Autumn, 1955, and this is the first line of volume 17, number 1, of Horizons. This issue is whole number 64 and FAPA number 58. Harry Warner, Jr., 303 Bryan Place, Hagerstown, Maryland, writes it, and the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph does the real work of publishing. Merry Christmas to everybody!

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: I voted against the proposed amendment to the FAPA constitution for several reasons. It is surprising that four brainstrusters like Silverberg, Eney, Martinez and Grennell offered in such poor form a proposal which is basically sound. In the first place, the requirement for a new member to fill activity requirements by the third mailing belongs in the third section of the constitution, not the fourth as proposed here. Secondly, the form in which it comes up for vote makes it appear to be proposed as a substitute for something in the constitution; presumably it was meant as an addition to the existing document, in which case it should have been labeled as as addition, or presented in conjunction with the remainder of the section which is to be retained. Thirdly, this proposed amendment is not sufficiently specific. It does not state whether the new member is to receive a fourth mailing, if he fails to participate sufficiently by the third mailing. If we assume that he isn't allowed to get a third mailing, the amendment fails to say if he's entitled to a refund on part of his dues; if we assume that he gets the fourth mailing in any event, the amendment becomes almost pointless. If a new member's first activity requirements must be met in his first three mailings, will his next activity requirements be calculated on the basis of the fourth to seventh mailings which he receives, or the fourth to eighth mailings, or the fifth to eighth mailings? The Chattahoochee: The Greeks not only painted their statues, they also sang, danced, and accompanied with musical instruments their plays. The texts which we're supposed to admire as the ancient Greek drama are little more than opera libretti. Mambo: There are two glaring inconsistencies in Norm Browne's suggested inactive division for FAPA membership. The first consists of the fact that the person who is too busy to meet the activity requirements isn't going to have time to read the mailings. It takes longer to read even the cream of the annual 1,500 pages than it does to write an eight-page article or publish an eight-page magazine. The other defective reasoning involves the "keeping up with fandom" notion. The inactive member wouldn't get as good a notion of fan events for his five bucks as he would by spending that money on the leading subzines. Incidentally, the Vanguard Amateur Press Association had an inactive membership status for a while, and where is that organization today? '' I'm glad to see several members rushing to the defence of "comments on comments". Such a procedure is the lifeblood of any intelligent conversation, and forms the bulk of the contents for the best literary magazines. These comments may seem a bit grotesque in the FAPA because of the time lapses. But think what fine training this represents, for conversations via radio with spaceships nearing the solar system. '' Incidentally, do you know that American Indians are not permitted to join the Red Men lodge? '' I don't understand how you could justify margins on a typer with spacing that varies according to letter size. Light: That must have been a fake flying saucer that Bob Gibson describes. The real ones always move, usually rapidly and eccentric in path. His phenomenon could have

been a refraction of the image of the sun, since it appeared in the west soon after dawn, which faded as soon as a freak atmospheric condition ended. Target: FAPA: Hagerstown's traffic lights don't act as if electrical impulses went 23,000 miles per second. If you stand at a spot which permits you to see them for two or three blocks in a line, you can see a perceptible delay in the change of the more distant signals. Normandie Notes: You mean that the whole house in which Howard Hughes lived cost only $75,000? I'm disillusioned at the scale of life in California. '' The law of averages causes different newspapers to have different headlines for the same story, helped by a few other factors. Two men won't think of the same combination of words, any more than two FAPA members won't comment identically on a fanzine. Other factors: varying typefaces permit one paper to get more characters into a given space than another. One paper may not give the story the same sort of head as the other, since this editor may want to give it a streamer, then a one-column head and the other editor may prefer no streamer but a four-column head. If it's a local story, the reporters may have emphasized different things in the first paragraph, and it's customary to build the head from the first paragraph. Newspaper policy may have something to do with it: the New York Daily News uses colloquialisms in heads that the Times wouldn't consider. Finally, the editors do phone one another in the major cities that still have competing newspapers, to make sure they haven't identical streamers. '' I was doing a pictorial feature on the county farm queen, and she kept murmuring, "Tell me when I'm supposed to take off my clothing." Turned out that she was referring to a change from a dress to blue jeans, however. Ego Beast: It's not quite right to vote . against the membership increase proposal because it might increase postage bills. The increased costs of putting out each mailing may result from demanding more activities from new members, or simply from a general perking up in FAPA publishing, so postage is a problem that must be faced anyway. We can always assess publishers, as the constitution suggests, or increase dues once again. '' For puzzled people, I might explain that the Ephless El to whom Don refers in this issue is Elmer Perdue, who used for a time a typer without an f. Null-F: One slight transcribing error on the back cover might puzzle a few people. Albaugh was the name on the third-from-left elephant, not Al Paugh. '' I wonder, am I the only FAPA member living the primitive mimeo life? Mine doesn't have automatic feed, it has no electric drive, there is no provision for mechanical slipsheeting, and the inkwell has been broken since I obtained the machine. I keep trying to tell myself that everycne will be forced to use such mimeographs after civilization breaks down, so it's good practice. FAPA Snooze: It's a mistake to put out a fanzine containing only one item, when that item isn't top-notch. This listing of switches in foreign policy would be much less irritating, if part of some large publication. Anyway, you can't solve the troubles described by ascribing them all to expediency; they range all the way from the result of a cold, calculated risk (Korea, 1950) through sheer hysteria (Spain, 1898). How come you don't mention the Spanish aboutfaces of the past 20 years? Phlotsam: Maybe you can figure out the proper term for my evening meal. It consists of two sandwiches, around 6 p.m. It isn't elaborate enough for supper, I consider my major meal of the day my dinner, and it's hardly brunch or breakfast. One local dime store, incidentally, stops serving lunch at 4 p.m. but offers breakfast until closing time, 5 p.m. '' Please don't

mention "The Letter Edged in Black". It caused very embarrassing moments for me, in my extreme youth. I was fascinated by its plot and charmed by a word from its very beginning, "yestermorning". I went around using "yestermorning" in conversation at every opportunity, until the queer looks in my direction woke me up to the fact that it isn't as popular as "yesterday". '' The problem of writing about the "common man" is as old as literature. I think it can be resolved very simply into the dull writing about the common man, which doesn't grasp the interesting things about him, and the good writing about the common man, which ignores his dull aspects. James Farrell and Thomas Wolfe wrote hundreds of thousands of words about lower middle class families which must have been quite similar in real life; but Farrell becomes a bore after one or two novels, because he doesn't get inside the people as Wolfe did, and contents himself with recording the conversations, physical actions, and a few fundamental emotions. '' Striving earnestly to live up to GMCarr's mental projection of me as a sophisticated intellectually inclined youth, I spent most of my vacation reading Thorstein Veblen's "Theory of the Leisure Class" and I am pleased to report that you are on the right track: cats are better than dogs, in that a dog is a complete example of Veblen's "conspicuous consumption" while a cat has a limited usefulness to mankind. Eleventh Hour: FAPA records aren't so abstruse that there's much danger of the procedural rut you fear, if one man holds the sec-treas post year after year. Speaking from experience, I can assure you that the post is difficult only until the holder gets used to it, after which it becomes a mere matter of mechanical detail, requiring perhaps one hour weekly. But the term of office is nearly expired, before the officer's well familiarized with his duties, under the present setup, creating a real hardship on sec-treases. '' Without checking back, I believe that it's been at least five years since we had no waiting list. You must realize that an increased membership would be quite likely to promote a continued waiting list, because the bigger the organization, the bigger the mailings are apt to become, creating a correspondingly greater demand for admission. Gods, Graves & Tv Sets: If humanity succeeds in blowing all its members to smithereens, and at some future date e-ts arrive to explore the depopulated earth, they're liable to get a fouled-up notion of human anatomy, by mistaking tv antennas as phallic symbols. Willis Discovers America: Not quite the very finest of Willis humor, no matter what the author thinks. But it is so close to that apex that it makes no difference. The only real fault is the effort to reproduce Pogo-type dialogue, which sounds more like Amos 'n' Andy. '' There's no footnote for "Unendurable pleasure indefinitely prolonged". Surely you don't believe that the younger fans know by instinct that this was Mowkowitz' most famous remark? Heathen: You can purchase a jar of substance entitled "No Sir" (absence of the comma is the manufacturer's mistake, not mine) that might be easier than air rifles when your dog gets into one of those conditions. It's a deodorant for that special purchase, and costs a buck from Miles Kimball, Oshkosh, Wis. It's supposed to work on any domestic animal. Sudden thought: miscegenation probably wouldn't even be in the language, if human-type females attracted males as efficiently as female quadrupeds in season. Did you ever see a male dog stop to study the breed of a female dog, at such times? '' If you have access to those filters, and Bill Danner is willing to mess with colored inks, I can supply the three Fairchild engravings per picture that would permit full-color cuts in Stefantasy. Normandie Notes #2:

Most little boys and many little girls learn the do-it-yourself aspects of sex without the need of kits. They keep on doing it, even though parents may advise them that that will cause them to go crazy. Lark: I know very few instances in which a man's religion had any effect on his business practices. Mostly, honesty or deceit in business practices comes from the individual's conviction that he'll make more money in the long run by such morals or lack thereof. '' Censorship does create a greater demand for the censored thing in a few spectacular instances. But a Catholic can't read all of the things that are downthumbed by his ecclesiastical authorities, simply because the list is too long. That creates the economic pressure on most publishers that I described. For every "Forever Amber" there must be a thousand really intelligent books which didn't sell well because their tone afflicted this or that religious denomination. Besides, the mere power to control tastes in this fashion can be really disastrous, if one religious group should eventually gain temporal power in this country. The nation of Brazil has forbidden the screening of the recent movie about Martin Luther, because the nation is predominantly Catholic. '' My apologies; that was the Hagerstown Paint & Glass Company, not the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. Despite this goof, my subconscious could have worked as I described. '' I give my 35 mm color film to the commercial labs to process, too. But I've been doing it myself for 4x5 color film, because of the substantial savings possible. Most firms charge 50¢ per sheet for the processing; for three bucks' worth of chemicals, I can run through two dozen sheets or even more. '' The laminated surfaces Columbia used during the last years of 78's are giving me trouble. Tiny cracks are growing, year by year, on some of my records. These cracks don't affect the audible sound, and aren't caused by pressure because the discs are in albums, stored with care. I assume that this lamination is dehydrating and trying to curl away from the base. Kiddie Korner: Sir, SAPS stole the dramatic rescue tradition from the FAPA's old days. The FAPA just hasn't had any defaulting officers for a long time. Grue: Fanvariety and Opus proved that format isn't essential for a successful publication. Max' bubbling enthusiasm would have won fans over if he'd used one of those postcard mimeos. '' It may not be cricket to comment on my own writings, but I might explain that I can sympathize with Ackie's middle-name troubles. I don't know my own middle name. My parents have always assumed it to be Backer. But a while back, when national security depended on my possessing a birth certificate, I obtained a copy of the original, and discovered that my middle name is Packard. I've used B. as my middle initial in signing documents all my life, and I'd be quite pleased if Juffus wanted to give me free legal advice on what to do. '' We'll probably never know for sure why pulp magazines declined. But part of the trouble probably originated within the field. The market must have been limited in potential customers to begin with; when the greedy New York publishers began those enormous chains of pulps, the purchasing potential automatically split up among so many magazines that they all sold poorly. This automatically entailed such extra difficulties as the fact that newsstands weren't big enough to display them, one editor was expected to produce a dozen titles, and very poor fiction was needed to fill up the vast acreage of empty pages. Quite possibly the pulps will make a comeback, if all this is so, now that the field has been cut down to size. '' There is nothing fabulous about the fugue in H minor in the title of

one gnurrsery rhyme. German composers write lots of fugues and sonatas and symphonies and such things in H minor. In Germany, H represents the note in the scale that is called B in English; the key of B in Germany is our B flat. This is what made possible the fugues which pay tribute to Bach, by using the letters of his name as the first four notes of the theme. '' I can't conceive of objecting to any parody or satire, no matter how much I admire the thing that is travestied, as long as the new version isn't disgustingly obscene. If a great piece of writing can't stand to be kidded, or to be utilized as a method for kidding something else, it's probably not a great piece of writing. I imagine that Lincoln would be annoyed by the fame that that Gettysburg talk holds today, when his talks with a meatier content are ignored; once you manage to get away from the Gettysburg Address and view it from a distance, you see that it merely dresses up the oldest platitudes into slight disguises. Terragon: A couple of slight corrections on spelling in the reprint: the pseudonym was Solitaire, and the political viewpoint was called Michelism. I'll bet that there are going to be some disillusioned people, if any fans hunt up copies of the Collector after reading this panegyric. Fiendetta: Nobody expects plastic-backed tapes to fall apart as the years pass, and they should last longer than those made cheaply of paper stock. The deterioration which I've been mentioning has to do with such things as gradual loss of signal strength, leakage of the magnetic impulse to the adjacent layer of tape, inclination to stretch irregularly when in use and during rewind, and increased tendency to break frequently. These things are affected greatly by the temperature and humidity at which the tape is stored, and those two factors can't be controlled in the average home. '' There's nothing remarkable about the balance of factions that you describe in Savannah. It's the result of a political principle whose formal title I can't recall; you can find a whole article about it in the paperback collection of reprints from Harpers Magazine. '' Pantagraphs aren't expensive, unless the situation has changed radically since I was a small boy. I used to own a toy pantagraph that worked perfectly. '' I'm glad to see another person who favors an ejection clause in the constitution. But I feel that it should require more than a majority; at least a 3/4 vote, maybe even more. '' Where did Lee Hoffman's lizard get that bellybutton? '' Odd, how frequently Walt Liebscher continues to be quoted in fanzines, down through the years; he bobs up time after time in this mailing. Horizons: There won't be room this time for the mailing reviews that got crowded out last time. Let's just pretend that I praised everything in that mailing, eh? Stefantasy: I don't think that A. J. Franck is being completely fair in some of his examples of progress in reverse. The genuine example of progress in reverse is caused by sheer stupidity, like the trend to long autos. It is true that trolleys and telegrams used to go more promptly and faster, but that was largely due to the fact that their workers got starvation wages; I'm sure that we'd have competition again in the telegraph industry, if you could hire messenger boys for five dollars per week. '' A Washington preacher must be reading Danner publications. Here's a quotation from a recent sermon by the Rev. Dr. A. Powell Davies of the All Souls Unitarian Church: "Try God, folks. Works for you while you sleep. Works for you all the time. Cures your worries instantly! Nothing for you to do and so inexpensive! Remember the name, folks! God! Go to your corner church today, folks, and get God! G-O-D, easy

to pronounce, easy to remember, easy for you in every way. Try God! This program is brought by Self-Interest and Vulgarity, Incorporated, with branches allover America. Remember, folks, try God!" I hasten to point out that Dr. Davies was attacking the alleged "religious revival" symbolized by preachers like Norman Vincent Peale and Billy Graham. He calls the present situation "not spiritual regeneration but mass hypnotism." Birdsmith: Hollywood shouldn't be expected to depict a convincing reform as the climax of a movie about a drunk, because there's nothing in real life that will rescue an alcoholic as one of Lee's cavalry charges will help along justice in a picture about he-men. So, why can't the movies be realistic about the problem and climax such movies with the alcoholic sinking deeper than ever into drink? To give the devil its due, television seems a bit more honest on occasion. I saw a half-hour program dramatizing the final section of Waugh's "A Handful of Dust" which retained the chilling conclusion of the novel. '' Redd is getting mystic when he cites Huck Finn as "one of the nobility of the American West" unless he's trying to say that skillful writing can ennoble even the littlest person. Huck couldn't enter parlors that Tom Sawyer frequented, even though he was welcomed in a few homes where Jim couldn't go. The reference to Shakespeare isn't exactly fair. It implies that he wrote about important people out of choice. He didn't; the aristocrats that made the Elizabethan theater possible wouldn't take an interest in dramas about the little guy. '' I hope that the survival instinct will prevent all-out war. But if you assume that the race has the same survival urge as the individual, you must also grant that a race may decide on suicide, as the individual occasionally does. Diaspar: That famous "To be or not to be" soliloquy is probably a later interpolation in the play by some hack. Shakespeare would hardly have Hamlet wonder whether there's survival after death, such a short time after chatting with his father's ghost. The bad metaphor could be explained by assuming that "sea" was a misprint. "Assail" instead of "a sea" would make sense and would be a logical error. The Oklacorn!: Four pages of this would have been enough. Moonshine: What's causing Avon's Will to bob up so often in this mailing? You can't judge him by his movies; all of them have been insufferably pretentious in staging, acting, and tediously drawled lines. Sample the RCA Victor set of A Midsummer Night's Dream, to hear how it should sound. '' Your point on the value of habit in issuing FAPA publications is a good one. Once the routine is established, it's easier to publish than not to publish. Wraith: A nearby hospital has been bringing legal action against people who promised money during a funds drive and didn't keep the promise. Churches will probably adopt such tactics any Sunday now. Esdacyos: There's a strange eating place just west of Hagerstown. It's the only independent, non-chain restaurant that's advertised coast-to-coast; Skip Knepper spent a month driving over the country, sticking up signs announcing that it's 2,465 miles or 976 miles to his restaurant. Unfortunately, the postal inspectors won't let me describe the unique things about the establishment itself. Demeter: "Da Capo" meant simply that Mozart might not be Mozart, if things had been easy for him. Is there any thought that hasn't already been expressed by a story? '' If levitation exists, it may be restricted to darkened rooms for the same general reasons that cause most persons to prefer a dark place to sleep or a dim church to pray: it is easier to concentrate the mind on certain tasks when there's no distraction from bright lights. Emblem & Card: Gad, even I

can't remember this far back! Blood, Sweat & Bheers: So now it comes out: Don Wegars would also rather watch a baseball game than put out a one-shot. We're gaining strength, men. Keebird: If that first page wasn't intended to be a parody of Faulkner, then Eney is really Faulkner. It has suddenly occurred to me that uniform time over the world might be more desirable than calendar reform. It would be so nice, to know that it's 2 p.m. simultaneously all over the world, eliminating the mess caused by the International Dateline and watch resetting when you travel. If South America can get used to summertime in December, China should be able to put up with sunrise at 8 p.m. Zip: This is one of the most enjoyable general-purpose publications I've seen in the FAPA in a long while. I hope that Ted realizes by now that the amount of comment caused by any given FAPA publication is governed by the controversy it arouses, not be its excellence, if this issue fails to receive lengthy paragraphs of commendation. The work that must have gone into that front cover represents more than several FAPA members have done for the organization in two or three years. Charles Wells has covered color mimeography with Teutonic thoroughness; I've never tackled it, but I strongly suspect that it would be cheaper in the long run to buy a couple of second-hand mimeos for multi-color work. Constant inkpad changes and cleaning operations would cost just as much before long, in wasted ink and inkpads and hours of labor. Fafhrd: How come Richardson assumes the Martian settlement won't contain women? I can see no reason for an all-male colony. Women wouldn't weigh as much in takeoff, an important consideration, they live longer, and there's some reason to believe they can stand temperature extremes better. If the settlement on Mars is to be permanent, it obviously would grow faster containing lots of women and as few as one healthy male. If psychological factors are feared, an all-female colony would be a good starter, using artificial insemination to propagate. '' You shouldn't need to think so hard to figure out the sexual symbolism of flying saucers. '' Don Wilson's article is revealing, in that he found so few pieces of real literary criticism of Lovecraft. A smattering has been done by Laney and Leiber; the other commentators tookthe lazy way out, and simply wrote about HPL's personal characteristics. As a result, I fear that the future will have a distorted biographical picture of the man. He was a queer duck, no doubt about that. But no queerer than the eccentric you'll find in every city block. There's nothing so remarkable about an aversion to seafood or a delight in walks after dark or recognizing that Dore was a great artist. It's not fair to his memory, to keep harping on his odd traits, and fail to emphasize that he had no enemies, met the challenges of life, and never harmed man nor beast. Gemzine: The retort to my article on religion would be convincing, if I hadn't used up the first page in emphasizing that I wasn't attacking organized religion, only the abuses thereof. '' You underestimate Rotsler. He really did distribute the article, telling how a white slaver rejected his wife. '' I agree that Romeo and Juliet would today be considered juvenile delinquents. Society would cluck its tongue, burn more comic books, and use them to illustrate what happens when young people don't go to Sunday school. Fortunately, Shakespeare took a more intelligent attitude to the problem of the young lovers, and demonstrated in his play that the stupidity of their families caused the tragedy, not the wrongdoing of Romeo & Juliet. '' The vast publicity to recent Siamese births probably results from efforts to keep them alive and separate them by modern medical techniques.

How Long?

It has suddenly become unfashionable to write science fiction stories and newspaper articles about an atomic war which will create the collapse of civilization. While we're waiting for another reversal of U.S.-Soviet relations, we might amuse ourselves by considering another angle to the fall of civilization. So far, I haven't seen any detailed guesses on the length of time in which civilization will fall apart. It certainly won't happen overnight. I can supply a few educational facts about the probabilities, and I'm willing to make some guesses about the length of time required for the decay of other phases of civilization. Maybe some authoritative reports on the outlook for other facets of civilization will come from FAPA members who are specialists in those fields.

Maryland's newspaper editors have set up a committee which is designed to keep newspapers publishing in the event of an atomic conflict or some equally serious catastrophe. I think that they are wasting their time. The complete disappearance of newspapers should be one of the very first manifestations of the decline of normalcy. Hardly anything that is made today is as dependent on delicate technology combined with shipped-in products. A few sunspots can ruin teletype reception; a worthless packing shed that caught fire a while back knocked out teletype service in Western Maryland completely for 12 hours because it damaged some telephone lines. A newspaper publisher can't send around the corner for a roll of newsprint or a repair part for a linotype; they must be shipped hundreds of miles. I'd estimate that two or three days after the atomic conflict, we won't have anything but skeleton, four-sheet newspapers, containing just as much news as could be picked up by radio and by word-of-mouth, and that even these will stop as soon as newsprint or ink runs out. It's hard to imagine trucks racing from one state to another with newspaper supplies, when people will be growing hungry.

Fiction about a future in which the atom has reduced us to primitive conditions usually mentions the weed-choked roads. It is possible to get some idea of the life-expectancy of highways, simply by looking at stretches of road which have been abandoned. We have quite a few such ghost highways in Washington County, no longer in use because a relocation has been constructed to eliminate a dangerous curve. It looks to me as if a road definitely starts to fall apart after five years of neglect, that after ten years it would be very difficult to use it, and that another five or ten years after that will produce the situation which the stories describe. The decay of the roads would probably be speeded a little, if we assume a busted-up civilization which still had some motor vehicles, but nobody to keep the roads in good repair. On the other hand, most of the abandoned sections around here have been antiquated, narrow strips of highway to begin with, and a really modern highway might have a better life expectancy.

I'm assuming for this postwar primitivism a quick conflict in which there wasn't time to requisition the possessions of private individuals, and I'm ignoring the possible effects of bomb destruction and looting. So, how about motor vehicles? With normal use and care, it's possible to get ten years of use from an auto; by being very conscientious about maintenance, an auto would last twice that long; and even older cars can be kept in running order by a person who is skilled with motors and such internal organisms. Even if we cut two-thirds from each of those spans, because

the stockpile of repair parts will dwindle fast, it still seems quite probable that lack of fuel, not broken-down mechanisms, will be the cause for the auto's disappearance from highways. It is quite impossible for any individual or small group to refine gasoline. So I don't think you need to worry about the danger of a half-dozen autos being cannibalized for parts to keep one vehicle going; there just isn't going to be anything to propel them after a few months.

Railroads are more complicated mechanisms. I suspect that a railroad which continues to have some steam-powered locomotives would be the method of transportation which would last the longest in a collapsing civilization. Mining coal to provide power for locomotives requires muscles and time but little technological knowledge, and there's plenty of knowhow on the proper maintenance of steam locomotives among the older generation of railroaders. The diesels would probably be idled as rapidly as motor vehicles, for fuel lacks. If we leave out of consideration the danger of bomb damage to tracks, it would probably be a decade before the workings of time would do enough damage to rails to prevent locomotives from operating. Railroad ties are so embedded that they would be the last place our primitive descendants will turn to obtain firewood; rails would be useless as salvage material if there were no means of melting them down to create something else. Even after the lack of proper attention caused rails to spring and stopped trains from running, I think that railroad rights-of-way might serve for a century or more as footpaths. It would be harder for vegetation to block the path of a railroad than a highway.

I'll need some help from the audience on clothing prospects, because I know absolutely nothing about mills and their machinery, or the difficulties of producing cloth in the home with primitive tools. It would seem logical that at least a decade would pass before we'd have worn out all the clothing that we owned and all the reserve stocks in stores and warehouses. After all, children's and workmen's shoes are the only articles of apparel that are ever worn out, in today's civilization. All other articles of dress are discarded before they're worn out, because they've become too shiny or have lost their shine or have become tooeccentric in appearance because of changing fashions or have become too similar to the garments that everyone is wearing, or have been outgrown, orneed darning in places that will be obvious.

I believe that the return to the cave and the forest leanto occurs much too soon after the collapse of civilization, in most fiction about an atomic future. The fate of the Blue Mountain House which I described in Horizons about two years ago seems to agree with the gloomy predictions of rapidly collapsing structures. But that was a frame building to begin with, and was badly damaged by fire before it was abandoned, with a result that in thirty years, it has become difficult to see where the foundation once stood. It should be a different story for buildings which are built principally of steel, stone, or brick. Windows, of course, will be the first thing to go, and won't be replaceable after existing stocks of glass are used up. But if you're willing to occupy a building without glass in the windows, and there are no destructive gangs roaming the country, I believe you could count on fifty years to a century of comfortable existence in any well-built modern structure, before deterioration became too bad. You'd probably be forced to abandon the top story after a decade or two, because of a leaking roof, and you'd hardly be able to

keep the furnace going, unless you could adapt a coal-burning furnace tothe use of wood. But a house without glass in the windows and unheated would still have numerous advantages over the Thoreau-model shack or the cave.

Food is naturally the biggest factor in survival. My suspicions tell me that this country would be almost certain to turn into a nation of people with vegetarian diet, in the barbarian future. In the past, nations which have suffered disaster from war or flood or soil erosion have continued to raise cattle and pigs and other meat-producing animals. But the missing factor today is the scarcity of people with the farm experience; for the first time in the history of civilization, we have in this country a situation in which a tiny minority of the population produce almost all of its meat. Any city dweller can quickly learn to raise vegetables in the backyard, if food supplies become dubious. But it takes a lot of time, strength, and knowhow to keep meat animals alive. Even the matter of queasyness might enter the situation. Remember Damon Knight's little story about the end of humanity, because the last woman alive wouldn't enter a men's room to save the life of the last male? I suspect that a very great proportion of Americans who may be faced with the need for providing their own food might do without meat, rather than go through the messy process of slaughtering livestock. If looting and hoarding could be minimized when the breakdown occurred, I don't believe that too many people would starve. Food stocks are pretty well scattered over the nation at any given time, and there's always an enormous surplus of seeds on hand in the stores every year; diets would be restricted to a few easily-grown, big-producing crops after the first year, however.

We must probably resign ourselves to doing without electric power, within a year or two after the collapse of civilization. At least, that's the time interval that normally occurs between the occasions when major repairs or renovations are needed at the two power stations in the Hagerstown area. People who should know have told me that few if any of the major electric power sources could be started again, after breaking down completely, because they can't generate enough power to start themselves unless they are already in full operation, or can borrow the juice required from a neighboring plant. The latter method would seem more practical! Each summertime thunderstorm in this part of Maryland knocks out the power supply to as many as a thousand homes; without crews of servicemen on the job, it's quite possible that this sort of damage would make the power stations useless even before the equipment deteriorated too far.

There's a pretty good clue to the life expectancy of telephone service after atomgeddon in the big phone strikes that were occurring regularly, a few years back. If memory serves, the telephone company said at the time that dial service could be expected to function pretty well automatically for about a month, then would begin to break down in sections over a period of several months, if maintenance men stayed off the job. I think that the moral should be: throw away your phone book or that little black book with telephone numbers, a year after civilization collapses. However, there are still lots of old-fashioned telephone systems back in the wilderness, self-contained, without dial equipment; some of those might keep going for years, if a power source could be rigged up and poles aren't destroyed for yule log purposes.

Naturally, the survival of radios and television sets depends

mainly on the lasting qualities of house current. I should imagine that receiving sets could still be functioning a half-century after the blowup, in fair quantities, by cannibalizing and drawing on stocks of reserve parts when sets failed. Unfortunately, there are few battery-powered radio sets in homes today which can receive the wavelengths which might be expected to continue transmissions even after normal power sources failed: amateur and emergency transmitters utilizing the shortwave bands. If federal authorities are really serious about civil defense, I believe that there is only one way to keep in touch with the general public during such a breakdown period: distribute immediately crystal receiving sets by the hundreds of thousands. They have no moving parts, no tubes to wear out, no components that would be useful to looters, and weigh next to nothing. Even if homes have no power source, it might be possible to keep the public informed for years, by rigging up generating equipment strong enough to keep one or two long-wave stations functioning in each general area. (I might add that you can buy a kit that will permit you to build a crystal radio, complete with earphone, for less than five bucks from Monky Ward, in case this article has done a really thorough job of alarming you, up to now.)

I don't believe that water would be a major problem in this problematical future, except for persons who refused to budge from the big cities. Without explosions or deliberate sabotage, water mains would break down only gradually, over a period of months, possibly years, and the demand for water would naturally be cut tremendously by the cessation of manufacturing. This same factor, the end of factory operations, would actually make it easier to obtain water in many rural areas, where pollution from waste products is now a problem.

The arts would undoubtedly flourish under these conditions. The most stupid theme that I have encountered in science fiction in recent years occurred in a story where all the characters *sat* around mawkishly emoting over one of the few surviving phonograph records remaining. The record was supposed to be a symbol of the almost extinct art of music. Naturally, this is all hogwash; men will be able to sing as well as ever, if every scrap of printed music and every record is wiped out; and only the simplest of tools and easily obtained materials are necessary to make very fine string and woodwind instruments. (Actually, I suspect that vinylite records will still be excavated from time to time in playable condition, when all our skeletons are crumbling into dust. They are almost indestructible without the use of extreme violence.) It might be the finest possible thing for the future of the arts, if some of them were wiped out in total war. It may be significant that painting was the first of the arts to reach great heights after the Renaissance: painting was the only fine art which didn't survive from the height of Grecian culture, and as a result, all the outmoded traditions of sculpting and playwriting and narrative poetry strangled the workers in those forms after the Middle Ages, while the painters could follow their own genius.

Summing up: Under the kind of quick, total war that I've postulated, I think that we'd continue to enjoy some of the advantages of civilization for the first decade, and that most of us would still have a few technological wonders operating around us when we had become old men and women. At a guess, I'd say that a century after this war would be needed to return normal life to the type known in North America during the 18th century, and five centuries to destroy all the clues to the scientific past.

A Young Fan's Mancy

IV.

I have already probed gently into the matter of corresponding, in a previous article in this series. I described at some length the manner in which letter-writing to Jim Avery led to the creation of Spaceways, and I described briefly the people to whom I wrote frequently, because of my first letter in Brass Tacks.

But the subject strikes me as worthy to be covered more thoroughly. In fact, this letter-writing tendency is one of the very few traits that seem common to virtually all fans. The average American male detests like poison the task of writing a letter, unless he is equipped with a secretary who will do the things that make it such a bore. But I can't recall any even semi-important fan who didn't write lots of letters. I can't speak for others, but I'm certain that in my own case, it was fandom that got me into the letter-writing habit. I hated writing to relatives and similar individuals like poison, so it's not likely that fandom unleashed in me a hidden propensity for correspondence.

Be that as it may, I think that the golden era of my fannish corresponding equipped me remarkably well for the newspaper work into which I drifted in 1943. When Spaceways was a-borning, it became necessary to do a lot of correspondence work, and I quickly discovered the whole secret of letter-writing: write the first thing that pops into your head, as soon as that subject is exhasted, start to write about the next thing that occurs to you, and so forth until you run out of ideas or feel that you've given the correspondent as many pages as his patience will bear. When I applied this same principle to reporting, I found that it worked just as efficiently. On my return from listening to a long speech or tramping through the county fair, I didn't waste time poring over my notes, trying to decide the order of importance or human interest which the various phases of the subject deserved. I simply wrote about things in the order in which they returned to my memory, using the notes to supply details. It gave me the undeserved reputation of being a fast worker, and it's probably as good a method as those they teach in journalism classes: the topic that stuck in my thoughts most conspicuously must have some attribute that would interest other people, too. On the other hand, I blame this easy way out for the difficulties that I've had in selling fiction. It just doesn't create a marketable story, if applied in pure form. However, a couple of longish stories which I've sold to theprozines used a modified approach: I thought out systematically and thoroughly the manner in which the story would begin and end, then improvised as I went along between those planned extremities.

If I were an all-out miser, I think that I would spend most of my spare time writing letters and encouraging the members of my family to carry on a voluminous correspondence. I can't think of any activity which costs so little in itself, and so effectively prevents indulging simultaneously in money-consuming other activities. If you take up knitting, you may find yourself falling into the habit of doing your knitting in the movies; if you spend your time watching television, you usually begin to consume vast quantities of refreshments during the programs; if you learn to like baseball games on the radio, you quickly succumb to the desire to attend the games regularly at the ball park. But it isn't possibleto knit while typing; there's so much danger of accidents involving the end of the platen and a glass filled with beverage

that it's easier to fill pages and the inner man on separate occasions; and there's hardly any way to adopt more expensive forms of letterwriting, aside from the use of airmail postage. An extensive correspondence also has the advantage of improving an individual's typing speed to a remarkable degree. Writing fiction or fanzine articles doesn't promote fast typing, because even a mediocre typist will usually find his fingers getting ahead of his thoughts. But nobody expects polished syntax or carefully constructed paragraphs in a letter. I quickly reached the point at which letterwriting didn't take a great deal of my time. The time consumed in an extensive correspondence is exaggerated, when it's possible to fill singlespaced a page in ten minutes, or to turn out a reasonably long three-page epistle is a half-hour. My principal fault as a correspondent, I realize, has been that of writing overly long letters. This trait has probably lost several correspondents who felt obligated to reply at similar length, and never found time to do so. They should have borne in mind the fact that even St. Paul kept on turning out extremely long letters, although it is hardly likely that the Corinthians and the other recipients bothered to dash off more than a brief scribble in response.

One tradition that will not die in fandom is that letterwriting should be on a one-to-one basis: A writes B, then waits for B to respond, then replies in turn, and so forth. There are numerous variants on this basic scheme which may be much more practical in given situations. The Boggs-Silverberg-Grennell correspondence, already described in previous FAPA mailings, is a fine example of a triangular correspondence that works better than most of the simple, two-way letter exchanges. For the person with a voluminous correspondence, I can see no insult or slight to the recipients, if he decides to write identical letters to most of the people on his list, via carbon copies or a form of duplication. I believe that Les Croutch did something similar, in carbon-copied forerunners of Light, Bill Rotsler has come up with a variant of the same idea, although he calls his production a magazine instead of disguising it as a letter, and there have been other uses of the theme, though often in one-shot form, when an individual got panicky at the size of his pile of unanswered mail. The misnamed round-robin letter has worked out well upon occasion in the past. This has nothing to do with the communication which originally bore the name, a letter on some touchy topic, signed by a number of individuals, who affixed the signatures to form a circle at the bottom, to avoid one name having the appearance of leading the others. The fannish round-robin, sometimes also wrongly called a chain letter, usually has been a correspondence among a group of five to a dozen persons. The first man on the list writes a letter and sends it to the second; this second individual writes a letter, and sends both letters to the third party, and the process is repeated until the whole list is covered. After that, as the round-robin continues to pass from hand to hand, each recipient removes his old letter and substitutes a new one. This method gives you a lot of letters at regular intervals, while putting you under the obligation to write only one letter. I started a bunch of these things in the World War Two days when everyone thought that the draft would bust up fandom, in an effort to keep in touch with friends. Unfortunately, nobody has yet invented a method of rescuing the joint letter when it hits a snag; the whole chain busts up if one

link grows lazy, peeved or gafia. Unfortunately, I can't remember any of the numerous philosophical problems that were solved in these chains, before they snapped, with a single exception. That exception was an outpouring of opinions and prejudices worthy of the FAPA, on the mighty problem of whether it is possible to make an ordinary Gilette blade serve for daily shaving for six months.

Naturally, the bulk of the thousands of letters that I must have written during those years were filled with trivia. Ephemeral comments on fannish happenings of the day, accounts of what I'd liked and disliked in the prozines, and bread-and-butter notes in response to contributions for Spaceways or unusually big subscriptions filled the bulk of the letters. Most of the correspondents have faded away into gray shadows, too, whose personalities I can recall only by making a real effort. But there are still some topics and some correspondents that stand out clearly.

For instance, there was the series of letters in which Don Thompson and I tried to work out a system of shorthand which would use the ordinary typewriter, instead of the pothooks of Gregg or the special machines for existing systems of mechanical shorthand. The idea seems so practical that I still don't understand why it hasn't been popularized. It is as quick an operation to hit a key of a typewriter as it is to make a symbol in written forms of shorthand, and use of the typewriter removes the danger of transcribing incorrectly, because of a deformed symbol. The special machines that are manufactured for speedwriting are expensive and scarce; it would seem more logical to utilize the typewriters that can be found everywhere. DBT and I worked out in considerable detail the method by which we felt that dictation could be taken on the typer byusing only 20% or 30% the number of strokes that would be required for typing the same passage in normal form. That would permit a fairly good typist to take dictation between 200 and 300 words per minute, faster than the normal person talks. We proposed using only lower case, to get away from the time lost in use of the shift key, except for a scattering of extremely frequent words which would be expressed by one capital letter. The short-typing would save time by eliminating as many letters as possible in each word, like wd for would and apc for appreciate; by replacing a handful of constantly recurring syllables with numerals, such as 2 for ing and 3 for ment, perhaps; by skipping spaces between words in set phrases; by omitting words whose necessity was obvious, such as articles most of the time and many prepositions; and by reserving a few keys for sounds which ordinarily require two strokes, like th, sh, and ch. Unfortunately,we never got up the energy to practise the system that we had painstakingly worked out, so I still don't know how practical it might be. It would seem ideal for transcribing brilliant conversations, taking excerpts from tapes, copying passages that are particularly impressive in books, even in writing letters.

Then there was the great project for a uniform book review format in fanzines. J. Michael Rosenblum was my principal ally in this attempt. It seemed to us shameful, that so many book reviews should be painstakingly written about rare volumes, and lost immediately in the limbo of old fanzines. Most reviews approximated a page in length in those days, so we set out to try to persuade fanzine editors to put each book review on a page to itself, whenever the length made this practical, and to follow a standard arrangement of the vital statistics about the volume at the top of each review. The project included the running of a quantity of extra copies of the review page, by each cooperating fanzine edit-

or. These loose pages were destined for eventual distributing to persons who didn't take many fanzines, but wanted book reviews. There was nothing wrong with the project, except for the lack of interest among fanzine writers and editors in general. It never produced many concrete results, as far as a collection of book reviews are concerned. But it seems to have had one permanent effect: more reviewers got into the habit of including the vital statistics about the book's author, date, and publishers at the start of the review, according to accepted bibliographic practice.

My halcyon days of correspondence had come and gone, before the most interesting recent personalities came into prominence. For this reason, I've never had the pleasure of exchanging letters with any regularity with such diverse individuals as Harlan Ellison or Lee Hoffman. Redd Boggs was known to me in the days of Spaceways only as an individual who sent me a quarter every third issue and occasionally, if memory serves, typed a postal of ratings on the contents of each issue. But there were some dillies, among the people with whom I was in close contact back in the days when I leaped enthusiastically into every promising new whirlpool of letterwriting. Most remarkable, perhaps, were the exchanges of letters whose full significance didn't become apparent until much later. Ray Bradbury and I wrote to one another several times, because I had decided several of his brief fiction efforts were good enough for Spaceways, but I would have nominated him as the least apt to sell a story to the prozines among all the people on my list. There wasthe young man in a New England state who was prominent as a fanzine editor and writer for some time. His last letter to me explained that he was dropping out of fandom because he had done what he set out to prove: become part of the crowd, and gain acceptance as one of the gang, while avoiding the personal visits that would have shown to fandom that he is a Negro. One fellow in New York was a very enthusiastic correspondent, until a pulp magazine accepted one of his short detective stories. He immediately wrote to me that he could no longer spend his valuable time in the construction of letters which would bring him no profit, and ordered the correspondence to be suspended. The magazine folded before it got around to publishing his story, and to the best of my knowledge, he has never sold another word of fiction. But that remains unique in my experience as the only correspondent with whom my relationship has been broken off, finally and deliberately, by intention rather than by death or the accident of a lost address. Therein may lie the secret of why it's such a pleasant thing to build correspondence friendships: they never really die. You may not have written to an individual for five years, but you have no grounds for assuming that the lapse will continue indefinitely; any day, the postman may bring that long-awaited new letter from the person in question. Such things do occur from time to time. It isn't wishful thinking, because Rosenblum struck up our war-interrupted friendship again just recently, after a lapse of nearly five years, and I am maintaining on strict schedule the world's slowest correspondence with Marshall L. McLennan of Australia: I wrote to him this year, he replies in the following year, the year after that, he receives a new letter from me, and so on. We don't have enough in common to make a rapid-fire correspondence advisable; but we get a lot of pleasure out of comparing our changing ideas and circumstances, at this pace.

Richard Meyer, one of the more unpleasant old-timers in Chi-

cago fandom, usedto insist that I spent my entire waking life behind a typewriter, alternatively cutting stencils and writing letters. It wasn't that bad. If you don't try to produce imperishable prose, and can type with nine fingers, it's easy to answer three or four letters in an hour, and in two or three hours the entire correspondence duties of a week can be completed. The only thing that slowed me down was a series of superfluous sidelines which gradually built up around correspondence. I got into the habit of making carbon copies of my letters, almost from the first. This was caused principally by the trouble that I experienced, remembering whether I had told a given correspondent about this or that matter. Then I began to stamp the date received on each letter as it arrived, in order to have knowledge of the letters which had been unanswered for too long, without ruining my eyes on blurred postmarks. From there, it was a natural step to stamping the received letter a second time with the date on which it was answered. For a time, I filed all correspondence, alphabetically by the name of the person who wrote it, chronologically by the order in which letters from any given person arrived. But I am some sixteen years back on this filing task at present, so it isn't likely to be brought up to date in the foreseeable future. There was a time in the early 1940's when stickers were all the rage: little gummed labels advertising forthcoming conventions, adjuring postal employes to "Boost Science Fiction!", propagandizing the insect-resembling traits of Yngvi, and in general fulfilling the subconscious demands that today are released through the interlineation. No self-respecting fan would mail an envelope that didn't contain at least three of those things, so there was another detail that slowed down letterwriting.

Those days of glory are gone. I remember one fantastic afternoon when the postman dumped seventeen letters and postal cards through the mail slot, the biggest haul in my history, exclusive of advertising junk, and not counting the sterile piles of press releases that clutter up my desk at the office daily, simply because public relations men compile mailing lists from names that they find in the annual directory of Editor & Publisher. Nowadays, it's a rare week when seventeen pieces of personal non-commercial, non-business mail arrive. Three or four hours per month are more than enough to handle my letter-writing tasks, except when I grow energetic and pound out letters which aren't inspired by incoming communications. Remembering Jack Speer's famous definition of a regular correspondent (someone whose letters you needn't answer), I've hung on to a half-dozen or so correspondents for ten years or more. Then there's always the possibility of reviving at any time an old acquaintance. Bill Groveman and I wrote one another weekly for four or five years, long ago, broke off for no particular reason for a three-year period, then resumed again, until another great silence set in early in 1953. Undoubtedly letters will begin to fly again soon. I don't believe that anyone will ever write to me again such fantastically perfect letters as those of Ackerman, or such frank admissions about himself as Raymond Washington, Jr., or such completely illegible penciled postal cards as Sam Moskowitz, or such conspiring missives as Julie Unger in the days when we were preparing the fabulously successful Odd Tales hoax. But it's nice to know that there are still lots of excellent fans scattered throughout the world, and that there's no logical reason why I shouldn't find a letter from any given one of them among the mail on any given day.

Puppy Love

When Doris woke, she blinked against the window's morning light, then lay quietly for a moment. While she lay on her side, still sleep-relaxed, she drowsily sorted the dream-fragments out, discarding them before they mixed irretrievably with the experiences of the past night.

She wrinkled her nose at the dampness that still hung in the air, catching the odor of the rain that had fallen before dawn. She twisted her head slightly, releasing her right ear from the pillow's muffling, when footsteps padded down the sidewalk below the window. The pattern of the footfall wasn't familiar. It was not important enough a matter to send her to the window to look out. But the effort of turning her head dispersed the lassitude of sleep. The girl rolled to the edge of the bed, groped with her feet for the warm shagginess of the small rug, and slipped from under the covers. Already she was calculating: a dozen hours of daylight routine before the next night.

Doris dressed before the large mirror, congratulating herself on having bathed before going to bed the night before. She studied briefly her plumply rounded thighs and her tapering upper arms, brushed the short, chestnut-brown hair straight back from her forehead, and carefully corrected with lipstick the slight irregularities at her mouth. The ritual breakfast shouts were resounding below, when she had finished.

Her younger brother studied her critically, whenshe walked into the kitchen. "Must've been a long babysitting job last night," he commented. "I didn't hear you come in."

Doris skilfully snatched his waterpistol from the breakfast food carton, filled it with milk from his cereal dish, and held it at readiness. Ben subsided. She began to gulp her own breakfast as the clock's large hand swung closer to schooltime. "Maybe I just didn't make any noise when I came in," she told him. She put the weapon in her lap, out of his reach, as she saw him tense for a desperate grab.

"She was in bed when she should have been," her mother said defendingly. "But I didn't hear her either. You should be a second-story worker, Doris. I've never known anyone who could move so quietly."

"I've got another sitting job tonight," Doris explained, finishing the coffee. "This one might be a late one. You can call at the Jordans' every half-hour if you want to keep tab on me, smart stuff." Ben ignored her. She emptied the milk from the waterpistol in a stream that landed accurately in the cat's saucer, and tossed it back to him. She remembered to smile, as she left the room, to spare her mother the knowledge of the genuine tension that was slowly building between them. The cat saw her coming as she entered the hall, flattened itself against one wall, then retreated nervously through the dining room door to keep away from her.

Doris reached school in time for another cup of coffee before classes. "Big deal," Claudia was saying as she squeezed into the booth at the drug store. "Hot dogs, marshmallows, campfire, all sorts of boys. Starts at eleven. Hi, Doris; you coming? Down by the dam."

"This is a bab sitting night. Wish I could."

"No, you don't wish," Alice said. "You're just too nice to come." She was smiling but serious. There was an uncomfortable silence. Doris looked away from the group of girls in embarrass-

ment, meeting instead the pointblank stare of a pimply-faced boy in the next booth. She looked back to the girls, saying: "But I might be able to come out, just for a little while, if I can get away from the baby in time."

"It'll do you good," Alice said. "You can't be a completely nice girl all the time. I mean, you ought to do something daring once every so often."

The boy with the pimply face was still staring at Doris. One of the other girls had noticed his intentness, and nudged Alice. She turned, looked at him, and beckoned to him.

"This is Phil," she told Doris. "Phil Willis. Doris Carson. Doris, I think that Phil has been admiring you from a distance. A short distance, that is. He wants to take you down to the dam tonight. Don't you, Phil?"

Standing beside the booth, Phil couldn't force himself to look straight at Doris. Claudia nudged him, and said:

"You needn't be scared. Doris isn't like the rest of us. She wouldn't do anything she shouldn't."

"Could I come for you tonight?" Phil finally asked. "I can get the car."

"But I don't know what time I'll be done babysitting," Doris said. "Sometimes it's pretty late, and—"

"And you'd just have to go home because it would be too late to do anything else," Alice said. "Phil can pick you up wherever you're sitting. We'll still be there, don't worry."

Trapped, Doris agreed. She left half of the coffee in the cup, as she crossed the street to school. The night now loomed ahead as a tedious, endless alternation of loneliness and boredom. She didn't snap out of her apathy until she became the focal point of the Englishclass.

"I didn't mean to accuse you," Miss Ingram was saying, "I merely meant to ask information on your sources. Your ideas are so good that I think you deserve credit for hunting up such a calibre of thinking."

The red left Doris' face, but she still seethed inwardly. "I'm sorry if I yelled," she apologized. "But I didn't copy anything else when I wrote that essay. I just thought for a while."

Miss Ingram was smiling now. "Well, you simply chose a topic that most girls don't worry about until they reach the college level. And your title. 'Maturity'. I can't think how long it's been since I saw an essay with such a simple title."

"It's good, then?"

"The title, yes. But I don't know whether you should be thinking quite this way for a few more years. High school girls who write about growing up don't usually choose images that are quite as unusual as yours. I don't remember being so sensitive to the odors of the fields at night as you are, and I walked past a vacant lot many a night when I was a girl. And you really are hit in the emotions by the moon, aren't you?"

"Well, I suppose that different girls react in different ways," Doris said carefully. "Maybe I won't notice such things a few years from now. But it's only been a few months that I've been really mature. I mean, physically. That is, a person doesn't develop physically overnight, but a person sometimes realizes overnight just how mature she is, physically."

Someone tittered half-hysterically at the back of the room. Doris sat down abruptly, knowing that her face had again reddened. Miss Ingram was saying:

"On the other hand, I really think that Jane couldhave chosen a subject just a trifle more complex than her emotions upon

tasting her first hot fudge sundae...."

The puppy rushed giddily through the room and tried to swallow Doris' shoe, when she entered the Jordan home.

"I don't know how to thank you for giving him to us," Mrs. Jordan said. "He's the best little dog I've ever seen. So affectionate, and I know that he's going to be a wonderful companion for baby shen she grows up."

Doris snuggled the small, brown, wriggling thing against her throat and quieted the pup with soothing noises from somewhere deep in her vocal apparatus. "I might take him home with me, just for tonight," she said. "I'll bring him back in the morning. I finished giving away the litter last week, and now I'm lonely for them."

There was a squawk from upstairs. Doris followed Mrs. Jordan, who hurried to the bedroom to change the baby. The puppy hovered at Doris' feet, as she watched distastefully the operation. She managed to straighten out her face before Mrs. Jordan turned to her, saying: "I suppose it won't be long before you'll be doing this for one of your own. Girls marry young these days."

"Not me," Doris said. "I'm happy right now." Something in her tone caused Mrs. Jordan to change the subject.

When the couple had gone, Doris settled down in the bedroom. She turned the chair so that she wouldn't see the baby directly, but would glimpse in the corner of an eye any unusual movement in the bed. She opened the window full, letting the cool October night reduce the oppressiveness of the heat in the room, and stared attentively into the dark of the suburb, seeing around the patches of light from windowpanes, the fingers of her right hand moving rhythmically up and down the soft back of the pup, which lay sleeping in her lap. She broke her quiet sitting only for the last bottle for the baby. She watched the infant suck noisily, its eyes rolling insanely from her to the wall, hearing its uncontrolled gurgling, and watching its occasional spasmodic kicks and twistings. She was relieved when she could return to contemplate the dignity of the sleeping pup.

The Jordans returned before midnight. Doris was standing on the corner, waiting for the bus home, when the Chevrolet paused opposite her, and honked. She turned her head in annoyance. Then she looked again when she recognized the voice. The streetlight traced Phil's features vaguely.

"It's lucky I didn't wait any longer," he said. Doris climbed into the auto almost sullenly, and silently. "I didn't think you'd get done this soon. There's still plenty of time for us to have a good time." He continued to jabber away, out of the character that he had shown in the morning in the drugstore. His face was flushed and Doris detected beer on his breath.

"I hope you didn't get the wrong impression of me this morning," Phil was saying. "I mean, I'm not really awkward like that. It was just that I was afraid that you wouldn't have advanced ideas like I have. Then I decided that you and I probably think about things in just the same way."

"Like how?" Doris didn't like the speed at which he was driving down the twisting dirt road leading to the river.

"Well, conventions. People might think there's something wrong, for kids our age to loaf around at the dam without chaperones at this hour. I say that it's just natural. Everyone ought to go ahead and do what nature tells him to do, don't you think?"

"That's the way I've always acted," Doris said fervently. "Don't," she added more sharply, and slapped at his hand which

had been awkwardly groping around her knees. Immediately, Phil reached under the seat, pulled out a beer bottle, and took a couple of swallows. It restored enough self-confidence for him to offer her the remainder. She refused.

"Besides," he was saying, "I guess that there's something in all of us that's a little bad. Bad by ordinary standards, that is. Maybe your great grandfather was a horsethief and so you'll get the impulse to steal autos. So you can't really blame a kid when he does things that most folks don't approve."

They had reached the riverside. A small fire was burning, a dozen young people hovered around it, and the flames cast faint points of light into the fenders and bumpers of at least a score of autos. The bushes were popular tonight, Doris reflected.

There was a long pause. Phil showed no particular desire to emerge from the auto. Finally Doris said:

"That's what they told us in science class the other day. About the way things skip generations. Suppose that there were things that showed up only once every fifty generations or so in a family? Really rare things, that is."

"Like what?" Phil was swallowing the last of the beer, in a determined fashion.

"Oh, I don't know. Maybe something like a craze for dope, or wanting to be a cannibal, or something like that." Somewhere in the distance, a dog was howling. Doris felt that she must get away from the confines of the auto, from this inadequate boy, from the group.

"Impossible. Can't be done. Laws of heredity. I've studied it in class, too. I'm going to be a scientist. They know everything about generations."

Phil's voice was threatening to turn into mumbles. Abruptly he swung his right arm over Doris' shoulders, and yanked her to him. She was preparing to sink a fist in the pit of his stomach when she felt his left hand fumbling toward her breasts, under her thin coat. Before Phil had established contact, he squawked crazily, feeling the wriggling and the wet tongue instead of the breast. He half-fell from the auto, and raced excitedly toward the young people around the campfire.

Doris pulled the puppy out from under her coat, pressed it against her cheek, then quietly climbed from the car and walked through the densest shadows to the bushes. She ducked under overhanging branches, slipping out of sight, and went rigid a moment, listening. The other couples had not chosen this particular area, she decided, hearing nothing. Soundlessly, she pulled off her clothing, folding them into a neat pile, then stretched full-length, rigidly. The puppy stood gravely beside her, watching her intently, no longer playful, waiting. She tried to concentrate on the night, its scents, the endless stirrings of insects and small animals around her, the faint noise of the flowing river. Glands and tiny muscles deep within her body responded reluctantly, fighting to overcome the influence of the disgust she had felt at Phil's behavior.

The moon rising beyond the river achieved the final stages that her willpower found difficult to surmount. It stirred the old instincts within her. The puppy whined suddenly, as her body changed slightly its conformations to the impulses of its interior churnings. She was ready.

Doris rolled over, listened and sniffed again to make sure nobody was in sight. All was still.

"Come on, Junior. Let's go for a run," she barked.

Vox Dei

Some pleasant concatenation of events has presented me with a spare page or two in this issue of Horizons. It gives an opportunity to do something that I'd like to do regularly, quote from a few recent pieces of correspondence.

Ed Cox: "It was with a bit of a jolt that I read your remarks anent baseball in the current Horizons. Enclosed is a small keepsake. The guy at the gate wouldn't, for some obscure reason, let me keep the whole ticket! Not only that, but I have spent innumerable hours at staring blear-eyed into a television screen while my favorite PCL men did their work on the field. '' Since my enlistment in the army in January of 1951, I haven't kept up to the minute with the major leagues. It used to be that I'd listen to the radio while the Braves (then out of Boston) and the Red Sox did their work. I even kept score-cards! Since I've been out here in sweltering California, I've not lost my loyalty to the Braves or the Red Sox.... At any rate, this has been a note to revise your statement. There are at least two more FAPA members who hold baseball high on their devotee-list. You are no doubt getting a note from C. Lee Jacobs, soon-to-be ex-DPOF of FAPA." So there, Nancy Share!

Andy Young: "...So here we are, and J. is now eager to get into a quarry (limestone, or shale, if possible) and I am working for the summer at the Harvard College Observatory. So is she, but she's just doing tiresome computations for them, which she hates. My job is also dull, but there is a side to it that is pretty interesting: the Harvard Announcements. '' As a matter of fact, you may have come in contact with the results of my labors on these. You may recall that recently a couple of new comets have been discovered; Comet Bakharev-Macfarlane-Krienke (1955f) and Comet 1955g, discovered by Honda: your paper probably gets such reports from Science Service or AP. Well, do you know where these people get their reports about comets? Via the Harvard announcements, and that's me, temporarily. Discovery telegrams come in in code, and I decode them, write up an announcement to go on the Announcement Cards, and get the telegram sent out to various observatories and also to Science Service. These people doubtless tell you, if they consider it worth the bother. We've had quite a flock of bright comets recently, and the people at HCO are rather excited about it; but I doubt that such events thrill the general public. One man's meat is another man's dog food. '' And speaking of Harvard, and news, and the like, that business about the artificial satellite took us unprepared, and we were just as uninformed as anyone when the story broke."

Paul Spencer: "Your assault on Bradbury strikes me as very sound. You might have made more of the fact that he has become a great pilferer from his own work, writing story after story on the same few themes. Yet 'Fahrenheit 451' (surely not his best work) goes on its merry way. Probably I've mentioned seeing it serialized in the German liberal magazine 'Der Monat' (a highbrow journal if there ever was one, I judge); more recently, I discovered that it has been announced for early production as a play on Broadway. (Isn't this the first time a story from an s-f pulp has achieved that distinction?) The fact is, I think, that Bradbury has a great deal of individuality, and writes with power on important themes. He is certainly more than a run-of-the-pulp s-f or weird writer. The trouble is a narrowness of scope, I think—particularly irksome because the subjects that do interest

him tend to border on the pathological—plus a great deal of over-praise. I trust that your article was intentionally limited to his faults, and that you recognize his legitimate claims to admiration. It will be interesting to see whether he can survive the inevitable reaction from the extravagant praise he's received to date, and whether he can broaden his view and perfect his talents enough to become as good as he's now widely considered to be....
'' I enjoyed 'Down in the Dumps', and thought you unfolded your idea quite skilfully. The tv program on all fours seems painfully plausible; the ensuing fad seems like a little too much trouble to be entirely convincing, but the exaggeration is small enough so that the satire is effective. I'm left with an eery feeling that the condition you describe actually exists, in essence, which I suppose is the effect you were aiming for."
-////-////-////-////-////-////-////-////-////-////-////-////-////-////

Whither Wollheim?

You, Too, Can Change....

I report with alarm that the television industry is continuing to cast greedy eyes upon fm. Members of the FAPA who like good music or other features of fm reception might be able to do a certain amount of persuasion, by writing to congressmen and asking for continuance of the status quo. The television industry has been lobbying in an effort to get nine-tenths of the fm allotment of frequencies. This would provide room for five additional television channels, and extra tv channels can hardly be needed anywhere except in a few of the largest metropolitan sectors. The tv lobby insists that this change wouldn't harm fm, because there would be room for all existing fm stations on the narrowed fm band, if new frequencies could be worked out for all fm stations. In theory, it might be possible;in practice, it wouldn't work out, because only the very finest fm receivers can do the selectivity that would be necessary to separate such closely crowded signals. A letter to your congressmen at their home address between now and the end of the year might help to counteract the renewed efforts of the tv lobby that will be made after the first of the year.

Eighth-Month Agony:

August hates me. That is the only conclusion I can derive from the jinx that that month has possessed over my activities during the past two or three years. It is preposterous, the variety of mishaps, annoyances, disappointments, and assorted troubles that the fates have been managing to crowd into that single month's 31 days each year. Many of my woes are too personal to be detailed in Horizons; if some of those which follow seem unimportant to you, understand that they are a mere sampling. This year in August, for instance, came the first occasion in the five years that I've owned the auto when it broke down and refused to budge. It couldn't have happened at a worse time, because I had an appointment eleven miles away at the time, and it got balky after I'd backed out of the garage, leaving it stalled crossways in the center of a busy street with such a high crown that I couldn't push it out of the way. I also had my first record-ordering accident in August, 1955. Macy's sent a disc I didn't order, and I still don't have the matter straightened out. I bought an Ansco bulk film loader in my enthusiasm over the faster Anscochrome; something was wrong with it, causing the winding key to break when I tried to exert pressure, and

ending in a gruesome fifteen-minute struggle in the stygian darkroom with the unfamiliar device, to avoid the waste of film. (Don't let this discourage you from purchasing a bulk film loader, you 35 mm bugs; Ansco replaced the defective package immediately.) The radio which I use at the office went bad, and the repair shop spent exactly seven weeks getting the simple little table model repaired. I even had trouble with my latest order to Ken Slater; the gods of perversity went to great lengths to cause the Pan people in England to decide suddenly that he wasn't a good risk, and I still don't have those Pan paperbacks that I want. I took a week's vacation in August, hoping to see a lot of baseball games and get an early start on reading the new FAPA mailing; the mailing arrived the day after I returned to work, and it rained the entire week from hurricane influences. A major writing project came acropper in a manner which I still don't understand. This had been jinxed from the start, I suppose. A New York publisher had accepted it for book publication, then midway through minor revisions, I was informed that the firm was pulling out of the field of young people's books altogether, dropping its existing catalogue and taking on no new titles; then in August, the person who was handling the manuscript for new placing returned it to me without explanation, and I'm now trying to find out who has seen and who hasn't seen it. I missed a couple of intriguing book and record sales during the August clearances in Washington, because of that city's transit strike; I just got chicken about the parking and walking situation. So it went, for thing after thing. Can anyone suggest a release from this hubris?

I Hate To Admit It Dept.:

One thing did satisfy me during August. I saw a movie, the first Hollywood product which has really pleased me out of the three or four I've attended during the past eighteen months. It was "We're No Angels". The movie does a remarkable job of sticking to the original play, "My Three Angels"; the only significant change in the plot isn't too annoying, since it doesn't affect the main course of the action. Hollywood showed remarkable reticence, in not spelling out on the screen the things that the play left to the imagination of the audience, too. I can't imagine how the adapters restrained themselves from showing the snakebite incidents, but they did. Of course, the Hollywood set makes the little general store in Africa look like the main sales floor of Macy's, and the convicts are as fastidious in personal appearance as if they'd just stepped out of the House of Lords, and for no discernible reason, the movie opens with a man in a boat singing Martini's "Plaisirs d'Amour" to a different set of words, but those discrepancies are the kind that amuse instead of sicken.

The Years of Reticence:

Two recent acquisitions are the lp sets of "Werther" and "Eugen Onegin". I wasn't very familiar with either Massenet's or Tschaikovsky's operas, until the records came along at reductions too great to resist. I'm extremely happy with them, now that I really know them. But musical considerations aside, they define a matter that has been puzzling me. This is the curious reticence that has grown up in 20th century America over the attraction of men and women. Goethe and Pushkin wrote the novel and long poem that formed the basis for these operas around the start of the 19th century. That was the time when a fantastic variety of subjects were taboo in conversation among polite people, but

the problems caused by love affairs occupied a major portion of a person's talk, letters, novel-reading, and poetry-writing. There is nothing in the theme of either opera which has become antiquated today. Werther is a young man who kills himself because he is in love with an incorrigibly virtuous married woman, and Eugen Onegin is a similar young man who doesn't kill himself but does lose all chance of happiness because he didn't grab a girl when she practically threw herself at his feet, forgetting that silly young girls become excellent wives a few years later. But it is quite impossible to imagine any novelist or poet writing on such themes today, or to conceive of a composer choosing these topics for an opera. A fellow who was working part time at the office while attending college found a translation of "Werther" among his reading assignments, skimmed through it, and came to me baffled. How in the world, he asked, could anyone in Goethe's time take seriously a story about a man killing himself over a woman? When I told him that that seemed to me to be a bit more logical than the 20th century's acceptance of Philip Jordan's life-sacrifice in the interest of European power politics, he probably decided that I'm as crazy as Goethe ever was. The fact remains: nobody writes about such things these days, outside the vulgar pages of the confession magazines. Moreover, I've sensed an increasing tendency in recent years to avoid affaires de coeur in conversation. Several of my friends have recently married, without my being aware that they were going steady with anyone, and I've noticed a definite trend in the past few years to fail to announce engagements in the newspapers, even the long-term jobs in which rings are publicly worn. In fandom, the FAPA has been singularly free from any references to girl friends and wives; I wouldn't know the marital status of several members, if it weren't for occasional references to their children. And in fifteen or more years of corresponding with fans, I've been on the receiving end of just one really detailed account of a fan's romantic problems. It's most puzzling in view of 1955's frankness in so many other respects.

More Sol-Searching:

There hasn't been a line in the FAPA about the fact that another segment of the future has plopped through to the present. It is that old chestnut of science fiction, solar power, which had become as unpopular in fictional form as gravity screens. A few lines from the press services revealed recently that a small area in the South will have its telephones powered by the sun before the end of the year. I feel that this could be as significant for man's future as atomic power. It is hardly likely that future developments will ever make it possible to operate major factories by solar power. But I don't know of any practical reason why energy from the sun shouldn't be harnessed in sufficient strength, within our own lifespans, to run automobiles, most home appliances, and to provide light. It should eliminate the noise and fumes from motor vehicles, and reduce by a major amount the drains that are now being made on natural resources like coal and oil. It would be nice to know that if mankind can refrain from blowing himself to smithereens, he may have won a respite of another century or two before depletion of natural resources forces him to get off the earth and move to the other planets. Oddly, I have met the same reaction from every Hagerstonian to whom I've mentioned the subject: "Suppose you're driving uphill and a cloud covers the sun?" People can be dreadfully near-sighted.