



FAPA - MAY 1960

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For the first time in quite a few years, Horizons is not published on the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph. The machine on which this issue will be published is still something that lies in the future, proving that I'm still interested in science fiction. Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, has not at this writing decided to discard himself at the same time as the old mimeograph. This is volume 21, number 3, whole number 82, and FAPA number 76, unless contradicted by another publication which may or may not be in this mailing.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: Dis and Dat is described here as a legal postmailing with eight pages. I would like to point out that it does not represent eight pages of activity credit. Three pages are reprints from The Fantasy Amateur. ' ' Had we not had so many troubles in FAPA in recent months, I would have offered this year that waiting list vote proposal. I thought it best to skip it for at least a year, in the hope that such non-action would add to the tranquillity which this organization needs badly for a while. ' ' I'm pleased of course to have done well in the egoboo poll again, but this time the pleasure is tempered by the suspicion that this will be my last year of triumph for a while. There are entirely too many talented newcomers in FAPA with youth and vitality for a senile old fan with dwindling energy to stay in front of. Ad Interim: Paperbacks are durable enough for most reading purposes. I question the usefulness of fine editions for anything except reference books and volumes in which you will be browsing frequently like poetry anthologies. Do you really expect to re-read Rochester Towers frequently enough in the future to wear out a paperback edition of it? A Propos de Nothing: Feminine psychology is the last subject I'd claim knowledge of. But simple observation has caused me to believe that usually a girl is unpopular among feminine co-workers because she is or acts superior in some way: style of talking, choice of companions, or quality of beauty shop patronized. Burblings: It would be nice to know what Burb does when typing to cause the typing to look Burbish, no matter what machine he uses. ' ' I know the difference between a Bjo Mountain Mover and a Bjo Hired Gun. But it would be nice if someone published a list of who is which, to save hard memory hunting ten years from now by the third Fancyclopedia publisher. Catch Trap: Maybe women don't twist their legs around ropes on the flying trapeze for fear it'll look as if their seams aren't straight. But I find it hard to believe in this tiny instant of unconsciousness near the end of that difficult somersault. It might be just an involuntary bat of the eyes. I agree thoroughly about the better physical resources of women, and can't understand why only men are being trained for space flight in this country. ' ' Ability to detect precise intonation varies from person to person. I'm quite limited in ability to detect slight variances. That probably accounts for my worship of Lotte Lehmann, who was notorious for carelessness in pitch. But there is something to be said in defense of coloratura sopranos. Electronic analysis has indicated that apparent off-pitch singing in rapid passage work may not be the singer's fault, but a result of the vibrato, which seems to go on regularly regardless of the speed of the figuration; it can pull down the pitch of some notes and raise the pitch of others

enough to cause listeners to frown, when the music is too fancy for the ear to realize that vibrato is in use. Le Moindre: Somewhere in Dostoyevski is a character who asserts that he feels himself capable of doing any act, given the circumstances, that any other human has ever done. I'd always felt the same way, although my faith in that tottered a couple of times when I heard of someone leaving all his money to the church or when men married certain girls. Now Boyd Raeburn of all people has caused me to realize that that belief was as fictional as the novel. Because I cannot imagine myself paying under any circumstances \$1.75 for a roast beef sandwich. "I put little trust in iq or mental ability tests for hiring purposes. Just look at the United States Post Office Department, whose workers all were hired as a result of their test scores. Besides, job-hunters are frequently too keyed up or desperate for work to do their best on a test, or they rush through it in the belief that speed is important. A check with the applicant's high school records might be much more useful." Politicians aren't laboring under a delusion that the farm bloc has more voting strength than it possesses. The farm bloc does carry much more weight than the city voters, on a per capita basis, in many areas. Maryland has seven members of the House of Representatives, for instance, six of whom are elected in parts of Maryland that contain barely half of Maryland's total population, simply because more than a million Marylanders live around Baltimore, and the state as a whole has only about three million residents. "Farm bloc" normally refers to not only farmers but the people largely dependent on farmers in one way or another, including most small town residents. The Rambling Faps: The pages devoted to poll results were good examples of the difference between reprinting for purposes of laziness, as Higgs did, and reprinting for purposes of usefulness, as Gregg did. The poll remarks in the other issue are equally valuable. With fewer categories, we might get more replies to the poll; all those blanks are enough to frighten anyone. "I think it's been unwritten law to require credentials only at the time an individual becomes eligible for admission to FAPA. I see no reason why we shouldn't unofficially revise the unwritten law to require credentials both to get onto the waiting list and to get into the organization, with credentials obliged to be not more than one year old on both occasions." Dale Arden was Flash Gordon's little friend; Wilma Deering was Buck Rogers' pal, and her name always impressed me as the worst possessed by any heroine in the history of science fiction. Alif: Good poetry but I'd like to see Karen make more use of her potentialities for fat, frequent FAPA publications. Bleen: I suspect that sometimes when you take your auto radio to the repair shop, they just hide a transistor set under the dashboard instead of going to the trouble of removing the original radio for repairs. Mine needed attention last summer, and the man had to take out everything except the differential to remove it from the vehicle, then said: "Now, these new Olds really make it hard to get at the radios." "Dean's remarks to John Trimble give me a good opportunity to announce that I removed three photographs from a chain letter before forwarding the letter to the next person. They didn't shock me and nobody on that letter's list is of questionable reputation. But the pictures violated postal regulations. Under the circumstances that have recently circumscribed, I don't think it's wise to be a party to such violations, just in case someone's mail is being opened. Members of the chain

will understand the reference. I shall be happy to pass along in person the photographs to the first visitor who comes from the general area to which they were supposed to go. Until Maryland, my Maryland stops housing reformers, I plan to act similarly with any unmailable items that may reach me, and I'd prefer that they didn't reach me at all. I hasten to assure everyone that DAD had nothing to do with this episode, aside from giving me a chance to bring it up by his comments on Shipside. Outfinity: I have about ten feet of movie film to prove that peacock's existence. I've not run across a genuine hartebeest, but some wild goats have apartments on the cliffs above Harpers Ferry and once bear tracks were found in a local park only one-half mile from Bryan Place. X Trap: I assume that this is parody of surrealist fiction. It makes more sense than most of its prototypes do, if it's such. I also wonder if Jean's command of English has really reached this point, or if it represents a good editing job or even a translating accomplishment. Three-Chambered Heart: Well, I assume that the quote at the top of the Copper quotes is from the Latin version of Cole Porter's "Night and Day" that was so well-liked by Sejanus, but I don't see the significance of the one on page two. And I can't believe that John has had any experiences that would be "a bit too much" for FAFA. We've had the organization turned into a confessional for a kleptomaniac and an arena for lying slander, and so many other assorted oddities that we're hardened. Lark: Oddly, despite my lack of interest in stereo, I prefer to sit as close to a live orchestra as possible. It has nothing to do with the spread-out musical curtain. Partly it's because I got used to being in the middle of an orchestra when I played in the things, partly because it helps to weaken the audience noises when said audience isn't between me and the music. '' The local rescue mission store had quite a modern-looking thunderbug on sale for a while. The price tag said: "50¢, special price if customer is in a hurry." '' One of the local high schools is starting to teach printing in its vocational shops. It inherited a press from a deceased local printer, and now the best educational brains of the city are concentrating on how to finance the purchase of a linotype to go with it. '' I can get two fairly distant stations on each of two or three television channels by rotating the antenna, without interference between the two. Mightn't it be possible to produce antennas that are sharply directional, for use in case a breakthrough of the distance problem should be achieved? '' You get surface noise on stereo discs from both vertical and lateral unwanted motions of the stylus. On monaural reproduction, the vertical motions don't reproduce as noise. '' Are you sure that you're eligible for soil bank money? Isn't it necessary to have actually removed the land from production to get the dough? If not, people could get rich fast by purchasing worthless mountain-land for a song and getting ten per cent or more return on the investment, even with the cost of mowing counted in. '' Those very old Lionels may have been bad from the standpoint of today's modeling esthetics, but they're quite valuable. I got a letter recently from someone in California who is so desperate to locate them that he was writing to everyone whose name appeared in The Lionel Magazine thirty years ago, including my nine-year-old self, hoping to make a purchase. Light: The service men have a couple of advantages over the customers, as far as dishonesty is in question. If the customer doesn't pay his bill, the service man can refuse to

answer future trouble calls and can spread the bad-pay word among his competitors, making it hard for the customer to get repairs, particularly in the smaller towns; the customer who gets gypped can't hope to inform everyone in town of the event and his refusal to patronize that service man in the future will have only a tiny effect on the service man's patronage. And if the service man wants to get tough, he can take the unpaid bill to a lawyer; the customer on the other hand has no practical recourse to the law, because it's impractical to try to prove that the service man did inflate his bill or that poor workmanship caused more trouble in the set almost at once. '' Any day now, possibly before this mailing goes out, you'll be able to buy the first self-contained 8 mm sound movie camera. The Fairchild Camera people are making it, with transistorized amplifier and a companion projector. The price of the camera isn't much more than a first-rate silent 8 mm camera, but the film is a big problem, almost three times as expensive as regular 8 mm film. Eventually, I believe that 16 mm movies will lose all their appeal to amateurs, and will live only for projection of films to large groups. Shipside: I do believe that this is the first fan to drive a cab since Al Ashley. Driving at all in Los Angeles is a prospect that causes me to quiver, and I look with undisguised awe and admiration on anyone with the ability and courage to do it for a livelihood. '' You can't legally escape social security payments as a free-lancer. Even the self-employed are supposed to cough it up, at a higher rate than the individual who works for someone else. Revoltin' Development: Here is another kind of heroism, even more spectacular if possible. Maybe someone else in the organization has put a chrome strip on an automobile, but nobody has ever had the guts to come right out and admit doing it. And which body is possessor of that rusted hinge in your hearse? Japanese Genesis: My conscience hurts, Helen. I received your card about a gettogether last year, just before your arrival in this country, and I never answered it. There was some good reason why I didn't: I couldn't get to the city at the right time or you hadn't left a stateside address or something of that sort. But to make things worse, I've forgotten precisely the cause of my boorish silence. My apologies, and my assurance that there definitely was a cause for my failure to reply. '' I wonder if newspapers in Japan aren't so public spirited for tax reasons. I understand that Japan is badly dominated by one or two tremendous journalistic empires. '' Christine Barker sounds like a good waitinglister candidate. She has more interest in fantasy and can write better than some of the individuals on the list at present. Wraith: Big Little Books occasionally turn up in small quantities at the local second-hand stores. I'll try to pick up something interesting for you, Wrai. '' Horses are definitely becoming prehistoric animals on farms. Almost all of them remaining in this county are kept for sentimental reasons or because the kids like to ride horses. '' It varies from school to school, but in some schools the band is the rallying point that the football team is at other schools. In such places, the losses to graduation are considered a tragedy, junior high school students are watched carefully for any symptoms of musical precocity, lp records are custom-pressed and sell like hotcakes after the spring concert, and the school owns tens of thousands of dollars worth of the best instruments, purchased by contributions. Robin Hood: I just can't believe that this is as it left the child's

hands. It normally takes at least fifty years of hard living to break through to this kind of inspired simplicity and compression of thought and expression. However, I've long since ceased to feel surprise at the accomplishments of individuals who have youth on their side. To Visit the Queen: This must rank as the best fiction FAPA has seen in four or five years at least. It gives an impression of absolute authenticity, at least to a person who has never been in the service in England, the conversation sounds as if it had just emerged from a hidden tape recorder, the characterization is lifelike but distinctive, and the main idea of the story and the central incident that it encloses complement one another to perfection. This should certainly sell to a good professional market with just a small amount of compression at the very end. Pleiades Pimples: Here is another item that makes this mailing an unusually fine one. It's the sort of thing that you'll find nowhere else in print in such frank and full form. It has the added personal importance for me, in that it might jar me into getting down onto paper the two novels that have been giving me headaches for several months. I have no intention of quitting my job to try to support myself freelancing, but I would like to reach a condition in which I could take a leave of absence during the three summer months from my job and devote them to the kind of writing I'd like to do. There was only one thing that I missed in this essay: mention of the new postage rates for manuscripts. I've not discovered yet if it applies only to novel-length works or any mss., what you must put on the wrapper to obtain the rate, and whether editors feel you're a cheapskate if you use it. Gasp!: The "gypsy" music that you hear in cafes and Hungarian Rhapsodies isn't true gypsy folk music. It's mainly based on slightly corrupted versions of dance tunes and ballads that were popular in Europe during the early and middle years of the 19th century. '' What's a weiner-wagon? A crying Jag? Salud: It's hard to generalize and even harder to make sure about the mental facts of life in the little tads, but I'd say that the evidence points to the fact that most Hagerstown children don't have prejudice against school and teachers. For every kid I know who constantly hooks it or gripes about school, I know two who hover on the brink of nervous breakdowns because they're mixed up in too many extra-curricular things or hopelessly in love with their teachers. Modern school buildings help a lot. They are cheerful to look at and well ventilated and there is room for kids to move around, since all the space hasn't been wasted on 12-foot ceilings and huge halls. Locally, I think that the attitude of kids toward schools was helped much by a very simple action. The school board decided to tear down all the fences around schools. It ended the captivity-feeling for everyone in the school yards. Parents shrieked in anguish, predicting slaughter of the innocents chasing balls into the streets, but that was ten years ago and there hasn't been an accident from this cause yet. '' I have been sorting through my mental card index of Doubs and Newcomers and haven't located your relatives yet, but I'll probably run across them before the next mailing. There are hundreds of each species around Hagerstown. Beaver Creek is just a few miles east of town, and was almost wiped out last year in a controversy over a liquor license, but still survives. I think I have some transparencies showing your ancestral origins, and I'll send them along if I can track them down. Day*Star: I recall one fairly good circus novel published perhaps 20 years ago, "All Their Child-

ren Were Acrobats", but I can't recall who wrote it. Argosy published a couple of good ones during the late '30's or early '40's, but memory fails me completely on details. I wish Marion had demonstrated this circus enthusiasm a little sooner. She could have done a better job than I did on that circus fandom article in Void.

Vandy: That determination to do something really good for FAPA every quarter and the less imposing thing that actually results is common to all members. The arrival of a mailing always inspires me to resolve that this time, by golly, I'll stop plodding along with a predictable set of items in Horizons and instead I'll produce a publication that will really cause some excitement and pleasure. I ways emit another Horizons in the end. Maybe the new mimeograph will cause my character to reform, but don't bank on it. '' A remark of mine caused all this discussion about speaking ill of the dead, and it's time to point out that the discussion has veered entirely away from my original point. I said that I hadn't published my feelings about E.E.Evans during his lifetime and I wasn't going to do so as soon as he was safely dead. It's one thing to be too pious to utter a disparaging remark about someone who is no longer with us, but it's quite another thing to unleash venom which you didn't expel during his lifetime because you were afraid of a reply, the situation that seems to have happened with the death of Lancy for a few Los Angeles fans. '' You don't need a home in the city to get record discounts. It might be hard to get good prices on Library of Congress discs, but almost any generally distributed records are available from mail order discount houses; reductions average 30% and may be larger at times for specific labels. Let me know if you want addresses. '' The platen and rollers of this typewriter developed perforated ulcers a year ago. When I had them replaced, the Underwood people claimed that the replacement parts are now made of stencil-resistant materials. I'm using films for protection, just in case, and there's no sign of swelling after a year. '' Huzzahs for Tucker's words about postal inspection. I think an issue of Hocus was opened and read before it reached me, and small wonder, considering the contents of the back cover. It's no time to play with fire, gentlemen. Target: FAPA!: I did not fill out the politics poll, the first poll I've skipped in a long while. I'm sitting out this campaign, on the grounds that the candidates for both parties possess an equal amount of stupidity and inability to fill properly the office of president, and I'll be blessed if I'm going to be concerned over who wins. '' Thanks-giving sounds like the worst possible choice for a convention. It isn't a long weekend for some employed persons, transportation is even more jammed up than over Labor Day because of college mobs, and there's the blizzard danger in some parts of the country. '' Why maintain such uncertainty about standard musical terms like sonata form? In the time you're wasting to read this issue of Horizons, you could pick up enough familiarity with musical terminology to sling them around with the rest of us. Tra-La!: The haiku examples continue to vary wildly in quality from good, fresh ways of thinking about things to hopeless cliches. I see no reason to try to preserve the original line and syllable count when deriving from a language as unlike English as Japanese. Nobody tries to translate Latin poetry by imitating the vowel quality system that forms the poetic mechanics for that tongue. Fappendage: Terry Carr must have the clearest head in the West; he's the one person who maintained his usual style and high writing quality in this

particular tumult. Sergeon's Banc: Yes, and what ever happened to the useful tradition of reprinting the constitution in The Fantasy Amateur two or three issues per year? Most fans have short memories and shaky filing systems, needing to be reminded of the law in this matter regularly. " It would be hard for me to write about the graveyard shift restaurants because they're so scarce around here. In fact, during World War Two when I was working the early morning shift at the ticket office, starving passengers would almost attack me when I admitted that there was no place within a dozen miles where they could get a bite to eat at 2 a.m. Even in 1960, there's only one place in downtown Hagerstown and one place on its fringes that remain open all night, and both are fairly high in their standards. " The trouble with an ayjay that consistently obtains about 90% participation in each mailing is that it loses the wonderful things that come from fans who just don't produce at regular intervals. You and I are the every-quarter type, but there are Lee Hoffmans and Bill Rotslers and Bob Tuckers who simply don't function as we do, yet turn out priceless items when they do come out of hibernation. Celephais: "This has been a very mild winter in Washington." Words can sometimes come back to haunt you, eh? " I suspect that Marion's dislike for Fledermaus comes from the fact that she's mainly acquainted with the dreadful thing that the Met produces under that title. I can't see how anyone could resist the Krauss set on London records. But I share Bill's dislike for "Aida". Except for the Nile Scene and Amneris' music, I think it is the worst of the Verdi operas known to me, bad Meyerbeer in the score and a ridiculous plot on the stage. " My nomination for something stronger than Lady Chatterley's Lover would be Zola's La Terre. I got a copy of the British paperback edition without trouble, which surprised me, after its long banning in both England and France. " Cattle crossing signs always used to puzzle me because I never saw cattle going across the road. Finally I realized that cattle don't stroll back and forth at any old time but are escorted across in the early morning and just before dark, two times when I'm rarely driving outside town. " Cherry Tree Books were British, I'm almost certain, and they probably weren't distributed in this country. " It's good to find more support for my anti-stereo, pro-78s opinions. And I read recently that tapes can even be spoiled if stored on metal shelves from which all traces of magnetism have not been carefully removed. The Directory...: Before Christmas, I remembered that it wouldn't be long before FAPA would be blessed with another edition of Ron Bennett's wonderfully useful publication. So I began to think hard about some brilliant and appropriately grateful remarks that I might use in Horizons when the time came to comment on it. Unfortunately, off-and-on pondering for weeks failed to produce any comments that would sound as sensible and sincere as simple thanks and a fervent wish that this may go on year after year. I am annually fascinated by the way some names in the volume are completely strange to me but have obviously become known in the British Isles, like Alberta Leek, a name one would not be likely to forget, once encountered. Quotebook: It's a pity that as entertaining and re-readable a volume as this had to become the center of an activity dispute. I feel strongly that a ruling against merely financing as activity credit is the only possible one. If this form of activity were permitted, I could keep anyone I wished in FAPA, simply by announcing that he had sent me three bucks to

pay the cost of eight pages of an issue of Horizons. Quotebook aside from this subsidiary matter is a pure delight. I think that Willis and Grennell stand out for brilliance despite the wonderful company in which they are placed in these pages. Phantasy Press: The convention account held my interest tightly, quite an achievement after reading a dozen similar accounts already. Marion looks on things with a fresher eye than most experienced convention-goers, which helps a lot. But even here, I note, Pittsburgh has been misspelled. Before this next convention is over, we Americans will have dropped more h's than Britishers have ever done. '' The only fault I can find with the statistics is the fault of the members, not Dan's fault: there aren't enough new members in the higher places. Fortunately, the valuable part of the waiting list is now only about a year away from admission. '' Some of the pictures were entertaining, but any photograph of someone being presented with something is inherently dull, whether it's in a fanzine or in a newspaper. '' Thorough reviews of Science Fiction Digest issues would be wonderful. That fanzine is harder to find even than old FAPA mailings. '' Mary G. Byers was a pseudonym for Mary Rogers? I thought she married Cyril Kornbluth. Phlotsam: Inspect that stapler from all angles to make sure it doesn't have some kind of gadget that clears the channel when a staple fails to cast adrift in the proper fashion. Lacking that, the knife is the only recourse. It usually happens to my stapler when I haven't applied quite enough pressure when squeezing. '' Full agreement about the difficulty of enjoying a baseball game on the television screen. I prefer a video seat at a basketball game, but I'd rather see any other sport in actuality. Even though the camera brings you very close to the ballcarrier in football, you miss all the downfield strategy. '' "Bei mir bist du schön" sounds like German dialect. (The tune also sounds like a passage in Mahler's fifth symphony.) But I think the rhyme with "explain" is justified by the way Germans write poetry. Nearly identical sounds are permitted to serve for rhyming purposes in that language. Two good examples are in the opening lines of Tamino's famous Bildniserei aria: "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön, // Wie noch kein Auge je gesehn. // Ich fühl' es, wie dies Götterbild // Mein Herz mit neuer Regung füllt." '' The Christmas tree page struck deep into my vitals. Very good writing, simply loaded down with emotionally loaded matters for me. Klein Bottle: More welcome than ever, because this is Rosleriana that hasn't reached me. Who is the villain on that particular letter? '' Odd you didn't mention the one combination of Thurber and Terhune, the piece the former wrote about the latter's boorishness when a dog got killed. I prefer the Thurber attitude to dogs, not Terhune's. '' Red Barber, not Dizzy Dean, popularized the peapatch and catbird seat expressions. Diz is most celebrated for revising the past tense of verbs, as in: "He'da been out even if he'da slud home." '' Chic Young modeled Blondie on his wife, she died soon after the strip became popular, and that might be why her garments don't change with the fashions. '' Wetzell has published several large fanzines in the past few years, devoted mostly to Fortean stuff and Maryland folklore. I can't remember the title. '' Isn't it possible that the arrival of more invigorating weather and the mental lift from attending the convention help to perk up FAPA activity in the November mailing? Stefantasy: A wonderful issue but I didn't reserve any comment space for postmailings, and I'll have to convey my delight to Bill Danner via tape recording.

The Lady Wasn't Shady

Many years ago, Horizons published an article by Paul Spencer, then a FAPAN, about an opera that practically nobody had heard of, "Die Frau Ohne Schatten" by Richard Strauss. The article didn't produce much comment. Few members of FAPA were then interested in serious music. For the rest of us, the article was principally a tantalizer. We had to take the existence of the opera on faith alone, because not a note of its score was available on records, the printed music wasn't available in this country, and it required a trip to Europe at just the right time to see the opera performed. It was even hard to find out much more about the opera, because the flood of books about Strauss had not begun to flow and only his best known works were covered in most English-language publications about 20th century music.

The situation has changed gratifyingly since then. The entire work has been released on London Records and an orchestral suite derived from its score is available on Columbia Records. The vocal score is expensive but immediately available from Boosey & Hawkes. "Die Frau Ohne Schatten" has become so close to a standard part of the repertoire in much of Europe that it's almost an old favorite over there, and will undoubtedly begin to show up occasionally in the United States in the opera companies that can cope with its severe demands. If you can read German, it's easy to find a wealth of material about the work, both in the biographies of Strauss and in his published correspondence with the librettist, Hugo von Hofmannsthal. All this gradual solidification of the opera from an almost theoretical existence to reality has caused me to believe that it's time for another article in Horizons. If you don't like the idea, you can blame the individuals who liked the Reingold article a couple of issues ago and asked for more.

"Die Frau Ohne Schatten", "The Woman (or Wife) Without a Shadow", is unusual for a couple of reasons. It is one of the few operas known to me that might have been derived from a yarn in Unknown. It is based on myth, fantasy and symbol in a manner quite similar to the pure fantasy that Campbell published in Unknown, which is not to be confused with the pure fantasy which he has put more recently into ASF's editorials. It is also a quite good work if the music isn't heard at all, considered simply as a large-scale drama and a poem. Hofmannsthal was probably the greatest German poet and dramatist of the early years of the 20th century, and the librettos that he wrote for Strauss have certain merits that are lacking from his non-musical texts. Although the creators didn't intend it to teach beginners the art of creation, it might also be taken as an object lesson in how it is possible to build up a giant structure full of the most imposing philosophical connotations from the simplest of basic ideas.

The foundation of the plot, which provides the title, is simply the widespread and ancient myth-theme of the loss of one's shadow. The best-known use of the theme in fiction is probably Chamisso's "Peter Schlemiel", which German students often read in college. The shadow loss theme has turned up in one very well-known opera, Offenbach's "Les Contes d'Hoffman", whose Venetian act depicts a shadow kidnapping episode. Hofmannsthal's plot-kernel can be narrated in very few words: it is the story of the Empress who has no shadow, bargains for the shadow of a peasant

WOMAN

woman, decides at the last minute not to deprive the peasant of her birthright, and is rewarded for this noble decision by the gift of a shadow for herself. Let's see now how this naive little plot is amplified into four hours of words and music.

First of all, like his imposing predecessor in the libretto field, Wagner, Hofmannsthal causes his first crisis to occur before the start of the opera, so that we learn of it only by narration. The Empress wasn't always an Empress. She was once a gazelle, which the Emperor's falcon had wounded; the gazelle turned into a woman when struck down, the falcon flew away and has not returned, and although the Emperor married the Empress, he will turn to stone within a specified period if she does not acquire a shadow. Next, the peasant woman who is known in the opera only as the Dyer's Wife has troubles of her own. She is dissatisfied with her way of life as the wife of the dyer, Barak, and understandably gets impatient with her somewhat primitive brothers-in-law. It doesn't take too much persuading to cause her to agree to the bargain; she succumbs as soon as the phantom lover for whom she has always secretly yearned is solidified right before her eyes.

Next, one of the most imposing characters in the opera is never seen nor heard: Keikobad, a god of unspecified nature and powers, father of the Empress in either a biological or spiritual sense. It's Keikobad who causes the events to unroll by insisting on a shadow for his daughter. He is known to us mainly through two apparent emissaries, a messenger who has little effect on the plot, and the very wicked old Nurse who does most of the dirty work in connection with the shadow bargain. Other characters in the opera include a whole collection of unborn children (who remain offstage for practical reasons), Barak's brawling brothers, a gatewoman for the temple gates, and an assortment of maids, nightwatchmen and other less important characters. The assortment is lavish and strange enough to make any lover of Tolkein or Howard feel right at home.

Finally, the complexity is increased by the symbolism that is involved in almost every object and event that are seen in the opera. The shadow loss seems to be tied up with loss of one's soul or personality in many old myths, but Hofmannsthal provides for it an entirely different meaning, for his purposes: the shadow is equivalent to posterity, the ability to bear children. The fate that threatens the Emperor is another obvious symbol: husbands are apt to become hardhearted and hardheaded if the man and wife go through their married life without the blessing and distraction that kids provide. The crisis of the hunt in which the Emperor meets his bride seems to represent the clue to a guilt-complex and impotency on the part of the Emperor, the real reason behind the lack of a shadow for the Empress. The falcon seems to symbolize the Emperor's penis, the wounding of the gazelle and the change that affects the animal are the symbols of the defloration of the virgin, the Emperor's attitude toward his deed and his inability to find his falcon the whole clue to the trouble between the two rulers. The symbols involving Barak and his wife are much less indelicate. It is true that at one point the double bed splits apart by magic into a single bed, at the moment when she decides to give up her shadow (i.e., renounce further sexual union with her husband) and at one point little fishes in the frying pan take on the voices of the unborn children to complain to their mother-that-would-be about her decision to keep them from exist-

ence. But in general the Dyer and his wife represent an earthlier, plainer existence in which their actions signify their real thoughts. And there is some reason to believe that the division of interest between the royal and the common couples was a separate symbol of its own, a commentary on the class struggle that never leaves mankind, no matter what form it may take at any given time and place.

But this doesn't help with one important factor in the opera: Keikobad himself. We never learn precisely who or what he is, how great his powers may be, even the question of whether he is basically good or evil is never definitely resolved. Like Wotan, he seems to have become the father of the gazelle-Empress through a mating with an earth woman about whom we are told nothing, but this is all as vague as Lohengrin's abrupt and unelaborated announcement that he is the son of Parsifal. As far as I know, the name itself was invented for the sake of this opera. Commentators on the work have been silent on this puzzle; the composer and librettist said a good bit about their purposes, but I don't have access to anything that clarifies the Keikobad puzzle. My theory, which could be demolished by a paragraph that I've overlooked somewhere, is quite simple: I think the whole message of the opera is that there's no need for God to help those who help themselves. I have a strong suspicion that Hofmannsthal and Strauss intended Keikobad to be a loud thumping noise down in the cellar of the orchestra, nothing more. The elaborate buildup and real nature of the god would have one prominent precedent in German poetry: the episode in Goethe's *Faust*, where the mysterious cult of The Mothers is presented in awe-inspiring fashion until finally the goddesses themselves make their climactic appearance, and turn out to be a collection of small clay pots.

Helen Wesson or anyone else in the audience who is interested in myth might have a fine, long amusement, attempting to track down the specific sources for the opera. Otto Erhardt's biography of Strauss lists as source material the *Thousand and One Nights*, the Chinese legends of *Gozzi*, the little fairy tales of the Grimm brothers, the fantasies of Ferdinand Raimund, Indian and Arabian folktales, "mixed with his own ideas, and woven together like a brilliant Persian rug." The location of the events is described by the creators only as the "South Eastern Islands".

Some fans seem to be convinced that an opera libretto is created like a one-shot. They might be interested to trace the time and effort that went into "*Die Frau Ohne Schatten*". Its libretto is mentioned for the first time in a letter from Hofmannsthal to Strauss in March, 1911. After four years and one month of intermittent work and consultation between librettist and composer, the book was completed, and it was another two years and two months before the composer finished his part of the task. Hofmannsthal knew what he wanted from the outset, so the long work period was not partially wasted in complete changes of viewpoint; "*Der Rosenkavalier*" had suffered from this trouble, with characters that were originally subordinate in the plan gradually usurping the principal roles. The librettist's first mention of the opera that exists goes like this: "It is a fairy tale, with two men and two women contrasting with one another; one woman is a fairy creature, the other is earthly, a bizarre woman who has a basically good soul, incomprehensible, flighty, domineering, but nonetheless sympathetic, in fact, she is the principal fig-

ure." Two years later, the two men utilized a bright, moonlit night while they were riding between San Michele and Bozen to get many of the details straightened out. And Strauss seems to have demanded less reworking and redirecting from this libretto than was usual for him. He had part of the libretto by 1914 and wrote to Hofmannsthal: "The first act is simply beautiful, and so concentrated and unified that I wouldn't think of cutting or changing the least thing."

There may be a perfectly good reason for part of Strauss' satisfaction with the work. He was notorious for his eagerness to put himself into his compositions. "Feuersnot" is full of barely concealed puns and situations relating to Strauss's troubles at the hands of conservative music critics; "Ein Heldenleben" quotes from his own works and introduces his own wife in unmistakable manner; the "Sinfonia Domestica" was inspired by the birth of a son and the necessary preliminary to this event is not forgotten, although displaced in time; and even in the "Four Last Songs" the horn quotes an early melody to emphasize the fact that Strauss was setting to music the twilight of his own life. I'm pretty sure that he saw in the Dyer and the Dyer's Wife himself and Frau Strauss, whose faults were as evident to Strauss as the Dyer's Wife must have been an open book to Barak. Whether or not this is so, I think that Barak has become my favorite character in all opera, considered simply as a human being. In all seriousness, I would compare Barak with Pogo for possessing such splendid sense and goodness in a slightly mad and tumultuous world. Barak has also been equated with Parsifal, for his progression to complete wisdom through forgiveness, but I'd much rather have Barak around than Parsifal.

The music of "Die Frau Ohne Schatten" is somewhat different in style from the scores to the other operas of Strauss. In some ways, I think it would be the very best means of getting to know the operas of Strauss. For this opera, Strauss temporarily rediscovered Wagner's lost secret, that of creating leitmotifs which are extremely short, absolutely typical, and possessed of the ability to cut through the orchestral and vocal tissue to reach the listener's ear. This is complete contrast to an opera like "Arabella". It would be possible to listen to that opera a half-dozen times without being certain which themes characterize what individuals, because of the subtle way in which one theme grows out of another and the retiring nature of some of them. In contrast, most of the important building blocks in "Die Frau Ohne Schatten" are picked up immediately without help from a score, because they are either extremely loud, like the Keikobad and petrification motifs, or lovely melodies, such as those associated with the Emperor, or possessed of distinctive long hops between intervals, such as the music for the unborn children and much of Barak's generous supply of motifs. Lovers of big band jazz might be interested to know what Strauss uses even more instruments than they are accustomed to hear. His big band needs an unusually large number of strings, to produce effectively the divisi passages, twenty-one woodwinds, eight horns, four tenor tubas, three trumpets, four trombones, two bass tubas, six Chinese gongs, four tamtams, a xylophone, two celestas, a piano, an organ, and one of those "glass harmonicas" that you play by wetting your fingers like Ben Franklin. There is no way to sum up the general impression of the score in a couple of adjectives. It is fearfully com-

plex in sections, but the night watchmen and the unborn children sing with the simplicity of folk singers and the Emperor is remarkable for the lyric quality of his vocal line. Even on my medium-fidelity equipment, the orchestral effects come through stunningly. The frightening wall of sound that billows up when the Emperor appears in a stage of near-petrification in the final act must be heard to be believed. I know of nothing in all modern music to compare for brutality with the savagery that Strauss puts into his score as we are shown for the first time Barak's hut with its squabbling inhabitants; Le Sacre sounds in comparison like a peeved baby pounding his cup on the table. And throughout the opera, Strauss continues to demonstrate his absolutely unaccountable magic in causing the violins to sound like violins, instruments whose capabilities had been forgotten for a half-century or so in serious music. It's rather surprising, in consideration of the nature of the plot, that Strauss abstains so completely from putting really sexy music into his score. It is as chaste as anything Beethoven wrote, although the introduction to the third act of "Arabella" and the prelude to "Der Rosenkavalier" prove that Strauss could describe an orgasm in music better than anyone before or since. Apparently there was only one thing that was even more irresistible to Strauss as material for graphic musical illustration than sexual intercourse, and that was the thought of the devoted wife and little kiddies. So in "Die Frau Ohne Schatten" we have the musical excitement over the simpler household virtues.

All this doesn't explain one important matter. Why didn't the opera succeed with the public? Nobody could fault the premiere. Strauss had refused to put the work on the stage during the war, because of manpower shortages. It wasn't until late in 1919 that it was first performed, after more than thirty rehearsals, with an unbelievable cast that just started with Lehmann, Jeritza and Mayr. The critics were enthusiastic. One wrote: "A great work of music has arisen. Perhaps, the greatest to go on the stage since Richard Wagner's death. Hofmannsthal and Strauss have, indisputably, given the greatest measure of their ability, skill and determination." But it wasn't until 1934 that the opera was produced in Italy, and it didn't come to the New World until 1949, when it was produced in Buenos Aires. It hadn't been seen yet in North America when the tabulation of his productions in my possession was produced in 1953. Strauss suspected that he'd been to blame, by failing to wait still longer for that premiere, until more of the war's bitterness had died out. There is also the consideration that the opera is permanently unsuited to smaller theaters because of its staging demands. But in recent years, it has become semi-standard in the repertoire of many German and Italian opera houses, and it's inevitable that it will eventually reach New York, London and Paris.

It's impossible to say anything particularly bad about the London recording of the work. I don't pretend to know what considerations inspired the company to release in this country such an expensive and recherche set, but I devote each fourth Thursday in November to gratitude for the fact that that decision came when it did. If another year had passed, stereo would have been with us, and it's not likely that unfamiliar works of this magnitude will be turning up now that living stereo has arrived. There has probably never been an operatic recording in which such fine sing-

ers have been engaged for even the small parts. Emmy Loose, Anny Felbermayer and Hilde Rössel-Majdan would satisfy many of us as the leads in a Mozart opera; London squanders them on the very small ensemble parts of the serving-maids, although Emmy does get a moment of solo work in the last act as the temple gate keeper.

The booklet that comes with the London set is a model of what accompanying booklets should be. It has the full libretto, in original and a sensible literal, non-poetified translation in parallel columns. There is also a page of musical quotations, showing the basic form of most of the leitmotifs. Besides that, the booklet contains a brief history of the work, and a side-by-side summation of the stage and musical action. In case any non-German reading people obtain the set, I might point to one unaccountable error in the booklet that destroys the logic of the description. In the first scene between Barak and his wife, the descriptive matter in the booklet tells us, "His wife quietly answers that in three and a half years she has steeled herself to avoid motherhood; now he must steel himself to abstain from wanting children." What the Dyer's Wife really says, in the original German of the libretto, is that Barak has not made her a mother, as a result she has had to get along without the joys of motherhood, and from now on, he must "renounce pleasures that are dear to you", i.e., his rights as a husband.

The suite from the opera that Columbia released has been a minor puzzle to Strauss enthusiasts, because nobody seems to be certain where it came from. The Columbia release does not identify positively who pieced it together, but seems to leave the impression that Strauss did so. No such orchestral suite is included in the three listings of his works that I have been able to check. However, it could be one case or the other; Strauss used to show the greatest willingness to orchestrate the piano accompaniments to his songs for special performances, he seems to have pasted together two or three different suites from "Der Rosenkavalier", and it isn't at all unlikely that he fixed up a suite from "Die Frau Ohne Schatten" for some special concert or radio broadcast, without publishing it. I've heard the Columbia record only once and found that it impressed me approximately the same as any suite or arrangement or "symphonic arrangement" of an opera usually does: better than silence, worse than the real thing. I understand that the notes printed on the record jacket contain an error, claiming that the Emperor turns to stone. He almost does, but in the end everyone lives happily ever after in Strauss' opera except for that nasty old Nurse who is finally whisked away in a boat before she can do still more harm.

In any event, I think that the important requisite for this opera is a fair hearing. I can imagine a music-lover being repelled by the parlando nature of the start of "Ariadne auf Naxos", the almost continuous dissonance of "Elektra" and the vulgarity of much of the music in "Rosenkavalier". But "Die Frau Ohne Schatten" doesn't sound like those Strauss operas and an unprejudiced listening to some of it should convert almost anyone who is not basically immune to the delights of Teutonic music. If the stereo promoters suddenly realize some day that they have overlooked this monaural recording, they will undoubtedly take steps to get it out of circulation immediately, and it is improbable that it will receive another performance of such high quality on records again in our lifetimes.

Hagerstown Journal

April 29—This year, I shall flee in terror at the first glimpse of fireworks advertisements. I read one last year, and suddenly I was old and living in an alien world. It is one thing to learn of the death of friends and to see new buildings rising before your eyes. But somehow, the passage of time really strikes a solid blow to your midriff, when you read an advertisement and don't recognize the names and descriptions of many of the pyrotechnics. I could experiment this summer by driving the thirty miles to Virginia where fireworks are legal, purchasing some, and strive for the old thrill of setting them off. Instead, I shall prefer to allow myself to be sucked a little deeper into the quicksand of senility by sitting home on the Fourth, trying to remember more facts about the long-ago Independence Days, and hoping that the noise of crashing autos isn't too distracting, now that fireworks may not be detonated in Maryland. The Fourth of July was one of the year's three biggest days when I was a boy. It had a special advantage over the other two big days, by casting a shadow in both directions. Christmas was fine to look forward to but a terrible letdown when completed; Opening Day for the big leagues was just the first day of a fine long season, but you couldn't get much of a kick out of the weeks preceding the first games. But Independence Day really lasted. It began in May in those years, with the arrival of catalogs from the mail order fireworks firms. I never ordered by mail, because that would have ruined the shopping-in-person bacchanalia. But it was wonderful to get the first sniff of burning black powder as you opened the flimsy pamphlets and saw the sketches of display pieces and assured yourself that none of the favorite varieties of fireworks had been dropped from the assembly lines. Fireworks appeared in neighborhood store windows in June and we nearly set them off by the warmth of our desire and looks for weeks, but I never purchased anywhere except at the town's largest bakery. This firm removed all edibles from its display cases before the end of June, to make room for the fireworks, which took on added value by enshrinement under glass like diamond rings and peppermint patties. Of the agonies of deciding what to buy, I shall say nothing; the horrors of indecision are best unwritten. Hagerstown had an ordinance limiting detonation of fireworks to July 4 itself. But unwritten law allowed anyone to relieve the pre-Fourth tension by firing the tiniest crackers by day and sparklers by night. Each year, I told myself that next year, I would have the courage to hold these half-inch firecrackers between thumb and forefinger while they exploded, as the manlier boys did. And the next year, I always chickened. July 4 was unique in the year for the manner in which the holiday itself awakened you. The first cannon cracker went off at dawn, the distant thuds became frequent before 8 a.m., and by late morning the sound of the celebration throughout the town was uninterrupted. Christmases and birthdays of my youth mingle inextricably into one another in memory, but many Fourths stand out sharp and individual: the year when it was foggy until mid-afternoon, the year when I sent up a balloon, the Fourth when the cat ran away at 7 a.m., and the year when Independence Day turned into stark tragedy: it rained. Fireworks divided up into three types. Some pyrotechnics always went off as expected. They weren't very much

fun. Sparklers, for instance, always functioned, never exploded, labored under the additional disadvantage of needing a prosaic match instead of the exciting punk, and gave only momentary titillation by leaving fiery tracks on your retina when swung rapidly in your face. Red and green lights were equally dull, although they left gratifyingly permanent black marks on sidewalks. It was more fun to get fireworks that often had to be coaxed into functioning. Pinwheels were excellent in this respect, often acting as if some survival impulse were fighting the death instinct, occasionally writhing in real agonies of stop-and-start. Roman candles were as much fun as a dog having puppies, because you could never be certain when the last fireball had arrived from the litter. Neighborhood legends told of roman candles that had lain dormant for four and even five minutes before the ultimate parturition. Best of all were the true challenges, the fireworks that never worked as advertised. They formed dreamstuff, the challenge of the impossible. Spitting devils sometimes spat, sometimes scooted erratically in all directions, but never did both simultaneously. The Fourth wouldn't have been the same, if a perfect behavior spitting devil had been located. Skyrockets were just as delightfully exasperating. Year after year would go by without a really successful launching, in clear anticipation of the nation's much later experiences with larger versions. But very late on the night of one Fourth, I had shot off everything except one skyrocket, and it happened. This rocket took off uncertainly, then suddenly veered upward. My heart bounded in triumph, then faltered in awed disbelief because at the moment when brennschluss should occur, the rocket began to hiss louder and really started to move fast, spurting occasionally as it expelled some more stars. It darted across the entire block, into the next block where the Negro section began, hovered a moment in indecision, then aimed itself toward the flimsiest shack in that section, and dived with deadly accuracy into the center of its roof. It flared there, and I was certain that the whole Negro section was doomed to a holocaust, because the Fourth produced endless false alarms and by 10 p.m. firemen stopped answering calls. The last windstorm must have deposited a piece of asbestos on that roof, because nothing else took fire. Later, the Fifth was a day big enough for capitalization, because that was when we scoured the neighborhood for duds and partially consumed fireworks. The simpler finds were roughly ripped open to obtain the undetonated powder. We dissected the more complex pyrotechnics like pathologists, striving to determine what had prevented them from leading a normally useful life. With fuses as long as if we had acquired A-bombs, we then attempted to set off reconstructed and modified fireworks, and didn't mind the fact that we never produced anything except a weary-sounding whoosh that hardly jolted the container. If the weather remained fair, the last reminders of the Fourth might last for another two weeks. I can't remember the name of small, red, tissue-wrapped devices the size of your thumbnail, which were set off by scraping one edge rapidly along a sidewalk. They were supposed to sizzle and crackle until they had consumed themselves but generally got too enthusiastic about meeting destiny, blew themselves into a half-dozen pieces early in the process, and broke the chain reaction. We always salvaged promptly the larger fragments and started them again but smaller bits lay unnoticed in crevices for days. And in mid-July, a boy would step on just

the right spot on the pavement where a small fragment had been hiding and he would hear a tiny crackling sound beneath his heel, and if he looked very quickly down, he might be in time to see this ghost of July Fourth Past hopping and sparkling for an instant in a crazy kind of dance that symbolized the certainty of Fourth of July Future. It was something splendid, a sight to be treasured during the succeeding days as the reopening of school rushed up with awful rapidity.

February 29—The first fannish voice that I heard during the 1960's came from the telephone and told me it was Ted Pauls. He sounded a bit disconcerted when I answered his remarks, and soon the reason became apparent. "Golly," he said, "you sound so young, just as if you were still in your twenties." I reflected that that remark, heard on January 1, might have been enough to send me to the social security office, and Ted continued: "In fact, your voice sounds like Bob Pavlat." "And he's up in his thirties, too," I marveled. The purpose of Ted's semi-long distance call soon became apparent. He needed material for his fanzine. Greater egoboo hath no fan than when he knows that someone wants fanzine material badly enough to spend 35¢ plus tax to ask him for it over the telephone. I shuddered silently at the four letters that had come within the past week, requesting material and the two dozen pages of the next Horizons which must somehow be filled and the hours of typing that awaited me at the office that evening, and cheerfully promised that I'd try to find something to write about. "By the way," Ted said, just before ending the conversation, "I want to settle something that Redd Boggs has been worrying me about. Do you really have an anchor tattooed on your chest?" "I don't have much of a chest," I told Ted. "There's just room for a very small anchor." He seemed satisfied by that answer, and that was the way that I spent a very small part of Leap Year Day.

February 6—George Orwell describes in "1984" the manner in which a whole occupation has grown up around the job of rewriting history, destroying completely from mankind's memories and records the accounts of certain events which later become politically embarrassing, and substituting new versions into the resulting gaps. I've always considered his book a satire on the present instead of a prediction of the future, but it was hard to find actual cases today in which total obliteration of the past was being practised in the United States. I knew that the past was reinterpreted with dizzying rapidity at the whim of the public or the leaders, but it required an unwitting action on my part to cause me to go and do this feat myself. For many years, my birth certificate had bothered me, and not just because it was becoming so old. Certificates weren't given to the parents automatically after a baby's birth in Pennsylvania, in the particular geologic era in which I sauntered into existence. It wasn't until 1942 that I needed this slip of paper. I was then working for the Pennsylvania Railroad, the nation was at war, and by some chain of logic which I never wholly comprehended, the authorities deduced that I might charge the wrong fare for a one-way ticket to Roanoke or even falsify the total weight of cargo passing through the Hagerstown freight yards on some crucial day, if I couldn't produce proof of my birth. The Pennsylvania Department of Health quickly informed me that two dollars would bring me a guaranteed genuine copy of the certificate, I ordered it, and was quite surprised to find that my middle name was Packard. Family legend had caused me to believe it was

Backer. This birth certificate contained several other bits of information which were contrary to what my parents and I believed. Doubtfully, I took the birth certificate to my employers, they checked it against my draft card and the company records, and pounced with glee on the discrepancy. Then they just ignored the whole matter, on the grounds that it was hard to find help and I probably wouldn't do the national security much harm unless the war took a turn for the worse. Down through the years, the matter continued to nag at my mind. I was never called upon to produce that birth certificate again, but I feared serious complications in case I should want a passport or stood to receive a good lump of insurance money through dying. Once I even asked FAPA advice. Speer said it was nothing to worry about, because the name you use is your legal name for all intents and purposes. I considered seeing a local lawyer, but by accident heard the account of a local man who had decided that he didn't like his first name and had done something about it, a process requiring court appearances and all kinds of red tape. But here's proof of the superior mental qualities of a fan: in slightly less than twenty years, I figured out that the best procedure might be to write back to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, telling them that a clerk had probably misunderstood the name shortly after the birth, and what could I do about it? The reply convinced me that hearing aids were in bad condition in Pennsylvania for many years because the authorities have a whole sheaf of forms reserved for use when this particular kind of mistake occurs. All that I had to do was to fill them out, get them notarized in Pennsylvania—Marylanders apparently can't be trusted, even when they are notaries public—and send the forms together with my certificate back to Harrisburg. Whereupon, I discovered, the birth records were destroyed and a new birth certificate was substituted, containing the correct information, and even if I wanted to, I couldn't use Packard as a middle name now, because there is no trace of its legal existence. Only one slight flaw exists to mar my happiness. Pennsylvania seems to have run out of the long birth certificates that the Chambersburg Hospital possessed in 1922. They now use a simplified and shorter form, and it is this which reposes in my closet and the Harrisburg archives. With the destruction of that segment of the past has vanished a quantity of additional information. There is now no legal proof that I am legitimate, that I belong to the Caucasian race, and that I wasn't stillborn.

March 1—During wartime, there are alleged to be no atheists in foxholes, but in Hagerstown, it would be pretty hard to find even an agnostic on Shrove Tuesday, if you judge by actions. This city lies not far from the periphery of Pennsylvania Dutch country. That gentle and good folk is close enough to cause some mingling in the stores, marrying, moving and visiting. So some of the Pennsylvania Dutch versions of German customs have splashed over onto Hagerstown, including the annual fasnacht orgy. The name alone is proof of the distortion that a slight distance from the general article can produce. Fewer than fifty miles northeast of here, the word is always spelled correctly and used in complete form: fastnachtkuche. Back in pagan days, the Germans used to provide burnt offerings to their gods in connection with the spring fertility rites. By Christian times, the custom changed into a more practical form: a just-before-Lent method of getting

rid of all the fats on hand, before the plainer Lenten fare began. Thus, the fasnachts, which are sometimes burnt but never offerings. It's a pity that St. Paul couldn't have lived long enough to plunge into the fasnacht controversies, because the old boy dearly loved any irrelevant dispute even remotely associated with theology. Even without correspondence from him, the arguments have gotten along nicely. They concern both the essence and the form. In brief, there is a heretical school of Shrove Tuesday thought which asserts that fasnachts are really nothing more than doughnuts and may be prepared in approximately the same fashion. The bakeries are the principal strongholds of this heresy, because doughnuts are quite easy to bake. The older families in this area hold on like grim death to the proposition that a fasnacht is not a doughnut either in this substance or above all, in the form. The Pennsylvania Dutch cookbooks differ wildly in their fasnacht recipes but rally around one doctrinal point unanimously: the fasnacht must not have a hole in its center, should not even possess rounded corners but should be cut square, and besides, it should take at least six times as long to prepare as a doughnut. In addition, there is one overwhelming piece of folklore that gives the lie to the backsliders who want to take the easy way out. In the heart of Pennsylvania Dutch country, it is often a custom in big families to have a race to the breakfast table on Shrove Tuesday, and the last person to arrive suffers the ultimate insult: he must eat not a fasnacht but a doughnut. I do not propose to insert here any recipes, which may be found in many published cookbooks, but I might point out that some recipes are quite formidable. One of them sends fasnachts onto the table in much the same way that satellites are sent into orbits, in three stages: the first part of the preparation is done on the afternoon before Shrove Tuesday, the dough must not be disturbed then until late on the same evening, and finally the baking is done very early on the morning of Shrove Tuesday. It is not at all uncommon for a small church to sell 400 dozen fasnachts on Shrove Tuesday with no advertising other than word-of-mouth rumors that this was a vintage Shrove Tuesday for fasnachts. Hagerstown has two senior high schools, which are constantly at each other's throats with claims of supremacy in this or that activity. South High scored a coup which not even North High's basketball win several nights later overshadowed, when all the cafeteria workers got up at 3 a.m. and baked one fasnacht for each student who eats his noon lunch at school. The county court house corner in Hagerstown, normally sacred to rumors about real estate transactions and politics, is turned over to earnest discussions between businessmen about fasnacht prices and quality on Shrove Tuesday. Ash Wednesday comes the next day in Hagerstown as elsewhere, and a few of the devout go to special church services, but most of us feel that the whole Lenten season is nothing but an anti-climax.

February 15--The man calling in a news tip said that he had a hot one. The largest elementary school in Hagerstown had received a bomb threat that afternoon, and police were swarming all over the place, now that classes were over. I checked with authorities and learned what had happened: early in the afternoon, someone who didn't sound very sure of himself had telephoned the school and told the secretary who answered the phone that a bomb was about set to go off. The secretary had told the principal,

the principal had told the police, and all concerned had agreed that it would be better to let the school day go unmolested through its final 45 minutes, since it wasn't a particularly ominous type of bomb scare. After dismissal, the police had ransacked the building, and had confirmed their hypothesis by finding nothing. Fearing that some parents might not understand the decision, the principal asked me if I would refrain from making a scarehead about it. I simply wrote nothing about it. It typified the decision that reporters or editors face quite frequently. Of course, it is splendid to listen to speeches about the freedom of the press and the journalist's obligation to report the news. Unfortunately, even Mr. Webster didn't think up a very precise definition of what constitutes news. Most newspapers don't seem to have it quite straight in their minds as yet. The bomb scare story, whether it concerns airliners or schools, has been bobbing up almost daily in one part or another of the nation in recent months. If I'd told the Associated Press about the local event, the news would have gone over several states for sure, and a sentence or two might have been squeezed onto the national news wire. Yet no news service and few newspapers will go to the trouble to provide a report on a false alarm fire call, even though every large city possesses a few buildings or blocks in which a real fire would be certain to claim as many lives as a bomb on an airplane. I have already expressed my opinion about the harm that the press has done, purposely or not, to the cause of integration in the schools, and now the same thing is occurring for lunch counters. In Hagerstown, most of the downtown eating places broke precedent and began to serve Negroes a couple of years ago. The newspaper decided to run nothing about it, and it was accomplished without turmoil. The general public sometimes doesn't realize the ethical problem that faces newspapers in occurrences which are less symbolic than these. The journalism graduates are particularly shocked when they learn that a reporter has agreed to withhold some information without being subjected to unbearable pressure. But I don't think that journalism courses normally ask students to decide what they would do in cases like these, all recent and local ones: One of the town's most prominent young merchants dropped dead in the early evening. His mother has a severe heart condition, was already about to go to bed before the family could get sufficiently organized to try to break the news to her, feared it would be impossible to get a doctor immediately at a late hour if the shock proved severe to her, and asked if we would withhold the news item from the three radio broadcasts which we provide for a local station in the late evening and early morning hours, lest the mother or a neighbor hear the news and cause a fatal shock. We agreed, the family told her gradually the next day, and she lived through it. Then there was the girl who works in a local sweatshop-type shoe factory. She won some kind of state-wide 4-H honor that gave her a trip to a 4-H camp and all sorts of egoboo. The factory management wouldn't permit employees to take time off for any such nonsense, so at the right time the girl pretended to fall sick, several fellow-workers reported daily to the foreman on their visits to her sickbed, and she was fully recovered when she returned to work. Newspaper publication of the press release that the 4-H office sent out about her accomplishment would have ruined everything. The event is lost to the published records. There was one death from flu this

winter. By all journalistic theories, it represented a front page story. Without asking for a ruling from the powers above me in the office, I wrote it as a straight obituary and expurgated the cause of death. This was self-protection, as much as anything. The virus was going the rounds. Publicity for the one flu death would have sent every nervous man and neurotic woman in three counties racing to the doctor at the first cough or runny nose. I wanted to be able to find a doctor with a few spare minutes, if I caught cold. By all odds, the strangest request for withholding news in my experience came recently from a local optometrist. He telephoned the office, very flustered. "I had to fire the boy who helps me," he explained. "That made him mad and we had an argument, and I called him a son of a bitch. He told me he was going to the police because of the way I was cussing him. So it'll all go down on the police records, and I'd hate to see you run a story about it because my customers might be afraid I'd talk the same way to them."

December 2—"So this is where he stood?" I asked. The man who had told me to come right through the gate and into the back yard nodded. "That's what we understand. Hard to believe these days, isn't it?" "Yep. He talked about what a lovely countryside it was. And you can't see the countryside now." We turned our noses to windward. The large gloomy house which looked as if it had been there for ever blocked the view in that direction. Trees along the street loomed up forbiddingly if you looked that way. The garden to the rear was cluttered with shrubbery and a garage. Other houses were in the fourth direction. It looked normal enough but I no longer cared for the jokes we'd been making about how easy it was, since it was downhill the whole way. "Funny thing," the man said. "The old lady who lived here died the other day. We buried her this afternoon. I don't know what will happen to the house now." "It should be marked better," I complained. "That sign along the sidewalk doesn't point at anything in particular." "Well, there's a little stone down here." He pointed to a forlorn slab peering out from the foundation of the house, half-hidden by winter-bare weeds. "Maybe there was more once, because it's supposed to mark the exact spot." "And you haven't been getting tourists or anything today?" "I don't think so. Of course, I've been at the funeral. Just take your time, and let yourself out when you're finished. I have things to do." He vanished inside the house, before I could ask if he was a relative or undertaker to the deceased. Tentatively I decided that he acted more like a preacher. I stared a little longer, trying to decide if legend somehow had erred, about the location, because it seemed impossible that this solidlooking area had grown that way from an open field in exactly one century. Then I took a couple of pictures, trying to choose interesting angles, knowing that wherever I stood, the photographs would be dull without humans. But the neighborhood was now as uninhabited to all appearances as if the first-born had been slaughtered regularly during the century. Carefully closing the gate behind me, I walked out, looked again in disgust at the uninformative West Virginia Highway Commission sign, and tried for a last time to picture how it must have been with the mobs and the scaffold. Then I returned to where I'd parked the car, sensing inquisitive eyes peering through curtains in nearby windows. I drove back to Hagerstown from Charles Town, and that's how I spent the centennial of John Brown's hanging.

April 3—Catherine went to work as a stenographer in a county office quite a few years ago. She was a young farm girl who very obviously was holding a job for the first time. My own job takes me to that office almost daily, and it took only a couple of weeks for me to realize several odd things. Catherine reminded me very much of someone I couldn't place. She was the quietest girl I had ever encountered, both in scarcity of words and their low volume. And like a dog pouncing upon a small animal, only to recoil at the last instant when it turns out to be a hedgehog, all the wolves in the area would scent a new kill, then back off before they had accomplished anything. She was attractive, but somehow enforced a standback spell on men. She engaged in an interminable powder room procedure three or four times every day to retain a remarkably well-groomed appearance. She made no close friends among her fellow-working females, had no apparent hobbies or interests, and all that anyone knew about her was the fact that she had graduated from high school, started to college, quit after a month, and gone to work. It was in 1952 that she displayed interest in something: the coronation of Queen Elizabeth. She bought every book and magazine with material on this event, brought them to the office and neglected her work to pore over them. Nobody interfered, because it was so nice to see her take an interest in life. Then I realized the source of the familiarity: she resembles the Queen very much, even wearing her hair in the same style. And almost immediately, she acquired a tremendous diamond on the crucial finger. She had become engaged to an obscure young man who worked in the stockyards. A definite change came over Catherine, now that Elizabeth was queen. She did no more filing work, because of the undignified stooping and reaching it required. She emanated even balmy odors than before. Her boss no longer dared to order her to do this or that. I began to feel uneasy around her, and wild fables ran through my mind, of bastards in royal families who get sent away as babies to grow up unnoticed. The years passed, her engagement stretched out endlessly, and Catherine was her same self except for showing signs of strain during Elizabeth's first two pregnancies. Then the newspapers began to run stories about the allegedly wandering affections of Prince Philip and immediately, Catherine got married. A year ago, the woman who had been Catherine's token boss for so long retired, and a new head was hired for the office. An almost intolerable sense of strain became apparent throughout the building at once, for it was obvious that Catherine didn't like her new boss. The new office head thought it over, decided to try to make the best of it instead of resigning—firing Catherine for insubordinate acts didn't occur to anyone—and when the clash of personalities was at its most tumultuous, Queen Elizabeth's third pregnancy was made known. Catherine lost interest in her superior and the work of the office resumed its smooth course. Catherine, now that the baby has been safely born, now takes two lunch hours daily, doesn't report for work on any day when it snows, and has discovered a new way to pile up vacation and sick leave through the year in some mysterious way that permits her to take off most of November and all of December. I wish I could bring this little description to a shattering climax, but it's too early for that. Catherine has suddenly developed an intense and unprecedented interest in flower shows, chatters about them endlessly to anyone who will listen to her, and drags her consort or husband to one every weekend. I'm keeping my eye on Great Britain.

Whithering Glances

At regular intervals, the urge to whither and to whence overtakes fandom. This philosophical heat seems almost as instinctive as the measures that animals take at specific periods to make sure that they imitate the habits of their ancestors to assure that there will be descendants of the species. However, fans differ from animals, by the act of sending out questionnaires and writing fanzine columns designed to show why are fans. Now that I've filled out the questionnaires and read the essays, it's my turn.

The most recent topic seems to be two-fold but related: Why do some readers of science fiction become active fans while most readers don't; and why does no other specific type of literature have a fandom like science fiction? Several factors implicit in both of these posers seem to have been overlooked up to now.

The questionnaires are usually intended to try to solve the first problem. I think that they are wasted. If the determining factors that cause readers to become fans were simple enough to be deduced from the answers to two-page questionnaires, they would be self-evident without the questionnaires. If this investigation is to be made at all, it should be done thoroughly. For each fan under study, a couple of hundred hours with a skilled psychologist, plus an extensive research program into the fan's hereditary and environmental factors, and a similar study with a control for each fan so scrutinized—that kind of research might provide the material for a careful statistical analysis that would give clues to common factors that cause science fiction readers to turn into fans.

But after all that work, I suspect that the research people would end up their thick report with the statement that more must be learned about chromosomes to be sure why some readers become fans. Those who are so interested in this matter never acknowledge the fact that something similar occurs in a multitude of other interest fields. Hobbies, pastimes, and avocations of all sorts generally have a vast mass of take-it-or-leave-it followers who correspond to the general reader of science fiction, and a tiny hard core of all-out enthusiasts who can be equated with science fiction fans. Whatever causes interest to turn into activity must be operative in these other fields. Take photography as a large example. There are 34,000,000 persons in the United States who are photographers, in the sense that they own or borrow or steal cameras and use them to take pictures. The largest camera organization in the nation, the Photographic Society of America, has 10,000 members. A PSA member is to the ordinary camera user as the fan is to the reader of science fiction: the latter just release the shutter and read the magazines, the former engage in all manner of special related projects. Millions of persons go to the circus when it comes to town, only a thousand or so belong to the Circus Fans Association. For every musicologist, you'll find ten thousand persons who like music very much. Maybe a Ford Foundation will some day spend enough money to discover what makes a person take an intense interest in any hobby, an answer that will be as applicable to the NFFF as to the PSA. I don't think the answer can be found merely by studying the individual's height and his number of years of education.

The other phase of the problem, why has only science fiction

produced this kind of fandom, is more suited to discussion, because it is the kind of question that can't be answered by research. Guesses are the best answers that anyone can provide. Therefore, my answer-guess would be: science fiction has fans because real enthusiasts about any other kind of fiction can take more positive action about their enthusiasms; science fiction enthusiasts must sublimate their urges into collecting and publishing and talking.

Western fiction has no known fandom, unless you count the individuals who collect books about the Old West. But remember, the man who is wild about the wild west can do something about it. He can spend his vacation in the real West, living on a dude ranch or taking pictures of faked or abandoned cowboy towns. He can see real live Indians on their reservations. In extreme cases, he can pull up stakes and move into the heart of the cowboy country, making his living at this or that occupation associated with the West. But your science fiction enthusiast can't visit Mars or see bems in the zoo or get a job on a time machine assembly line.

The only detective and murder mystery fandom known to me is the very small group of enthusiasts for Sherlock Holmes, aside of course from collectors of all books in their field of interest. There are several outlets for enthusiasm in the detective and murder field that probably prevent amateur publications and conventions from existing. The rabid readers undoubtedly are sometimes interested enough to join the local police force or to begin training for FBI service or open their own private detective agencies. Others undoubtedly go out and commit murders themselves. A few borderline cases may take the easy way out, and simply become harmless but annoying peeping toms.

It will be noted that there is nothing at all resembling a fandom for love stories. This is where my theory gains its greatest strength, because love story readers are in the best position of all, when it comes to doing something about their enthusiasm for the field. They can just let nature take its course on the way home from the movies or at the next picnic, and they will immediately be living a series of events like those depicted in their favorite fiction, as science fiction enthusiasts can hardly hope to do.

It might be objected that there is something the science fiction enthusiast can do: become a scientist. And maybe our fandom does lose some prospects that way, but it's an expensive, twenty-year task, which many readers haven't the money or intellect to manage. Back in the early part of the century, it took less education and ability to do a scientist's work, and that might be the reason that fandom didn't evolve until technology became so complex about thirty years ago. There's another loose end: the failure of modeling to become popular with science fiction readers, as it does with people who used to read the aviation fiction magazines. The answer to that might be the difficulty of whipping up an interest in models of things that don't exist as certainties; you can't be sure if your Jovian landscape or three-livered Martian is done to correct scale and colors.

I understand that Mr. Disney has built some very convincing futuristic rides and displays. I also notice that visits to Disneyland are quite popular among California fandom. If a ratio between gaffation and visits to Disneyland could be found to exist, my guessing might be given a bit of circumstantial evidence.