

66

Volume 17, number 3, whole number 66, and FAPA number 60 of Horizons begins at this point. This is the spring, 1956, issue. It is published for members of the FAPA and a half-handful of others from the Doubledoubletoiland-trouble Mimeograph. Editor and writer of otherwise uncredited material in this issue is Harry Warner, Jr., 303 Bryan Place, Hagerstown, Maryland. No issue of Horizons is genuine without a fingerprint in the appropriate gap above.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: My thanks to everyone who supplied me with the overdose of egoboo in the poll. But I can't help realizing that I wouldn't have made quite that showing, if Boggs, Hoffman and Danner had been more completely represented in the past pair of mailings that are freshest in the memory. I propose next November to list concisely in Horizons the stuff that is published earlier in 1956, in an effort to assure a better showing for the people who happen to be more active in the winter and spring.

" Hey, Tucker and Bloch! Want to trade my fiction poll standing for your fiction income? " The best thing to do with Lee Jacobs' advance dues would be to invest it in longterm securities. By the time he worms to the top of the waiting list, compound interest will have turned it into a tidy nestegg. The Rambling Fap: Repeatus worditis is a habit that nobody should worry about. Nobody but English teachers who are too stupid to find real grounds for criticism will complain when you reuse a word. In the first place, there are no synonyms for many nouns and adjectives; using a different word simply because you don't want to repeat a word may change your meaning slightly. Besides, look at the stupid rut sports writers have carved, by running into the ground this effort to avoid repetition. Now you can't find anywhere on a sports page any reference to "ball" or "game" or "player". Instead there are horribly hackneyed substitutes like "spheroid" or "tussle" or "athlete" which slow down reading and add nothing to the conveyance of information. Phantasy

Press: The official critics and laureate committee vanished from the FAPA because voluminous comments in FAPA publications made them superfluous. There was always something Gilbert & Sullivanish about the existence of an official critic, anyway. " Last I heard, Dale Hart was in the Los Angeles area, barely grazing the outermost fringes of fandom. Birdsmith: Don Ford isn't such a newcomer to fandom as implied here, if he's the Don Ford who subscribed faithfully to Spaceways many years ago. " My reference to Western Union slowness referred to the time lapse between the moment A gives a message to WU and B receives it. Sending telegrams is probably like reading newspapers, an automatic activity or a habit which most people do without realizing that there are better ways of accomplishing the same results. Telephone service is so cheap and covers such a large proportion of the population that most telegrams could be handled by A and B more quickly, cheaply and conveniently by a long distance phone call. In fact, it's rather preposterous for A to pick up his telephone and dictate a message to a WU operator, who will transmit it to another city, where WU will pick up a telephone and dictate the message to B; A might as well phone B direct. In the largest cities, WU has its advantages. I can't think of a better medium

if a large firm must send a message rapidly to its fifty branch offices. But the local office, serving some 60,000 persons, is open weekdays only from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. A messenger boy is available only part of the time. The effective time during which a telegram can be dispatched promptly isn't much more than twelve hours daily because it's pretty sure not to be delivered until after dawn the next day, if ordered within an hour or two of closing time. Inaccuracy is an enormous problem; the time we save by using long telegrams at the office is nearly counteracted by the checking necessary to unravel a garbled section. Because WU can't keep messengers handy, the newspaper must pull an employe earning three times the amount that WU would pay a messenger away from the job and send him to the WU office to pick up telegrams too long for telephone dictation. The worst WU trick was one that happened eight or ten times every summer during the baseball season. WU and the telephone company collaborate through some jurisdictional routine in our baseball news teletype. At regular intervals, the WU man closing down the office at 11 p.m. would pull the wrong switch, causing our baseball teletype to go dead. Nobody at the newspaper office noticed it for ten minutes or so; by the time we could complain, the WU office would be locked and its employe would be out doing the town, requiring a phone call to get the manager out of bed and down to the office to replace the switch. The manager seemed to enjoy it, incidentally, despite the monotonous frequency with which it occurred. '' Rodent-catching ability in cats is a useful trait, considering the way rats carried the plague so many centuries. Not many dogs will kill a rodent, and the other things which dogs have been trained to do are closer to tricks than to useful services. Keep Your Cottonpickin'....: It's fortunate that Lee mailed and brought most of her FAPA output to me before the mailing; I'd have never been able to read through the bundle as rapidly, without that aid. '' I've never understood why people wasted so much time building canals in the last century. The Chesapeake and Ohio runs alongside the Potomac near Hagerstown, and was just as expensive and eventually impractical as the Suwannee. But the canal corporation kept pouring money into it for a century. The example of ancient Rome should have taught people that a properly built road is best for transportation, even before the automobile age. '' Even with two credits for dependency (myself and a relative) I lose 17 per cent of my weekly check to deductions and another per cent seems to fall off each year. Social security will go up twice in the years to come, there's talk of a company-sponsored obligatory pension plan, and the state is itching to expand its new deduction system. Where will it end? Stefantasy: Bill Danner was too polite to complain about my stupidity, which kept his November issue out of the proper mailing and probably cost him a lot of poll votes. '' Main trouble with street signs around here is their smallness. You can't read them until nearly too late. This is particularly bad in Hagerstown, whose main streets are one-way. Out-of-town drivers get caught in the wrong lane because they didn't see the sign ordering a turn soon enough to change lanes, then there's a cacophony of horns at the intersection. '' Anybody who is naive enough to think for one minute that the '75 postmark came from the future hasn't had much experience with the Post Office Department. '' Bill is getting better results with the Fairchild engravings than the local press men. The pattern observable in a few of these derives from a

bad tube in the machine, not from Danner's press work. ' ' I wear a hat, mostly as a safe means of rebelling against the current fad of going hatless. If men's hats come back into fashion, I'll throw mine away. Target: FAPA!: Sure, myths turned into fiction. You can see it happening, in medieval English literature. Readers now identify themselves with characters of fiction, but there's hardly room for doubt that early fiction was a symbolic representation of such natural phenomena as the sun's course, the change of seasons, and so on, which had already been interpreted in more conventionalized, obvious ways in myths. One of these days, I'll inflict an article on the FAPA on this very topic. Driftwood: Are you the "gay Sally Dunn" which the chorus sings about on several occasions in "The Sorcerer"? ' ' My own pet-peeve-remark: "I hope I haven't broken your camera," just after I've taken a photograph. It's a statement which simply doesn't admit of a civil answer, similar to "I'm pleased to have met you." ' ' Does anyone know where those "Jesus Saves" signs come from? I've never found one containing identification to the origin, and I've never encountered a sect claiming credit for their erection. Light: Some sort of incentive and chance for betterment seems to be a necessary ingredient in the recipe that produces a civilization. The thing which causes many of us to gag is the enormity of the gap between the income of the wealthiest class and the wages paid to waitresses and domestic servants and similar low-income groups. ' ' I had a hard time digging the punch line in that parable. Couldn't the ending be fixed up a little, to conform with the real wording of the song? Revoltin' Development: If Bloomington is the subject of a city directory, like most cities of that size, Tucker's address can hardly be kept a secret from visiting firemen. Most city directories include all of the small towns surrounding the city in question, you know. I would retreat behind my business address, if this city directory for Hagerstown didn't exist. ' ' What did happen to Sully Roberds, anyway? He's the only Normal fan that I can remember. Abharti: It's wonderful, how rapidly the deity's abilities increase in step with the latest developments of science. Since the evolution and heavenly sphere fiascos, religion seems to be taking a new attitude toward science: if you can't beat 'em, join 'em. ' ' Internal evidence in the New Testament hardly leaves serious reason to doubt that the Q gospel once existed, as the basis for at least two of the gospels as we know them today. Presumably this Q document needed expansion or alteration to fit the trappings from St. Paul, paganism, and other sources that had begun to spring up a half-century after the Crucifixion, accounting for the existing gospels. Grotesquette: I've never heard of a fan suddenly becoming a more interesting person because of an appendectomy. But that's apparently what has happened here. I enjoyed these two pages as much as everything that had emanated from Berlin in the past, squaunched together. Ker: The earliest of the New Testament gospels as we know it probably was written around 85 a.d. But the oldest complete mss. of the gospels are a couple of centuries younger than that. Religious scribes have never stopped tinkering with texts, so Croutch is probably substantially right; the essential part of the New Testament as we have it dates from centuries after Christ. ' ' I could decipher only about half of the lines in the story. Maybe I missed essential points for this reason. But I don't get the ending.

Even assuming that the mine had worked its way into a harbor, it's hardly likely that a tug's wash would be strong enough to throw it against another ship, and a ship of the Argo's size would hardly fall apart in that fashion from the explosion. '' A reporter doesn't want to submit his story to this or that person before publication for any number of reasons. The request is a bit insulting, for one thing, akin to using a magnifying glass on the dollar bills you've just received in change, to ascertain that they aren't counterfeit; there's no assurance that the story will appear in print as the reporter wrote it, after the city editor and makeup man have done their work on it; and what might be intended as a mere checkup for accuracy would probably turn into a tug of war in which you try to convince the reporter that he ought to have included this and to have emphasized that. Contour: I've never heard of fans reacting to females as three of the Filthy Four did on that occasion. Horizons: A full report on the FAPAP idea will appear next issue. Meanwhile, I'd like to announce that I'm beginning to look with more favor on the idea of some type of voting to pick FAPA members. I was deadset agin it for a while. But it seems sinful to allow no hope except the passing of time to those deep down the list. Maybe a vote and chronology could be combined. The present chronological order would still be the fundamental basis for admission, but FAPA members would vote at each annual election for waiting listers, and the three waiting listers receiving the most votes for admission would be jumped to the top of the heap. Poo: All-comment FAPA publications bring to mind the fact that the statisticians have overlooked one thing. Whose publications get the most space in the comments in the following mailing? Without trying to measure lineage, I'd suspect that GMCarr is the recent champion in this respect, probably followed by McCain and Wells. '' Important notice: My remark about South Americans who have become accustomed to summer in December was supposed to be a jest. I'm sorry that it baffled so many persons. I promise not to try to win votes in the humorist poll during the coming year, as a penance. '' Shorttyping might be desirable, even if it's hard to decipher. There are circumstances in which the rate of recovery is less important than the speed of deposit; for instance, the rare instances in which my ideas about an article or story are piling up faster than I can scribble notes, or when I want to get word-for-word a conversation or talk which it isn't convenient to tape. Bhang: Now that Dave has located a man who draws smutty pictures, who will be the first to unearth the person who thinks up dirty stories? They hardly spring up spontaneously. '' I can't imagine anyone getting cold when it's warm enough to rain. But such persons might enjoy life more if they overcame their prejudices and invested in long, old-fashioned underwear. Despite all the jokes, it's constructed on the sound scientific principle of retaining body heat by snug fit. Good News: Let us hope that the creativeness which Scientology induces will include FAPA activity. That seems like an odd name for the system, however. I know that ology is a perfectly good suffix. But Scientology immediately strikes me as the opposite of science, much as astrology is an opposite of astronomy. Lark: I don't know, either, why sunspots affect teletypes. But they do, sometimes dangerously so, causing garbling of one or two letters every line or so, not enough to merit a repeat of a message, but enough to require painful, word-by-word editing and corrections.

" It's not exactly right to list fear-making as the worst feature of the Roman Catholic faith. Some of the smaller Protestant denominations are even worse with their efforts to frighten sinners into repenting. My main objection to the dogma is the manner in which so many of its members use their belief in confession as grounds for doing pretty much as they please, and the hypocritical attitude toward such matters as divorce and contraception, which must have messed up more lives than any other factor in the world today. Knight's Mare: I have absolutely no recollection of reading this before. But I must have done so, as a VAPA member. The Fortean cosmology always sounded to me like Old Testament Christianity in slightly disguised form. It contains the same sort of universe, the direct intervention by higher powers, even small plagues in the form of frog showers. I don't know why Fort messed up his valuable research work by trying to fit the facts into an untenable hypothesis. Another Light: About 25 years ago, an American furniture firm tried to promote something similar to your built-in coffin for persons who sleep themselves to death. It was a couch designed for use in the front room. When the owner died, the legs were removed, the lid was brought from the cellar or attic, and there was the coffin. Honest. " Couldn't those Californians have intended to go water skiing? " After eleven months of trouble-free reception, our tv set developed a habit of breaking the picture into strips and ribbons. I called the service man and resigned myself to a long, hot summer. He came, removed the back, and stood for four minutes, just staring into the intestines of the set, without moving a muscle. Then like a cat pouncing on a mouse he grabbed out a tube in one lightning-like motion, went out to the auto, and brought back another in its place. No testing, no nothing. It works just fine. And he never carried out his promise to mail me the bill. Burblings: I assume that there's a secret message in this issue. The general theme seems to be that people who aren't active fans are usually doing something else that seems just as silly to an outsider. An excellent point. Remember Milt Rothman, and his answer to those who asked what good is fandom? What good is anything? Wraith: "What SAPS needs is a couple members who will fill a mailing like Lee Hoffman and WM Danner...." What SAPS really needs is new rules, easing the stringency of its activity system. The SAPS regulations just don't cover the people like LeeH or Rotsler who operate in gigantic spurts of productivity interspersed with inaction. They accomplish more in the long run than those who frantically rush around preparing six pages for every mailing. Fanhistorys: See what I mean? " This is the type of fan chronicling that is so badly needed to help newcomers to fandom to catch up. So many remarks in the fanzines are based on the assumption that the reader has two or three background facts. Someone referred to Lee a while back as the girl who walked around a horse and disappeared. That's significant on at least three levels that require a knowledge of the background: her fondness for hayburners, her spectacular case of gafia, and the European official whose disappearance is one of the world's classic mysteries. So, the more of this sort of reminiscing and interpretation, the better. " It might be easier to remember fandoms if they were named, instead of numbered. Even though they don't depend on any particular individual or magazine, it's easier to remember a word than a figure, just as we speak of the Victorian Age, which really started a bit after

that queen ascended the throne, and was breaking up during the final years of her reign. Most of the fannish periods now listed by number had some outstanding individual or fanzine that typified the general atmosphere. ' ' My memories of damon's early fanning differ pretty sharply from a couple of other reminiscers. I'm positive that I'm correct on the circumstances surrounding his "Unite or Fie!" item that touched off the NFFF. But I don't find the energy to dig up my Snide envelope, to determine how many issues of that appeared. Isomer: The way I was taught, the r stands for "recognition" in fubar. ' ' The logic of assuming that four dimensions exist, one of which is time, seems quite irrefutable to me. It's easy to figure out the properties of a fourth spatial dimension, by analogy, but there's no particular reason why this fourth spatial dimension should exist, while excellent reasons exist for considering time as a necessary dimension. Time wouldn't necessarily be a non-spatial dimension, to a being with a still greater number of dimensions. A two-dimensional world that was in motion through the third dimension would see things changing in an inexplicable fashion, just as we see things alter with the passage of time. So, why not throw away those testeracts? Le Moindre: "Normal" meant the sort of care and use that the family auto usually gets in this country. Cars that are handled properly and maintained skilfully will operate almost indefinitely, but the habit of abusing machinery will probably survive any war. Fiendetta: I suspect that you're judging your omnipotent god by your own limitations. Just because you can't figure out the answer to that problem about a weight too heavy for the all-powerful deity to lift, you mustn't assume that the omnipotent god would be stumped; there's probably a solution to it. ' ' Somewhere, I've read that tonsils may have a function, that of intercepting some infections that would otherwise reach more functional areas of the throat. I've never had my tonsils removed and I catch cold in the throat only about once every two years. ' ' I'll bet that it was hard to get that great big marathon onto a little television screen. Fellow was telling me that he's seen a real, live marathon, somewhere near Boston, too. It had never been frozen, but it was inedible. Mooncalf: It seems impossible that there's still another intelligent female on the North American continent, but here she is. ' ' A split personality is one that's split off from reality, part or all of the time. Sufferers from it are now largely concentrated in this nation's armed forces, where they are claiming that island bases and World War Two-type bombers are what we need to whip Russia, rather than these stupid things like guided missiles and transcontinental rocket planes. ' ' Buddhism wasn't exactly a religion, in its original form. It was a philosophy, a difficult but effective way for an individual to learn to enjoy life through a sort of negation of life. Since it's been turned into a religion with promises of a hereafter and scriptures and all that, it is very nearly as bad as orthodox Christianity for deviance from the founder's principles. ' ' Aren't there lots of movies made specifically for Negroes, with all-Negro casts? I assume that they aren't on a very high level of artistry, if they exist, because the limited audience would put a strain on production budgets. ' ' I filled a page of Horizons once with an excerpt taken at random from a Merritt novel, which adapted into iambic pentameter with a minimum of changes of text. Seabury Quinn wrote a few novelettes for Weird Tales that were published as prose but

scanned as blank verse. " "A person with a well-adjusted sex life is a better worker and creator" is a risky generalization. Thomas Mann's "Dr. Faustus" is an excellent exposition of the opposite belief. Those broad, sweeping statements about sex just don't fit the varying ways in which humans are put together; remember, everyone used to assume that long walks or violent physical exercise was a surefire way to drain off sexual desires, and now it's acknowledged that such exertion increases them for many persons. Tyke Magazine: Wish I'd thought of that: "Rome resisted Christianity and Christianity resisted Rome. And the result is Roman Catholicism." Phlotsam: Well, some Rochester newspapers really did omit the classified ads because of newsprint scarcity. Sooner or later, newspapers will be forced to cut down on advertising as part of a general pulling-in-of-horns process. It is something like the retail store situation. Around the turn of the century most stores stayed open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., six days per week. Nobody believed they'd ever cut drastically into shopping hours, but it became necessary when labor grew too expensive. Growth of advertising has reached the point of diminishing returns for newspapers; too much of the theoretical profits leak away, just as signal strength suffers if you raise your television antenna too high. " Don't hesitate to buy a tape recorder on technical grounds. I'm the world's worst mechanic, and I got mine to operating after filling only one seven-inch reel with a 60-cycle hum of all intensities and degrees of fidelity. I hadn't shoved the microphone jack deep enough into its socket. " Two scenes from my first movies stick with me. One was a cockroach race, ending in the squashing of the bugs, in a famous movie about prison life which has a title that I should remember and can't. I can't identify the source of the other memory: A man dying before a firing squad, succeeded immediately by a shot of a guard or sentry, patrolling atop a high wall. This must have been a pre-sound film, because the volley was symbolized by a few frames of pictureless glaring plain colors. Null-F: GBS's theory that people should be jailed for failure to earn a specific minimum annual amount might be sounder than it seems at first thought. There's a theory at loose right now that a lot of juvenile delinquency today derives from the child labor laws; kids find it harder to earn spending money than formerly. Lack of the things that money can buy seems to underlie a large proportion of juvenile crime. " Wollheim had little or nothing to do with the VAPA. It was a Lowndes-Blishes thing, from start to finish, ending when they lost interest, after supplying perhaps half of the organization's total output over the years. " I'm afraid that I don't want to see Palmer succeed. If Other Worlds becomes successful, once again RAP will be claiming simultaneously that he's publishing the finest science fiction, publishing the science fiction that trains kids to enjoy the really good science fiction, and publishing the magazine with the biggest circulation which is the only thing that counts anyhow. I can't bear the guy. Wendigo: With Wetzel on the FAPA waiting list, it looks like an exciting future. " Only way to be fairly safe regarding the mailability of a magazine: show a copy to your postmaster before trying to mail it. Does anyone know if the Post Office Department has made a ruling on recorded tapes of dubious content? Grue: The space is all, as we Pennsylvania Dutch say, and this is another of those fascinating but not comment-provoking issues. No Gemzine in my bundle, so I'll try to find a copy elsewhere and comment next time.

No Common Vineyard

Sally Dunn writes longingly in Driftwood of a future in which she will be able to express liberal opinions. I'm afraid that she will be forced to enjoy fleeting moments of such liberty in her future. Because the world is pretty much a College of Wooster, a world in which the people of Plato's cave are growing increasingly afraid to peer into one another's protective clefts.

I spent only one afternoon with the Rev. Orville Shick. He was pastor for a couple of years at a small Presbyterian charge, about thirty miles west of Hagerstown. He had intelligence, the rarest of commodities in preachers, coupled with a still scarcer attribute, the bravery to say what he thought to a few persons. For picture-taking purposes, we visited several of his projects and two of his churches. He started to talk something like this:

"Ever since I accepted this charge, members of my congregation have been asking me how I like Hancock. What can I tell them? I don't like it. But I think that I can do some good by staying here. I'll be asked to resign, if I answer with the truth, if I tell the people that I think that Hancock is a wretched community that will never have any degree of prosperity until it gets an industry or two to cancel out the effects of a bad year for the orchards. I think that there's something pretty close to feudalism going on around here, between the big orchard operators and the moneyless people who work in the orchards. But I want the experience that I'm gaining here, so I change the topic. I don't admit that I'm simply going through an unpleasant but necessary stage in my career until I'm ready for a better charge." He was quite proud of the new church which he had persuaded one of the congregations in his charge to build on the side of Sideling Hill Mountain. But he admitted subterfuge regarding the building that it replaced. Older people in the congregation were attached to the miserable old church, which resembled nothing more than a roadside fruit stand, so it was necessary to leave it standing unused for a year or two, before having it razed as quickly and secretly as possible, before a split on its fate could develop in the congregation.

The Rev. Mr. Shick has since taken a charge in a larger city. The county has lost several other excellent ministers, too. One of them resigned, because his Lutheran congregation would not cooperate with his attempt to persuade the two or three Negro families in that rural area to start attending church. It was the preacher or no Negroes; no Negroes was the outcome.

Oddly enough, the clergy today has the freedom to stand in the pulpits and urge his congregation to do the very things that are the basis of Christianity. I think that it was either Menck-en or Shaw who pointed out that any preacher can make such recommendations, and his career suffers no harm, as long as he doesn't try to force his congregation to carry out these things. The University Baptist Church in Baltimore is comparatively liberal, standing across the street from Johns Hopkins, getting the patronage of the prosperous people in the vicinity and college students as well, and its young minister was starred in Hagerstown's interdenominational preaching mission this winter. One night, he explained the long fight that he had waged to lobby against the inclusion of "under God" in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Another sermon was devoted to a scathing attack on what is mas-

querading as a national religious revival, emphasizing that the peace-of-mind school is opposed to every Biblical tenet of Christianity. One of his talks was aimed directly at business, calling today's practices a "twilight zone of morality" that is to blame for most of the nation's crime. He had big audiences, and the collection plates overflowed and the service clubs applauded vigorously his appearances before them. But Hagerstown is precisely the same city today as it was before Dr. Richardson's appearance here. He didn't make the mistake of expressing any of those opinions in conversation to the important people of Hagerstown; he probably would be a national storm center, had he done so. The moral: Free speech is perfectly possible for the clergyman, as long as he restricts it to the sermons, and turns to the customary platitudes while his listeners are awake.

The need for something very close to hypocrisy is particularly painful in newspaper work. This incident occurs to me at least a dozen times weekly, in varied forms and places: I was sitting in a drug store, drinking a cup of coffee, when an extremely bulky man plopped into the next seat and started to talk. He recognized me as a reporter, having seen me in action somewhere and sometime, but I still don't know his name. He began to lament the trials of the small businessman who is trying to make a living in the motor trucking business. After I convinced him that my duties don't include the award of the contract on hauling newsprint supplies, he shifted his subject to the wage and hour laws. "This girl isn't particularly bright," he said, "but she can answer the telephone and meet people so I've been paying her fifty cents an hour to do my office work. So the other day, these guys from the government have a long talk with me. Now I've got to pay this girl a lot of back wages. I'm going to fire her. But if I hire someone else, I'll have to pay a buck an hour, just because I haul stuff across state lines. This isn't a free country any longer. And she wasn't complaining, either. What do you think?"

It would have been perfectly possible for me to say what I thought: that any man who would pay \$20 for a 40-hour week's work belonged in one of Dante's innermost frosted areas. I could have said so, walked away, and that would have been the end of it. But if I displayed such freedom of speech every time such a conversation springs up, little incidents would begin to occur. The general manager at the newspaper company would be buttonholed at Rotary meetings by industrialists who would suggest that someone with safer ideas would write less slanted stories; the knowledge of Russian that I've displayed through translating work from time to time would begin to appear in a new, sinister light; the boss would suggest that for the sake of public relations, it would be nice for all of his reporters to go to church every Sunday; I'd hear the background noise more frequently that gives away the fact that the switchboard girl is letting someone else listen to my telephone conversations. I've seen it happen elsewhere in Hagerstown. As I've explained in previous issues of Horizons, by keeping ears open and mouth shut, I manage to survive in Hagerstown as a person with a set of opinions that are only slightly anarchistic; while in the FAPA, where I feel free to say many of the things that I really think, I'm undoubtedly classified by most members as a confirmed conservative or reactionary.

But freedom of speech recedes still further into the distance for about one per cent of the local population—the school

teachers and the administrative staff of the board of education. We have never undergone here a violent controversy over the school system. Twice we came close to it. On the first occasion, the superintendent of schools simply threw up his hands in disgust and quit. Too little a man for such a big job, the county commissioners and his enemies in the school system said. That resigned superintendent has since acquired a slightly better job. He is now superintendent of the Cook County, Ill., schools, an area that includes a rather large town, Chicago. On the other occasion, a bunch of nitwits banded themselves into a committee with three avowed purposes: dissemination of information on the local schools, election of board of education members, and "democratic" operation of school affairs, which would include a referendum every time the question came up about where a new school should be built or whether the new senior high school needed a swimming pool. This organization caused me a painful winter, meeting one evening per week in endless sessions which had to be covered, lest something important arise. Fortunately, the organization broke up when half of its members discovered that the other half sought the right for teachers to inflict corporal punishment on students, the group disintegrated into its real components, a bunch of idiots with axes to grind. One or two of them were monomaniacs on the corporal punishment question (in Maryland, only the principal has the right to spank); another was battling for the "democracy" angle of a referendum, with endless comparisons between Hagerstown and ancient Athens (and I kept wondering if he thought Hagerstown should adopt as well Athens' slavery system, subjugation of women, and quick degeneration at the hands of the rabblers who insured its military defeat); still another turned out to be a fellow who had no desire to do anything but draw charts, and the endless supply of school statistics was his reason for joining the bunch.

The present superintendent is a mild fellow who achieves almost as many things locally as Dr. Benjamin Willis did, but exercises extreme caution when it comes to land options. Dr. Willis had taken an option on a huge hunk of land, for eventual construction purposes, before getting a go-ahead signal from the commissioners, an action whose enormity was so great that politicians still conduct conversations about it in a whisper. The new superintendent admits to me though hardly to the public in general that he loves to listen to the news from Moscow, via short wave, before leaving for the office each morning. The newspapers have put him into trouble only once. We wrote a story, on the basis of the annual Maryland Department of Education report, about the percentage of social studies in relation to the entire curriculum here. His phone rang constantly for days after that. People were threatening to write to the governor, if local schools were really teaching socialism a couple of hours every day, as the newspapers had declared. And so, as a result of covering school happenings, I have acquired something pretty close to understanding of the gobbledegook which most school people speak and talk. Most of these school people could say things quite plainly, if public opinion permitted. But when John Doe concludes that the school system has failed, because someone wrote a book (which he didn't take time to read) entitled "Why Can't Johnny Read?", it's simply not safe for school teachers to speak and write plainly. They adopt an educational jargon of their own. It's filled with things like "areas of experience" and "a working basis of mutual collaboration toward

the understanding of one another". Some of it is meaningless and the rest of it makes excellent sense, if you have the patience to go through it and translate. It's the only way that even vaguely liberal notions can be presented by the men and women in the educational profession.

Occasionally, someone in Hagerstown revolts. The local area is one of the three counties in the United States that supports a county museum. (Other museums are tied in with colleges or philanthropists or some such sponsors.) For about ten years, it had as director a suave, knowing fellow who was a failure as an artist, which is true of all museum directors, but a genius at diplomatic relations with the people who hold the pursestrings. He succeeded in getting safely out of town a quite well-known artist who came here for a showing of his paintings and was picked up as a homosexual before opening day; he headed the civic music group, talking almost all of the visiting musicians into attending the deadly teas and receptions which were almost always arranged in their honor; when the president of the board of trustees visited the museum, he walked beside her with a folding chair, and deftly plopped it beneath her every time she indicated a desire to sit. One afternoon, for some forgotten reason, I visited the museum and found him thoroughly drunk. For one hour, he held me spell-bound with a monologue on what he really thought about Hagerstown and the people to whom he was so hypocritically genial. A few months later, he resigned to take a similar post at a museum in a slightly larger southern town. The director who immediately preceded him hadn't been as lucky. That former director had made the mistake of marrying a Hagerstown girl. That one is still in Africa, following the career of archeologist which he adopted as the only sure way out.

I wonder a lot about the medical profession. I don't suppose that anyone will ever know these three things: what song the sirens sang, how many mercy killings are achieved by physicians, and how frequently physicians deliberately induce miscarriages or perform abortions. Maybe the physicians themselves have a good idea of the general ethics of the profession, but I somehow doubt it. There was a county health officer who was pretty frank about such things. He wasn't a practising physician when I knew him, so he may have felt free to say some true things. Or it may be that the health officer was simply trying to shock me. I was attempting to get enough facts to write a story about the clocklike precision with which elderly local persons were dying, a few weeks after breaking a hip or suffering some other accidental injury, as the result of complicating pneumonia. The health officer, however accurate he may have been, squelched that story in the bud. He simply told me that physicians generally do everything short of downright chilling to encourage an injured elderly person to die of pneumonia. "It's a reasonably painless way to go," he explained. "It saves the old folks lingering for years too crippled to do anything, maybe in agony from the injury, maybe starving slowly because they're a burden on relatives who can't support them properly."

Of course, there are the incidents that occur spontaneously without reflecting on any particular profession or stratum. A group of local aviation enthusiasts feel guilty today, ten years after a young man was killed in a plane crash. The young man had somehow enlisted and served in the Army Air Corps, even though he

was an epileptic. Upon his discharge, he was wild about aviation and lied about his medical condition in order to get his pilot's license. Other aviation enthusiasts around town could have grounded him, simply by dropping a few facts in the right places. But this would have embarrassed him, might have cost him his vocation, and everyone kept quiet. He suffered an attack while flying solo one day, crashed and was instantly killed. I admit quite frankly that I dissimulated dreadfully the night that World War Two concluded. I tried to join the general mood of gayety. But my real thoughts were black, because that day had also produced the announcement that the draft would continue at a rapid clip for months or years to come. People would have considered me lower than the vilest reptile to admit the truth, that the thought of enduring years in the service was more immediate to me than the end of the war. One corner of my mind was even busy, assuring another segment of my thinking processes that this state of emotions wasn't so terrible, because the end of the war had been perfectly obvious for days, while the announcement about the draft was unexpected. Or you can obtain an interesting monologue, without any charge, simply by asking any funeral director what he thinks of people who bury jewelry or other types of valuables with relatives. Every mortician of my acquaintance believes this to be one of humanity's most unpleasant habits. Some of them try feebly to talk the family out of it. But I've never found one who possessed the courage to stand up to the family and insist that this should not be done on the grounds that the family itself will regret the action after a few months have dulled the emotions.

All of the foregoing has no particular point, unless it's to illustrate one merit of the FAPA that is generally overlooked. The FAPA is one of the few existing methods by which an individual can disseminate his riskier opinions and ideas with a minimum of embarrassment or possible consequences. I'm positive that Gertrude Carr entrusts matters to the pages of her FAPA and SAPS publication which she wouldn't dare to hint to her neighbors. Most of us have ventured opinions in ayjay print that we wouldn't care to show to the boss or the family or the cop on the corner. They needn't be subversive thoughts or stupid thoughts; they're just ideas that differ either from the ideas of most people or from the ideas that our neighbors have come to expect from us.

And it might be that the thing which is most needed by the nation today is not freedom of speech but willingness to speak, the courage to say the things that it's perfectly possible to say if a person has the courage to make those statements. The Mrs. Carr who has dreams about FitzGerald must be at least as real as the Mrs. Carr who praises the senator from Wisconsin to her friends, and it's a shame that the former has been so completely engulfed by the latter through society's elaborate set of taboos and fetishes. It's undoubtedly a brave and noble thing, for a person to sacrifice himself in the interest of public school integration or the rite of holy communion, as many persons have done. But little drops of water and little grains of sand still exist. Sally Dunn and the rest of us have the ability to shock people and be considered eccentric in many ways other than the life-and-death matters. It might be best for us and for the world if we continued to smoke in colleges where the students just don't do such things, pending an opportunity and the potential to set the world, instead of just a cigarette, aflame.

How We Got Rid of the Little Green Men

We were sitting around the store, fretting over the situation. Jeff Hawkins had just shooed a little green man out of the flour barrel, when the whole pile of buckets went toppling with a crash. Jeff cursed and kicked at the little green men who came wriggling out from under the mess they'd caused.

"No use exercising your leg muscles, Jeff," someone said. "You know that they're tough critters. They wouldn't feel it, even if they didn't always duck in time."

Jeff fumed while he replaced the lid on the flour barrel and picked up his bucket display. But he couldn't answer back to the truth. We'd had a peaceful little town until the little green men landed in their flying saucer. They didn't give any intention of leaving, and spent all their time looking frantically into every nook and corner of the village. Any day now, city folks driving through would start to believe what they saw, and then there'd be all sorts of publicity.

"I still say it's jewelry," Mrs. Hawkins said. Her eyes didn't leave the little green men who had been huddling near the front door, and now went shinnying up the side of the wall, Indian file. "There isn't anything else worth hunting in this little town."

Jeff saw what the little green men were trying to do, just in time. He used a broom to keep them away from the light fixture. A couple of us got a ladder, and took down the big fluorescent fixture from the ceiling, opened it up, and let the little green men see that it contained nothing of importance. That was the only way to have any peace, figure out in advance where they'd hunt next and help them, so they wouldn't do damage.

The fellow who runs the Esso station had stopped in to kill time. He said: "Now, I got a theory. I don't think they're hunting anything. I think they're looking for a place to settle down."

"Naw." Jeff watched the little green men file out of the store and sighed in relief. "They're looking for something. It's a good thing they shine in the dark. Without that, a fellow couldn't even have privacy in the bedroom. But I'm admitting that we're stumped. They don't want food, they don't pay any attention to money, we've given them batteries and such gadgets in case they want to fix their flying saucer. I guess there's nothing to do but call in the law."

We saw the shadow darken the store, before we noticed the hermit standing in the doorway. Mrs. Hawkins said:

"Old Man Romaine! What brings you to town?"

"I saw a little green man snooping around my shack and followed him back to town. I'm going to move away if there's going to be that sort of thing going on around my place." He walked in, cautiously, because there were splinters in the floor and he never wore shoes when he came to town. You could tell by the smooth bottom skin on his feet that he never went barefoot except when he wanted to put on a show in front of people. We told him how the little green men were hunting for something, we didn't know what, maybe uranium or something of that sort that just didn't exist in this little village, and how we were afraid everyone and his brother would crowd into town when word got out.

"You say they've been hunting day and night for five days, snooping into everything, driving you to distraction? And they

never talk to you or pay any attention when you try to talk to them? And you can't figure out what they're looking for?"

"That's exactly it." Folks in the store said it just like a crowd answering a speaker in a movie. Old Man Romaine eased himself into a chair and looked at us. He said:

"Whenever living critters start acting peculiar, there's always the same reason back of it. I know from experience. Now let's see. Have you let these little green men look in the bank vault?" We told him how they'd squirmed in somehow, scaring the cashier to death when he found them inside the next morning. It wasn't there, whatever they wanted.

"And they haven't found what they're looking for in any of the houses?" He could see from our faces that they hadn't. He sat pondering a moment. From out of the crowd came a voice:

"Just what do you mean by what you said? About folks acting peculiar for the same reason?" Old Man Romaine tossed a scornful look in the general direction of the voice, then had a bright thought.

"How about Dobson's Cave?" We looked at each other. Jeff scratched his head, and said:

"I don't know if they've looked there. It's all grown up around the entrance. And they've got big rocks over the mouth so kids can't get in, ever since part of the roof fell in. But there's nothing in that old cave."

Old Man Romaine rose and started to look around for the little green men. We never did know if they could read minds, but a couple of them came scooting into the store just then. He tramped carefully through the door. "Come along, if you're going to help look," he yelled to us over his shoulder.

None of us moved. We knew that cave didn't have anything inside except a few bats and it was a four-mile hike. So we watched through the window the long line of little green men tagging along after the hermit. Pretty soon the little green men were hard to see, when they cut across the green pasture, and we started to talk about other things.

It was starting to grow dark when we heard a commotion. The hermit wasn't in sight and it was hard to see anything against the pasture. Mrs. Hawkins started to jump up and down, clapping her hands like commencement night.

"I just thought," she squealed. "Maybe the little green men collect critters from different planets. Maybe they'll get some bats and go back where they came from."

"Calm down," Jeff told his wife. "Haven't you got any sense left? Bats fly around the street light every night. The little green men don't pay any attention to them." She stopped jumping up and down and pressed her forehead to the big display window.

"I still wonder what that hermit meant?" she said, in a subdued sort of tone. "About the thing that makes critters act peculiar? He's the most peculiar man himself in three—"

She never finished. Some little kids had gone running in the direction of the commotion. Now one of them came racing to the store, yelling so excited that we couldn't make sense. So we all hustled outside. Without a dirty store window in front of us, we saw all the little green men coming back from the cave. They weren't in a straight line any longer, because some of them were finding the little green women pretty hard to handle. But the little green men yanked and carried and shoved the little green women into their flying saucer, and ten minutes later they were gone for good.

Dull, Small Towns I Have Known

Williamsport is a town containing about 2,000 residents, built along the Maryland bank of the Potomac River, six or seven miles from the center of Hagerstown. There was a time when five miles of farmland separated the two towns. The trolley charged double fare for the entire trip, and another little town started to grow up near the point at which the extra fare was levied. It was called Halfway, as a result. Halfway has grown to be larger than Williamsport by now, but it hasn't changed its name to Three-Fourths, as some people keep suggesting. The trolley has been replaced by a bus, the point at which another fare becomes necessary has been moved, and a century from now, some etymologist will discover that the name is a corruption of the first name and initial of a pioneer settler named Alf A. On the other hand, Williamsport has just about the same population today as it possessed early in the 19th century. Local legend claims that the population can never change, because each time a baby is born in Williamsport, one of its young men leaves town.

The most remarkable thing about Williamsport, to the casual visitor, is the width of its streets. They have ample room for parking on both sides and three or four lanes of moving traffic. Yet the town is an old one, founded by a Revolutionary War general, Otho Holland Williams. General Williams didn't foresee the traffic congestion of today, but he laid out his town with provision for the great carriages which he hoped would some day go up and down its streets by the thousands. Otho Holland knew General George Washington, as an old war buddy. Williamsport's founder also knew that the new nation needed a federal capital. He intended to do everything in his power to have the capital built in the town which he was founding. Unfortunately, the wide streets and the pull which Williams possessed with General Washington were unavailing. General Washington was so farsighted that he pointed out what General Williams had ignored—the fact that a great city could never thrive as far west as Williamsport, because there was no way to get supplies shipped a full hundred miles inland. The Great Falls of the Potomac prevented navigation, and it was obvious that roads would never be a dependable means of transporting merchandise. George Washington did visit Williamsport, and reminisced then about the good old days before the Revolution when he had tramped over that area as a surveyor, before all the land was dug up into farms. But the city of Washington was founded far downstream. When it was too late to move the capital, George Washington had another brilliant idea, a canal that would open up the western lands to commerce. It took a century to complete the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal as far as Cumberland, some 175 miles, and nearly another century to convince the canal company that competition with railroads and highways wasn't possible.

But the river that blighted Williamsport's chance for world fame remains a dominating influence in the town today. Just as in Mark Twain's Hannibal, every child and almost every adult in Williamsport is influenced by the river, in one way or another. Every time that it rains hard, people start to look uneasily at one another and at the river. In March, 1936, a combination of hard rains and melting ice sent the river 49.8 feet above normal, washing away some houses, leaving 300 people in town homeless because of waterlogged houses, and causing oldtimers to shut up af-

ter forty-seven years of uninterrupted reminiscing of the local effects of the Johnstown Flood. After the 1936 flood waters receded, the washed-out people moved back into their homes or put up new houses where the old ones used to be. Nobody even considered such a drastic step as moving to a point which future floods would not reach.

To me, April 15 is a magic date, because around that time, the new baseball season begins. In Williamsport, that is an even more important time. It's the opening of the most important part of the fishing season. Wolfe's on the Square sells slightly more than 4,000 fishing licenses every year. Practically every resident of Williamsport who is ambulatory purchases one of them, and the remainder go to the people from other towns in the county who are induced to purchase their licenses in Williamsport by some sort of sympathetic vibratory influences. The condition of the river is posted every morning in the store window, for the benefit of persons who don't want to trudge a few blocks to look for themselves. The Potomac isn't as favored for fishing as the Conococheague which empties into the river near Williamsport, but the Potomac gets more attention during the fishing season because more fishermen fall into the river. At least twice a year, someone gets marooned on Duck Island after some sort of nighttime fishing mishap and spends three or four hours, shouting until employees of the power plant hear him, and send out a rescue boat. There are no fish in the canal bed, which contains water only in very wet seasons, but it is a wonderful place for bird watchers. A few years ago, the federal government decided to construct a highway on the canal bed for sightseeing purposes. The reaction in Williamsport—and neighboring communities—couldn't have been any worse if it had been proposed to dam up the river itself. Eventually, Supreme Court Justice William Douglas, who favored retention of the river in its natural state, organized a hiking party, tramping the canal right of way from Cumberland to Great Falls. Now the government hopes to build the road on the bluff overlooking the river, instead of down in the canal bed.

For a small town with no particular wealth, Williamsport is possessed of fine buildings. William Byron, a member of the family that owns the town tannery, got himself elected to Congress during depression days. His influence got a very nice town building erected in Williamsport with WPA funds and labor. Just about the same time, the bus driver who was taking Williamsport High School to a basketball game decided not to waste time waiting for a freight to reach and pass a grade crossing at Rockville. He miscalculated, and 17 school kids were killed. Byron seized the opportunity to dip into WPA funds again, and the town acquired a memorial library. A year or so later, the congressman's plane crashed. That's why there's a Byron Memorial Park in Williamsport, complete with an excellent recreational building. It was completed just before the WPA broke up. It's been nearly two decades since a windfall has come along to Williamsport, but it's now ticketed for a new post office, and the townsfolk are talking of a drive to dig a municipal swimming pool. Byron Memorial Park is available for that purpose every time it rains, because someone miscalculated drainage and it submerges completely every time a half-inch of rain falls at Williamsport.

Slowness of change is one of Williamsport's principal distinctions. The volunteer firemen have had the same president for 26 years. The same man was mayor for 21 years, quitting only be-

cause his employer finally gave him a promotion into duties that involved lots of traveling. Jacob Mills, the town policeman, has been the community Santa Claus for 23 years. This is a simonpure Santa, untainted by any commercial considerations. One week before Christmas, Mills begins to climb into his Santa suit at dusk and prowl the streets all evening, talking to every child in sight and walking into every house where small boys and girls reside. He's looking for a successor, because he grew disillusioned with the task several years ago, the night he got stuck in the mud while driving back from a visit to a rural family that lives along a wretched dirt road. But nobody else wants to give up the time, and Mills seems haunted by the fear of disrupting the juvenile psychology of an entire town by failing to do the job each December. He wears out a Santa suit every four or five years, but a service club or the volunteer firemen always buy him a new one.

The fact that one man could destroy the Santa illusion in this manner is an excellent example of how great an effect the slightest act can have in a town like Williamsport. A different kind of example concerned the town dump. For decades, a large portion of the river bank a half-mile from town has been dedicated to the purposes of a dump, trash heap, ghat, and similar activities. The rare individuals who occasionally tire of fishing were in the habit of practising their marksmanship on the excessively large rats that thrived there. It is perpetually bathed in a bluish smoke, and one fellow almost got killed from a stray bullet. The town council decided to close up the dump. It took four years to find a field which suited everyone as a new dump site: proposed areas were rejected as too close, too distant, too hard to find, too easily visible from the highway, or too expensive. A landfill was finally located in a satisfactory spot. Immediately the rats began to miss their customary food supplies and invaded the town. The council was told by the state health department to get rid of the rats; unfortunately, everyone in Williamsport owns several dogs and cats and it took long, arduous preparations to arrange a poisoning date on which all pets could be confined to quarters. Now the rats are fewer and dumping no longer is done along the river. But plans to clean up the old dump site have been dumped; so many organizations and individuals own the land on which it is located that it's hopeless to try to obtain cooperation in a beautifying program.

There isn't much migration from Williamsport; it's often accompanied by dire results when it happened. "It's like living in a cage," one girl complains to me. "The Methodist preacher lives on one side of me, the American Legion home is across the street, and everyone who works at the silk mill looks into my window on the way to and from the job." But those who escape frequently return voluntarily to the sanctuary of the cage, after a period of wildness. Boots Poffenberger was the best prospect that the Williamsport Wildcats had discovered in uncounted decades of semi-pro baseball activity. Someone told him he could become a big leaguer. He did, first with the Brooklyn Dodgers, then with the Detroit Tigers. His failures to report, his antics after he had reported for duty, and his unpredictable behaviour on the mound curtailed a career that might have been as spectacular for accomplishment as Dizzy Dean's. He's back in Williamsport, broke and happy, coaching little league teams and fishing. The town has another native son on the Dodgers' roster, Dave Cole, but nobody pays much

attention to his career. All Williamsport ballplayers are anti-climaxes after Boots.

Town elections in Williamsport are gradually turning into small imitations of their counterparts in larger cities, unfortunately. There was a time when Williamsport had several distinctive features for choosing municipal officers. There was no registration. If you were recognized by the election officials, you voted. There might be a delay while the officials got together to calculate the year of your birth, to make sure you were twenty-one years old, or a map might be consulted to determine that your home was located within the town limits. Then, when you were permitted to vote, you didn't waste time making marks on an official ballot. Instead, you reached into your pocket and gave the man a ballot that had been handed to you, already filled out, by your favorite politician, hours or days before. Both parties had ample supplies of such ballots available. The town derived a small extra revenue by selling advertising space on the back of these ballots before turning them over to the politicians. Nobody in Williamsport can remember why there are no Republican and Democratic parties in town politics. Instead, it's Citizens and Progressive, parties whose membership is divided roughly but not altogether in correspondence with the normal major political sects.

Timelessness in Williamsport takes queer forms. The veiled lady is probably the oldest tradition in the town. Approximately once every decade, the veiled lady makes her appearance. She glides out of narrow alleys or sidles along the fences on the darker streets, scaring the living daylight out of kids and children for her silence, her ominous gestures, and her jet black garb. This goes on for several weeks, until the veiled lady is finally either captured or evades capture by such a narrow margin that the perpetrator reforms. It always turns out to be a teen-aged boy who had nothing better to do, and usually is released for lack of any particular crime. The original veiled lady seems to have been a ghost, and it may be that the specter influences the kids to keep up the tradition; it seems difficult to believe that it could stay alive after such long lapses over so many decades, without some specific cause.

Williamsport is the town where church bells ring unexpectedly at the oddest hours of the day or night. The Methodist minister sets them off every time some girl in the town has a baby, no matter what the hour. Not to be outdone, the Assemblies of God preacher subscribed to a special telephone service: dial his number, and you hear a recorded prayer, ending with a request for contributions. The prayer changes daily, to keep people interested. The fire siren blasts forth many times every day, because every time the fire hall's telephone rings, the siren is activated. One of the most endearing features of Williamsport has disappeared within the last year, unfortunately, the most battered war memorial in the United States. It stood smack in the middle of U.S. Route 11, which runs through the center of town, and was banged up by a large truck at weekly intervals until moved to the quiet of Byron Memorial Park. Williamsport drinks Potomac River water and didn't complain, the time that small fish began to appear in faucet water, probably out of loyalty to the favorite recreation. Its high school chooses the valedictorian and salutatorian for June graduation ceremonies in December. The suspense used to make the kids too nervous. It's a typical small town.

Whither Wollheim?

For Tapeworms Only:

I am now among the ranks of tape recorder owners. In my possession is a Tri-Fi Dixieland, which should put me into audible contact with quite a few persons in the audience. It's dual track, operates at either 7 1/2 or 3 3/4 ips, and has the inestimable advantage for an unmuscle person like me of weighing a mere 24 pounds. Unfortunately, since acquiring it in February, I've been able to do little or nothing with it in a fannish sense, due to an almost unprecedented lack of time. All indications point to a springtime breakup in the logjam of things that had to be done during the winter. So by the time this FAPA mailing appears, I hope to have sent tapes forth into the wilderness to FAPA members who have recorders. I think it is also safe to pledge a fairly prompt reply via tape to anyone who wants to take the initiative. In case anyone in the audience is contemplating the purchase of a machine, it might be well to investigate this one. Bill Danner recommended it as an excellent buy. Olson Radio Warehouse, 275 East Market Street, Akron 8, Ohio, is offering it at \$79.95, complete with one five-inch and five seven-inch reels of tape, plus expressage. The list price is \$129.95, and it seems to operate more satisfactorily than most of the tape recorders in its price range. I can detect no wow when playing back music recorded at the slower speed. It hasn't thrown or broken any tape so far, and no mechanical defects have developed. There are a few features lacking that would be found in more expensive models: no tone control, no fast forward speed, and the lid can't be closed with seven inch reels on the spindles. But that low weight is a tremendous convenience, for anyone who will be moving his recorder from one place to another with fair frequency.

For Speculators Only:

Recent FAPA remarks about religion have set me to wondering. I am no student of theology, but I admit with pride to have read "The Brook Kerith" and even looked at a collection of Robert Ingersoll's lectures once. (They reminded me too much of the way a local school teacher talks on the Fourth of July.) Maybe some of the people in the audience would like to mull over this question: Could Christianity survive the loss of the doctrine of the Resurrection, just as it has adapted itself to live without the Old Testament time scale and the theory that the earth is the center of the universe? Let's assume that suddenly copies of the legendary Q source for the New Testament accounts of Christ should begin to turn up in caves or some such place, just as the early mss. of Old Testament writings have begun to appear near the Dead Sea. Let's assume further that even the most quibbling students of incunabula can find nothing in these copies of Q to cause doubt about their age and authenticity. Finally, we'll imagine that every ms. has one feature in common, even though they may differ from one another in other minor details: they all stop at the Crucifixion. How do you think Christianity in general would react? By putting the Resurrection into the same category of "symbolic truth" as the Genesis account of the Creation is now placed? Or by simply ignoring the existence of these copies of Q? Or by delving frantically for clues that would indicate that Christianity had already split into several sects when Q was circulated, with this particular gospel deriving from a heretical branch? At

that, I have always found it difficult to understand the culminating significance that the Resurrection is given in today's churches. I imagine that only the Unitarians consider it as less than the very central core of dogma. Yet there wasn't anything in the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah that would have required a Resurrection. The Apostles, who must have been prepared for almost anything after the Crucifixion, seem to have been completely caught by surprise at what actually happened. Christ himself had said little or nothing to indicate that he expected this turn of events; references to the second coming were in relation to the end of the world, which all the early Christians expected momentarily, and which Christ himself must have believed to be imminent, judging by his recommendations on economics and celibacy.

Helpful Hints for Photographers:

Many members of the FAPA own cameras and are interested in other planets. It is easy enough to take a picture of Mars or Venus, because you simply aim the camera and fire away. But you can amaze your friends by doing something really difficult. Why not take photographs of the nearest stars, to determine if planets are circling them? I would recommend the use of a flash bulb, because the dark side of these planets might be turned toward earth when you click the shutter. The tables found in photographic handbooks are not quite adequate for this situation. Let's assume that your camera synchronizes at 1/50th of a second and that you happen to have No. Five flashbulbs handy. The nearest star is situated about 154,854,374,400,000,000 feet away from earth. That calculation is based on sea level, but you probably won't overexpose very seriously if you happen to live several hundred feet above sea level. If your flashgun reflector is polished and bright, you will need a lens capable of opening to $f/.000000000000000064$. I would recommend the use of a 35 mm camera, since it is light in weight and easy to hold. To prevent a lens of this power from becoming too bulky, it would be better to avoid an extreme telephoto lens. The best compromise would be a 100 mm lens. To insure proper light-gathering ability at this aperture, the lens will be 9,708,906,250 miles in diameter. To avoid flare, take the pictures on an evening when the moon isn't very bright.

Social Note:

The first fans to show up at 303 Bryan Place in a year or longer were Larry Shaw and Lee Hoffman. They were here such a short time that I didn't even have the opportunity to accept the offer of a pint of Okechonokee swamp water or to ask how one goes about boycotting Infinity. There wasn't a stencil in the house, so no oneshot. It was raining too hard to get a camera in the limited time available, so no pictures. A most unsatisfactory day in many respects, in fact, since I had an early appointment for work which couldn't be avoided and they needed to get to New York on the same evening. We have hopes of repeating the general situation under more satisfactory circumstances a bit later.

Sophistication:

I wonder, do other people who write fiction suffer embarrassment? When I was about three years old, I used to enjoy cutting out paper dolls, coloring outlines of people in paint books, and doing similar things based on the human figure which undoubtedly had deep Freudian significance. Even then, I remember that I hur-

ried over the portions of the pastime involving the more private sections of the human body. When I entered fandom, I followed the crowd and tried to write stories. Immediately I discovered that those old repressions about imaginary humans were still inside me. Writing stories about people who didn't exist caused me more embarrassment than any of the stupid things that I did to real people in actual life. I found it positively difficult to refer in a story to an elderly man by either the first name or the last name unprefixd by a Mr.; it seemed disrespectful to my elders. After I had turned out three or four dreadfully bad pieces of fiction, I realized that one of their many faults was my tendency to make all the nasty things happen offstage, out of immediate sight of the narrator and the characters. Understand, I didn't make my characters so real that I mistook them for actual people; anyone who can remember some of the fiction in the old hectographed Horizonses should realize that. And I didn't make them do perverted things, either. It just seemed to me that I was being a snoop or a peeping Tom or a gossip when I described the things that happened in these stories. Probably this was a major reason why my spasmodic efforts to sell fiction professionally over a ten-year period met with such a miserable failure. Now, I've never encountered any such reaction among other fiction writers, good and bad, prosperous and unsuccessful. Lots of them find it agony to create fiction, simply because they have trouble deciding what should happen next or can't stop revising what they have already written. But they don't seem to have any scruples about the way they invade the privacy of their creations. This sense of embarrassment hung on for me, even after my first sales; in fact, it took a more definite form, in that I started to feel guilty toward real persons whose first names were the same as those of my characters. But last year, when I wrote about two-thirds of a novel which I still intend to finish one of these months, something happened. I became hardened, steely-emotioned, dispassionate. Maybe the theme of the novel helped, because I destroy in it the entire solar system, a dozen lines before the first chapter ends, together with all of humanity except for one fellow; maybe that clean sweep wiped out some deep-rooted repression within me. During January and February, I pounded out six stories, some 32,500 words altogether, as boldly as anyone would have done it. Even if they don't sell, I've accomplished something.

Put These in Quasi-Quotes, and Blame Croutch:

While you're here, you won't mind taking some pictures of the baby, will you?...If you'll send a reporter right away, he can get a good story on how the leaves in this tree look like the face of Abraham Lincoln....Well, it is a strike, but you aren't planning to put anything about it in the newspaper, are you?...See, I've even written the headline for you....I know you're so busy at the office that I thought I'd just call you at home and give you this story....You see, our lodge wins a prize if it gets more stuff in the newspaper than any other chapter in the country....I don't guess that's enough information to make a very long article, so you can just add some things to it to fill it out a little bit.... Now, don't use my name in the paper as having said that, but I'll back you up if it causes a libel suit....Can't you just say that it happened on Sunday without saying which Sunday?...No, I've never

been married, but you've been printing service men's pictures for all the other mothers....We don't care if you never print it, we asked you to come because the professional photographers charge too much and we wanted a picture....Will you print this every day this week?...You mean that you need first names, too? ...It's wonderful how the newspaper always comes out with exactly the right number of pages for the type....I'd like you to look up for me this article about an auto accident that happened about 1942 or 1943....

Not All Greek to Us:

This is as good a place as any to collect a few more notes on the general topic of Greek drama, Elizabethan acting, and opera librettos. They belong in the mailing comments, but would be pretty badly fractured among various magazines if used there. My belief that the Greek dramas were intoned in song rather than in speech has several pieces of circumstantial evidence as its basis. First and foremost is the manner in which the great Greek plays are known to have recently grown out of the primitive ceremonials and rituals to the gods, which were definitely made up of song, dance and accompanying instrumental music. The extremely liberal use which the Greek drama makes of the chorus is another piece of evidence; it is next to impossible to speak effectively in a chorus, even in poetry, when the language's poetry does not depend on strength of accent and rhyme. Despite all of the praise that has been lavished by critics on the texts of the Greek dramas, they seem singularly sketchy and plain, in comparison with the flights of imagination that went into Greek philosophy and history and the plastic arts about the same time; they read very much as good opera librettos read. But the most compelling reason for the theory that the Greek dramas were sung is one that I've never seen in print. It's the simple matter of acoustics. The Greeks gave their plays in outdoor theaters, and their audiences were large (one reference book estimates 15,000 as typical of a major festival). How in the deuce could actors be audible to the audience, using a speaking voice without benefit of amplifying system, or the resonating devices of the enclosed theater; or the lungs of a Moskowitz which turn up only once in a millenium? The singing voice carries much better under such circumstances. If we assume that the plays were sung, we also see the reason for the frequent choral sections—the contrast between solo and choral voices that is still so effective in 20th century compositions. I'm also dubious about the assumption that a half-dozen woodwinds and drums made up the orchestra for the Greeks. They would have been inaudible; I suspect that really big accompanying forces were put to use. It's important to remember that even Elizabethan plays were chanted, instead of intoned in ordinary speaking tones, to contemporary audiences. Acoustics may have been partly responsible in this case, too. The theater of the day was open on top, and a surprisingly large proportion of its inside walls contained closely packed human bodies, and the human body is one of the most efficient sound absorbing objects in existence. Unfortunately, we can't be sure about the Greek drama. We don't know exactly how they pronounced their language, the surviving fragments of Greek music are performed today as much through guesswork as through scholarly knowledge, and we can't be sure that the musical instruments which the Greeks most frequently pictured are the kind that were most frequently used in daily life.

Don't Say It, Just Think It:

If we ever open a college of fannish higher education, required reading will be a looseleaf volume entitled the Postal Manual. Many fans don't seem to realize that such a guide exists. All sorts of misconceptions about the mails, fandom's principal means of communications, continue to exist. It takes only a half-hour or so to go through the sections of this document which apply to the average fan. And it's available at any public library. Better yet, it's written in a language that bears some resemblance to English, in contrast to most government publications. The sections dealing with unmailability are particularly important. For instance, did you know that you can be plunged into deep trouble with the Post Office Department regarding lewdness or obscenity, even though you haven't written or even seen the stuff in question? Just mailing the address of a place where this unmailable matter may be obtained makes you liable to penalties. It's also quite possible to break the postal regulations about contraceptives, even though you're too innocent to know one contraceptive from another. The mere act of urging in print the use of contraceptives, without specifying the type or telling where to get them, is technically against the postal rules. I think that it behooves the FAPA to pay particular care to this matter, in view of population and religious arguments that keep bobbing up. You can also suffer a fine or jail sentence if you don't watch your language when asking someone via the mails to pay a debt, so be careful, when you lose patience with the next fan who stops putting out his fanzine as soon as you subscribe. Incidentally, the postal regulations make no distinctions on mailability among the various classes of mail. You are just as liable to penalty if you put something in a first class letter as in a third class fanzine or fourth class FAPA mailing. Naturally, there's much less peril to you, if you use first class, because postal workers are apt to open materials sent second, third or fourth class; but the recipient can complain about what he receives first class. On the brighter side, at least one fan to my knowledge can mail his bundles of magazines at a very low rate, because his local postmaster lets him use the book rate applicable to publications containing at least 24 pages. Now, I'm pretty sure that this particular postmaster errs on the side of leniency, because there are sections in the manual that exclude from such benefits any publications that are produced in typewriter face characters, such as mimeographed or hectographed matter. But it might be worth a trial, in your own home town, to wave under the nose of the clerk the page that describes this lower rate, in the hopes that he won't delve into the related sections closely enough to locate the exceptions. As for the FAPA itself, third class mail can be sent by non-profit organizations at a reduced rate, if a special permit is obtained. I'm pretty sure that the FAPA would qualify, as either a fraternal or a scientific organization. The saving wouldn't be enormous to the organization, since the permit can't be applied to fourth class and third class has a weight limit of eight ounces. But the possession of such a permit should save the FAPA a few bucks in the course of every year in postage on the waiting listers' copies of The Fantasy Amateur, special bulletins between mailings to the full membership, and the like; it might also be used when the official editor sends out a postmailing that doesn't exceed the eight-ounce maximum for the class.

Vox Dei

W. Max Keasler: "Right after I went into the Navy, I was all set to start up another fanzine when the Navy transferred me. So I boxed up all my fanly belongings (material, stencils, lettering guides,...everything..the whole works..even my mailing list) and the Navy shipped them for me. Well, they never got there and I was so discouraged, decided to just give up until the time came when I would be permanently stationed somewhere and here I am.

" The JO after my name stands for journalist third class, and that's just about what I do, release Navy news subjects to civilian newspapers, magazines, tv, etc. A sort of public relations department for the Navy. Also put out a newsletter for the base, and all in all it's a very good job. Especially after some of the jobs I've seen you can get in the Navy. What helped me a lot was my high school journalism and working on Fv and Opus, because if you can type and run a mimeograph they won't put you to mopping decks. " Anyway I decided to get in touch with some fans in the area, and taking up the Bell Telephone book I looked up some names I knew were in southern California and there was Charles Burbee. I wrote Burbee asking him about fan doings in the area and he referred me to Ron Elik. Ron invited me over to his house last Sunday for assembling of the FAPA mailing and after 2½ years it was good to see & hear a fan again. Burbee, Howard Miller, Lee Jacobs, Ed Cox, etc & various wives were there."

Marion Z. Bradley: "...Another cliché you might well avoid, if you go to writing Jack Woodford-type novels, is the woman who wriggles out of her dress and is naked underneath. I worked for a time in a dress shop. I fancy the man whose heroine is naked under her dress is simply limited in his knowledge of feminine lingerie; some women, particularly those who have never had a child, omit brassieres, but the omission of all underclothing is limited, I think, to the very poor, and possibly the whimsical very-Bohemian, of whom I have no experience. If you want to omit doing personal research, and have no sisters for confirmatory evidence, in the interests of realism I say that the minimum is usually pants of some variety and a petticoat or slip, and 99 times out of a hundred, more than that. This because I was reading an issue of Manhunt magazine the other day, and three stories had that naked-under-her-dress cliché. From which I deduce that many writers are either from a strata of society about which I know less than nothing....or else their information comes from a lack of knowledge. (Why, if they wonder what women wear under their dresses, don't they buy a copy of Charm or Glamour, and find out?)"

G. M. Carr: "Re hypnotism: I believe people do hypnotize animals. Seems to me I read somewhere about people drawing a line on a floor and getting a chicken to stare at it, after which the animal will stand spellbound for hours until released. I don't know how they go about un-hypnotizing--possibly just pick it up and toss it outdoors (or slaughter it for the cooking pot--since that trick was specifically recommended for keeping the fowl quiet during the interval between bringing it in from the chicken yard and chopping off its head). Also, isn't part of animal-training technique a sort of hypnotism? I mean the bit about 'look 'em right in the eye and don't let 'em see you're afraid.'"