

88
Horizons is an amateur publication devoted to proving that the Futurian Federation of the World is not dead. Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, has published this issue in the autumn of 1961. It's volume 23, number 1, whole number 88, and FAPA number 82. I'm not much of a prophet but tentatively forecast that the cover will be by Jean Young and the mimeography by Dick Eney.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: I'd certainly like to know what that proposed amendment about activity waiver means. There is absolutely no clue in this version to tell whether the endorsements must be submitted before the deadline for the mailing with which the individual's membership expires or before the one after that. In any event, if this passes, I predict that we will never again lose a member except through resignation or death. There will always be a dozen kind-hearted souls to sign waivers, or the membership can split up into groups of one dozen, each of which will fill out and sign an ample supply of forms for each of its members, to be used whenever needed. '' To eliminate future fusses over the date when a postmailing was mailed, why not require the member to use first class postage if it's an effort to save his membership? That way, the postmark will be proof. Silly Seasonville: Even if Webster insists that squirrel is two syllables, despite the fact that I have hyphenated it above, in fanspeak it is one syllable. I've never heard it in any way except squirl. Apocrypha: Then there was the grammarian who walked along a river, heard someone shouting from midstream: "I will drown!" and replied: "All right, if you insist." '' Curt hiring a canary sounds a trifle like my editor when he needs a new girl for the woman's page. He knows perfectly well in advance that it's useless to hire her, because she will either quit to get married within a year, prove unable to spell, or be forced to quit early three times each week in order to rush home to her sick child. I disagree with the generalization that a woman doesn't mature emotionally and intellectually after 20. I've seen too many kittenish women change much later after marriage or motherhood. A Propos de Rien: I think that the Bach cantatas are numbered solely on the basis of the order in which they appear in the old Gesellschaft edition. Bach fandom was even slower than stf. fandom in its publications and its first issue came out in 1851 but it didn't finish the series for nearly a half-century. In certain cases, two or more cantatas intended for the same Sunday or the same season follow one another in the numbering, but not always. The numbers give no hint about the date of composition. '' I've known some puny typists, but haven't yet found one whose little finger was too weak to type the letter a. The position of a is quite sensible, because it makes that finger useful; the whole point here is that the little finger is short, not weak, and to give it more than one frequent character to control would involve too much motion of the entire hand. Day*Star: "Present laws make it very difficult to obtain and keep weapons." Go to your nearest Montgomery Ward store, get the fall-winter catalog, and study pages 1406 through 1413 for guns, page 1415 for ammunition. In two or three states, you'll need the signature of your police chief,

elsewhere you can order what you wish without even making a down payment. I agree that the legal profession is an unspeakable mess and that justice consists mainly of keeping property and wealth divided in the status quo. But I'm too much a physical weakling and too poor a shot to want to risk the abolition of cops. I do believe that it would be very simple to make policemen more useful, simply by removing them from their automobiles and forcing them to walk their beats again. Much petty and some major crime would be deterred if the imminence of the law didn't involve such a conspicuous accumulation of motor noises, headlight glare and instantly identifiable vehicles. '' What's the difference between the German subsidies for the birth of children and the American tax exemptions provided for each child? It would be much more logical to increase the amount of tax according to the number of kids. '' I think the music is good for the final pages of Turandot. But I doubt that Puccini would have let the opera go on the stage without a drastic change in the libretto's conclusion. The allegedly happy ending after the sacrifice of Liu is unconvincing and bad drama. Suppose Madama Butterfly ended with the revelation that the heroine forgot to take the sword out of the sheath and wasn't hurt after all? I'd prefer to reserve judgment on the merits of the two versions of Butterfly until I have a chance to hear or read the score of the original work. But I think that opera composers should do like playwrights: create an acting version as well as a paper version of each work. Goethe certainly didn't hope to see his complete Faust on the stage without cuts and there's no way in which the elaborate stage directions and instructions to the actors can be conveyed to the audience in the theater at a lot of modern plays and so we have the best of both worlds. The Running, Jumping, and Standing Still Magazine: The lead article prompts the thought that fandom has been shamefully silent about the death of Doc Weir. Here was a fan who had no enemies, to the best of my knowledge, never wrote an article or letter that was meaningless or hackneyed, possessed a stupendous fund of knowledge on a large variety of subjects, and yet nobody says it's too bad he had to go or plans an anthology of his work. Kent Moomaw had perhaps one-fiftieth the ability and got twenty times as much attention. '' Sheila, I've thought and thought and can't figure out what angered you late last year. And please, if you get mad at me again, wait until after Christmas Eve to do anything about it, please. There's too much danger that doctors and orderlies will be drunk when a broken hip arrives that night. '' I bought a pair of shoes in mid-summer of 1960, wore them for six months until my fall, again for a month or two after I was walking again, and by then the uppers had torn clear of the soles and were ready to crack open just below the laces. Maybe we've reached the point at which it isn't necessary to put quality into manufactured goods, as long as the advertising is effective. '' I'm decidedly the social type. I know four neighbor families by name and three others by sight, after only four years on Summit Avenue. '' Agreed about numbered fandoms. I'd call this Third Fandom. First Fandom: everything up to 1926. Second Fandom, from then until around 1940 when the prozine-orientation ended. Third Fandom, ever since. If you don't believe there was fandom before 1926, wait for my history. Driftwood: BC was one of three things that made me laugh during the

ten hospital weeks , especially the eatanter. '' Ah, for the days when I also read newspapers and lots of magazines. Music and fandom, plus general disgust with current events, have cut me back to about five books per month, no newspapers, no magazines except those specializing in music and photography, and codles of Tannish pages. '' Don't hesitate to stop by if you should drive through Hagerstown again. My frequent warnings about the necessity for giving advance warning are meant for anyone intending a special trip here. Anyone willing to risk finding me out of town or tied up with my job or someone who happens to be coming through anyway is welcome to pay a visit at any hour, any day. (I keep the doorbell and telephone bell soft enough to be inaudible while I'm in my bedroom, so there's no danger of disturbing my rest.) The Nehwon Review: I've always thought that material published in general fanzines disappears from view much faster than items distributed in FAPA. We have more reprinting in general fanzines from FAPA than vice versa. Back issues of FAPA publications are available longer in most cases, through surplus stock. Many persons can locate a back issue instantly if it appeared in FAPA, but how many fans have dependable filing systems for all the non-apa magazines they receive? And you're guaranteed a lot of comments on anything you publish through FAPA; if you send it to a subscription fanzine, it may appear in the last issue and you'll never know what fans thought of it. I'm afraid that Redd is projecting his own slackening of interest in FAPA as an organization onto the organization as a whole, like the critic in Mörike's Abschied who adjusts the candle until he finds the spot from which it will project a shadow with a long nose of the poet. Phantasy Press: My reaction to the Cuban invasion was great relief that it fizzled. If it had been successful, we really would have a mess to worry about. Cuba is neither the first nor the last area lost to communism because the residents found themselves no better off after generations and generations of uncontrolled capitalistic plundering. I don't like the thought of it any more than you do, but I don't think there's a chance of preventing all Asia and all Africa from going communist in the next half-century or so. I think capitalism is a splendid way to operate a nation, but I don't think there should be lower classes under capitalism like American Negroes and white Cubans. '' Smoke Signals is the best McPhail writing I've seen yet. I don't imagine that Dan has anything to worry about seriously from the physical standpoint. If a doctor sees anything dangerous on a chest X-ray, he doesn't wait six months to take the next one. Lark: Are you sure that the linotype slows the operator and not vice versa? Those linotypes work like greased lightning when the operator makes a mistake at the start of the line and slides his fingers along a bank of keys to fill up the rest of the line. '' Ernie Kovacs claims that The Black Pirate was intended as a semi-serious spoof of deadly serious movie thrillers. Ankus: I hunted for the identifications you need in the half-dozen glossaries of this type at the local library. I had no success but learned something: these books copy one another scandalously, and it's about time someone produced a reference work of the same type for fantasy fiction. Does the name Silverlock itself have any literary association? I suppose that the latter half of it is supposed to refer to the fact that the work is a complex kind of roman à clé. Limbo: Even in the

78 rpm days, tests showed that audiences were unable to distinguish between the sound of records and the actual orchestra in a concert hall. I don't think that any amount of multiple soundtracks and speakers will bring the concert hall sound of a symphony orchestra into the living room. Overtime for Eye-tracks: Denying activity credit for mailing comments would be an excellent idea if someone could solve its one flaw: how do you distinguish between a mailing comment and an article which the writer says is an independent effort, even though its topic was mentioned a mailing or two ago? '' I'm surprised that a new civil war hasn't broken out over unemployment compensation. The federal supplement to state aid seems as clear-cut a case of infringement on states' rights as the slavery question. And we all know that the South fought the war over states' rights rather than slavery. '' Idea fiction is hard to read in this form. I can see some usefulness for synopses of plots and principal ideas in old prozine stories, but this is too jerky. Washington Guidebook: Trend, trend! We're entering a new fandom, whose major interest will center around description of home towns, and Speer and I are the pioneers. For a person who dislikes travel, I have an unaccountable fondness for reading about places that I shall probably never visit. I don't quite understand where all the people work around Seattle, but this seems quite complete and adequate in most other ways. It would be nice to be told the exact functions of the numbers: systematic indexing, or reference to some large map, or a method for the traveler to orient himself? Vandy: I've seen about a dozen Twilight Zones by now and have decided that it's much better when working from an original idea. The adaptations from published short stories are inferior, with The Chaser as the most conspicuous example of how this rule operates. It's probably inevitable that they can't pad out and cut down stories of all lengths and numerous scenes to fit exactly into the 23 minutes or whatever actual playing time may be and a budget that permits three or four sets at the most. '' My observation has been that the proportion of neurotic and psychotic people in real life is about 90%. '' Buck's comments on Why Is a Fan? would do nicely for a section on ethics in the next edition of the Neofan's Guide. '' I've always felt it more logical to eat animals than vegetables. The latter don't prey on other living creatures, as the former do. Like Linus in a memorable Peanuts strip, I feel positively ill when I watch someone eviscerating a pumpkin or eating a melon. '' That soft, cool smoke must be something like the wet, cold and delicious beer that we hear so much about in the East. Experienced drinkers tell me that it's not the only liquified beer and that its temperature characteristics are not perceptibly different from other beers. Catch Trap: To continue with a previous theme, I ordered a salad plate for lunch one day, taking to heart Marion's remarks. At 5 that afternoon I got a stabbing headache that didn't go away for three days. I have reverted to cheeseburgers. '' All these women are letting their hair grow again, and none of them will tell me how they can stop that process. '' I had never eaten more than a slice of bread and cereal for breakfast, often not that much, until entering the hospital. It took almost the entire ten weeks to learn to eat most of the enormous 7 a.m. meal, which always contained fruit, cereal, eggs, coffee,

toast, milk and fruit juice, with a gigantic bun on Saturdays and Sundays. This was a major worry to me on my return home, the fear that I wouldn't be able to convert back to spartan fare, but I did. Incidentally, I lost about ten pounds while in the hospital, despite eating twice as much as usual. Target: FAPA: I'm quite willing to write the introduction to that anthology. I've gone through all mailings in possession of me since summer for fan history purposes, so my memory is fresh. " I don't imagine that this proposed constitution will get enough signatures to become law. I might point out that if it does, FAPA as we know it will last only another three years or so. Under this constitution, Wetzel would immediately get onto the waiting list, and I know that at least 30 of us will resign from the organization the day he joins. The Larean: There is much faulty memory and wrong ideas about the events leading to adoption of the present constitution. Briefly: The two-page document's inadequacies became so obvious in a series of disputes over its meaning and proposed changes that Lee Jacobs as president proposed a complete revision in the autumn, 1954, mailing. He appointed Tucker chairman of a revision committee that also contained Boggs, Willis, Croutch and me. The committee bogged down, probably because it was too big, and the new president, Sam Martinez, dissolved it in the autumn of 1955. The hassles grew even more complicated and bitter and in the spring of 1957, a new revision committee was formed with Pavlat at its head and Speer as the actual rewrite man. The proposed new constitution was unveiled in the summer, 1957, mailing and approved with a few changes early the following year. All the troubles that Ron mentions, "Jew-haters, football tickets, invincible Negroes, the vagaries of Jacobs, and 45-day-old mousemilk" occurred before the present constitution was written. " Good grief, are people still calling those chain stories under the pointless name of round robins? No matter what the NFFF says, a round robin is a letter signed by a number of persons with signatures in a circle to make it impossible to determine who was the first to sign. Stefantasy: A red, white and blue cover is the last thing I would have expected from Bill. I hope we'll get someday an explanation of whatever complex printing tricks were used to produce this one. " I was in the zoo in Washington this summer for the first time in many years, and it suddenly occurred to me that most of the animals there had gone insane because of captivity. I saw several pacing up and down in their cages, stopping each time at a point where they must have believed bars existed, never going beyond. Churn: Or prejudice: I have an elderly aunt in San Diego who is one of the world's nicest persons in most ways. This summer her daughter's illness forced her to take a sudden bus trip to El Paso. She was many weeks getting over it, and I finally found the major source of her trouble. She had been forced to sit beside a Mexican. I still can't conceive that anyone should find this something other than an interesting experience. " I think we ought to be consistent about this thing. We must break off diplomatic relations with Britain. They closed down the monasteries over there and took the land away from the Catholic church, just as Castro has done to the churches in Cuba. " I can't understand why insanity should be a defense in court. Unless the defendant was in an asylum when he committed

the crime, there is no way to determine his mental condition at the moment of the crime. Later examination will reveal his mental condition at this particular time. But the serious crime may have been the thing that drove him into insanity. Next thing you know, it'll be possible to get out of finishing the installment payments on your auto, if you can find a psychiatrist who will examine you and testify that you were not responsible for your actions when you purchased the vehicle six months ago. Then the county or state could finish making the payments and you could keep the car after one or two treatments. This would be much easier on the taxpayer than the similar procedure when a crime occurred. Moonshine: I don't trust myself to comment on the wildly radical proposal that Rick Sneary has made: that government leaders should possess intelligence and the qualifications to rule the people. I think that our present system is in the good old tradition: rulers chosen by people who don't want to vote but do so because the Jaycees knock at the door and remind them of their patriotic duty, so they cast their vote for the candidate with the longest name. On the other hand, Rick says extremely wise things about the Moskowitz-Warner mess. I appreciate the way some fans came to my aid but some of them sort of overdid it. '' My idea of hell is just about the same as Sartre's: One other man, a woman and myself in one room from which we couldn't get out, without ability to sleep, for the rest of eternity. '' I don't believe that science fiction has been too conservative in its predictions. Go through the magazines of the 1920's and 1930's and see the dates on which these things are supposed to come into being and the speeds with which a discovery like the harness of atomic energy will be put to useful purposes. Sercon's Bane: You can't know the things you hear about military service, unless you go through life as a civilian. This doesn't mean that I think this is worse than going ahead and serving. It does mean that you encounter an endless number of snide remarks from persons who fought like fury to remain civilians, failed, and now spend all their time reminiscing about their wonderful 16 months in the army. You find it difficult to separate these individuals from the reasoned few persons who genuinely believe that military service is good for a person for causes other than the fact that they got stuck with it. It was exactly the same with the broken hip: for every person who gave me useful advice about how to get along with it, there were ten who would have scared the pants off me, had I been wearing anything below the ribs, with their accounts of shortened legs, infections around the pin, casts, crutch falls, damp weather pains, and a dozen other eventualities that never came true. I think that Buz is among those who use reason rather than emotion for his beliefs about people who get drafted, but he may not realize how easy it is to be mixed up with the other kind. Salud: Somebody must read Crabbe. Peter Grimes was based on one of his poems. I think that Byron will make a comeback any year now. To me, he speaks more immediately than many of today's poets, and I suspect that his recent neglect has been reaction against the enormous enthusiasm for him in the 19th century. I can't bear Shelley. '' I don't remember most of the technical matters about poetry, either, but didn't you learn them in high school? Literature textbooks almost always contain summaries about such things. '' The cost of multi-storied schools compared with one-

story buildings for equal cubic footage might surprise you. Most states have such strict school construction laws that it's very expensive to meet the standards for stairwells, wall girders, and such things. The one-story building permits you to put the gym, auditorium and other noise-makers where they won't disturb study. If so much roof area makes one-story buildings expensive to heat in the three cold weather months, it saves fuel during the four months when nights are chilly but daytime sunshine is warm. The elimination of the fire hazard is something that can't be measured in financial terms. Maintenance costs are cut sharply when you can reach anything with a short ladder. Of course, all this assumes that the school will be built where land doesn't cost a thousand dollars per foot of frontage. Hagerstown built a new high school in 1927 in a fine residential district, paying \$30,000 for a plot of ground that you could spit across, and erecting a four-story building on it that has cost in remodeling and repairs three or four times the complete construction cost. In 1955, it became necessary to build a second high school. By going a mile further out, they got a 50-acre site for \$50,000 with room for a high school, junior college, football stadium, and future swimming pool. The high school can be expanded indefinitely on this site; the older one is already too big for its land. Different: Chris has made a stupid statement this time: the one that says she has no literary ability. I've seen nothing to give any basis for such a claim in the articles and letters she's written, and I hope she ignores her opinion of herself and becomes active in FAPA by writing. Celephais: I second Bill's recommendation of Harpers Ferry. It's infinitely more interesting than this area's widely publicized spots like Gettysburg and Antietam, which are essentially nothing but farmland disfigured by ugly monuments and signs with too-small lettering. HF has many attractions: history, scenery, architecture, geology, flora, hiking, even cliffclimbing if you're athletic. '' Most of the operas you list as revivals that never stay around long are produced annually somewhere. My source material isn't more recent than the seasons of 1958 and 1959. But in those years, I find William Tell turning up at such scattered points as the Vienna Staatsoper, Montpellier and Malta's Valetta; I Lombardi was done by the Welsh National Opera Company; both Nerone and the Leoncavallo Boheme were in the repertoire of San Carlo of Naples; Iris was produced at the Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania; and to hear Pelleas you could choose productions in such places as Rio, Bratislava, Frankfurt, Soumen (in Finland), and naturally many French cities. Don't judge the world's opera activity by the stagnation of the Met. '' Another trouble with the ittybitty autos is that they vanish when parked among bigger ones at an angle. I've gotten into several jams recently, starting to ease into an apparently empty stall only to find it occupied by a runt. The Rambling Faps: I think that I said enough nice things about the Heinlein project the last time I saw it. So I'm going to pay more attention to the Bloch issue, which roused many pleasant memories for me. I hadn't realized that Bob published so much before the first time I encountered his work, Return to the Sabbath. The Strange Flight of Richard Clayton must have been my favorite of the early Bloch. It won little fanzine mention but I still think it's one of the most ingenious science fiction shorts ever written. Now, won't someone supplement this index with at least a partial listing of Bloch

in fanzines? Just suppose you wanted to obtain his article on Godfrey as a television force. How would you go about locating it? If you remembered it was in EAPA, you might find it after an hour's leafing. The several notes that I have on Gregg's mailing comments all seem to have been covered earlier because the same topic came up in other publications. Lighthouse: Sometimes I'm Happy is hard to evaluate objectively because I'm getting badly prejudiced against any fiction by fans that is mainly concerned with music. I've helped myself to make it a welcome-worn-out theme. However, I thought the handling of the dialog in this one was terrific, it was a relief that the musical element was a bit different from the usual jazz jive, and at the end of the story I decided that I wanted to read it through again right away, so it must have done a pretty good job of penetrating my defenses. '' It is wonderfully satisfying to see all the West Coast fans moving East after so many years of migration in the opposite direction. The trend undoubtedly contains some important symbolic meaning, but I've looked and can't find it. '' My faith in the jury system was reinforced a trifle last spring. The local little theater group produced "The Night of January 16", an early indiscretion by Ayn Rand. It's an audience participation murder mystery in the form of a trial. A jury is picked from the audience at the play's start, and the final scene takes two forms, depending on whether the jury finds the defendant guilty or innocent. Six performances were given, the girl was acquitted in five of them, and I understand that the conviction occurred when a friend of the prosecuting attorney snuck in between acts and convinced the jury that he was feeling bad over losing the case nightly. This doesn't mean that a jury will render a fair decision but it may mean that you'd be likely to get the same verdict from almost any jury. The Vinegar Worm: Years ago, I proposed in Horizons a complete revamping of the nation's school system. It called for teaching nothing but the basic arts of reading, writing, spelling, and elementary math until the kids reached their teens, then whizzing them through history, geography, science, and such things in the next two or three years, with the confidence that the ability to use the language was permanently installed. Unfortunately, I haven't heard about any plans to follow my advice. '' Ted Cogswell is the world's greatest optimist if he expects to hear brilliant things in a beer-drinking session, with fans or anyone else. It may sound brilliant after you've had enough beer, when you're around people of whose genius you're already assured. On this matter of fandom vs. the world: there hasn't been any activity since prehistoric times that was action of the whole world. If you fight wars you are in a make-believe world that creates nothing but destroys, and if you stay home to manufacture aircraft you are in a make-believe world that others are fighting to protect; the mainstream stories ignore the implications of the future and science fiction ignores the way people really behave. No matter how fannish a person gets, he's no more withdrawn from the whole real world than an Episcopalian rector or Mickey Mantle. I have yet to hear of a fan who forgot to eat and starved to death because of fiawol preoccupations. '' Full agreement on hospital seasonings. Now, I was not only flat on the back but unable to pull the tray across me, because of the traction apparatus. It is remarkably hard to feed yourself under those conditions.

Whatever Happened to Charlotte?

It's hard to know how to begin this explanation of why I spent part of this year's vacation in New York City without direct contact with the fans in that area who receive Horizons. To say that I was there and didn't feel in the mood for fandom would be a gross oversimplification of the truth and it would leave me on somewhat less friendly terms with certain individuals whom I like very much. To give the full explanation will be tediously lengthy and rather unpleasant in certain respects. I could remain completely silent about the trip, but for the certainty that this trip would somehow become known at some future date. I know some things now that I didn't realize at the start of the summer and I would eventually refer to them in some betraying way.

This dilemma wouldn't exist if fans weren't so hospitable. One reason that I hesitated about a vacation in New York this summer was the possession of insistence by several fans in the area that I should stay with them, whenever I found opportunity to make such a trip. I would be certain to offend someone, unless I should divide up my stay into day-long segments, which would require a ridiculous amount of explaining, packing, and getting acquainted with strange beds or couches. I didn't need to worry about Les Gerber, because he was spending the summer in New England and the Midwest and couldn't press hospitality on me. The Lupoffs were expecting a more permanent type of guest late this summer, and would probably not care to be burdened by me at this particular time. But this left the Shaws, the Dietzes and several other individuals and couples. I feared that one or more might be mortally offended at my choice of hosts. So I thought first about staying home on this vacation, my usual procedure, then wondered if I shouldn't start at a hotel and do some telephoning, trusting to luck that some of these hospitable persons might be out of town or otherwise occupied to simplify my problem. My boss, who visits New York on every journalistic occasion he can seize, was dubious about my chances of finding a room in a decent hotel without reservations at the height of the tourist season. Then I remembered that I'd had a splendid long weekend in Philadelphia last fall, and decided that I'd rather spend a week or so there.

On that Friday afternoon, the last working day before the vacation, Roy Provins, head of the local library, called me into his office to give me a small piece of news. A two-room rural school was being closed down and its pupils would go to a larger building, beginning in the fall. The teachers and children had decided to donate the entire sum in the school treasury, some \$375, to the library's building fund. "It seems like a lot of money for such a small school to have," Roy said. "They told me they'd earned most of it when the kids sold pictures." I stared at him, my news sense alerted. "They made that much money out of pictures? What kind of pictures do you think they were selling?" "Hey, I hadn't thought of that. My God, no wonder they closed down the school!" Roy will become the topic of an article someday, because he is a wonderful and unique individual, but just then I was thinking of only one facet of his past: the book he had written about New York. He worships the city, and even though it proved I hadn't read his book, I asked him about the

midsummer New York hotel situation. "Go ahead," he said with the zeal of a missionary. "Just go in any direction and stop at the first hotel that looks like the right one for you. You won't have any trouble." Still, I didn't pack after work that night, confident that I would get up with a bad headache or in the midst of a hard rainstorm or would find some other good excuse to remain in my stay-home rut for the coming week. But I felt splendid Saturday morning, tossed my only summer suit, razor and Contax into the new suitcase that my grandmother had given me on Christmas Eve, of all conceivable times considering what happened that evening, and took the early afternoon bus for the big city. When you own a 1947 model auto, you take the bus on any trips of more than 100 miles, for obvious reasons.

It was just dusk when I arrived in New York, not quite dark enough to hide the welcome signs that stood invitingly in the windows of most commercial establishments. Roy had ignored one factor in his advice. He hadn't taken into reckoning the annual Jehovah's Witnesses convention. The first few hotels I tried caused me to realize for the first time what traveling giants these religious people are. When I got the now familiar regrets in the Henry Hudson, I knew that something had to be done, headed for a telephone booth, kept one eye on my baggage just outside, and ran the other over the bloated telephone directories. I got the coins out of my pocket and held them over the slot with one hand, determined to place the call the instant I found the numbers because I didn't feel right about announcing on a Saturday evening that I was available to anyone who really meant it when making hospitality promises.

So the Lupoffs' line was busy an interminable time and no answer came from the Shaws, and I couldn't force myself to ask Mr. Gerber for advice even though his son's description of him had indicated that we are persons of similar tastes. I didn't call Lee Hoffman's number because someone had told me she was back in Savannah, a rumor that later proved to be false, and I kept doing something wrong every time I called the Dietzes because the operator kept answering my ring, asking me what number I was calling and telling me to dial it again. When I found Charlotte Miner's number, I started to dial it, then stopped halfway through and hung up, realizing that I was a complete idiot, because Charlotte had married Mark Walcott and fatigue and a slight attack of nerves were the only conceivable reason why I'd almost called a listing under her maiden name and disturbed whatever Manhattan woman happened to possess the same name. I suddenly felt that I wanted some air badly, I was hungry from failure to eat an evening meal up to now, and I did a ridiculous thing: walked with that heavy bag all the way down to the President, whose name was on the little card of recommendation that the desk clerk at the Henry Hudson had given me. The cards hadn't worked before, but at the President I was told that I could even have a room with a radio in it, and I didn't experience after all the thrill of following George Orwell's advice about how to spend a night getting some rest even when you have no place to stay.

The President is just off Broadway on 48th Street, and I admit that before I even took time to eat, I yielded to a perfectly human impulse. Every writer and musician dreams of the day when he might see his name in lights on Broadway. That the-

ater which was made to order for me was just around the corner. Better yet, it was playing a war movie of some kind, with silhouetted figures of men in battle under the giant vertical arrangement of lights that spelled out WARNER. I took a picture which cut off all but the very top of the silhouettes and the resulting effect is exactly like a huge mass of unseen people waving a magnificent welcome to me. Then I stared for a while at the other signs down toward Times Square, trying to figure out exactly why I had come to New York. I certainly have no intention of going to see Spartacus, the Planters Peanuts that were next in line are not particularly favorite food of mine on an empty stomach, it was fun to watch the cartoons flash across the large screen advertising Canada as a vacation spot but I could hardly consider taking a vacation during one of the things, I had no intention of Flying BOAC, I already owned a Scripto pen and would have no use for a GE iron, and then came more theater signs. I had the strangest impression that I wouldn't find what I really wanted advertised on the sides of buildings, but couldn't quite define that want, so I attended to a simpler need, by eating at an unfancy and not too expensive restaurant at the corner of 48th and Broadway. I forgot my vague perplexity by getting involved in a conversation about jazz with the fellow behind the counter. It turned out that he is a guitarist who had just spent \$500 for a new amplifying system for his instrument. Apparently I remembered enough Ted White remarks to hold up my end of the discussion in impressive fashion. I didn't believe him when he told me that he was doing a waiter's job early and a jazzman's task later each night. But a couple of days later I spotted his photograph in the window of what appeared to be a good supper club further up Broadway.

Sunday morning, I realized that it was high time that I announced my proximity to the unsuspecting fan civilization of the clustered islands. However, I thought I'd better buy a Times first and see what was going on in the city, just in case I might run across something I dare not miss. But the outlook was most dull: the Yankees were out of town until Thursday, the Lewisohn Stadium concerts were devoted this week to ballet which bores me sick, if there were any old silent movies showing in the area, I didn't know how to locate them, and there was nothing on Broadway that interested me. (Don't smirk at the hick from back in the hills who imagines that you just walk up to the boxoffice and ask for a nice ticket for this evening's performance of the latest smash hit. One of the blessings of a newspaper job is that our New York advertising representatives can procure seats for almost anything on short notice, as a goodwill gesture.) So there was nothing to do but start calling fans—it had begun raining too hard to permit another delay for the sake of picturing. I hesitated among the people I had tried to reach the night before, couldn't decide which should be the first victim, and compromised yet again by calling another fan. I won't mention his name, since he has never offered me hospitality and isn't too active these days, anyway. But we had a fine, long conversation. I at least got invited to his office for a chat some afternoon in the following week. I felt better almost at once during the long chat about old days in fandom, and sensed my hidden hunger's source: I was starving for an older day in fandom, a different crowd from the active fans of to-

day. Understand, I am very fond of today's New York fandom. But I've been living in the past too much during all this fan history research, which has brought memories of the years when my life was somewhat simpler and happier and I wished that I could go to see old fans who hadn't yet turned into highly respected professionals in the science fiction field. I hinted at this to my conversationalist, then asked: "Whatever happened to Charlotte and Mark Walcott? I haven't heard a thing about them for years." He hesitated and said: "Man, you really have lost touch. Charlotte has taken her maiden name again for some reason. But she doesn't do anything fannish any more, and we've kept all the trouble out of the fan press." I tried to explain that a person who carries on most of his fanning by mail doesn't hear the gossip that runs through the conversational grapevine in fandom, but he didn't seem to want to talk about it any more, merely suggesting that maybe Charlotte would be glad to hear from me, and her number was in the telephone book. We hung up pretty soon after that. I didn't know whether I was relieved or unhappy to have been ignorant of a splitup between two fans. I had never thought much of Mark as a fan or as a person, but I was sorry for Charlotte. And I was relieved that I hadn't placed that telephone call the night before because that was the right Charlotte Miner after all and I would have committed some awful blunder. Some female fans could have split with Mark without any ill effects, but Charlotte was a special case and I didn't dare think what she must have suffered from a marriage failure. The news left me suddenly disenchanted with both today's and yesterday's fandoms. I didn't want to talk to anybody from either fannish era. The rain had stopped, I was getting hungry, I had three 35-exposure rolls of Kodachrome stockpiled for this trip, and I decided that exercise would do me more good than anything else just now. I was in such a mood that I did a silly thing: walked all the way down to Greenwich Village, stopping only to eat and to take an occasional picture. It was an excellent test of the recovery of my broken hip. It felt just fine after those 40 blocks or so. There was a tender spot on the ball of my left foot, but I discovered that that came from a crease in a larger than ideal sock. Under the impression that Lee Hoffman was no longer in town, I thought that I might as well look at the famous basement, as a fannish monument. That meant additional trudging, because that first block of East Seventh Street was not where it should be. I found other sections of the street without difficulty, but my map and passersby were equally useless toward my specific goal. And then somehow I was on Bleecker Street and I felt much as Byron must have felt the first time he set foot on the shores of Greece. I stopped for coffee in an establishment whose exact function eluded me: it wasn't a coffee house and it gave no evidence of possessing more exciting purposes but it certainly wasn't a restaurant. A gigantic Negro was immediately fascinated by what he termed my streamlined construction and began to make wondering little rhymes about it. He seemed to be on the point of fitting music to his new poem when I was ready to leave and for one bad moment I thought he was going to get rough to make possible completion of his artistic endeavor in the continued presence of the model. I emerged hastily, wondering what I'd encounter next, and was hardly prepared for the actuality: a sign announcing Dylan Thomas' Under

Milk Wood. The Circle in the Square's matinee was about to begin and I went in hastily and for the next two hours I forgot everything else in the explosive words and unique experimental staging of the production. It was the first real relaxation I'd known since leaving Hagerstown. I was in such a good mood that I didn't even mind the fact that I just missed the first subway train I tried to get, because I couldn't be sure whether it was an uptown or downtown train, then after catching the next one turned into a coward, didn't risk the complexities of transferring, and simply got off at the 50th Street stop on Lexington Avenue. It meant another walk and I was a trifle tired and by the time I was past Rockefeller Center that sore spot on my foot felt like a genuine blister. To rest it a few minutes, I found a pay phone and before I knew it, I was talking to Charlotte.

Our conversation got off to a bad start because one of her first remarks was so out of character that I wondered if this could be some kind of a mistake, after all. Newer fans may find nothing remarkable about the fact that she told me to come up to the apartment so we could chat and I said that I didn't want to disturb anyone with a lot of fan chatter and she explained that nobody could be disturbed, since she was living quite alone. To understand the full shocking significance of this, you need to have been active in fandom many years ago, when Charlotte was publishing and writing. Then you'll understand that this invitation astonished me as much as if Kingsley Amis had shown up stark naked for that recent British convention. We have had all sorts of feminine fans over the years, with widely varying personalities. But except for a few adventurers whose names rarely appeared in fanzines, you didn't think of them as delicate, shy creatures who needed protection lest some expletive or obscene pun cause instant gaffiation from shock. Charlotte was different. She was the only intensely feminine fan, in the 19th century meaning of feminine, that I have ever known. While most fans of her sex wrote letters and published fanzines that could hardly be distinguished from those of the males, Charlotte refused to use anything but the most fragile and small sheets of notepaper for her letters, a habit that caused her envelopes to bulge absurdly when she had a lot to write. It wasn't mentioned in fanzines, for fear she would take offense, but it was generally known that Charlotte refused to join any fan gathering at which at least two other females of irreproachable reputations weren't present. She visited me once, when a carload of New York area fans were on their way to the Midwescon, neatly divided between three males and three females; it was the only fan conversation I've ever experienced in which no profanity or offcolor language occurred. As a writer, she sounded astonishingly like a more refined Jane Austen, if that doesn't sound too paradoxical. That one meeting and pictures I'd seen indicated that she had an instinct for good taste in clothing and absolutely flawless personal grooming. Yet with all this, she wasn't the useless little ornament that you might imagine. Her mind was clear and firm on every topic, fannish or mundane. She had whizzed through college, but quit her schoolteaching career after three months of its first year, when older boys persistently bumped her in the halls and the principal told her it didn't matter. She found a typing

job with a lady lawyer, after first ascertaining that this individual and her two other subordinates were heterosexual and catered only to complex and clean legal matters that involved no visits by suspicious husbands or worried confidence men. She had known Mark as another New York fan for the past year or two but none of us imagined that Charlotte would consider marriage until she was at least 30, and then would be apt to marry almost anyone except her actual choice.

I don't mean to imply anything libelous about Mark. He was principally a convention fan, at a time when that term had not come into prominent use, but he got occasional attacks of the collecting mania that were mainly responsible for his appearances in fanzines. He had an obsession about the prices of fantasy items, and kept writing articles and letters of comment based on how much the items had brought at the last auction or the potential worth of a complete set of Fantascience Digest. He had the kind of personality that would have made him successful as a dealer in fantasy literature, extraverted, extremely friendly with everyone and absolutely unscrupulous when the time came to unload most of the stuff that he'd piled up during his latest buying spree. Most of fandom had treated the news of his marriage as the start of a different kind of hoax, and it was two or three months before that photostatic copy of the marriage certificate that Mark circulated convinced us of the truth. Of course, we'd hunted up the marriage license record at once, but that proved nothing, because anyone can buy a marriage license and fail to use it.

But the Walcotts didn't stick around in fandom too long after their marriage. Mark occasionally showed up at a New York fan gathering, always careful not to patronize any one of the countless splinter groups over the others. Charlotte went with him only once and shattered some illusions by drinking a half of a glass of beer. She was even quieter than usual. All this was ten years or so ago, I'd lost track of them completely and now the husbandless Charlotte was inviting me to come calling. It wouldn't have been a remarkable invitation from anyone else who had been in fandom, where the propriety of such a visit is never questioned, but it was so out of character for her that I sank right back into the rut I'd dug for myself ever since reaching New York: a delaying action. In this case, I wanted to know what I was getting into. Mark was bigger than me and I didn't want a thoroughly Victorian melodramatic appearance by him while I conversed with his formerly Victorian wife.

"I'd like to," I told Charlotte truthfully, "but I'm completely tied up until Wednesday," I lied. That would give me a chance to contact Ted White and Larry Shaw, who between them know everything about everyone in fandom east of the Mississippi. "When are you coming back into fandom?" Even the low fidelity of the telephone receiver left no doubt about her reply. "I'm sorry," she added. "That just slipped out. My mouth is still full of an ugly taste from fandom. I like to talk to fans now and then. Just don't propose putting out a one-shot or anything." I grew more and more concerned as I brought to her attention the things that had been happening to me in the past few years. Her voice produced its words faster than it had done on that night of the visit and the New York accent was as strong

as if she had been cultivating it deliberately. There had been a time when she kept elisions and vowel shifts out of her speech as systematically as she kept dirt from beneath her fingernails. I didn't even get any particular sympathy when I mentioned my broken hip, which she hadn't heard about. She clucked her tongue against the roof of her mouth in unCharlottish fashion, and changed the subject as if she feared I might inflict upon her an account of that hospitalization as lengthy as the one that descended on FAPA in Horizons. Finally, she said: "Well, please try to come Wednesday night. I'll stay home for you." And she hung up. The old, original Charlotte had flashed back to life for the fraction of a section that the word please had lasted and then had come the abrupt end of the conversation, a rudeness that the original Charlotte could not possibly have accomplished, even if she'd tried.

When I got back to the hotel, I found that there was indeed a blister, and it had opened, apparently during the last couple of blocks between the telephone booth and the President. My sock was still wet with the fluid that had seeped out. But no blood was evident and I could put weight on the foot much more easily now.

The next morning, I started out to hunt books and came to my senses just before making purchases: I couldn't conveniently carry them home with me, and if I mailed them to myself this soon, they would reach Hagerstown before I did. It would be more sensible to sightsee for a while before hunting down more facts about Charlotte. I had been urged not to miss the Bronx Zoo, and chose that as my destination. Unfortunately, my mastery of the subway system was not quite as complete as I had assumed. I made three separate and distinct efforts to get into the Bronx and had gone past Grant's Tomb on the first two of them before realizing that the train hadn't zigged or zagged as it should have done. I don't remember doing anything differently the third time, but I was across the Harlem River in a jiffy. Despite the delays, there was still plenty of time to see the botanical gardens before looking at the zoo, I told myself to justify the fact that I'd entered the grounds at the wrong end. Tourists apparently don't come up here in great numbers, because my camera was the only one in sight and most of the other fauna among the flora consisted of teenage boys wandering idly around. I was thinking that the large central building, a sort of glorified greenhouse, reminded me of something when a man came up and struck up a conversation, a real rarity in New York. He lived just outside the grounds and was upset because they hadn't opened this building on this particular day and he had visiting relatives from upstate New York who had wanted badly to see the rare plants inside. Then he cautioned me: "Don't wander around alone. Those kids are nasty. They ganged up on me one day and I had trouble getting home." I was so delighted to remember that the building on this misty day resembled strongly the one that Wells' time traveler sees upon arrival in the future that I hardly heard his warning. Then after he had stomped away and I had resumed my walk toward the zoo, I remembered that two of those boys had stuck suspiciously near me for the past ten minutes and now they had vanished and I might have been the only man on a desert island. Traffic was too distant to be audible and I realized that I couldn't hope to save

my camera if they really came after me. Then the path I was walking dead ended, branching to right and left. I wasn't sure which way I wanted to go, but turned to the right. This path was narrower. It veered sharply a hundred yards ahead. I rounded that turn and I was suddenly face to face with four large and hairy teenage boys. I froze, involuntarily. They stared at me a long instant, then turned tail and dashed frantically away in every direction as if I were either the devil incarnate or his most trusted lieutenant. I never did find out what I had interrupted, but I came to the zoo itself soon and found it would be closing in less than an hour and suddenly I didn't want to look at animals. New York didn't seem as friendly as it had been the previous day, besides which my blister had begun to ache in nasty fashion again. I was so happy to find a subway close by that I forgot my acrophobia and went up the steps to the elevated station without hesitation. Even here, people were scarce. But the close-clustered pairs of track, the steel along the station roof dotted with caged light bulbs, even the plain wooden boards of the platform seemed comfortingly suburban, strangely similar to the station at Pen Mar, my principal source of amusement when it was Western Maryland's biggest summer resort in my boyhood.

This time, I succeeded in a complicated bit of transferring and emerged at the 42nd Street stop on Lexington Avenue. I ate, with little hunger, then remembered something. I've been trying desperately for almost three years to find pleasure in stereo. Acoustic Research has a demonstration room in Grand Central and I thought that I would not only give my ears practice but also cheer myself up with some music. It didn't work quite that way. I got there just as Beethoven's Harp Quartet had begun. I listened to it all the way through but I heard none of the spiritual experiences that stereophiles experience: just the fiddles coming from one speaker, the cello from the other, and the viola wandering back and forth and occasionally settling in the center. The sound was too lacking in highs for my ears. I didn't wait for the next record, but stood on the balcony a while, unwilling to experience the pain from my blister for a while longer. The people swarmed through the gloomy floor below me around the central booths like worshippers around some complicated god's idol, and the Kodak transparency shouted its message accusingly from the wall opposite me: "All outdoors awaits your movie camera." I'd brought only my still camera to the outdoors of Manhattan. I was lower in spirits than at any time so far this week when I got tired of leaning and limped to the street. I thought I heard someone behind me yell at me: "Watch out for the car, mister." I was on the little raised walk at the Vanderbilt Avenue side of the terminal, so it couldn't have been a motor vehicle, but I stupidly stepped backward obediently anyway. The word hadn't been car but cart, because I fell backward against the baggage cart that a porter had been pushing behind me and landed on my head.

That grimy exterior flashed off and a gloomy interior succeeded it like a plain cut at the wrong place in a movie. Usually I get a lap dissolve out of a faint but this was different. I was in a hospital, obviously in a ward. The other men on both sides of me seemed totally uninterested in my feat of getting back my senses but an aide lumbered up when I started to squirm.

I felt all right, aside from a stupendous headache, but the aide wouldn't bring me my clothing and eventually summoned a nurse and interne. "We can't keep you here, if you sign a form absolving the hospital of consequences," the nurse said. She didn't look happy. The doctor had ignored her when he arrived. I couldn't help remembering Dr. Sprecher, my hip physician. He would have broken the heart of any nurse in the hospital if he had failed upon approaching her to pinch her rump, apply a half nelson, or give some similar symbol of comradeship. "There's nothing wrong with your head but a bump," the interne was saying. "But we X-rayed you from head to foot. There's just a shadow on one plate that might indicate a hairline fracture of your hip. You'd better wait until we take another set to make sure." I pulled up both legs from the hip until my feet were flat on the draw sheet. Everything felt fine except that even this hurt my blister. "An inch and a half below the socket on the left side?" I asked. He looked surprised. I explained that it must be left from the old break and now could I have my clothing? He insisted on getting verification of this before releasing me. I started to give him the Lupoffs' name and address, then stopped, fearful that they would consider the call some kind of complicated hoax and doom me to at least a temporary splint. So I told him to contact Charlotte instead. She must have sounded convincing over the telephone, because I was given immediate liberty. When I got up, I didn't think I'd be able to dress myself for the ache in the head and dizziness. But I won time by providing Blue Cross information, felt better, and managed to stagger to an elevator. The nurse had been human after all, because she went with me to the street, hailed me a cab on the theory that my slow gestures looked drunk, and insisted that I must follow the instructions Charlotte had given over the phone: I was to go to her apartment to rest for a few hours. It wouldn't be safe to be alone in my hotel room just yet, in case something invisible to X-rays should be happening under my skull.

I had one bad moment in the cab ride. The driver stopped outside a bulging white building and for a wild instant I thought that Charlotte lived in the Guggenheim Museum. But he just wanted some ice cream, then took me to her apartment a couple of blocks behind the museum, in a fair to middling residential section. He waited to see if I tipped him, and when I did, he insisted on walking me up the one flight of stairs to her apartment.

Charlotte didn't look much different from ten years ago. She must be 30 now but looks five years younger. The complexion was still flawless. I looked for immediately and found the tiny indentation in one cheek. A fannish legend, possibly apocryphal, said that Charlotte had once experienced a pimple and had insisted on its removal by surgery by her physician, creating the barely visible crater. She didn't seem to have gained or lost a pound. Once she had curled her hair but now she made no effort to disguise the fact that it was straight as a string, and she had it cut short, shingled like a boy's head.

If you've noticed that several pages remain of this narrative, and you hope they will be devoted to a frank disclosure of real intimacy between Charlotte and me in the hours that followed, you are inviting disappointment. I was weak and wobbly, to begin with. Specifically, I touched her only once that night.

That was when I used her chin as a lever to turn her face into the bright light from the ceiling. I wanted to test my memory of what had happened on that visit years ago. Sure enough, she blinked in normal fashion with the right eye but squinted the left one until the lids almost closed. "That eye is weak," I told her, just as I had done a decade ago. "You're just too proud to wear glasses." Then I let go. She chuckled a little in noncommittal manner on both occasions. But the first time she had blushed in confusion and this time she didn't.

Even if I hadn't been wearing a bandage around my head and my hands hadn't quivered when not propped on something, I doubt that anything would have happened between us in the hours that followed. I had always been convinced that Charlotte was a pearl among women, in or out of fandom. But I hadn't always understood that you don't discover the thing of beauty when you open the oyster. The pearl is covered with layer after layer of dull or ugly skin, some of it positively rotten. It takes a skillful person to peel with infinite care the successive layers away without damaging the real pearl embedded in the center. Not even this expert can ever be sure that the globe contains a sound pearl at its center. Sometimes the rot has gone all the way through and you keep removing layers until nothing remains.

So I stayed up all night, talking with Charlotte. This was a first for me. I've had sleepless nights during illness of myself and my parents, but I always managed to spend at least a couple hours on those bad nights lying down, partially undressed. Charlotte and I had so much to talk about that we spent what the French call a white night and as things turned out, I went 42 hours without genuine sleep, unless you count that brief period of unconsciousness after the fall. I didn't ask Charlotte about Mark's whereabouts. But something, possibly her assured manner, told me that he wouldn't bust in and make a scene with an ex-wife and occasional correspondent. Three times, Charlotte got coffee and cakes for me. The first time, she stayed in the kitchen too long for the elementary results. The next two times she was honest about it and let me watch her drink the beer.

"I know I didn't use to do this," Charlotte told me. "And I think I'm breaking away from it, gradually. But, Harry, you know that none of us are the same persons we were one year, ten years ago." "Of course, but the last few days, I've been wishing like fury that I could get back into that previous self, at least for a little while." "Just for the past few days, you've been wishing that? God, I've had more practice than that." She paused. Then she said: "I don't like me now so much but I'm having trouble bringing back the old me. If you want to say what you really think about why I'm single again, I don't mind. It can't be worse than my own opinion."

"No comment," I said, "because I don't know a thing. You must have bribed the fans not to gossip." She stared at me and apparently believed me, because suddenly she began to address me like a teacher who must explain relativity to high school sophomores. "Well, you'll hear only my side of the story, but you'll hear it with an open mind, then. I wasn't the right person for Mark. Maybe by now I'd be right for him, but I was different then. I was going along just fine in and out of fandom, fulfilling myself the best way that I knew, getting out of life as much as I could in the only way I knew how, the right way.

Then I woke on my 22nd birthday and it suddenly occurred to me that I couldn't have the full life and certain kinds of happiness that I'd dreamed about, if I didn't get married. It took me two weeks to decide whether to marry in or out of fandom. I decided on Mark after I made that choice. And things started to go bad almost at once. He wanted to do too much for me. At first, if he caught me looking at something in a store window, he'd buy it for me. We had our first fights about that. I'd never owed a cent to anyone before and Mark was a completist when it came to instalment plans. At first I felt miserable when he had to cut down on fanac when a big payment came due, then I felt even worse when he cut down on the payments to keep up his fanac.

"Then there was the baby trouble. No babies, he insisted, and every time I started on that subject he came up with all the miserable fannish gags you've heard a million times about turning out our little oneshots and methods of reproduction. Finally I lost my temper one night and told him I'd married him only because I wanted to become a mother. That was the first time he swung at me. I ducked in time and he was sorry and I was horrified because my fingers were bent and I knew that I'd have scratched his eyes out if he'd connected. That was the first time that I realized that I'd turned into another person, living in the same skin as the previous owner."

"Why didn't you leave him then?" I asked and instantly knew it was a foolish question because for all I knew, this might have been the point at which she did leave him. "Well, for one thing, he was awfully good in bed. And I was scared that I had grown so different from all those wretched little fusses and compromises that I'd be miserable alone again or with the kind of man I'd dreamed about at first. And I did want kids of my own more badly than you'll ever know unless you get reincarnated as a woman. I was at a stage where I was willing to gamble a sudden change of heart on Mark's part or a planned accident on mine against the months and months of barrenness that were sure to come if I gave him reason for divorce, went through the proceedings, and found a new sire. I didn't start to hate Mark until the night of the welcoming party for Linus Martz." Charlotte used another name, the right one. "You know about him, but maybe you don't know that the two of us had corresponded for years. When he got transferred to New York to work, the fans around here didn't know quite what kind of welcoming party to throw for such a famous fairy. We decided on a conventional one. Mark insisted on not letting Linus know my identity as soon as we arrived, claiming that it would be fun to see if Linus could pick out penpals among the fans he was meeting in real life for the first time. Linus ignored me at first. Then--well, this party was in a pretty big apartment, I had a cold and I went to the bedroom where we'd left our coats to get more Kleenex from my coat pocket. Linus made a beeline for me when he saw me going there. I wasn't worried, not with his reputation. 'Mark just told me who you are,' he said with a queer giggle that I hadn't heard him make yet. 'He did?' I asked. 'He did,' he repeated. And like a strong and friendly bear he swatted that big right hand and arm right across my breasts. It hurt horribly and I half-fell, half-sat right down on a rug beside the bed. I wanted to scream and sat there with my mouth open and nothing coming out but little groans. I didn't know what Linus would do next and I couldn't move as he

stared at me with those big eyes getting wider and wider. Then he knelt down beside me and grabbed the top of my dress. My God, I thought, were we all wrong about him? But he didn't tear it off me. He just pulled on the front of it and looked down inside as if I were a peep show at a penny arcade. Then he jumped up and stared at me for another instant. 'They're real!' he informed me, and got white and dashed away as if he'd seen a couple of dirty garbage pails down there. By the time I pulled myself together he'd run out of the apartment. The next day he quit the job that brought him to New York and disappeared from fandom and nobody knows what happened to him. Mark thought it was a scream at first. He'd told Linus that I was a certain fringe-fan from the New York area who wanted to meet Linus because they had a lot in common and this fringe-fan was a transvestite for big occasions like this one. I don't blame Linus for being fooled, especially with my haircut. That was the turning point for Mark and me. He didn't realize at first that he'd done something absolutely unforgivable, using his wife that way and losing me a good correspondent. I wouldn't let Mark have me for three weeks after that and he finally got remorseful enough to tell me that we'd start raising a family right away if I'd make up.

"I thought that was what I'd been waiting for. But the instant he made the offer, I realized that I didn't want babies any longer, by Mark or any other fan or any man, either, for that matter. I didn't want to be a nice girl, either. In fact, for a few months after that, I think I outdid Mark in vulgarity and general uselessness. I refused to have anything to do with his fan friends and kept writing to just a few of my special pals far away who probably hadn't heard about the party. I didn't change the sheets oftener than every two weeks, I quit work and put us deeper into debt by refusing to do much cooking so Mark would have to take me out to eat or starve, and I got into the habit of going to a movie in the afternoon and sitting through it three or four times so I could learn it by heart, then go home and dream up little variations on the plot with me as the actress who did the changing. Thank God, the fans here in New York are a pretty good bunch, even if they do fight among themselves every so often. You didn't hear any gossip about what I was turning into?"

"Not a bit," I said. "All I knew were the negative things. You dropped out of sight and I saw Mark mentioned in a few party accounts and then there wasn't any more mention of him. I remember asking someone about him, and I was told he'd gaffed."

Charlotte smiled. I wish I'd had fast film in the camera or flash equipment, because it was something like that Edgar Allan Poe portrait: seraphic on one side and ominous on the other. "Well," she said, "suppose I tell you all about that, too, since nobody else did. You know that Mark's folks lived way up in New England and had a little bit of influence and money. They hadn't liked the way things were going with us and blamed me for it for a long time. But they couldn't pick on me as the cause of the troubles when there was that big warehouse fire over on the East Side that ruined the firm that Mark worked for. So he didn't have a job, either. And it happened like lightning: one day Mark and I were arguing over which loan company we should lie to next to borrow another hundred bucks on our signatures, and the next day he was telephoning his parents collect and a couple of telegrams

flew back and forth and by midnight Mark had cashed in the wire that sent us enough money for two one-way train tickets to his old home town. His father had arranged a job in the bank for him and his mother had said she'd forgive me for all that I'd done to her unfortunate son, and we were to sell everything we had and move in with them right away.

"Mark was so amused by some of these instructions that he didn't notice how I was taking them. Getting rid of our furniture was the easiest thing in the world; we'd been trying for months to hang onto it and the stores didn't need two invitations to repossess. Mark was already trying to remember whether he'd be the eighth or ninth fan to call himself the Maine-iac. He did take the trouble to ask me if I'd miss New York and I said no. But I was thinking a lot of things, not so much about whether he'd change in a new environment or how I could endure his folks, but about the way I was reacting to the whole idea. Before I'd married Mark, my idea of final bliss would have been to spend my middle and declining years in the simple and healthy life of a little Maine village, watching the children grow and waiting for the grandchildren to arrive. Now I didn't want the children, I hated villages as much as this big city, and the future that I'd used my sense of wonder on in prozines so much was an inexorable menace.

"All this happened on the Thursday before Labor Day. I remember how thankful I was that there weren't many fans in town. Most of them were gone to the convention, so we wouldn't have a lot of tearful leavetakings. I didn't know whether I wanted to cry or not. I wanted to leave early Friday afternoon, to beat the holiday rush out of town, but Mark said he had to say goodbye to one certain fan. I waited hours in that dead apartment, hungry and nervous. It was almost dark when someone pounded on the door and scared me stiff because I thought Mark had gone off without me or something. But it was the woman upstairs. I was supposed to meet Mark at the 50th Street Greyhound Terminal. I didn't believe her. 'He must have said the railroad station,' I told her. 'Nope, bus station. I know because he said to be sure to tell you 50th Street, not 34th Street.' Then she grabbed my arm and dragged me upstairs and made me eat a bowl of soup before I left. I felt like keeling over and probably looked it. I don't remember how I got the two suitcases with my clothing and Mark's to the Greyhound terminal. We hadn't been able to afford new clothing for a couple of years but they were still heavy. It was midnight by then and that terminal was absolute hell. They'd taken out the benches to make more room for the mobs heading for the shore or the old folks back home. You couldn't even tell exactly where one line ended and another started. I finally heard Mark shouting at me and dragged the bags to him. I didn't have strength left to lift them. Then I saw why he hadn't come to help me. There were about eight stacks of prozines on the floor beside him and he was guarding them like the greatest treasure in the world, scowling at anyone who got shoved against them or touched the bottom ones with his foot. 'Things are going to be different for us from now on, baby,' he yelled at me above the hubbub. 'It'll be just like starting all over. We've even got a good start on a new prozine collection here. Jerry made me such a good price on them that there's exactly enough left for the

bus tickets for us.' I knew then that I wasn't going to Maine with him. I might have done it on the train, not on a Labor Day weekend Greyhound. And a big man right beside us who was sopping wet from sweat and red in the face suddenly bent over and got sick all over the floor. Mark grabbed the prozines and got them out of the way just in time. He ignored what happened to our luggage. I waited a minute or two, knowing that I'd get nauseated myself. I always have when it happens around me, ever since I can remember. But I didn't get sick. I just got madder because I couldn't get sick, which meant that the change in me was absolutely complete. I was ready to walk the streets to get enough money to live on but I wanted to do one thing before then. I dug into my purse and found that big hunting knife in a fake leather sheath that I'd always carried, just in case I had to go down a dark street alone late at night. I had cut the ropes around three of those big stacks of magazines before Mark saw them toppling into the filth and realized what I was doing. He roared and grabbed my arm and twisted the knife loose. It fell onto a Clayton Astounding. We both grabbed for it, but I got there first. Mark reached for my arm again. Instead of jerking back I shoved the blade into his throat, as hard as I could. He gafiated in one hell of a big hurry.

"I remember the first thing I thought after that was to wonder about my chances of getting off with a manslaughter conviction. It didn't even occur to me until the cops had asked me a lot of questions and taken the names of witnesses that people thought it was self-defense. I knew it was murder but I didn't think it any worse to say that it was accidentally done to save my own life than to plead manslaughter. I didn't even set them straight on whose knife it was. Everyone assumed it was Mark's. Of course, it got into the newspapers but the fans rallied around me and kept it out of the fan press as completely as they did that time years ago when a bnf New Yorker got caught molesting a little girl. I found that I had more friends than I'd realized, now that Mark was gone. After the hearing that whitewashed me they found me a job and got me out of some legal complications of this sort and that. I decided to stay in New York because here's where I'd changed from one kind of person into another and this is probably the only place that I can manage to change back. But it's harder to become the old me than I'd thought. I don't think I'll ever succeed completely."

It was late morning by now. Charlotte helped me to take off the bandage and I felt pretty good: not sleepy but a bit irritable. She suggested, and I agreed, that it would be better for me to go back home and take things easy for a few days, because if I contacted other New York fans I'd get caught up in an exhausting whirl of fanatic. So I returned to the President, packed, and caught the next bus home. Some street repair was going on around Tenth Avenue, the driver didn't notice a detour sign, and got trapped in a one-way street with a ditch in front of him and an unbroken stream of crosswise traffic behind him, in his search for the Lincoln Tunnel. A policeman noticed the trouble and held up traffic on the avenue long enough for the bus to back up and make a fresh start. We were in New Jersey in a jiffy and I remember that I kept thinking that machines can do certain things much more easily than human beings can do them.

File, Sci

Among the ample quantity of projects that wallow in the comfort of the unborn is a complicated and difficult article on the other Gernsback. I want to go through my small collection of Science and Invention, draw up a box score on the speculative and predictive articles, and determine how many of these promised scientific marvels came to reality during the three or four decades that followed.

It'll be a long while before I find time for such nonsense. Meanwhile, I was glancing through one issue of S&I, a process that brought something else to mind. I wonder if somewhere in today's scientific world there are people who go back through the dusty files of past publications, and take another crack at projects that failed early in this century, haven't been thought of since, and might be successful with present knowledge?

As I've emphasized frequently and betrayed even oftener, I have no technical ability and somewhat less technical knowledge. So I don't pretend to take a stand one way or the other. Maybe some people in FAPAland have enough knowledge to say something sensible on this topic, on the basis of some items in the issue in question. This was the March, 1927, edition, whose fictional content was limited to a segment of Cummings' Into the Fourth Dimension.

Hugo never got tired of announcing that television really is arriving this time, no kidding. He was at it in this issue with a doublebarreled article. Part of it told about a method of making persons visible to each other during telephone conversations. One Monsieur Dauvillier had done it with "two tuning forks kept in vibration by electricity, and producing induced currents. One of the tuning forks vibrates 800 times a second and the other ten times a second. The induced currents are synchronic, which are conducted by wires to electrostatic fields in the cathodic oscillograph receiver which is a Braun tube." Then there was the description of what J. L. Baird had done. He had shown the British Royal Institute how to produce telecasts without bright lights. No technical details are given in this item, just the comforting assurance that "the inventor accomplishes this seeming miracle by using invisible infra-red rays." The readers in 1927 were assured that the demonstration had permitted telecasts of subjects "sitting in a room of inky blackness". The prediction at the end: "In another year television will be a commercial proposition and the apparatus will be sold for \$150. It will enable its users to see and hear at the same time in connection with either the telephone or radio."

That annual blister, wireless transmission of power, must have been another Gernsback favorite, to be dragged out whenever an issue threatened to be a little dull. It turns up unexpectedly in a long continued article entitled "Interesting Experiments with High Frequency Currents". The good old Tesla coils seem to have had something to do with it, but I got dizzy from the heady descriptions of how many turns of how much diameter were used with such a thickness of wire, not to mention the abundant use of dowels, glue, and beeswax. The writer told how "a 24-watt light, connected in series with three turns of wire wound in a loop three feet in diameter, was lighted to full brightness when the loop was held several feet away from one of

the Oudin coil primaries. For best results with this experiment the axes of the two coils should coincide. It is not beyond reason that some day we may be transmitting power on a large scale."

Maybe I shouldn't bring this up, in view of recent recordings of Wellington's Victory. But there's a fascinating little item under the one-line headline: "Report Loud Phonograph". This instrument was invented in Berlin by a locksmith and a carpenter and guaranteed to produce the volume of "20 orchestral instruments". It worked like this: "A mixture of atomized air and oil is generated with the aid of a hand-pump and then projected through a tube to the resonator. It is by the influx of this mixture into the soundbox, that the tone volume is augmented to such a degree as to create the effect of a full regimental band."

I might point out that some of the devices described in this issue have come into reality, and I wonder if a lawyer might not make a reputation and living by ransacking these old magazines for such instances, then digging out possible patent infringements. One item illustrates a new type of tripod head that finally came onto the market in slightly different form a year or two ago. The basic idea is the same: a permanent gadget in the camera's tripod bushing which slips through a device that is screwed onto the tripod head and left there. A "batteryless flashlight" that the Slaymaker Manufacturing Company had just made apparently works on the same principle as a small flashlight widely sold two or three years ago that stayed lit as long as you kept pushing down a springloaded lever. There's a screwdriver with built-in light which I've seen in novelty catalogs quite recently.

On the other hand, some of the items are incredibly naive, for a magazine that listed a staff of experts that occupied nearly half of the space on the contents page. An article about the "pallphotophone" turns out to be a description of the sound track that was just beginning to appear on movies, then suggests that "it would seem a simple matter to record a long novel on a short stretch of film, and with a projector and loud-speaker, have it read as rapidly as we desire. It is said that we can understand the electric reader at five times the rate of ordinary talking." Another item with two pictures tells of "a new violin bow, the invention of Herman Berkowski of Berlin, (which) enables violin players to strike with the bow more than one string at a time". The pictures show this to be the same curved bow that was in use in Bach's time. There's an offer of \$5,000 for a perpetual motion machine. No time limit is listed and I suspect that Hugo owes that sum to whichever Russian was mainly responsible for sending up the first long-lived sputnik.

I suppose the most nostalgic sentence in the issue is on a page showing the latest novelties in toys. "All of the toys illustrated on this page are substantial enough to weather quite a few seasons of bumps." There's a small mystery in the department that answered questions about radios. "Mr. George Smith, Philadelphia, Pa., inquires for the proper method of preparing the solution for an electrolytic rectifier of the lead-aluminum type." Could that be by some remarkable chance the same George Smith who used to put such horrible topics into his stories about electronics?