

92
Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, is sound asleep as he begins stenciling volume 24, number 1, whole number 92, and FAPA number 86 of Horizons. Will the noise of this venerable Underwood waken him in time to make him responsible for opinions expressed herein? This should be the November, 1962, issue, and let us hope that it isn't just a pleasant dream to believe that Dick Eney has his firm hands on the controls of the duplication machine.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: The latest rulings on situations caused by split couples seem fair enough. But I wonder if the concept of dual memberships doesn't cause infinitely more trouble to the organization than the satisfaction derived by the couples when they see both their names on the roster. I would feel quite pleased if some brave soul proposed a moratorium on dual memberships: retain those that exist but grant no more in the future.

Remembrance of Things Past: Nobody who has not experienced the sensation can guess how much egoboo a creaky old fan accumulates as he leafs through a publication like this. In fact, I can't remember any previous item in this series that derived from the past of someone still active in FAPA. Bill Evans was kind enough to supply me with a spare copy for Jim Avery, my old co-editor. He wrote the longest letter I've received from him in a decade, saying such things as: "Some of the material still reads well after more than 20 years. I won't labor the point... but merely say that stf. ain't what she used to be. Not from what I've seen of fairly recent offerings in the fan mags. I can't bring myself to refer to 'em as fanzines.... I can't help but feel that a little of the past is rubbing off at the moment."

" Publication of all these reprinted items has caused me to realize again how I ought to try to dig out old folders that contain many clues to the identity of some of the pennames that Spaceways utilized. I can't remember the identity of some of the real writers, after all these years. But here are some notes on names for which memory is still functioning: All the Pongs were Tucker, of course. Don Robertson existed, a San Diego reader of stf. who long corresponded with me but never became a real fan. I seem to remember that Widner was Wacky Jilliamson, but don't include that conjecture in any reference books just yet. Guy Amory was Ray Bradbury. You can detect most of his old pseudonyms because he was so obsessed by that business about this being a little Martian, not a big Martian, which would be fantastic; I imagine he used it at least once under every penname. Although they sound like fake names, James A. Tillman, Jr., was a semi-active Tennessee fan, and Richard Kraft was a real New Yorker who never had much personal contact with the fan population of that metropolis. Fantacynic seems to be someone in England. Out of all this reprinted material, I think that by Youd and Lowndes holds up best for sheer writing ability, while Widner best communicates the sense of the fannish milieu. Finally, if Youd's version of the famous lines from Flecker's "Hassan" are startling, you should have seen the original version. I insisted on dilution in the form of a rewrite before it went into print. It is hardly necessary to state the obvious: that I'm most appreciative of the honor of forming the subject of such a giant collect-

ion. I feel wistful as all get out, longing to try my hand at editing a subscription fanzine again, to determine if I could do a better job of it. Maybe, after the fan history is finished, I'll have the feeble remaining sparks of energy in this battered frame augmented by some kind of fannish transformer and attempt to put the souped-up voltage to work on such a fool undertaking. A Sense of FAPA: This collection provided me with an equally splendid mixture of sensations. From the personal and accidental standpoint, it helped to restore my faith in fandom. Heresies had troubled me during the summer, because of my continued unhappiness over the Martin case and the utter revulsion that I experienced over the doings of Bob Jennings and D. Bruce Berry. If something this splendid hadn't existed, it might not have been necessary to invent gafia for me; it was entirely too solid and bulky a reminder of the fine things in fandom to ignore. While the completed anthology doesn't possess quite the type of contents that I'd assumed it would feature, I'm pretty sure that I prefer it this way. A downright effort to choose a hodgepodge of the best writing of all the valuable members FAPA has possessed over the years would have been deficient even if twice this number of pages had been available. The present arrangement, combining in most of its pages the history of FAPA with literary samplings, can't be faulted on grounds of incompleteness or unfair choice of materials. Besides, future reprinters will do little duplicating if they decide to issue anthologies of the finest material from specific years of FAPA or its more celebrated publications. I do not believe in ghosts, so I can't quite accept what my eyes communicate about the actual presence of fresh impressions from original Laney stencils. To see the unmistakable Laney typeface and strikeovers between these dignified stiff covers and on blue paper is something like an encounter with the ghost of Hamlet's father in the middle of President Kennedy's press conference. Over and beyond its value as a memory-awakener, I think that this anthology would be quite useful as an introduction to fandom for anyone entering the field who is beyond his middle teens. It gives a good indication of how well some fans can write and draw, covers the important facts about the early history of fans, states plainly the less pleasant things that an individual may encounter while pursuing his hobby, and makes quite obvious the manner in which discussions break away from sf. and fantasy topics to cover the whole mundane universe. About all that I can add is a confession: I cannot imagine myself under any circumstances creating this volume. I would have gone psycho at the thought of the work involved, I would dream up nineteen crazy possibilities of lawsuits arising out of the contents, and I can't express properly my admiration for an individual with the patience, persistence, wisdom, and taste to accomplish something like this. I hope that someone in the new officialdom, whether it's the two E's themselves or other dignitaries, will take the proper steps to draw from FAPA funds the amounts they spent on mailing separately these publications. And now let me go on to the rest of the mailing, after a final observation directed at these largest contributions: I don't feel quite so timid toward what 1984 may bring, now that I can hope that it will be followed by a 200th FAPA mailing three years later productive of treasures of a worth approaching

these. Wahrscheinlichkeitsrechnung: What's more, a perfectly uneventful and regular future for me would cause 1987 to have another significance. A few months after the 200th FAPA mailing, I would be eligible to retire with full social security and company pension benefits. ' ' I would add another prediction about far future fanzines. I suspect that fewer will be published by the editor. Even today, there are enough of us who can't manage crank-turning to keep volunteer mimeographers quite busy. As family obligations and income increase. I imagine that neofans will find publishing a major source of income. Old and Rare: It would be easy for me to cap this climax for late-appearing fanzines. On the attic is a bundle of a fat fanzine that I apparently mimeographed for someone and never distributed for no reason than I can now recall. I hesitate to send them out after about 20 years, lest someone who was involved realize the identity of the culprit. It's a pretty good final issue of a once well-known fanzine, too. Day*Star: "Trend" has been misused as badly as hoax and blackball in the past year or two. Two or three fanzines with a specific approach or specialized topic are a tendency, not a trend. Apocrypha: This is where I came in on the mailing comment comments. ' ' Wouldn't it have been easier to use the treble control on the preamp, instead of all that complicated revision of the acoustics? Cockatrice: This is a good opportunity to explain why I did not carry out my intention about filing for secretary-treasurer in this year's FAPA election. After I accepted a place on a ticket, I became honest with myself. I recognized that if elected, my first official act would be a letter written to Martin, inviting him back into the organization and apologizing for what had been done to him. This would have been disowned by the other three officers, most FAPA members would have set up impeachment proceedings, a half-dozen would have come to my defense, and alarums would have resounded through the long winter nights. In the end, I would have accomplished nothing but the creation of more illwill. I don't think I'll ever feel as content with FAPA again, as a result of the expediency that was substituted for decency in this matter. But I know when my opinions don't stand a chance against clannishness. I suppose that I'll simmer down eventually; if by next summer I still feel the same, I plan to quit FAPA in favor of some other ayjay group. ' ' Nobody has ever taken the trouble to explain what we're voting for in the FAPA poll. Is it for the material circulated in the past year in the organization, or the creations of members in the year in fandom in general or for the accomplishments in FAPA in recent years? If the polltaker gave instructions, it wouldn't suit some people, but we'd get more consistent results. The Persian Slipper: Odd, isn't it, that the first European telstar transmission was so highly praised by Americans? We're all supposed to be agreed that the federally controlled networks in Europe can't produce anything worth watching. ' ' Even if there's no law against registering a false name at a hotel or motel, it could become the basis of a severe mess. What if you get into a minor brush with the law in that strange city? Or some other fan commits a crime under an alias and you're suspected of complicity? Or you lose your pocketbook to a sneak thief and must try to explain why the papers in it don't correspond with the name you've given? Or a desk clerk makes a mistake in your bill and the penname puts you

under suspicion of fraud? '' Queen's Peril sounds like fun. I rejoice that fans are now thinking silent when contemplating movies, which never should have been wired for sound, amateur or commercial. Horizons: It's pitiful, the stuff I had to omit from the article on music fandom for lack of space. If you aren't good fans, I'll inflict a sequel on you someday. Wraith: I hope that everyone who complains about farm subsidies will go out and use one of these bull rakes a few hours daily, to obtain personal experience of the way farmers can sit back and enjoy life while the government pays them for abandoning the land. Phantasy Press: Think harder, Dan. We didn't worry about the Bomb in 1937. But weren't we just as deeply concerned about lower case bombs and associated horrors of war? We had no means of knowing that the onrushing war would not extend to North American shores, and we heard a lot about poison gas and a possible duration of three or four decades for the second world conflict. Maine-iac: Who are these fans who panic "at the first hint of some sort of exposure to the mundane world"? I cooperated fully with Mrs. Camper via telephone and letter with answers to her questions, and I didn't ask anything about what she planned to write. I know of no fan who got flustered about the matter, although some of us felt considerable concern about the accuracy and attitude that might result from an article written by someone with only a brief exposure to our field. Helen's Fantasia: I expected almost anything in this 100th mailing. But the transcript of a fashion show narration caught me by complete surprise. To this masculine mind, the peak was the definition: "Obi--stiff brocade cummerbund sash on kimono." Karuna: Here's someone else with a just reason for resentment at FAPA's growing provincialism. I hope Jane is with us long enough to understand what's really happening: the organization is stagnating through lack of turnover and the length of time required to become a new member. It shows up in the ouster of a Martin, who isn't a personal pal of many members; in the anguished screams at such a mild change in tradition as use of covers on the official organ; in the recent addition of strictness toward waiting listers while delinquent members get petitioned back into the organization. The situation will get worse if we don't unclog the waiting list somehow. We need two or three nearly new and lively fans as new members every year. Whether the members or the waiting listers vote on such additions, or a raffle is held to advance someone occasionally, or the top Fanac poll vote-getters on the waiting list are given special treatment, I think it's essential to end this obeisance to the great god queue. The Vinegar Worm: Isn't it possible that the general good feeling among these Midwescon people results from their distance from fanzine fandom? If you see each other only a few times a year and don't publish stuff in fanzines, there's little opportunity for feuds and disagreements to build up. The Bull Moose: It's too late to try this year, but couldn't you hear American baseball games by tuning in the shortwave stations that beam them to troops in Europe? I use this roundabout method of hearing some day games played in cities whose broadcast band stations aren't audible in Hagerstown until after dark. '' The historical material is quite reminiscent of the style and attitude of Dickens' famous work on the same topic. I would urgently recommend it to anyone who isn't satisfied by just four or five pages every three months. Salud: American robins move out of cities into open

country in Maryland, apparently. I haven't the least idea why they behave oppositely from starlings, who summer in the fields and winter on the ledges of downtown buildings. '' A story written around the assumption that a girl is necessary to the male crew of a spaceship might be entertaining, but the assumption is baseless. It's like these training routines given to astronauts. They must be intended solely to use up time and win publicity, because people keep their sanity in many everyday circumstances that are much more trying: certain illnesses, for instance. '' Doesn't nearsightedness frequently develop around adolescence because of physical changes as the individual grows? It may be just coincidence that measles frequently strike shortly before this time. '' I also intend to refuse to sign petitions for FAPA members, unless the circumstances are outstandingly special, as in the Linard case. Le Moindre: Williamsport, a nearby town, is delighted with numbers instead of exchange name for its telephones. The telephone people used to try to hook in some local association with the exchange name. They picked Canal for Williamsport. Too late, they discovered that's a fighting word in the town because of the calibre of people who used to run boats on the C & O Canal along the edge of town. Moonshine: Several issues of The Alchemist that I'd kept in envelopes out of the light are nearly illegible by now. I wonder if all hectofanzines will eventually suffer this fate? '' The silence in fandom about "Crusoe Warburton" when published is good retort material for those who like to recall how fanzines used to publish material about stf. They didn't. I think books get more and better reviews in fanzines today than at any time in the past, and the lack of comment on prozines is recognition of their low quality, nothing more. Dry Martooni: Moreover, I'd like these lamenters over today's crime and manners to look over lots of old newspapers. You don't need to go back to Socrates to discover that lots of kids have always been very bad. '' The official editor had better read the entire mailing before putting it out, or he'll be in real trouble some day. Revolting Development: I'd like to supply all waiting listers with Horizons. But I refuse to impose on my publishers for too many non-FAPA copies, I detest with an unholy white hatred the task of addressing and mailing individual copies, and I'm just going to have to continue to fumble along with a few dozen on my private mailing list, making some fans angry and doing my own conscience no good. Poor Richard's Almanac: I've received perhaps half of all the Fantasy Rotators for the past six months or longer, making me a semi-informed person on the Cult. And nobody could explain why FAPA was worth saving until it encountered something from which it needed rescue, as the Cult did. '' You're confusing stream of consciousness with realistic fiction. The latter could hardly combine with the former, since its characters never give any evidence of being aware of anything except cigarettes, cliches and one-syllable words. '' As I understand it, Tucker saved Singer from near-annihilation at the hands of fans angry over the death report. And the report was a lie, not a hoax. '' I think the whole Les Norris story should be told in one place, instead of slowly filtering through. Remember how he was to attain his climax of fame by marrying Bjo? '' New York strikes me as the big city least likely to cause a stranger to get lost. This assumes that you're in Manhattan, where strangers generally

are, stay away from Greenwich Village, and have at least glanced at a map showing the logic of the street system. '' I still can't see why college-age people suddenly get so impressed with sudden adulthood. The mental and physical advances during college years are unimportant compared with the changes you've undergone in the last three or four years of high school. What really happens is that these college students know that this is the last time most of them will be sponging off parents or scholarships or some other subsidy, and they make the most of it, enjoying what they imagine to be freedoms and sizing up the entire world. Then they finish college and encounter reality in the form of jobs and responsibilities to others and they simmer down far enough to be scorned as old stodgies by the current batch of college students. Phlotsam: Even if you needn't pay tax on homemade wine, I'm pretty sure you need the license, just as you must report your financial matters to the internal revenue people even if withholding has taken care of all your obligations. '' Ms. Found in a Glacier should get a lot of votes in the next poll, if we can find out who really wrote it and remember it until winter. '' Covers on the Fantasy Amateur follow a fine old tradition. Those when Ashley was editor were probably the best ever. Couldn't you remove the staples from the FA, rearrange the pages to suit yourself, and staple it again in less time than it takes to write a complaint about it? '' I'm pretty sure that I'll never die young, since I'm knocking on the door of middleage by now, and I did resign myself to dying young many years ago. Several aunts used to assure the whole family, including me, that my bronchial attacks would be the end of me as a small boy, and I didn't doubt authority in those days. '' Your joint membership suggestion would let a couple get away with less activity than the present rules require. The man would write six pages, the woman would run them off, and they'd have the dozen pages of credit between them. Self-Preservation: Some of these revelations about steam seem like an unconscious paralleling of the famous charade scene in Offenbach's La Belle Helene. The story is about the start of the Trojan war, so the characters are understandably surprised when the answer turns out to be "locomotive". '' It's surprising that a person of Lee's acumen would pass by the wonderful opportunity that Oscar Wilde spotted so quickly in conversation about Christ. Someone who brings the dead back to life could make things uncomfortable for any king. Astra's Tower: Sorry, but I couldn't give this even the mild amount of serious attention it may have required, after the third paragraph. "Danilo" is so inextricably associated with the absurd bearer of the name in Lehar's opera that it's spoiled for all other purposes. I did read far enough into the story to catch on to the fact that the mysterious man is Ron Ellick. The Iconoclastic Quarterly: I don't think that fans can be developed from monster fans into stf. fans by forced feeding, any more than the people who bought 250,000 copies of Palmer's Amazing every month later bought a quarter-million copies of Astounding or Galaxy regularly. There's no real need to worry about inability to recruit through the stf. prozines. There are ways to gain new fans today that didn't exist when we depended on letter columns and fanzine reviews: annual cons in all parts of the country, special sections devoted to stf. in back issue shops where you can run across other readers, willingness of faculties to let high schools

and colleges sponsor stf. clubs, for instance. '' Since writing about Bellini, I've gotten my clutches on two of his other operas in score form: Il Pirata and the one about Romeo and Juliet. Neither has a significantly mad heroine. '' I second most of Les Gerber's advice on record-buying. But one point is dubious. If everyone waits for a second recording of a new or obscure old work, instead of buying the first recording, no company will record a work that is not already available on discs, for lack of immediate purchasers. I've found, too, that the first recording is more often than not better than the next one. Too often the label that puts out a competitive version tries to one-up the original recording by the use of a big name conductor or performer who isn't suited for the particular work; the first recording is more apt to use the musical forces that have done the work in public performance, to save rehearsal costs, and the music and maker are usually congenial. Target: FAPA: The whiteheaded pin and two-position use are the best suggestions yet. I intend to follow this system for the rest of my fannish days, even if nobody else does. '' Bats have passengers, bedbugs, a good enough reason for not giving them hospitality. There is also some evidence that rabies can be transmitted by bats without a direct bite. Churn: I still think an ayjay group larger than FAPA would be too much publishing work, too much reading work, and too likely to cause an even madder rush for places on the waiting list. '' The NFFF does nothing that couldn't be done without the organization. Two or three fans without an organization could keep up with the welcoming letters, which I suspect alienate more prospective fans than they recruit. The convention hospitality room is essentially the work of an equally small group. The NFFF has caused so much cleavage between its members and general fandom that I'd prefer to see it dissolved. Null-F: Read the chapter, "Futurist Music," in Ernest Newman's "A Musical Motley" for lots of information about early experiments with pre-tape equivalents of electronic music. Luigi Russolo was a leader in this nonsense around World War One. '' Nat Hentoff may be able to read music but he can't criticize it. He begins a review by some remarks about "influences" on the jazz musician, continues with two or three of about 50 stock remarks that are non-specific enough to fit any recording by anyone, and reveals his pleasure or displeasure with the disc. Nobody could possibly fit his reviews to the discs simply by listening to them without checking the records. B. H. Haggin is his exact equivalent in the field of serious music record reviewers. '' The existence of dozens of cadenzas by great composers and musicians to compositions they played frequently seems sufficient evidence that they didn't improvise them. The dull and endless G minor fantasy published as opus 77 is the Beethoven work that his contemporaries claimed was most like his improvisations. '' The G&S reference to parliamentary trains was stuck into The Mikado because of continuing public concern about England's railway regulation act of 1844. Parliament set standard fares for the steam cars and apparently the British kept talking about it until the rails were nationalized quite recently. Grue: I'll probably regret this, but I might as well follow Dean's lead and provide some help for anyone incautious enough to come to Hagerstown. If you approach from the Baltimore-Washington area, use Route 40 from Frederick to Hagerstown, unless it's a rush hour or heavy traffic for some

other reason. In that case, Route 40-A will be slightly slower and much safer. From the west, stay off Route 40 between Hagerstown and Cumberland, Md. That 70-mile stretch is being widened or relocated at five places, and delays at these points will be in effect until next summer at least. Use the Pennsylvania Turnpike and climb off at the Breezewood interchange. If you do, take it easy for the next ten miles toward Mercersburg, Pa., because the intervening mountains are quite steep and it'll take a while to adjust driving patterns from the turnpike's gentler turns and wider surface. From either the west or the north, use Interstate 81 from just south of Greencastle to Hagerstown; Route 11 for this distance is one of the most congested highways in the Middle Atlantic States for its width. The only practical way to reach here from the south is Route 11, on which you must drive with the most extreme caution through West Virginia: there are steep hills that are hard to detect until you start down them on curves, and lots of drunks from Maryland infest this highway because of less stringent tavern rules in West Virginia. Oblique: It would be nice to know who on the staff hated me so. The sudden epidemic of typos in my letter could hardly be accidental.

' ' The fans, writers and editors could have hampered the production of bad picturizations of stf. stories by refusing to sell rights to dubious characters, by failing to give a hugo year after year when nothing more inspiring than Twilight Zone was in the running, and by failing to cooperate with promotions like previews of new grade C films. ' ' With all respect for the memory of Vernon, he's second in this issue to Fake Hero, and that's an accomplishment for anything that tried to compete with a McCain article. Ice Age: I've spent some time in New York. The main reasons I wouldn't live there: It's too hard to get away from, with almost everyone on islands, in case of natural or manmade catastrophe. There are too many musical, dramatic, and sports attractions on which I would lavish money, and I'd need a really big income or much more willpower. I dislike the extended commuting time required to enjoy good living accommodations at the kind of money I could earn. I don't like to live in any city where it isn't safe to walk any street at any hour of the night. Ownership of a car is too difficult. I know that some of those problems can be obviated if you're lucky or talented, but I've never had a surplus of either commodity. ' ' Inside Story is fannish as far as I'm concerned, because I went through True's experience, of having my fiction sold to Las Cuentas Fantásticas and then getting from the entrepreneur only a bill for a copy of the magazine. I'm a fan. Different: I don't understand Sam's reasoning when he says that democracy is a source of FAPA's longevity. Most fan organizations that have failed have been equally democratic. And I fail to remember any recent instances in which FAPA members use it "as a substitute for group psychiatric therapy". The panel transcript is extremely informative. In this instance, I agree fully with Chris' opinions. It's odd that nobody mentioned church members as an analogy to our fandom. These religious fans generally do and talk about everything except religion. Speer sounds much less convincing in this kind of impromptu talk than in his writings. "A handicap is a handicap if you yourself think of it as that" is suspiciously like an unconscious description of the only real grounds for this all-fans-are-handicapped business, with Speer, not the rest of fandom,

as the subject of attention. Ankus: It's a shame when a G&S company goes against the most explicit intent of Gilbert and hams up the performances. It's quite possible that the deadpan Savoy tradition is the only factor that has distinguished these works from other comic operas. Meanwhile, international negotiations of prodigious complexity, spanning two continents, may have put me in possession of tapes of The Grand Duke and Utopia, Ltd., by the time this mailing emerges. It'll be my luck to have them hit commercial lp discs after I've gone to all this trouble. Lighthouse: I hope that I'm not the only person who appreciates the work that went into Wheel of Futility. I can offer one other reference: an extended study in Musical Quarterly about three years ago of the wheel of fortune concept. Maybe the undeniable fondness of composers for putting big orchestral works into D minor can be explained on logical grounds. The way stringed instruments are tuned, this key simplifies the use of resounding double and triple stops to increase sonority. " My eyeballs popped several millimeters when I saw ATom's heading for Ted White's comments. It's the spitting caricature-image of Alexander Woollcott. " Don't worry, Terry Carr. Lots of us will be battling for second place in poll results as soon as Bergeron comes among us. " That picture of the shattered hotel door would be fine for my history. But does anyone know the law on illustrations for historical volumes? Are releases required from identifiable living persons pictured? Can each of us who are visible in The Immortal Storm get \$75,000 because Sam Moskowitz didn't ask our okay? Celephais: Nobody has mentioned the quiet that descended on railroad cities when the steam locomotive vanished. I've spent my life close enough to four railroad lines to become too weary of the puffing and chugging to regret its departure. " Ackerman couldn't claim credit for much publishing. Morajo did most of the work on the fanzines associated with him. " I kept track this year. First yule cards in display windows: Aug. 14. First Christmas tree for sale in a store: Sept. 1. First Hallowe'en decorations: Sept. 16. Badly: Strange thing: I'd thought that a dozen members would run down names and personalities like this on such an occasion. It's a good although lone example of what I foresaw. Sercon's Bane: Latest local fauna crisis: starlings that nested in the space above the back porch roof boards, after one warped loose. The noise and dirt were maddening until the family got big enough to chase them out and nail the board tight. " One question: how were people expected to realize that Hitler was the dangerous one, out of the big assortment of dictators of the 1930's? A Letter from Jean Linard: My conscience smarts like fury for my failure to write to Jean during his time of troubles. I can plead only a frantic rush of attention-demanding matters for the past year. Dry Martini: Somehow I enjoyed this more than its fatter companion. At least you Oklahomans get up at a sensible time for Easter morning pageants. They call them sunrise services around here and begin them at 8:30 or 9 a.m. Fifty-Fifty: Space is short. I am very fond of the page number decorations, hope this signals an unbelievable spurt in activity from both Martinez and Parker, believe that we already live so long that we lose identity and become different persons several times, and finally realize what the Cult reminds me of: a boy scout troop where everyone uses language he wouldn't think of uttering elsewhere and otherwise loses some of the inhibitions that make nice persons elsewhen.

For Crest's Sake

Three or four times yearly, I receive a review copy of a paperback fantasy volume. Through circumstances I don't pretend to understand, these invariably arrive just as I've completed stenciling an issue of Horizons. This means that a review in this periodical would not appear until four or five months after the volume had hit the newsstands. By then, it would have sold out at many display racks, and most of my readers would have made their own decision on whether or not to buy. So from the standpoint of boosting circulation, I fear that the publishers waste review copies on me.

There is also the more general question that I've never seen discussed in fanzines: should we accept free copies of professional publications? I'd be inclined to say no. There have been some shameful exhibitions of toadying to professional magazines, to keep them from growing angry at fandom and cutting off the supply of free art and manuscripts for convention auctions. I would hate to see the review copy practice become widespread enough to represent the main source of reading matter for fanzine editors. It could lead to the abuses that passes and free drinks cause in the sports and amusements columns of your daily newspapers.

But this is close enough to an academic question to be unimportant, since the manna of free paperbacks so rarely falls. And on this particular occasion, I feel inclined to write a few paragraphs about the most recent review copy to arrive. It is "Time Is the Simplest Thing". I think it's the best example in years of how a big name, Clifford D. Simak in this instance, can sell a bad rewriting of plot platitudes that few neofans would risk dispatching to the NFFF manuscript bureau.

Simak is one of my favorite stf. writers. All the praise that the City series won does not seem adequate to me for its excellencies. I never grow tired of his favorite hero, the man who is in touch with the real world and nature. But when the really capable writers lower themselves to copying the wornout Goldbergian plot machines, the resulting book is likely to be almost unreadable. I finished this one only because it was the only printed matter in my immediate possession during that bus ride back from Pittsburgh. So I didn't miss a page, not even the penultimate paragraph of chapter 27 with its incredible: "They had got out of there so fast they'd fell into the ditch." This is only slightly worse than the disregard for common decency toward the basic rules of grammar that can be found on almost every page. Maybe you're a fast reader and don't notice such carelessness as: "...nothing, not the earth he stood on nor the air he breathed or even the body that he wore..." But Simak knows better than to write like a junior high school student and Fawcett Publications, Inc., must have somewhere a proofreader, if the firm's editorial board doesn't know how to smooth out a rough manuscript.

Fiction apparently grew out of mythology, and mythology has as one of its bases the sun's daily disappearance and its triumphant re-emergence the following morning. In myths, this is converted into trips to the underworld, resurrections, and various other symbolic representations. In fiction, the same pattern appears in the form of one or more principal characters who

undergo dangers and conquer them or go down fighting in a glorious manner. There is an important distinction between myth and fiction: in the latter, the hero normally gets out of trouble through his own wits or strength or other personal characteristics. It wouldn't be hard to make a good case for a theory to the effect that the rise of fiction is linked with the rise of the common man. Myth has prevailed in our civilization mainly where there are social classes and members of the upper crust get there through no greater feat than that of being born to the right parents. When the wave of democracy is rising, it washes away the inevitable deus ex machina of the sagas, epics, Greek plays, and other myth or semi-myth material. Around the time that real men are discovering that it's possible to better one's self and one's environment, the true fiction writer grows popular, recounting how his imaginary individuals are doing the same thing. I don't know which comes first, the fiction or the breakdown of feudalism or slavery, but I suspect that they're separate aspects of a single whole. In any event, it's obvious that science fiction and fantasy fiction in general owe more than most fiction to this tradition of the self-reliant hero, since they rarely are set in a distant and tyrannic past like some mundane fiction.

So it's particularly disappointing when a writer of Simak's ability descends to the level of a writer like A. E. van Vogt and borrows most of the latter's faults, supplementing them with some of the worst attributes of Superman and Campbell's psi craze.

"Time Is the Strangest Thing" starts with a hero in revolt and newly possessed of an alien creature whose immaterial self invaded his mind during a remote control trip into distant space. He attempts to escape the benevolent prison of the organization which conducts the exploration of space in this manner and instantly we encounter the same amateurish reliance on coincidence that Vogt introduced in "Slan" when the telepathic boy leaps aboard the car containing his worst enemy, by an unexplained and poorly covered up coincidence. Simak's hero, Blaine, gets a lift to a party by chance, and by another chance he meets at the party a telepathic woman, Harriet, who has been preparing for just such an event. But when Blaine is about to be captured at this party, Simak tells us that "His mind was racing, seeking for a way, looking for an out, anything at all that would get him out of this." Apparently even the alien creature in his mind has realized by now that it has happened to encounter an unusually stupid sample of a moronic breed, the stf. novel hero, for it goes into action despite Blaine's protests and causes time to slow down far enough for him to get away. (Blaine reveals his basic nastiness by knocking down two men whose reaction time is much too slow to threaten him harm.)

Harriet tells him that "It is always a good idea to have a line of retreat laid out," and drives him toward apparent safety. But the two enter a small town and suddenly are threatened by a mob that hates paranormal people, and immediately we begin to suffer another Vogtian trouble: the sudden emergence every 50 pages or so of a new plot twist that has been previously concealed and bears little relation to what has gone before. The girl gets away but Blaine is about to be lynched. Now, in mundane fiction, long enough to give room for a series of climaxes, it is customary for the hero to vary his means of conquering his problem. He

may live through an ambush by winning a fistfight, then get out of the hoosegow by causing the jailer's daughter to fall in love with him and let him free, later defeat overwhelming odds by tricking his opposition into breaking into battling factions. But if you give a man a special gift like that of moving ten times faster than anyone around him, and use that resource at the first crisis, you're not going to be any more convincing than were the adventures of Superman, who was too powerful ever to be in real danger. All that Simak can do at the lynching is to cause his hero to do absolutely nothing, particularly not to save himself in the same manner as before. Let us wipe the furtive tear that falls when we read how Blaine "grew colder with the chill of overwhelming fear--fear that took him in its fist and held him stiff and rigid." And a moment later he finds himself in a dead world. He has gone backward in time and nothing will be alive until he has caught up to the present. Lamely, Simak says, "He must have done it without a conscious effort, almost instinctively, a sort of conditioned reflex action to escape the danger." As if that weren't insipid enough, young Master Cross' ghost returns a few pages later: once again occurs one of those impossible coincidences involving the hero and a motor vehicle. This time Blaine happens across and strikes up a friendship with the driver of a truck who is transporting a star machine, the only one of its kind out of captivity in the continent. Only now, halfway through the book, does one of the important characters appear, the villainous Lambert Finn. There is another unprepared new plot element, the introduction of teleports whom Blaine summons when he can't think of a way to get rid of an inconvenient corpse that happens to be lying around. Blaine gets himself captured again, this time by putting on an alien creature disguised as something like Medea's celebrated textile. You'd expect even this semi-intelligent hero to utilize one of the two escape hatches that had previously got him out of danger without his own participation. But he doesn't exert the special energy that the time-speeding trick provides and he doesn't snap into the past beyond the time at which he put on the thing. He just "lay quietly on his back and while a chill went through his body, sweat poured down his forehead and ran into his eyes." It must be an oddly slanting forehead, I should say. That patient alien provides the rescue again, this time by prompting him with certain syllables that cause the thing to let him go. At this point, Blaine does something for himself for the first time in the book, on the 145th of its 192 pages. He beats up an enemy in fair combat. The most appropriate lines in the novel follow: "A faint surprise ran through him--that he should have been able to do a thing like this."

The genuine Simak is faintly evident in the final stages of the book: a conversation with a priest, a macabre perversion of familiar Hallowe'en events and a battle with a sudden winter storm that happens more suddenly than any winter storm ever occurred but seems comparatively normal in this wild farrago. The last climax comes when Blaine is freezing to death, uses none of his previous methods of escaping, but wills himself to another planet with knowledge that he has picked up from the villain in another totally improbable plot upheaval. After this there is really nothing to do but end the book with a resounding platitude: "The distant stars glowed with certain promise."

Hagerstown Journal

August 6—I cannot decide this week where I want to spend a brief vacation, so I settle for Pittsburgh, a city to which I have no conceivable reason for going. At least I can probably claim to be the first fan to visit that city since the Pittcon, all traces of which have vanished upon my arrival. The Hotel Pittsburgher proves to be another of those mad hotels, comparable to Philadelphia's Belgravia. I enter the main door, and immediately men appear in quantities at the top of a steep stairway toward the lobby, frantically waving me back. I crouch, assuming that they are about to set off a charge of dynamite under the cigar stand, and one of the bellhops gallops down the stairs, feet barely touching them, and his final leap straddles him above my baggage. "Some guests try to carry them up themselves," he explains. I hear a deep sigh of relief from all the employes as I trudge up the stairs unencumbered. Pittsburgh got a bad fan press after the convention but I like the city. The girls are all one inch too short and twelve pounds too heavy but they possess remarkably fine complexions and dress in excellent taste. The policemen are the most relaxed and friendly I've found in any large city. I particularly enjoy the one who does a sort of softshoe routine while directing traffic at rushhour, complete with simulated near-pratfalls. The presence of trolley cars gives me the impression that I've stepped back a couple of decades. But I also enter the future of Bradbury when I decide to walk from downtown to Forbes Field. Forbes Avenue has been altered by the construction of highspeed divided highways that intersect it. At one point, the pedestrian must climb two sets of steps to get past the highway without getting squashed. I pick my way cautiously among fallen stones, trash and discarded mattresses that clutter up the climb. Obviously, only one or two persons a week walk out this way and there is no effort to keep the way clear for such eccentrics. At Forbes Field, I get the thrill of participation for the first time in an event that wins an eight-column streamer in a metropolitan newspaper. In the seventh inning, as Broglie is methodically shutting out the Bucs, bright orange flames shoot up a couple of hundred feet away from me in the right field stands. Almost everyone jumps up and starts to run. I've never been in a panicking crowd, I think, and what do I do now? Before I decide, I realize that everyone is running toward the fire, not away from it. The game is delayed 23 minutes, the 17,000 fans rattle off 85,600 times a joke about fireman Roy Face, and I come back to the hotel on the trolley, forget to watch out the window, and get off three minutes before midnight without the least notion of my location. I am only a block away from my hotel and within three steps of the only restaurant in sight that is still open. The next day, I get on a bus to go home and once again I go back in time, on this occasion to the movies of the 1930's when dogfights ended with World War One planes dipping crazily downward, hot oil splashing the windshield. Only in my case, it is the rear window of the bus that is afflicted by the spurts from the troubled engine, at a point in the Alleghenies where the land twists and turns all around as if you were a thousand feet above the surface. The driver lands us all uncharred at an interchange and his Greyhound eventually gets me into Hagerstown four hours be-

hind schedule. I go home, wondering why I haven't seen any good Trailways lately.

August 17—I suppose that most of us have such job miseries. I believe that mine started the Sunday evening I came to work and discovered that I was supposed to get a story on the Mack Trucks union meeting held the previous afternoon. It was a choice between accepting a two-year contract or going on strike. The decision had come an hour after the afternoon paper went to press, and the reporter for that periodical had walked off with the complete story. Upon learning this, the morning paper reporter who had been covering Mack Trucks announced that he was too busy to dig out the facts on this particular evening. I found that a spacetime warp had swallowed up every union official and all the industry's labor relations department. Eventually I managed to squeeze out four or five paragraphs to the effect that the union had accepted the contract. So the afternoon paper appeared Monday with complete details on the terms of the contract. I didn't get told off about this failure; instead, the editor was understanding of the special circumstances and urged me to square myself by doing a story on the retirement of the oldest insurance man in this city. The old codger had sold out to another agency, whose head I know quite well. I assured the boss that this friend would be glad to give me the story on the transaction. Indeed, he was, and suggested that our splendid friendship shouldn't be marred by any danger of a misquotation, so would I let him see my story before running it? I knew that a pal like this wouldn't doublecross me, and confidently dropped off the story at the insurance office the next morning. So anxious to oblige an old friend was this executive that he helpfully had his secretary take the approved story up to my office immediately, saving me another trip. She even carried it up to the news department and handed it trustingly to the editor of the afternoon paper, who was heard to remark that very day that it was the most unexpected good deed since the afternoon a park policeman had picked up a wrong field double in the right field corner of Ebbets Field and tossed it back to the infield while Duke Snider was still 75 feet away and breathing hard. The next day, I was still burning over such extravagant demonstrations of friendship, and I was doing everything somewhat to excess to attempt to redeem myself. I even developed a batch of negatives between two afternoon assignments, leaving them to wash in the locked darkroom. On my return, I thought I spotted a white dove flying through an open window, olive branch in beak, but didn't understand the significance until a large quantity of janitors with wet mops threw their grimy hands around my neck and urged me to hasten. Unknown forces, presumably the turning off of an unusually large number of spigots elsewhere in the building, had impelled the water to flow more freely from the darkroom hose in my absence. In accordance with Mr. Newton's observations, the hose had retreated far enough to send its augmented stream onto the floor instead of into the tank. The advertising department had been the first to evacuate when rivulets poked moist fingers through the baseboards. The water level in those rooms didn't stop rising until a large quantity of the overflow descended abruptly into the office of the composing room foreman in the next lowest floor. People didn't understand why I should congratulate myself that I hadn't gone out for supper before returning to make prints. In the excitement,

I thought that the editor had forgotten all about that lost film containing the photographs of his son's graduation. But I was ordered to report two days later to the front office where the personnel director broke gently to me the news that he wanted to give me a little series of little tests. A little more than two hours later, I was allowed to unlock the door and leave with one final word of advice: I must see one of the half-legendary South Bend officials of the publishers at a local hotel, right smack in the middle of the second all-star baseball game. There I was asked the few questions that had been overlooked by the first series of tests. This inquisitor seemed particularly ruffled at the fact that I was interested in music, and asked an endless series of impromptu questions about this matter. Three days later, the editor told me that I'd just been appointed city editor with another promotion to the post of news editor scheduled to follow within about 18 months.

September 6—So I missed the convention, partly because of the new duties, and during the last week of vacation this year, I had much time to think about things. With no other vital outlet for the money that would have been spent for the Chicon, I converted most of it into two new tires for the automobile and the Furtwängler recording of Die Walküre. This is extravagant, because I should have bought this unbelievably great set years ago, when it was issued by RCA Victor at a lower price, and Vox has arranged to market much of the Electrola catalog in this country, so it will probably return to a cheaper price soon. But Wagner generally provides for me what some people find in the Bible: a sudden insight into things when fresh circumstances cause thrice-familiar words to reveal new depths. Not halfway through the second act, it happened when the troubled Wotan cuts through his own rationalizing and brooding and sums up the whole situation as magnificently as Shakespeare sometimes does: "Ich berührte Alberich's Ring." There are several good reasons why I was wrong to accept the appointment. It conflicts completely with my hope to pull up stakes and seek happier campgrounds. As narrated in these pages recently, I planned a trip to Europe in 1963 that would tell me whether I want to leave this nation or simply seek a portion of the United States where things aren't quite as provincial and stagnant. Now I feel that, once accepted, the duties give me the obligation to carry them out for at least a couple of years. There is the terrible specter of expediency hovering around me. If I keep my health and sanity, I should hold this or better posts until retirement age arrives, and it will be so easy to float along lazily in the mild labors involved, living inexpensively and reaching financial ability to retire younger than normal if the spirit moves. The longer I keep a job title higher than that of reporter, the more helplessly enmeshed will I be in bourgeois small town life, because of ex officio duties on committees that automatically involve newspaper people. But other considerations decided me into saying I will. There's the undeniable fact that a hunt for journalism work elsewhere will be more likely to result in a good position, if I can include some tenure as city editor in my application form. There is the more nebulous possibility that I might be today in a position to put up or shut up: I've been wailing about the low state of American journalism, and this is my first opportunity to make specific efforts to improve the Hagerstown segment of it. I've always had a horror of telling

anyone to do something. But I'm curious to find out if I have any ability to command and lead. This job should provide the answer: it will put me in complete charge of a dozen people on the 60 to 70 days each year when the editor is on vacation, sick, taking the day off, or conventioning. It will also test my skill at the exciting occupation of getting the composing room to do what the news staff desires. This consists basically of shouting as loudly as possible and waving one's fist in the faces of makeup men and linotypers, but there are additional subtleties that test ingenuity. If the news editorship should materialize, it might provide a blissful state of affairs for me. It would presumably free me almost completely from the hack writing that my job requires (the post does not currently exist on this particular newspaper, so it's dangerous to assume specifically what it will be like). I believe I'd feel much more anxious to write carefully and extensively for fanzines and to tackle serious some big freelancing projects, if I weren't riveting out 5,000 or more words daily on the job. The reaction of others to this promotion was interesting. Naturally, most local folks used it as clinching evidence that the new owners don't care what happens to the morning newspaper. (The new owners have held that status for more than two years now. In Hagerstown, a thing is new as long as one person survives who can remember the previous status quo.) Unabashed, I saved some of the messages of good wishes that some kind persons took the time to write. The one from Rep. Charles Mathias is unique: it is the only written or spoken congratulatory message that reached me without a query about how large a raise I had received. There is some reason to believe that the public believes that my job involves a quarter-interest in the corporation, because shortly after the announcement, a local real estate dealer made a determined effort to sell me Mt. Tammany. This is an ancient farmhouse five miles from town where George Washington once slept, about the size of the average Hilton hotel, and surrounded by a couple of square miles of land, the very thing for a city-bred bachelor.

September 17—I had hoped to lavish on Horizons an extensive report on the events surrounding the arrival of the centennial of the battle of Antietam. But the sudden transformation of my duties, plus my foresight in scheduling in January one week of vacation for the celebration period saved me from personal attendance at most of the centennial rituals. For example, I did not see any of the fifteen performances of "Hills of Glory", the historical pageant. This pageant almost reduced the town's leading men to a state of hysteria because it was ready to go into rehearsal at the local fairgrounds when someone thought to look up the racing schedule, and found that horses would be dashing right through the stage eight times daily. The Maryland Racing Commission refused to allot new dates and the whole shebang moved hastily to the municipal stadium, which has the slight disadvantage of possessing only one access, a half-mile thoroughfare just about wide enough for a small boy to drive a cow down. Another minor disadvantage became evident at the first actual performance. The concluding extravaganza of the pageant was a reproduction of the battle, complete with sound effects. The bombs, shells and cannons went into action at 11 p. m., just an hour after the last patient in the hospital a few thousand feet away had swallowed their sleeping pills and quieted down for the night. The first centennial event

that I attended was Clara Barton day. Clara was the maiden who pestered people so persistently that they finally agreed to found the Red Cross, just to get rid of her. She had done some nursing on the battlefield of Antietam. The centennial program included one day featured by the unveiling of a monument to her. This monument had been costfree, because a local stonemason had agreed to cut free a stone that someone found lying along the roadside from an unknown source. Clara already has a plaque at Antietam on the little building which became famous for her courageous nursing. But this building has fallen into disgrace, because a historian pointed out a few years ago that it was right in the middle of no man's land at the most busy part of the battlefield. Either Clara was crazy enough to drag wounded men into the direct line of fire, or the tradition that she used that building is wrong. I thought that the program for Clara Barton Day would provide an unusual bit of human interest. It was a rather warm, sunny day, and a soldier in an honor guard toppled over just as if a leftover sniper had got him. Unfortunately, I couldn't describe in my report how the Red Cross people sprang to his aid, just as Clara had helped the fallen a century earlier. All the hundreds of local and imported Red Cross people just stared until finally the rest of the honor guard carted the poor guy off and dumped him in the shade to recuperate. I was greatly pleased by the two sham battles at Antietam, because they were resounding flops in every way. Four years ago, planning for this centennial began and the committee immediately split into two camps: those who wanted a solemn and awed program with emphasis on the importance of not repeating these mistakes; and those who wanted to hire an outside promoter who would whip up interest in beard-growing, authentic souvenir manufacturing, and such things. The latter party won. The sham battles, faithful re-enactments of the original fighting condensed into a smaller area, were to be so great a drawing card that state police sent 150 men and one helicopter to handle traffic, no parking was permitted within a mile of the re-enactment site, and prices were jacked up in awesome manner. You paid five dollars for a good seat, two dollars for parking space, and fifty cents to ride the bus that took you the two miles from the parking area to the battlefield. Standing room in the observation tower for photographers cost \$20. The promoter advised me in secret to leave Hagerstown at 10 a.m., if I wanted to cover the 2 p.m. start of the re-enactment 15 miles away: even with my trenchside parking privileges, I'd have a hard time making better speed. Hoping that I could write a different sort of story, based on my frantic efforts to arrive at the battle before it was over, I didn't leave the house until noon. I was parked beside the troops 25 minutes later. A hundred years earlier, the military situation had altered when a general overlooked the little detail of sending some men to protect the most easily crossed pass through South Mountain. In that tradition, the highly paid promoters had forgotten about a narrow tongue of land. Everyone familiar with the area used it to park free, then watch the whole sham battle without charge from just outside the low surrounding fence. Even with these freeloaders, attendance for the two days was announced at 18,000, it probably amounted to 12,000, and they'd expected 100,000. I was told by experts that the re-enactment was quite well done. It was free from the embarrassing interruptions that occurred at the First Manassas centennial, where the sound system kept paging Stonewall Jackson all

through the ebb and flow of fighting and never did manage to send him into the fray in time. About one out of every ten spectators carried transistor radios, so that they could hear the season opener of the Baltimore Colts. Most of the public said nothing, but one little old man was different. While shot and shell whizzed through the smoke-filled air and we were bounced slightly by the impact from cannonfire, he kept staring into the distance, repeating: "What a beautiful landscape!" I was supposed to view events from the press stand. This was a platform constructed of what appeared to be cigarbox wood, perched on stilts atop a spiderlike grandstand. I was waiting until it swayed back to a more level position to begin the climb, when the public address announcer hastily warned the journalists up there to stop moving the chairs around, lest delicately calculated balances might be upset. I remained on the turf. By now the price of coffee had retreated frantically to ten cents a cup, the dozens of temporary latrines were going to waste through disuse, and the program vendors were conferring with one another about the possibility of finding tomorrow a junkyard willing to pay more than 60 cents per hundred pounds for glossily coated paper. I watched two thousand grown men playing soldier, an occupation I outgrew some years ago, for an hour or so, then went back to the office. The next day was September 17, the actual 100th anniversary day. For years it had been understood that the President would be on hand to deliver the keynote speech, just as FDR had come a quarter-century earlier for the 75th anniversary program. But the present holder of the office may have felt that he wouldn't cut too good a figure, watching Americans reassuming the roles of their great grandfathers, fighting to preserve slavery. He sent word that he had to talk about the Constitution in Philadelphia, and anyway, that state has more electoral votes than Maryland. The centennial committee turned to Eisenhower as the next best thing, although I've never been able to imagine him as even second best in any situation. Ike sent back an answer to the effect that he was perfectly content to remain on the outskirts of his own battlefield, Gettysburg. So the third sham battle was called off and the members of reactivated Civil War units broke camp and drove back home a day ahead of schedule. Previously unknown representatives of the three major faiths were hurriedly signed up to deliver the centennial day addresses. Then history repeated itself. Early on the morning of September 17, it rained, just as it had drizzled before dawn on the day of the actual battle. The centennial people took this as an omen as powerful as the famous red sun of Austerlitz and immediately called off the whole shebang. I drove down to Antietam that afternoon, anyway. The sun was shining, but everyone seemed relieved that the centennial had been completed before the centennial day. One old lady from Detroit was there, because she wanted to visit the cemetery containing her uncle's grave on the actual anniversary day. The battlefield superintendent looked lonely, standing around near his headquarters, still wearing a raincoat just in case anyone questioned the wisdom of the postponement. In the cemetery itself, I counted four wreaths among the thousands of veterans' graves. I didn't stay long, because the no parking signs were still in effect all over the area. Pretty soon now, we'll reach an anniversary of the bus crash that cost the lives of 24 local high school students. I think I'll suggest a celebration of that event, to be conducted in a manner as appropriate as the Antietam centennial was.

Redemption Center

I intend to break myself of the habit of writing a letter of comment on each and every issue of Kipple. This bad habit is the thing that started all the trouble. I don't have enough spare time, during this fan history project, to think out previously and to compose leisurely the ideal letter of comments. I rush through the letterhacking chore, and this causes me to do things that are unwise. Specifically, I shouldn't have broken my usual policy of avoiding remarks on politics and religion. But I couldn't resist the temptation a half-dozen issues ago, when Ted Pauls produced one of his famous jeremiads on a paragraph from the Baltimore News-Post. I filled up a letterhacking paragraph with those speculations on why fans haven't discussed one significant future possibility, the second coming of Christ. If you've forgotten my remarks, or aren't on the Kipple mailing list, I mused over the fact that a minority of fans are genuine Christians who presumably believe that this will occur, and quite a lot of fans are agnostics so they can't exclude the possibility from their picture of the future, and quite possibly the proportion of fans who are convinced that there will be no such thing is no greater than the quantity who believe there will never be time travel or a human colony on Mercury.

One exciting thing about the Kipple letter column is the game of guessing which letterwriters exist and which are convenient imaginary names under which Ted can express his opinions or prod life into a flagging discussion. I didn't try to determine the reality of the Jeffrey Lynn who occupied two pages in the next issue with a letter that sneered somewhat at mine but must have seemed insufferably rude to anyone with real devoutness. Jeffrey let loose a mighty blast against those with faith who are willing to try to foist on the public belief in a supernatural event, but are so unoriginal as to expect the whole thing to happen again, much as before. He cited the amusing occasions when religious fanatics miscalculated some prophecy or apparent inspiration and got a whole city excited about the intention of the world to end next Wednesday. The long letter closed with a violent appeal to all readers to trust only the natural, material world around them, lest the wars and miseries inflicted by religion in the past should continue indefinitely into the future. Ted was left speechless, if he didn't write the letter, because after it he placed in his editorial parentheses nothing but an exclamation mark.

The address given for Jeffrey was in Allentown, Pa., far enough from known fans to increase my suspicions of the letter. So I was mildly surprised ten days later when I received a fanzine with an Allentown postmark. This seemed like entirely too much work to be another Pauls invention. But two days later, when I found time to open the tightly stapled thing, I was even more startled. It wasn't a fanzine from Jeffrey at all. It had on the masthead the name of another fan of whom I'd never heard, Peter Fischer. It wasn't a fanzine in the usual sense, but instead an indignant reply to the Lynn letter.

"For Christ's sake, how can I sit here another minute and let such an impious blasphemy go unanswered?" Peter cried in his editorial. He described himself as an occasional fringe fan who had been acquainted with Jeffrey for a long time. You could

guess even without reading between the lines that there had been a feud of some kind between them. I wondered briefly again about these fans who rarely intersect the mainstream of fandom, and plunged into the bulk of the 14-page publication. Most of it was pretty hard to plow through. I'd never taken the trouble to learn that there are postmillennialists, amillennialists, and premillennialists in religion fandom. But Peter went into glowing details about how things would be at the Second Coming, no matter which viewpoint turned out to be accurate. I got the general idea that postmillennialism takes the viewpoint that the world is gradually getting better, will continue to improve for all men, and Christ will arrive to complete the blessings of the good life. If you believe in amillennialism, you don't look for much change in the present balance of good and evil until suddenly the whole mess is settled by a sudden arrival of Christ and the last judgment. The premillennial attitude is harder to pin down because there is a mysterious "rapture" period involved that I don't understand any more clearly than I can define the exact composition of firmament. I was somewhat relieved to know that the premillennialists are divided into a number of splinter groups over fine points in both this rapture and in a period of tribulation also inevitable in the particular interpretation of scriptures and things to come. I got the firm impression that we had the first genuine minister in our midst since the Rev. Mr. Richardson was such an avid collector. No layman would be likely to acquire knowledge of all this.

And the next day, wondering what I could do to halt such an alarming trend toward theology in fanzines, I got the letter from Bill Crockett. He was the teen-age Philadelphia fan whom I'd met at last year's Philcon. I think I had been a hero in his eyes for an hour, because I'd helped to interview Jim Blish. He was sadly disillusioned when I admitted to him after the panel that I'd not read any of Jim's previous six novels. But now he was writing to me for help. His father had been assigned to some kind of state job involving coal mines, the family was moving next week to Allentown, and were there any fans there he could contact? He knew I correspond with Bill Danner, thought Kennerdell was right outside Allentown, and believed I might know of other fans in the area.

All that I remembered of Bill, aside from his physical appearance, was the reason he hadn't been an active fan. He was totally dependent on parents who were decent people with one overwhelming fault. They were socially ambitious. He'd explained that he could go to a Philcon because of the offchance that he might meet some fans with lots of money or good connections, or even a son or daughter of a state legislator who would help his own father's career along. But he wasn't encouraged to fool around with fanzine fandom, because of the demonstrably penniless, statusless, and undignified situation prevailing among its participants. At this point I made an even greater blunder than the letter to Kipple had been. If I'd said that I had no acquaintance with fans in Allentown, it would have been the safe truth. Instead, I replied that I knew the addresses of two apparent fans there, which was equally true. I emphasized that Peter Fischer would be the person to contact first. His diatribe had convinced me that he was a mature and educated person, one whom Bill would probably detest, but excellent evidence to bring home to parents, living proof that some fans are learned and responsible citizens.

Bill wrote again, soon after the family had settled down in Allentown. He was disappointed in the small size of that city, which seems like a large one to me, but he was bubbling with happiness over a personal victory. His parents had grudged him approval to issue a fanzine, to make up for snatching him away from a center of fan civilization. Naturally, he didn't come out and say so, but I gathered that he'd won the right because Messrs. Lynn and Fischer had visited the Crockett home and impressed the parents with savoir vivre. I hoped that they hadn't revealed their jobs to anyone but Bill; in fact, it was obvious that they hadn't, since they hardly indicated independent means for either. "Mr. Fischer looks awfully jolly," Bill wrote me. "He's awfully old, in his forties at least, but he has such pink skin and he smiles all the time. I'll bet he's the only fan who works at a redemption center." I mentally objected, then remembered that it's Mrs. Dan, not Dan McPhail who holds a similar job. "Mr. Lynn is tall and skinny, just the opposite from Mr. Fischer. He is real suntanned and scowls a lot and it's hard to tell how old he is, somehow. He's a mailman. I suppose we'll have to be more careful when we talk in fanzines about all mailmen being awful. They didn't talk to each other much, just to me. I can't figure out which one I like better. They both say they're going to help me with my fanzine, but Mr. Fischer brought along some supplies and I think Mr. Lynn wished he'd done the same thing."

Sure enough, Bill produced his first issue within a few days. I would have toppled over from surprise, if I weren't inhibited by the memory of that broken hip resulting the last time I fell down. His material consisted of a whole batch of posthumous items by really big names: Bierce, Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, and three or four others. The typography was perfect, without a visible mistake or strikeover. The only jarring note was blood on the wrapper. I did my usual letterhack routine, and implied strongly that Bill should do his own fanzine editing and publishing, even if he did have such adult help available, because it's more fun when someone doesn't do all the work for you. He replied by return mail, indignant:

"Now, about the first issue of Struggle, I did it all myself, except for using the material and supplies. Mr. Lynn got me those contributions, said they weren't copyrighted and hadn't been published and he'd known the writers personally. Can you imagine! Then I used the correction fluid just as Mr. Fischer said I should. It certainly is a wonderful ~~thing~~ substance. But I always thought you had to proofread stencils first and type in corrections afterward, instead of just rubbing the fluid over the whole stencil with a damp rag. Hope you didn't have any trouble getting your Struggle open. I mailed one to Mr. Lynn and he said that he couldn't pull out the staples holding it together. Mr. Fischer certainly knows where to get good staples. Mr. Lynn got blood over his copy trying to pry out the staples, and I'll bet the same thing happened to any mailmen who got nosy. By the way, Harry, if you write anything more about religion, my friends both want extra copies. They say their bosses are interested. Be careful, you know why, because of Mr. Lynn's boss. For some reason, Mr. Fischer says he needs three copies of everything for his employer. You'll get a second issue of Struggle before long. I think my friends are getting jealous and each is planning to outdo the other in helping me the next time."

I felt vaguely troubled. The next morning, I watched for the mailman and asked if he knew why there had been blood on my mail. He seemed totally puzzled and I could see no sign of injury to his fingers. I remembered that the staples had come free with unusual ease for me. Later that week, I passed the local postmaster on the street. His right hand was tightly bandaged.

At this point, unfortunately, I lost direct contact with Bill, as far as exchange of correspondence is concerned. I put together the succeeding events from such sources as the editorial in his next issue, one lone letter from him just the other day, newspaper clippings, and some discreet inquiries among newspaper people in the western half of Pennsylvania. I believe that I can save space and reduce the attrition in readers by adopting a third person narration from this point onward.

Bill received such an unexpected flood of glowing letters about his first issue that he didn't find it possible to wait until the next meeting of what the three had laughingly called the Allentown branch of New New Fandom. Neither of his fellow fans had a telephone, it seemed foolish to write a letter to anyone in the same town, so Bill stuffed his letters into his pockets, and set out to pay a couple of visits. He had no success. Mr. Lynn's address did not exist. A deep, abandoned quarry yawned where the house or apartment should have been. Mr. Fischer's address was on a building, but the building was a church. Bill thought immediately that he'd been the victim of a pun about that redemption center, and knocked on the door of the adjoining parsonage. The ancient and decayed minister had never heard of anyone with that name.

Bill was mixed up and slightly scared. He had a vague idea that something of this sort was employed by communist cells, to avoid detection, and wondered if he might not have run into something serious. He was still enough of a kid to go home and tell everything to his parents. They heard him out, then talked over the matter at length.

"I'm sure that Mr. Lynn uses improper language," Mrs. Crockett said. "I never heard so many hells and damns before." "Mr. Fischer isn't much better. He starts every sentence with good Lord and ends up with Christ almighty. But the really influential people I've known haven't talked like prudes. Martha, do you think these might be real industrial giants or great literary figures who are sort of slumming it around Bill? They don't act like civil service workers or clerks." "Well, we mustn't risk losing an opportunity for William. They seem to be getting into some kind of contest to see which can do more for him in this--fanland, do you call it? What was it that they said they'd bring at your next meeting?" "Mr. Lynn said he knew where he could borrow a mimeograph for me. I told him that old thing I'm using is an invention of the devil and he said the one he'd bring is the same make but it'll do things the old one can't. Mr. Fischer said if I'd run an article on the meaning of thousand years in Revelations, he'd get me material by Weinbaum and Kuttner and a genuine story by Smith. He claims that the one I ran last time was a fake. Golly, I hope these men aren't spies or something."

Two nights later, the Allentown branch of New New Fandom broke up permanently. The mimeograph ran magnificently, by itself, without even plugging it into the wall. Mr. Lynn claimed

it was battery-powered by transistors, when Bill expressed apprehension that this might be some kind of psionic plot. Mr. Fischer was late, so the two of them ran the beautifully cut stencils that Mr. Lynn had brought along. Bill wanted to show off his sharply limited knowledge of art and said they looked like Dore drawings. "Small wonder!" Mr. Fischer exclaimed. Bill and Mr. Lynn whirled, for they hadn't seen him enter. "For God's sake, boy, don't get rid of your own mimeograph until you run this one yourself." Mr. Lynn walked right up to Mr. Fischer, whose face was pinker than ever. "I think we'd better settle this right now," Mr. Lynn said, hardly loud enough for Bill to hear. "Our bosses shouldn't have paid any attention to this crazy fandom, and it's taking up too much valuable time for you and me." "All right," Mr. Fischer replied, his voice quite steady but quiet. "Start offering him your trumps. I'm not afraid that he--"

A whoosh of flames and a thud interrupted him. Mr. Lynn's mimeograph was molten in hue and collapsing into shapeless metal. Bill stared past singed eyelids, his mouth wide open. "I must have done something when I changed the stencils," he said tentatively. Mr. Fischer moved to his side like lightning and put one hand on his shoulder. "Not at all, my boy," he said. "I'll bet you put on one of your own stencils. And you'd used my correction fluid on it, right? It's a blessing that I took that precaution. You can see how flimsy his products are beside mine."

Mr. Lynn used a big big D and snapped his fingers. An extremely curved and naked woman was squatting on the rug beside the mimeograph's ruin. Bill felt his face reddening and tried to prove he wasn't really embarrassed by asking: "Is she a fan?"

Mr. Fischer roared with relieved laughter. "Jesus Christ almighty," he cried, "this boy doesn't need my help, Lynn. He's too good to need saving." The taller man stared at Bill carefully and the woman disappeared without even a signal. His hand still on Bill's shoulder, Mr. Fischer was saying: "Now, here's something that you can really write an article about. Look at the flyleaf. Personally autographed and inscribed for you, you see. And right here in Matthew you'll find a lot about this second coming that you've probably not thought about enough."

"Thanks, I guess even Coslet doesn't have that," Bill said, "but I think I'm going to be sick." He sat down hastily on the floor and watched the room revolve around him. Both Mr. Fischer and Mr. Lynn were suddenly looming over him, three times as big as they should be.

"I'd like to show you my redemption center, Bill," Mr. Fischer was saying. "I've got lots of wonderful premiums that any fan would like. You don't even need to collect coupons. You know how they say that fandom is a way of life? Well, fandom isn't the only--"

"You're one hell of a neofan," Mr. Lynn roared, suddenly threatening. "Stick with me and I'll have you in FAPA right away. Well, in three or four months, anyway. I know some people who have connections. I could even make you chairman of the board of the NFFF. And remember the Cosmic Circle? Well, I've got lots of land not as hard to get to as the Ozarks. I'm getting a big camp for fans together there. That's better than collecting stupid books and publishing fanzines that people think are too good to be true."

Bill was never quite certain what happened at this point, but

he suspects a sudden and thorough brainwashing. Because the two men were standing at either side of him, and suddenly things began to materialize at their feet. Mr. Fischer shoved the dozen-volume set of Kuttner's collected works in book form toward Bill. Mr. Lynn countered with a complete set of Unknown, crisp and bright as if they'd just come from the newsstands. Instantly a tremendous stack of thin magazines came into being on the other side: "Frank Reade" was visible on the covers of a few of them. Mr. Lynn waved his hand and stacks of cartons of beer towered to the ceiling. Mr. Fischer grinned in triumph and countered with a stack of root beers so bulky he had to move out of the way. Mr. Lynn drew a deep breath, snapped his fingers, and nothing happened. Impatiently, he repeated the snap, accompanying it this time with a muttering. For a split second, a linotype stood three inches from Bill's perspiring forehead, until its weight sent it crashing through the floor into the cellar. At this moment, Mrs. Crockett entered the room.

"Bill, for the last time, you must stop cluttering up the house with your—" She saw the two men before she noticed the gap in the floor. "Oh, I didn't realize—" She rushed forward to greet Mr. Fischer and plunged into the cellar after the linotype. Bill rolled backward with infinite care, out of danger, and whispered: "Maybe you'd both better go."

"Not until you choose." Bill wasn't sure whether only one or both of the men said it simultaneously. "Either way, you can have a whole world. You can't stay in the middle like some fans try to do."

"But I want to be a neofan for a while longer," Bill groaned. "I don't think either of you—"

There was a faint sound from somewhere outdoors. Mr. Lynn grew incredibly pale and Mr. Fischer gasped something that sounded like "At last!" Even Bill, who wasn't expecting it, thought it sounded like a trumpet blast. Then he heard the sirens and remembered Allentown's high-pitched horns that signal a fire alarm.

"Maybe it's a hell of a big fire," Mr. Lynn said to Mr. Fischer. "It sounds like those godforsaken slums down by the railroad depot," Mr. Fischer said to Mr. Lynn. "Let's go. What can you do about these crazy fans, anyway?" "Yeah," Mr. Lynn's voice trailed off in the distance. "They say it's nothing but a goddamned hobby, but—"

Mr. Crockett got Mrs. Crockett's foot out of the linotype's melting pot before dawn. Both Mr. and Mrs. Crockett were convinced by now that anyone from an old family would not have behaved in such inexplicable manner, but Bill was allowed to continue to read science fiction prozines, when they discovered that the linotype was essentially undamaged and it brought an excellent price when sold to a Wilkes-Barre newspaper. With the proceeds they built an expensive house and Mr. Crockett bought a more influential job and Bill was so anxious to forget the whole thing that he didn't even save newspaper clippings about the fire that had razed the city's worst slums but cost the lives of a convent full of nuns. You won't hear much from Bill in our fandom from now on. He's too intent on resurrecting a long-neglected specialized fandom that has little contact with ours, Frank Reade, Jr., fandom. That one letter I just got from him says that in this field, there's no opportunity for arguments over politics or religion.