wild North American typewriter was very good. Despit what he says, tho, one can get along quite nicely without using or learning any kind of t u o h system. I (vr, done it; snd look at no!;

"The Spacehands Song was very well put, and you left out themore -.... shale we say off eler verses. In using my Time machine I found that this was most popular on ship going between Earth and Pluto. On one trip a talented young fellow Sang for 10 hores with out stoping, and neavor repeated a verse. After this he was on able to sing for thee days. And when he did his voice had changed from a tenor to a base.

"It was really to bad about Ga in the QUEST OF GA. If he had only known where to go. I am sure you told it very well, it made me cry to see how silly we humans are compared to the great Sszxks. If you know any ether stories like this be sure to tell it.

"-???- was a very interesting little play. I tryed reading part 1, but for somerreason got off on the QUEST OF GA again. I tryed reading Act 1. 4 times, but your dimensional wapp keep getting me back to Ga. But anyway I enjoyed it very much...." ((Which is all for now!))

ORDER NOW!!!

All parasites will now face Brooklyn and rub
their rough, white tongues across the surface
of an envelope containing 5¢ or more....for
future issues of Groggy which they cannot af-
ford to miss. You will not receive any more
free issues unless you join the A-men or the
NYFA. And you'll be missing something.....
Fill out handy order blank below.

Name _____

Address _____ Amount enclosed

THANK