Ten years of publication are completed with this issue of Horizons. There was one skipped issue over that decade, which still bothers me and may appear yet to permit artistic symmetry and such things. Obviously, this is volume 10, number 4, whole number 39, FAPA number 33, VAPA number 13. Harry Warner, Jr., 303 Bryan Place, Hagerstown, Maryland, does the writing, and uses the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph for the mechanical work.

Emergency Flare

Don Wilson or Howard Miller has/have run out of energy and ambition, so once again my FAPA mailing comments are open to the first taker who will promise to get them into the next issue. In the meantime, you VAPA people will have to put up with them in Horizons.

The Fantasy Amateur: Can anyone else remember the days when Don Wollheim insisted that the FAPA would go to the dogs if the dues were raised to the outlandish sum of $1? '' I suggest that Dunkelberger didn't need eight pages of activity when this issue of the FA went to press. As for Stanley's case, may I suggest a motion to carry him on for another year on the strength of past momentum? He has a legitimate excuse for failure to publish in recent months, and one of the finest activity records in the FAPA for the five preceding years. I add my complaint about Glom. My copy did not arrive until May 20. It is wrong for Widner to get it in April, Warner in May, and Laney in June or not at all. It looks like aneffort to delay criticism by three months. '' Fran forgets he is responsible for the bad comparison of this bundle with last May. The spring, '48 mailing contained the first half of Ah, Sweet Idiocy. Ysatnaf: The last-page suggestions aren't wise. Most of theactive FAPA members--Rothman, Laney, Thompson, Speer, Burbee, and Warner, for instance--want a place to maintain friendships and chatter about anything without indulging in all-out fandom. Expanding the FAPA's function or scope would wreck this oasis. '' Hyper-Space Tube: Ordinarily, I'd shun the idea ofputting into FAPA office a guy who is starting another ayjay group. But Coswal has carried through the projects that actually were important and neglected only the ones that were impossible to begin with. I'll probably give him my vote as editor. '' Larry B. Farsaci might provide valuable information on early FAPA mailings. He kept each intact. This is the kind of remark that I ought to write on a postal. '' In general, an improved magazine, although there's still the impression that Walt can do ten times better than he does now. Morpheus: Is responsible for an article elsewhere in this Horizons. '' ATOTE: I dislike the attitude toward fiction in fanzines. No one excepts EEE to lose a chance for sales by publishing in fanzines first. But that does not mean that all his rejections should wind up in the FAPA. The ones that are too different for the prozines, yes. Those like this, no. It contains little ornothing that is new, and I don't like melodramatic endings even when they have a surprise twist. '' Different: It's good to have people think about the possibilities of the future, and science fiction is an excellent medium to start them to thinking. But claims that science fiction actually predicts the future lead to trouble. That which is most probable is not necessarily that which the writer will put into his tale,

simply because the improbable and the unlikely often make a better story. More important, if you convince enough people that science fiction is as prophetic as all that, you're going to have some sort of control or censorship from the government, sure as shooting. '' Phanteur: Jim Nelson is the best thing to come along since James Thurber. Why can't more artists who are unable to draw "realistically" capitalize on that very inability? Much of Nelson's work has been the very thing which he can do best--drawings in which great skill at photographic or naturalist effects would ruin everything. '' Change "think" to "like" in that fouledup sentence you question, Don, and all will be clear. '' Plenum: I think that both Milton Rothman and Redd Boggs badly need to look at a dictionary and find out what "infer" means before they go any further in that discussion. '' The Fairchild NEPA project at Oak Ridge, which hopes to use the atom to drive airplanes, isn't as hush hush as all that, Milty. I got enough information to sell a rather lengthy article about it to Associated Press Newsfeatures a few months back, and haven't landed in the Coplon-Hiss company yet. '' The remarks on Forteans are a couple of years late. I'll repeat what I've said before. I couldn't bear to be around Thayer's bunch, wouldn't want anyone to call me a Fortean, but I think that the fanatics have a definite value in a world where scientists, just like any other group of experts, tend to get dogmatic and fear anything that will upset their assumptions. '' Moonshine: "Out of the Silent Planet" is probably badly cut in the Avon edition. It's supposed to be quite a novel in a subtle sort of way, but the pocket editions have been abridging fast and furious since production costs went up. '' A Freudian wouldn't have much trouble figuring out that your dream put wells on a farm because your subconscious made a pun on the writer's name and rural areas are the places where wells are usually found. But I'll be blamed if I can find a sexual motivation for this dream! '' Contrary to Laney or someone, I think Moonshine has been improving over the years. A very slowprocess, but I now look forward to reading it, and I didn't five years ago. '' Fandango: Some of the Laney zing is missing in this issue, but the obvious effort to bring up new topics compensates. However, I think Fran has succeeded in doing such a good job on national defense and sailing ships that few of us will dare to criticize. One slight gripe: it would have been more practical for Laney to use the full names of the warship types, or at least a more recognizable abbreviation system, than for 64 of us to try to keep navy abbreviations in mind. The article on sailing ships has that undefinable magic touch that The New Yorker manages to use in articles when it comes time to list rather useless facts. '' A quibble on the poll article: Frank seems to imply that these popular amusements and pastimes are Good because most of the nation's people indulge in them. I can't see that fandom is any worse for a guy than regular nightclubbing or race track going, although I suspect that all such things are effects, not causes. '' Horizons: Chandler Davis wrote the letter about education. After I had done the mimeographing, another postal came telling me that he wanted credit for it. '' Dr. Keller says he can prove that my "solution" to Life Everlasting isn't valid. He also says that he had no intention of writing The Thing in the Cellar from the Freudian angle, but that it might have turned out

to be that way from the work of his own subconscious. '' Ego Beast: I still recommend semi-activity as the most desirable status for anyone interested in science fiction and fantasy. I've enjoyed myself more since entering that stage in 1943 than I did from 1938-39, when I just read the stories in the magazines, or from 1939-42, when I was furiously active with fanning. '' Catalyst: "Hope in the New Dark Ages" seems addressed to some vague public in general, rather than to fandom and the other folks among whom this magazine circulations. Few of us have hesitated to admit that we are timebinders, that we realize the world may be doomed by atomic war, and similar nasty thoughts. In any event, I do think that there has been progress since those early days that Bennett cites. The Incas built their aqueducts by brute force of human beings. We build similar things today by machines. If there is such a thing as progress, it's when you use mechanism instead of slavery. '' I enjoyed the poetry more than anything else in this issue. Something undefinable was lacking from the travelog, the story is so hopelessly obvious, and the Courzen article is soured by the impossible writing style. I'm completely serious when I say that Courzen could profit by studying the writings of Ray Higgs. Courzen has more to say than Higgs, it is true, but Courzen is a hopeless slave to the irresistable allurements of fascinating, polysyllabic verbosity. That is to say, he likes big words too much. Taking into consideration that this article is not complete in itself, I refuse to use up the energy during this hot summer that would be required to translate it into English. '' Sky Hook: These record innovations are quite simple, Redd, once you get away from all the fancy trade names and promises. Look at it in this manner: Records now revolve at three speeds, 33 1/3, 45, and 78 revolutions per minute. They come in three sizes, twelve, ten, and seven inches across. The ones that go slower are cut with many more grooves to the inch and require a special light-weight tone arm. That is all you need to know. All the major companies are still releasing the standard 78 rpm in twelve and ten inch sizes, and will for years to come, just as they're still making manual sequence sets even though automatic changers became standard a dozen years ago. Columbia's new method records go at 33 rpm and come in three sizes: seven inch, which play six to nine minutes, ten inch, which play 20 minutes or a little more, and twelve inch, which play up to 50 minutes, both sides. Victor's new method is confined to seven inch records at 45 rpm, each of which plays from six to ten minutes, both sides. Mercury, Vox, Polydor, Cetra, Concert Hall, and releases of several other firms are coming out in the Columbia method. Capitol promised to follow the new Victor system but hasn't yet. I recommend to everyone concerned the purchase of mechanism to play the 33 rpm records: it costs only around $10 for an adapter for your present phonograph, or about $30 for a complete record player that hooks into your radio sound system, and that investment pays for itself in savings over the years to come. It is possible that Victor will drop its 45 rpm things if they don't sell better than they're doing now. Fifteen years ago something similar happened, when a lot of people bought equipment to play a new type of Victor record, and were left holding the tone arm when the results weren't so good and the issuance of records was

stopped. Incidentally, you can buy a record player that handles all sizes and speeds, even possessing the ability to play both sides without turning the discs over. After a close look at one, I'm convinced that I'd lose a finger in the mechanism at least once a month. '' Some issues of Weird Tales have probably been riddled by anthologies almost as thoroughly as Astounding, but there have been more weird anthologies than the science fiction collections, of course. '' Forgot to say last time that I'll be glad to proofread for any semi-pro publisher. It's the sort of thing that I can do without difficulty in spare halfhours at the office, and I've had plenty of experience. '' There are a few other items in the mailing which require no comment, so I'll use a bit of space on the postmailings instead. Glom: The editorial changes in that story are the sort that you as agent and collaborator should have made, Forry. Big words in adventure fiction are proper only when short ones can't serve the purpose. There is no literary or logical reason why you should write "vocable" instead of "word" or "arboreals" instead of "trees" in pulp fiction. '' Three Eye: Aren't we well enough known to one another not to require published biographies, Henry? '' Green Thoughts: Interlude is good poetry. It moves, it has individuality, projects vivid images, and leaves a lasting impression. I ask for no more. The other two pieces of verse sound forced. '' Ambi: The essay is fine for its depth and obvious serious intention. But Stevenson fails in several respects. One is the absence of specific references: everything is stated in such general terms that it is impossible to know whether he is speaking of a general impression or specific happenings. Another fault is common to almost all of CBS' ayjay work: his continual apologizing for failure to write well enough or convincingly enough. This becomes a nuisance, not an explanation, after a time. In any event, I have more on this general topic elsewhere in Horizons; meanwhile, I must wonder why people expect fandom to measure up to some improbable height of perfection, yet jump on Degler when he insists that fandom is made up of starbegotten supermen.

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Department of Difficulty with Transportation

Western Civilization as we know it, with or without the atom bomb, is streaking down the greased slide on Timken bearings.... (It is) packed in the rumble seat, heroically twisting a disconnected steering wheel and staring prayerfully back up the incline.--Clifton Bennett, Catalyst, issue number two, page one.

Man in the 20th century is a dusty railroad traveller who has lost his way. Surrounded by expensive luggage, he stands on a weed-grown station platform uncertain what month the next train is due or what its destination will be. --Ibid, page two.

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Revelation of the Month

Astounding is destined to live foronly so long as it made money, a Street & Smith official declared.--Bloomington News Letter #10

The Menace of Stf. Fandom

From time to time during the years from 1943 through 1946, a precise, marionette-like little man in his seventies made periodic visits to Hagerstown. He was William Franklin Horn of Topeka, Kansas, and Waynesburg, Pa. Local history enthusiasts had struck up his acquaintance because he had been publishing excerpts from family papers, of interest to the Hagerstown area. Christopher Horn, back in the early part of the 18th century, had been a friend of Jonathan Hager, founder of this city, and had been on hand for that momentous occasion. Gradually, the conviction grew that Horn's documents were important enough and numerous enough to warrant publication in book form.

So Horn spoke here a number of times, drumming up enthusiasm and giving me some boring evenings. This county's historical society pledged itself to buy a lot of copies of the published papers, at .30 a set. After three or four years of careful preparations and checking for accuracy, the whole of the papers was published in three large volumes, complete with maps. Horn wasn't around much by the time publication date grew near. He had become ill, and the local history fans had lost some of their interest in the thing. Possibly this was because his talks invariably lasted at least three hours, never omitting the smallest detail of what Indian met which pioneer at what twist in the trail through the Alleghenies on that chilly September morning. All the public schools in this county and the library received copies of these books when they appeared, in elaborate presentation ceremonies. It was several months before they were quietly withdrawn from the shelves, and it was almost a year before the whole thing was revealed as a fake.

This mild little man, whose career had been spotless, who had been a carpenter all his life before retiring, liked by all except newspaper reporters who had to sit through his talks--this individual had spent his entire life creating this gigantic hoax. He must have had sparks of genius somewhere within him, because it took experts appointed by the Williamsburg Institute to discover and track down the frauds. Everything was perfectly logical on the surface of the manuscripts; but an anachronism here, a reference to a book which doesn't exist there, had given clues. The whole thing fell apart after months of study by these scholars. It achieved the distinction of occupying most of an issue of The William & Mary Quarterly, and the New York Herald Tribune devoted nearly a full page to the strange events in a Sunday edition. The research men had used spectrographs and chemical analysis to prove that certain "relics" were spurious. They learned that Horn had painstakingly traced geodetic surveys, charts and maps, obviously had studied dozens of histories to give the ring of truth to his own account, and had faked antiques. The librarian of Princeton University called the whole thing a fabrication unique in American documentary publications. Someone else whom the Herald Tribune quoted said it was a far bigger and better hoax than Thomas Chatterton's imitation of 15th century poetry.

No one knows why Horn did it.

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The Circus Fans of America conducted their annual national convention in Hagerstown this summer. They provided me with a

couple of strange evenings. Around these people, you mustn't say that you went to a circus or attended one; you must say that you caught the show. The members wear little lapel pins in the form of an elephant's head, carry limitless supplies of balloons to create the proper atmosphere wherever they go, and carry their hobby to unbelievable lengths. One greatly envied man is building up a complete collection of elephant tail hairs: one hair from the tail of each pachyderm active in the nation today. The local chapter through mysterious means unearthed data that listed every circus that had played in Hagerstown since the 1880's. Some of the Circus Fans concentrate on building miniature shows, modeling with wood, wire, metal, and other odds and ends. One fellow, cartoonist for a Chicago newspaper, follows circuses all over the country to paint scenes from them.

To make their convention here more entertaining, the Circus Fans arranged for a circus to open its season in Hagerstown and to spend a week beforehand rehearsing and practising in this city. I spent one night with the fans at the tent. The wind was blowing at 50 miles per hour, the tent was at halfmast for fear it would go up in the gale, and even the clowns were very nervous. The Circus Fans were in their seventh heaven. Some of them close to me were excitedly discussing the possibility of being caught under a collapsed tent, which I judged would be the climax of any circus enthusiast's career. The climax of the evening came when the group's president arrived. He had been a day late reaching town because of illness, so he had to travel in a wheelchair, and he propelled himself around that circus ground in fine fashion despite this handicap.

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Hagerstown's merchants include one character who makes himself known only as Nifty Thrifty. He has a name, but we didn't bother to publish it when I interviewed him because no one had used it for many years. He is a highly dignified gentleman in appearance, conducts himself in cultured, suave fashion, and he knows everyone in town. There can't possibly be another old clothes man in the nation like him. He has a small shop between the third-best hotel and the B & O station in which he sells second hand clothing and brand new goldfish. Some men find release in the arms of a woman, others immerse themselves in art or music, but Nifty Thrifty finds release by purchasing newspaper advertisements. He never advertises his nearnue clothing or goldfish; he always uses the space to let off his opinions on the bad direction in which the world is headed, the unfaithfulness of Hagerstown's husbands, or appreciation for the Christmas card which assured him that there was still fire inside even though snow was on the roof.

Nifty Thrifty's first 50 years, before he settled in Hagerstown, are cloaked in obscurity. He passes them over with the admission that he worked for other men. In this way, he contributed to the profit system, which was the wrong thing to do. Nifty Thrifty has not yet gotten to the point of figuring out what sort of an economy the nation should operate under, so he is operating his second-hand clothing store while he thinks it out; he insists that he sells clothing so cheaply that no one makes any money or loses anything in the process. Over the years, Nifty Thrifty has built up an elaborate philosophy of which he was very proud unti

I hinted gently that Emerson had said pretty much the same things. "I knew I should have gone to college, I knew it," he said sadly.

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If space permitted, I could write at length about the gentleman from a shady section of town who announced five years ago through the newspapers that he had seen the error of his bootlegging ways and planned to engage in a different type of undertaking. He promptly organized a Sunday school, followed it up with church services for adults, in an old shack that he called the People's Tabernacle. He appealed to the dead-end kids and their parents with an endless succession of evangelists, revivalists, and other special attractions. A battered old bus appeared from somewhere and was pressed into use to drive through thestreets of town, picking up kids for the Sunday school. A few men with money gave their help. The thing has grown quite rapidly; this summer the Rev. Mr. Billman has branched out with tent meetings in the southern part of the county and a radio program over another town's station. He seems more enthusiastic than ever about the situation, and up to now there has been no hint of scandal about church funds.

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But why go on? "Fantasy-fannism appears to be almost unique, though, in the force and vitality of its social ties and the remarkable variety of identifications, rationalizations, and confusions in abstracting that result." Stevenson speaking, and I would like to wonder whether he ever went to a baseball game, attended a meeting at a church, or sat in with a group of labor leaders at work, not to mention encounter a stamp collector, or have a friend who is bugs about photography.

Laney takes the different approach, to the effect that fantasy fandom is the place where the nation's eccentric people let loose with their egos. I don't think that the proportion of eccentrics is higher in fandom than it is anywhere else. More important, Fran has never acknowledged the really basic thing: that that desire for egoboo exists in every individual, and every individual satisfies it, even if it involves self-sacrifice so he can enjoy a martyr complex. The old women find their egoboo in sewing circles and missionary societies, the high school students play football or enter the school band, the men become active in fraternities, service clubs, labor groups, and lodges; failing all else, the individuals spend their time at the neighborhood bar, expounding their pet theories on the world at large, assured of at least a few listeners. You can't criticize the desire for making a noise and a show; it's fundamental in humanity, tied in with the will to survival, a basic principle in every psychology and religion.

The problem isn't to suppress it; what we want to do is to acknowledge it, and mm then try to channel it to means of expression that will be either "good" or at the worst harmless to the individual and the other individuals around him. I don't recommend that anyone should become an Ackerman, but I think that Ackerman, being what he is, is happy and harmless, and that he'd be unhappy if there were no such thing as fandom. Most of the rest of us have a casual attitude toward fandom, and I am still waiting for one concrete statement and example wherein a real authority in the fields of psychology or psychiatry points out a bad effect from fandom on any specific person.

Words and Music

Certain remarks in the FAPA and VAPA convince me that many members don't realize that there are good books about music. It is a very sad thing that the Deems Taylor, Sigmund Spaeth, and similar books should get all the publicity and achieve the big sales; but the books that are worth reading do exist. Here are recommendations for whoever wants to do some investigating:

The best long history of music that I know is Lang's "Music in Western Civilization," and the finest short one is Sachs' "Our Musical Heritage." (The author is not the one who sings the monologues in Meistersinger.) Unfortunately, these represent extremes of length and there is need for a good one in between.

For analysis of musical compositions, I'll stick to Tovey, particularly his Essays in Musical Analysis. The Victor Book of the Symphony is not so hot; The Victor Book of Concertos is a bit better, and valuable for its hundreds of musical quotations.

I have yet to see a book about opera that is really satisfactory. Ernest Newman's two popular volumes are too elementary, and the big Brockway and Weinstock book unfortunately forgets to say anything about music. The Victor Book of the Opera is useless, and the new volume attributed to Milton Cross is worthwhile only for finding out the dramatic situations of the more popular works. It isn't even possible to recommend the Crown Publishers' cheap edition of librettos, since they're riddled with misprints, abridgments, and horrible translations. Purchase of opera scores themselves is the only solution until someone writes a good book.

None of the elementary volumes on building a record library contains much that any intelligent person doesn't already know by instinct. Of the three "comprehensive" books, David Hall's is best, Kolodin's isn't bad, and Haggin's is to be shunned like the plague. All proceed on the false assumption that it is possible to "review" a record or an album in a single paragraph. You'll be wisest if you buy the Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia, which lists everything and puts duplicated recordings in order of merits in a manner which is usually trustworthy.

Essays: Gerald Abraham's name on a book, either as author or editor, is a guarantee of excellence. The volumes he compiled for W.W. Norton on the music of Schubert and Tschaikovsky are tops. So is On Russian Music, a sequel to another book which I haven't been able to obtain. Cecil Gray's Survey of Contemporary Music is the best one-volume summation of today's situation that I know. It is highly opinionized, and the bitter, merciless attack on the music of Stravinsky is wonderful reading during the current hysteria over that composer. Tovey's articles for the Encyclopedia Britannica are easily accessible and very fine reading; many of them deserve the rank of full essays.

I see no reason for reading a full-length biography of a composer unless it's brought up to that length because of the space devoted to discussion of the music. Robert Haven Schauffler's volumes on Brahms, Beethoven, and Schumann have their points, but are hardly scholarly from the musical standpoint. Weinstock's new biography of Chopin is unreadable unless you're an all-out admirer of the composer. Oscar Thompson on Debussy is good.

Special mention should be made of Lotte Lehmann's More Than Singing, a book which is unique for its efforts to tell how a great artist tries to achieve and communicate her effects.

The Devil's Own Time

Once in a while, something comes along that is peculiarly fit as an article topic in Horizons that should satisfy both the FAPA and the VAPA. Thomas Mann's latest novel, Doctor Faustus, is wonderful from this standpoint. Members of the FAPA are presumably aware that this book contains a long conversation with the Devil, giving it the right to be classified as fantasy and the honor of reposing on the shelves in the Ackerman garage. VAPA readers are aware through other reviews and discussions of the book, I presume, that this appearance of the Devil is quite obviously an allegory, a convenient way of stating the problem, and as a result anyone can read the book without risking the taint of being a fan.

Those who have endured Horizons for several years know that the Faust legend has always been one of my favorites. I have done a couple of articles on the subject, without succeeding in my efforts to get anyone to read Goethe's work. However, after going through Thomas Mann's Doctor Faustus, I am not certain whether he was consciously trying to retell the old story. This is a matter which none of the book reviewers have questioned, to my knowledge, but a pretty important one.

Let's look at the Mann book in comparison with the earlier efforts. All Faust material can be divided into two parts: the poetic drama that Goethe wrote, and all the rest. "All the rest" includes the crude first accounts of the semi-legendary Faust, the puppet plays that probably started Goethe to rewriting the tale, Christopher Marlowe's drama, and such recent things as musical works based on the legend and certain science fiction stories. The majority of the Faust material aside from Goethe achieves its effects through thrills, shocks, terror, and such methods. There is always the compact with the devil, who may be either horrible or funny, followed by a series of fantastic adventures for Faust concluded by his death and departure for subterranean regions. In Goethe, the framework of the compact and the adventures are sublimated into a philosophy: the restless, questing spirit of Faust inadvertently becomes the subject of an argument between Mephistopheles and God; God wins in the end, after a series of happenings in which Faust's essential goodness and greatness become more and more manifest, even though none of the adventures turns out completely happily; in the end, Faust is redeemed because he has striven.

Now, certain phases of all this can be found in Thomas Mann's novel, in a modern and unusual setting. Adrian Leverkühn is the Faust in the form of a composer who symbolizes the sacrifices of the artist. Like many another Faust, he toys with theology as a youth and gives it up in boredom or disgust. The encounter with the devil, the only part of the book that is not told by Leverkühn's Boswell, is described by the composer himself, quite obviously to tell the reader that at this point the composer decided to give up what every genius must give up, less obviously to inform the reader that Leverkühn recognizes his disease and refuses to take action against that disease. In the end, Leverkühn dies, after a period of insanity.

There are obviously a number of things missing from the Mann novel that are inevitable in all the other Fausts. Most apparent of the lacks is the absence of events in Leverkühn's life after

his encounter with the devil. Exciting happenings from this point onward were the reason for being of the puppet shows, they served to frighten the reader into being a good Christian in the oldest prose narratives, and they were essential to the expounding of the Pelagian philosophy in Goethe's work. To Leverkühn, however, almost nothing happens between his compact and the terrible moment at which he collapses. He gains a certain amount of fame as a composer, in a very quiet way, once he tries to propose to a woman in a grotesquely impossible fashion, and a few of his friends encounter violence. Otherwise, he lives a quiet, monotonous life of his own choosing, such as few composers or artists of any kind ever lived.

Mann's method of telling the story through the eyes of a devoted friend quite naturally precludes any account of what happens after Leverkühn dies. As for the familiar trappings of the Faust legend, many of them are present, but in such distorted form that Mann might have inserted them by accident. The abrupt appearance and prompt death of the enchanting little Nepomuk near the end of the book is a pretty obvious parallel to the Euphorion episode in Goethe. To be sure, there is a dog throughout the story of Leverkühn and the devil usually appears in the form of a poodle in the old legends; but Mann uses this dog in a quite different manner, as one of a dozen leitmotifs that run through the book and operate in a manner strongly suggesting extended musical works.

(I had better point out, before going any further, something that none of the book reviews have mentioned: the title of Mann's book does not necessarily imply an all-out retelling of the Faust story. "Doctor Faustus" is the title of Leverkühn's last composition, one that plays a highly important part in the story.)

But if you look at Mann's novel as an allegory of the composer in general, or the modern composer, you meet almost as many complications. It is perfectly obvious that some of the things which Leverkühn says and does resemble those that have been said and done by real composers. Syphilis has run through the lives of a large number of composers' lives. There are shades of Chopin and Tschaikovsky in the hints of homosexuality. Some bright critics have pointed out that the twelve-tone system of composition which Leverkühn adopts is not original with Mann, and these individuals were answered by Brahms a century ago when people detected something familiar in the final movement of his first symphony. With all respect to the wounded feelings of Arnold Schönberg and to the enthusiastic researchby various reviewers, I'd venture to say that no one could write a fictional biography of a composer without recalling a lot of actual happenings in the lives of existent and historical composers. It's simply a case of too many famous composers having done so many things that there's little to be done done for the first time.

I don't pretend to know exactly what Mann was driving at. I strongly suspect that for one thing he was determined to create a foil for The Magic Mountain, in the form of another novel centered around the problem of disease. The Magic Mountain concerned itself with a disease that confined and limited, drawing together a crowd of people into a parable of humanity. Doctor Faustus concerns itself with another disease, one that inspires and liberates in a creative manner, and allows one man to serve as a prototype of humanity.

The title page says that this book is "The Life of the German Composer, Adrian Leverkühn, As Told by a Friend." It might be significant that there is no adjective before "Composer" except the one determining nationality. Musicians who have reviewed the book would fight like fury over the artistic merits of any actual modern composer, but one and all, they have assumed that Leverkühn was a great composer. I don't think that there is much or anything to justify this assumption. The story is told by a hopelessly mediocre little man, who is hopelessly prejudiced about many things and could quite possibly be wrong about his friend's place in musical history. Apparently only a small fraction of the musical world actually acclaims Leverkühn, who seems to be famous in the fashion of a Berg, not of a Stravinsky.

As for the value of the book itself, I'd say that it has one immense advantage over Mann's other novels as a translation. It is told by a pedantic person, Serenus Zeitblom, and the stilted effects of H. T. Lowe-Porter's translating do not seem unnatural for this narrator. I have read one essay and one short story in Mann's original German; from them I'd estimate that all his English translations fall far short of the mark, missing completely the geniality and humanity that is inherent in the original tongue.

"I wish to state quite definitely that it is by no means out of any wish to bring my own personality into the foreground that I preface with a few words about myself and my own affairs this report on the life of the departed Adrian Leverkühn." That is the sort of English that you can find through the Joseph stories; it is simply bad translating in the case of the earlier works, but it is peculiarly expressive of the nature of the man who tells the story of the composer.

Probably this book is going to attain the status of the famous works of Byron and Milton, which everyone talks about but no one reads. Three or four persons of my acquaintance bought Doctor Faustus as soon as it was published, and consider themselves in a heroic manner, but they have shied away from the thought of actually finding out what is in Thomas Mann's book. I can boast of having read it, a feat which took me less than two weeks, representing a pace slightly faster than my average for such difficult matter. I had no temptation to skip or to skim, either.

But all the way through, I was wondering: does this appeal to me because it is a great book, or because it deals with something in which I am very much interested, music? At the end, I am tempted to decide that I read the narrative to encounter the observations on music that Mann puts into the mouth of this or that character on every other page. There are enough of these observations to fill a fairly large book independent from the novel, and I think that such a book would have a very fine sale; there is a crying need for musical essays that are not technical but at the same time are not deliberately aimed at the lowest common denominator of listeners and readers, like those of Deems Taylor.

Oddly enough, most of Mann's ideas and enthusiasms are very similar to my own. This is a big help, because it is nerve wracking to read a book about music which you recognize instantly to be a superb piece of writing, but whose statements are diametrically opposed to your own musical philosophy and creeds, as in the case of Virgil Thomson's The Musical Scene. With great self-restraint, I refer from wholesale quotations; I'll limit myself to one para-

graph from Leverkühn's quoted conversations, on a topic which I had intended to write in Horizons. (One of my paragraphs, that is; I'll have to fit it together from several pages of the book.)

"You underestimate my musical education. In my early days I had a teacher crammed full of the whole world of sound; a bubbling enthusiast, too much in love with every, I really mean every, organized noise, for me to have learned any contempt from him. There was no such thingas being 'too good' for any sort of music. A man who knewthe best, the highest and austerest; but for him music was music--if it just was music. He objected to Goethe's saying that art is concerned with the good and difficult; he held that 'light' music is difficult too, if it is good, which it can be, just as well as 'heavy' music. Some of that stuck by me, I got it from him. Of course I have always grapsed the idea that one must be very well anchored in the good and 'heavy' to take up with the light." Then, when someone plays a recording of "My Heart at Thy Sweet Voice," Leverkühn, undismayed by a translator's slip that puts it into the impossible key of D sharp major, says: "My teacher, he was an organist, afugue-man, you must know, had a peculiarly passionate feeling for the piece, a real faible. He could laugh at it too, but that did not lessen his admiration, which may have concerned only the consummateness of the thing in its own genre. You understand now how a serious man can be capable of adoring the thing. Intellectual beauty it has not, of course, it is typically sensual. But after all one must not blush for the sensual, nor be afraid of it. I would only like to break a lance for a certain breadth of view in matters of artistic morality. One grants it, or allows it, it seems to me, more readily in other arts than in music. That may be very honourable but it does seriously narrow its field. What becomes of the whole jingle-jangle if you apply the most rigorously intellectual standards? A few 'pure spectra' of Bach. Perhaps nothing else audible would survive at all."

Well, my guess is that that hurt the Schönberg adherents worse than the matters they complained about. I agree with it wholeheartedly, and can supplylists of phonograph records to anyone who wants to take theplunge away from the B Minor Mass and Choral Symphony into the forbidding waters of Auber overtures and Poulenc songs. Even if you don't like that particular idea, I think that you'll find much of interest and much that will enlighten in the volume, if you have any interest in serious music.

As for the rest of the novel, I'd call it an extremely distinguished and dignified failure. No one is alive in the novel, except the narrator. Leverkühn's character is enveloped in that same baffling, impenetrable veil of mystery that overwhelms you when you read a biography of Beethoven or Wagner: the obvious impossibility that such stupid events could have had any bearing on the composers' lives, the conviction that the things that mattered are not to be found in print at all. The detailed descriptions of Leverkühn's compositions have received high praise from the critics, as marvels of inventiveness on Mann's part, but I find them no better than the sort of thing you find in symphony orchestra program notes for real compositions. But there are noble pages about the last sonatas of Beethoven, the long scene in which Leverkühn loses his senses is as terrifying as anything in modern literature, and I strongly recommend everyone to try to read it.