

Now good evening, all; here begin I the first number of the fifth volume of the quarterly periodical, Horizons, which to the current moment has been in the preceding ten EABA mailings, which maketh of this EABA number 11, whole number 17, of this amateur publication that is given away to any and all EABA members by its instigator, Harry Warner, Jr., 305 Dryan Place, Hagerstown, Maryland, who if coaxed can be persuaded into selling an occasional copy for the sum of ten cents; and know ye all that this hight the September, 1945 issue, which like its brethren of past days is produced on the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph, and is stenciled on Macbeth, the editor's obsolescent typewriter so known because it doth murder sleep. So be it, and the Goodness of All be with ye, little comrades.

### IN THE DREAMING

I, being still 4F, though for how long I know not, had high hopes of making of this a particularly large issue, in celebration. There is nothing to celebrate just now, so I had made those plans in order to be a little different and escape the stigma of conservatism which less cultured fans have been insinuating as toward Hagerstown. But the hopes seem blasted now. The mailing was late, the stencils for this issue were late coming, and I doubt that there'll be time for more than the regular dozen of pages. However, while I'll try to make a complete issue in the first 12, if time permits I'll add on to them as many as possible.

Incidentally, this is the most telling argument for on-time mailings, it seems to me. Now that nearly half of the EABA membership publish regularly, a late mailing means a real reduction in the quantity and quality of publications. There are only thirteen weeks between mailing dates. A goop like me, who wants to have something in every mailing, must allow one to two weeks for getting his magazine to the Official Editor. It takes up to a week for the mailing to reach him. Ten days or two weeks are required to read the mailing thoroughly and be prepared to begin the new issue of your publication: in other words, four or five of those thirteen weeks are useless for publishing purposes. So when the mailing arrives late, it cuts another hunk out of the eight or nine weeks in which your publication may be prepared, with a corresponding loss in quality or quantity.

The bad reproduction of last issue disturbed me no end, and I'm making an effort to improve it this time. This typer is certainly not improving in stencil-cutting qualities, its platen being in bad shape and its keys no longer so sharp as in its best days. I'm trying this time a little trick of stencil cutting that may help--if it does, I'll pass it along to the rest of you; if it doesn't, this issue will be a dreadful mess--and am trying to keep the type cleaner, being even prepared to make the sacrifice of the price of purchase of a bottle of type cleaner, if such seems necessary.

We have been plagued with an excessive number of post-mailing and between-mailing publications during the last three months. How many agree with me that something should be done about it? Certainly there's nothing in the constitution forbidding such; but they're against the spirit of the organization, take the edge off the pleasure derived from getting EABA magazines all to the onces; and mess up controversies something dreadful. It seems to me that the Official Editor, at his discretion, could send out a post-mailing, not more than two weeks after the original one, and then nothing more until the next mailing, except for the most urgent matters. That wouldn't prevent members from sending out their magazines themselves, naturally; to combat that, maybe a wholesale snub would work, if members just didn't review or mention such outlaw magazines in their own publications. Anyone have any better suggestions?

### GLANCING BEHIND US

To begin by getting those pesky between-mailing items out of the way:  
 EA Loan-To-Annot, no. 1: I'm anxious to see more additions to the structure, and hope Doc Swisher carries on the noble task so well begun. Matters of Opinion,

## GLANCING BEHIND US

no. 15: Jack is one of those aristocrats, I see, bragging about his new-type stencils. At least he has the modesty to forebear mention of their phenomenal cost! Me, I get along on seconds, at the tremendous sum of 1.60 per quire. Danshee, no. 1: Weinbaum, sir Marlow said lots of things about his stories that people took literally. This whole argument about whether sfw stories are futurized Westerns misses the vital point, almost invariably. The fact that a sfw (I'm beginning to like Ackie's abbreviation) story could be turned into a Western, detective, or what-have-you by changing certain aspects of the plot is in itself nothing to grow horrified about; because you can't claim that a certain type story takes a certain type of plot. The essentials must be the same, except in trick writing, like Saroyan's stories or in the sfw field, things like Fearn's "Mathematica" which usually fall flat on their face. The value of a sfw story lies not in whether its plot can be converted to a horse opera, but whether the fantasy or futuristic aspect is strong enough to make it a better story than it would have been in a mundane setting, or whether the writing is so damned good that the setting becomes entirely secondary. I think many of the stories in Astounding today, and most of those in Amazing, are very poor stuff, and have complained myself that things like the Will Stewart contraterrene stories show nothing new but a relatively original motive; but I don't go around yipping that the merit of a sfw story lies in whether it could be converted to sell to another type of magazine. Agenbite of Inwit: Summer 1945. What a wondrous blessing, to see a legibly stencilled Lowndes publication! This issue shows Doc in his very best mood, into which he should fall oftener. In re COs: that "it takes much more courage to buck a stream than ride along with it" is a dangerous generalization. There are at least two types of people with CO tendencies who don't fit in--those like the Amish, who would be outcasts in their community with the people they spend most of their time with, if they were anxious to fight; and those who are just plain so scared of war that they can't bear the thought of getting in it. Then you mustn't forget the eggnentrics to whom publicity, however gained, is the greatest thing on earth, and can show off by mixing in with the really sincere pacifists. Too, I don't think the Bible is deadset against fighting and killing, although that depends largely on individual interpretations. The comments on Human nature and human behaviour are swell.

If there's any other in-between stuff, we'll find it later. To the bulk, then: FA Lean-To, vol. 1, no. 5. Doc, you mustn't neglect this! Horizons, vol. 3, no. 4. One hideous error: in the second new paragraph on page 11, in its second line, I somehow typed "major" instead of "minor". I hope the context made the mistake so plain that everyone understood what had happened. I'm not bothering with the top lines this time, as punishment for you who don't comment on them, for it takes superhuman foresight and concentration to make them come out even without first dunning. Please Lay This Aside: No comment occurs. Ballot: There has seldom been a more difficult choice than that between Evans and Stanley: too bad they had to run for the same post at the same time, when ordinarily it's so hard to find decent candidates for the job. There should be a definite time-limit set on votes, incidentally. Adulur: Deskan, Tat 1: Absolutely! Ray, no. 1. Wellheim is slipping; at election time in past years, he'd have everything at least four pages per publication. The Madman of Mars, June, 1945: Oops, I see it's not that any longer; but you get where I mean. Ackie, I suspect, is getting a bit tired of this, for his caustic comments are occurring less frequently than at first. The sentiment, if such exists, is mutual! The Phantagraph, vol. 10, no. 2: I like to see utter nonsense as much as anyone, and don't mean to be a wet blanket; but darn it, I don't like a whole magazine, ~~the~~ the whole thing in the same tradition, helping someone meet activity requirements. The Phantagraph, vol. 10, no. 5: Glad to read the story, which was a honey, again. I somehow get the impression that this is a condensed version, in case anyone is interested. Love, Elmer: Let's be careful not to fall into the deadly state of the other AJ organizations to which a printed

## GLANCING BEHIND US

publication is the thing, regardless of what it contains, if anything. Fan-Dango, no. 1: The ideas of the fanzine anthology are nice ones; only thing I object to in the tentative lineup is the letter section. However enjoyable readers' comments may be when they first appear, they're seldom interesting removed from the time and place of the things they discuss. Unless, of course, all the stuff in connection with certain classic feuds or arguments were included together.

Aagh!, no. 1: Jiminy, Ray Martinez really has it bad! I suggest for him a vigorous reading of Eugene O'Neill's "Ah, Wilderness!", which works in the great majority of such cases, first preferably having someone edit out all the quotations from Swinburne, replacing them with choice excerpts from the works of Cabell. Seriously, if one likes Cabell just for the sake of sheer beauty and escapism, I don't see why he bothers with reading; all he has to do is listen to Mozart chamber music for something infinitely superior in art and medium. "The Loveliness of Stanches" is positively inspired. I've often wondered why scientists don't turn their attention to figuring out how to operate on the sneller so that the human nature would come to enjoy what we now term bad smells, and vice versa. It would save gobs of energy now wasted on flower gardens, remove the expensive necessity of sewerage systems, and make the skunk the most popular animal in the country. Quest of the Foo-Stone goes on a little too long for the sake of its climax. As for Stubbs' article, I can only repeat what I've so plaintively asked before, why is there any justification for believing that telepathy exists at all, when clairvoyance seems to account for all observed phenomena of the sort? That is, wouldn't the playing-card experiments work just as well if no one were concentrating, trying to send his thought of what he sees to another person? Inos, no. 7: Interplanetary looks great, though I fear it's a bit complicated for consumption by the general public. If Parker Bros. turn it down, I suggest that Art work over it, taking out some of the details, and making it of about the same amount of complexity as Monopoly. Moonshine, no. 5: Best thing is the title lettering. Mof-fatt might have made something out of this, though, had he remained with us. Woony Wramblings: Very glad to see no red coloring on either of the airbrush covers in this mailing! Whopdoodle: The description of Stan Center is best. I don't see any particular advantage in having two one-sheets in this mailing, though, when it would have been just as simple to staple them with Walt's Wramblings, on which I can't find a date or volume number. About this joke business, I must come out into the open and admit that a joke presented as a joke seldom makes me laugh. My sense of humor is by far most easily tickled by a classic application of the not juste, or an unexpected flash of humor in an otherwise serious passage. For instance, nothing in the June Unknown caused me to laugh the way a paragraph in Boucher's book reviews did; yet that particular passage would in another place or to a certain class of people seem quite normal and informative. ("Odile.....performed several miracles herself, notably saving her father's soul from purgatory by direct intercession.")

Guteto, vol. 2, no. 5: Not too inspiring an issue I fear. Pogorus, vol. 1, no. 2: Russ' attitude is so close to being funny, that I can't get myself all worked up over it the way some of my correspondents have. So I'll constrain myself, and merely that he's going to be quite astonished around 1955 when someone reminds him of the things he's saying today. Fan-Tods, no. 5: This is hard to do. I must make a dreadful confession, Norm. I can identify a Beethoven piano sonata by hearing just two bars of it selected at random. I am full of such bits of marvelously useless knowledge as that in Bach's piano suites, he always inverts the principal subject of his gignes at the beginning of the second half when the composition is in three-part harmony, but not necessarily so when written in two parts. I have been known to sputter for ten minutes on why a certain fermata in the first act of Die Walkure, which is never observed, should be. If you don't rush me and get me all flustered, I can even give out surprising amounts of information about the hypochondrioid mode. To please Trudy, I might mention that I can hum a fugue of

## COMMENTING ON IT

which I've heard the music's din afore, and whistle all the airs from that infernal nonsense Pinafore. But when it comes to mediæval church music, Norm, I am stuck--stuck good and proper. I did intend to read up on the subject and be able to display my knowledge of it here, but when I found that time for such research wouldn't be available, I decided it wouldn't be quite fair. If you're really interested, I suggest a good dose of Lang's "Music in Western Civilization", the author of which with almost terrifying thoroughness devotes his first four-hundred odd closely printed pages to music before the time of Bach. Not being a rich man, I don't own the volume, and have had to read parts of it in two-week library loan periods, thus far confining myself to ground with which I'm reasonably familiar. This whole issue is tremendously interesting--may we have many more of its ilk! Inspiration, vol. 2, no. 2: Excellent stuff, with none of the filling-up-space difficulties evident in the last couple of issues. I liked "Gatner, Darkness!" too, from the two-thirds of it I've read. The familiars are really new, and the overworked theme presented far more logically than in any preceding stories built on the same idea. Matters of Opinion, no. 12: Three cheers for Speer's defense of planned time and the resultant necessary self-discipline. Makes me feel more justified for the slightly mechanical way in which I arrange my hours days ahead! Fantasy Amateur, vol. 6, no. 1: Sorry to see the last one from the Ashleys, and would hate to have to live up to such a reputation as Swisher will. This is as good a time as any to remark that the critics' report has about outlived its usefulness. Since new ones will be appointed by the time this comes out, we'll have them for another year; but after that, I see no point in continuing such remarks, which are far too short to be worth anything. Yearbook of etc., 1941: Three hurrahs! All is forgiven Julie for past transgressions of keeping up activity requirements by giving away FFF. This pardons all. I can't find a single fault with it, except that not capitalizing the titles would have made them a little easier to read. S-F Variety, June, 1940: When are people going to learn that my middle initial is B, not J or P or anything else. (Technically, it is P, because of an error in my birth certificate, which I'm currently trying to find out whether a change of can be had without court proceedings.) Campbell's Buts have been bothering me, too. Sardonyx, vol. 5, no. 1: Insomnia, up to now, is one of the very few things that has never bothered me; as a result, I doggedly and stubbornly refuse to sympathize with those who suffer. Just wait until I start to get it, though! When once or twice a month I can't get to sleep, I remain very calm, do not get panicky, and tell myself that the relaxation is almost as good as sleep, and what's a few hours missed! In addition, now that I'm working on nights, I find even quicker sleep than when I had the day trick. The mile-long walk home around midnight through practically deserted streets has a sort of hypnotic effect; I just stop thinking, and stride automatically, with the result that I'm half-asleep by the time I reach the house.

Browsing, no. 1: Hope Michael's price on "The Starmaker" will stop the ridiculous prices being paid for it in this country. And I can picture poor Paul Spencer's sensations on reading about this new Cabell discovery. Silver Dusk: Either these are hopelessly artificial, imitative poems, or I'm utterly lacking in critical faculties. Jinx, vol. 2, no. 1: The practice of using foreign words and phrases where they're equivalent to something in English annoys me. "The Commentary" conveys precisely the same thing as "Le Commentaire". Something is fishy about Pedantry (sic) by Bronx. I refuse to believe that any such paragraph was ever written, in the Drittenica or anywhere else, and the anecdote would have been far better had whoever wrote it taken the trouble to think up a logical series of complications. Tetrachords, for instance, have little use in the harmonic sense--they're useful mostly for theorists to show how scales and modes are built up and I looked in three musical dictionaries in the library without being able to find any such thing as the "simple tetrachord of Mercury". For another thing, I've never heard of simple and double chords as classes. You can double a or several tones in a chord, or maybe the whole thing if you're writing for a double chorus or or-

## GRAMMAR BEHIND US

chestra. No, no. There are far too many existent classic passages in the textbooks on Harmony Gilbert could have used, like this fairly good one from Clarke's textbook: "...A group consisting of minor third, diminished fifth, and minor seventh, may be either third to major ninth, or fifth to eleventh, with minor ninth. To decide which it is, it is only necessary to remember that the roots of the dominant chords of the related group are. Therefore D, F, A flat, C, if found in the key of G, must be fifth to eleventh, with minor ninth, because if it were third to major ninth, it is evident that D flat would be the root." Bob Jones' statement on Merritt is downright incredible; perhaps his best point is in the excellent character-drawings of his villains. Fungi from Yuggoth: It is, in my opinion, the finest thing in this mailing, because I've long wanted a place where I could read lots of HPL's sonnets without having to dig through piles of weird Taleses for them, and being a poor member of the downtrodden masses, have no copy of the omnibus. (Does anyone want to trade it for my copy of "Moon Pool", in excellent shape.) En Garde, no. 6: May it continue to appear every mailing, even if it mean no more Novas whatsoever! Stan Center is positively tremendous in scope. I shall probably be the only FANer not to devote three or four pages of his publication to his own ideas. But I can dream, no? Details of the Midgicon are entrancing. Oh, for a couple of days in a big city, with nothing to do but explore second-hand bookstores! Considering that I'm able to grab fifty or more fantasy volumes per year out of the two tiny 2nd-hand places in town, untold treasures must lie in dozens of good-sized towns where no collecting fans exist. Incidentally, how did Liebscher's telegram get through the code-watchers? "Darbarian Invasion", I hope, will touch off the labor union argument again, and this time I expect to see it come to a clean-cut victory for the powers of good over those degraded workers for evil who will put up with the worst of means to attain a very dubious goal. Sustaining Program, Summer, 1957: The comma after "for perhaps the last time" on the index page wasn't clear, which made me worry for a while, for fear Jack was giving SP up. Now, then, if Jack were one of those who have seen the light and obtained the second issue of Nova, he would know that Stf. Dr. is a far more honorable title than the shell of fragile, easily-won importance than the similar rank in the days of the old SML gave. Yeah, FFM is theoretically going to reprint novels that originally appeared in book form, instead of the old Munsey stories, now that it's been sold to Popular Publications. But I don't think we'll see many more issues of it anyway. (I might use this as a good place to predict that at least two, and possibly all three, of Standard's stf. titles will be gone by the end of the year. Watch and marvel at my forecasting abilities at the proper time.) How did you get a copy of Browsings in the last mailing, Jack? And I'll bet that first dictionary of yours is or was just like the one I have here on my desk. One of three, that is. I have a 25c one, which I use mostly to check on the spelling of words. This one that you're talking about serves me when I need a definition, in most cases. And on the little table where I type, reposes the 1934 edition of Webster's unabridged, despite its antiquity tremendously useful for a number of purposes, and containing lots of obsolete words or definitions of words hard to find elsewhere. Just for the heck of it, I hunted up that quotation Sam Russell used, and discovered it's the obscurer part of a very famous passage from Shakespeare. I don't like Jack's way of using the inflections of foreign words when in English context; it's impossible to carry out in lots of cases.

A final word on headaches. I had expected better results from such an intelligent group of peoples. Widner is the only one who made a worthwhile suggestion, of the whole bunch of course; for I specifically stated that sleep worked, but was too inconvenient. Norm's learned words interest me no end, because liquids help me to a certain extent--my doctor said that they dilute the gastric juices, or something to that effect. Oh, I'm a strange individual, all right, and I wouldn't be surprised at anything in regard to my reactions and quirks.

## MUSIC FOR THE FAN

## V—THE WOMAN WITHOUT A SHADOW

Reviewed by Pfc Paul Spencer

Among the rather numerous notable events of the year 1910 was the first production of the opera "Die Frau ohne Schatten" ("The Woman without a Shadow"). Naturally, perhaps, the occurrence does not seem to have caused much of a stir. At a time when the Allies were stormily laying the basis for the Second World War, this delicate work of fantasy got snowed under. The fact is regrettable, for despite its obvious faults, "Die Frau ohne Schatten" is a work of remarkable beauty.

The text is by a prominent Austrian dramatist, Hugo von Hofmannsthal; the music is by no less a composer than Richard Strauss. The beauty of the poem has been almost universally recognized among those who have read it, but many critics have questioned the value of the score. In any event, this opera is never heard today outside of the land of its birth, and only good luck gave me access to the score. I incline to side with the few admirers of the music, and am so passionately in love with the libretto that before I was drafted, I was engaged in rendering it into English. Certainly this exquisite allegorical drama should be known to lovers of fantasy, and I hope someday to complete and publish my translation.

The main characters are an Eastern Emperor and his wife, whom he found under curious circumstances. He was devoted to hunting, and while on one of his frequent expeditions in search of game was led by his favorite red falcon to a beautiful white gazelle. As the Emperor raised his arm to hurl his spear, the terrified animal changed into a beautiful woman, who revealed herself to be the daughter of Melkobaad, Lord of the Overworld. The Emperor wooed and won her, and brought her back as his Empress, together with a nurse of the Empress' own supernatural race.

As the curtain rises on Act I we find the Nurse watching over the sleeping Empress, on a flat expanse atop the imperial palace. Day is just dawning. A ghostly messenger from Melkobaad appears before the Nurse, and demands whether the Empress casts a shadow (symbol of motherhood). No, replies the Nurse; light passes through her body as though she were made of glass! The messenger decrees that if the Empress does not cast a shadow by the end of three days, she and the Nurse must return to the Overworld, alone; the Emperor will turn to stone. The Nurse greets this pronouncement with glee, for she longs to return to the supernatural realm. The messenger vanishes as the Emperor puts in his appearance, and announces he is going on a three-day hunting trip. Upon his departure the Empress sleepily appears, and is startled into wakefulness by the sight of the Emperor's red falcon flying overhead. The bird had disappeared after the Emperor, in a rage at its having dared to strike the Empress' eyes with its wing, had hurled a spear at it. Now its wings stream blood and it called down, "The woman casts no shadow! The Emperor must turn to stone!" Chilled with terror, the Empress recalls that these words had been engraved on the magic talisman which had enabled her to take any form she desired, and which she had lost "in the drunkenness of the first hour". She falls on her knees before the Nurse and begs her to tell her where she can get a shadow. Only among mortals, says the Nurse, who has no wish to help. But the Empress pleads so pitifully that finally she contents to lead her to a mortal woman who will part with her shadow.

Scene Two of Act I takes place at the home of Barak, a dyer, who has just married, and has had some strife with his spouse. While Barak is away, the Nurse and Empress come and offer riches in return for the shadow of Barak's wife. Lured by visions of splendour, she consents, and agrees that the two shall remain three days as her handmaidens, and that on the third day she will part with the shadow. But, she exclaims, here she has wasted time talking, it is time for Barak to be home, and she has prepared no supper for him! The Nurse obligingly furnishes a

## MUSIC FOR THE MAN

panful of fishes over a sizzling fire, and withdraws with the Empress. Barak's wife, left alone, hears the voices of children lamenting. The sound seems to come from the mouths of the fishes, and in a frenzy she puts out the fire, and sizzling and wailings simultaneously cease. Barak returns and finds he must be content with a crust of bread for supper.

In Act II (whose details are rather confusing) the Emperor begins to doubt the virtue of his wife, and later commences to turn to stone. On the third day, the Nurse, by means of awesome magic, removes the shadow from Barak's wife, but the Empress cries out she will not accept it--she sees blood on it. Barak, on learning what his wife has done, rushes on her to kill her. The power of Teikobad intervenes; a nearby river overflows and breaks in upon the house, the ground opens and swallows Barak and his wife, and the Nurse sweeps up the Empress in her magic cloak, as the curtain falls.

The first scene of Act III shows the dyer and his wife in separate subterranean dungeons. Barak is longing for his wife, who, in the next chamber and unaware of his nearness, is tormented once more by voices of the unborn. Finally the two are led out of their dungeons, in different directions.

Next we see the Empress and her Nurse arrive in a boat at the Temple of Life. The ghostly messenger appears and banishes the Nurse to the mortal world. The Empress enters the temple and finds within it the Stream of Life and its Guardian. And in a niche, seated on a throne, is the Emperor--turned to stone save for his eyes. The Guardian bids the Empress drink from the stream; if she does so, she will gain the shadow of Barak's wife, and the Emperor will return to life. She looks at the Emperor; his eyes plead. From outside she hears Barak calling for his wife, and his wife calling to him and begging him to kill her. After a long struggle between love for the Emperor and pity for the dyer and his wife, she cries out, "I will not drink!" For a moment, nothing happens. Then the Emperor rises, flesh and blood once more, and as he takes his wife in his arms, she casts a shadow. Then the--with Barak and his wife (who has regained her shadow)--are transported to an idyllic landscape as the voices of the unborn sing in joy.

There are three obvious faults in this generally admirable drama: its complexity, its touching upon the delicate subject of fertility, and the severe demands it makes in the matter of stage effects. Further, it is supposed to be very difficult to sing. Wildt brings us to the music.

As far as I can judge from my toings with the piano score, the music is tremendously effective. This, in itself, does not mean it is, necessarily, good music; it means that the music is splendidly atmospheric, creating with its eerie harmonies and chromatic melodies a powerful impression of mystery and wonder, and that it points up the dramatic developments to an amazing degree. Considering it purely as music, to be listened to for its own sake (which, after all, was not the intention, this being a music-drama rather than a grand opera), it does not seem to be Strauss' highest standard, as set forth, say, in "Don Juan" and "Till Eulenspiegel". Yet it is very well worth hearing, a lush web of symbolic themes and incidental melodies of a beauty which sometimes is breath-taking. It is written very much in the Wagnerian tradition, but departs from that style sufficiently to make prominent use of melism and the ensemble. The choral writing is especially attractive. The thematic material is not of uniform quality, but is admirably handled throughout. It seems to me that the best portions of the score (including almost all of Act III) are so surpassingly lovely that it will be positively criminal if "Die Frau" is permitted to perish.

Nevertheless, its elaborateness, and its esoteric qualities, seem to have condemned it to oblivion.

-o- -o- -o- -o- -o- -o- -o-

Musicologist Warner resumes next issue, with a dissection of Wagner's "Flying Dutchman", his earliest work still to keep the stage and in certain respects his greatest before "Das Rheingold". Erratum: "Preworld", somewhere around the middle of page 1 of this review, page 6 of Horizons, should be "Overworld".

## A FEW MONTHS OF SKETCHING

No, dear friends and neighbors, just because I no longer read every issue of any prozine you will not be spared from reviews. With diabolical cunning, I have devised this plan, wherein shall pass in review the grisly memories of the prozine perusing I have experienced during the preceding three months, more or less. Usually less, probably, because I think I'll find myself reading more than there's room to review thoroughly.

Anyway, the magazines that gave me the most pleasure during the last three months were two issues of Unknown--the April and June ones. The maddening buts, and the way the hero usually comes out on the short end, are every bit as annoying as Tucker points out in S F Variety, but there's still enough good stuff in the magazines to make me want to come back for more.

In the April issue, Fritz Leiber's novel was very nearly all it was cracked up to be, methought. There are any number of very good things in it: the idea that formulas for witchcraft change as man's habits and way of living alter; the pleasantly unheroic main character; and the really chilling eppursimuvra business. My only real complaint was with the ending: the final pages brought about a totally new twist that I hadn't foreseen, but nevertheless seemed a bit superfluous.

The other three stories in the issue aren't very distinguished. I don't enjoy the dialect stories of Jane Rice--the weird narration detracts attention from the yarn itself. "The Golden Bridle", moreover, seemed much too long. "The Giftie Glen", pleasant enough in its way, had a fault peculiar to Jameson's stories in Unknown. There seems to be no unity, or the impression of driving toward a finish. The yarn just goes on and on, with one incident after another that do little if anything to advance the action toward a crucial point, until finally Jameson apparently decides that the story is long enough, puts in a few hurried climactic words, and lets it go at that. "No Greater Love" inspires not a great deal of comment. It was just another thoroughly capable and entirely uninspired Nuttner story--marking time, when he is capable of turning out really superlative work.

The June Unknown contained nothing nearly as good as Conjure Wife, but did supply much more variety, through ten stories as against the four in the preceding number. Though it may have not been, from the standpoint of the w. k. Eternal Verities, the best in the issue, "The Hounds of Kalimar" struck me most favorably. On the surface, nothing about it is outstanding--the idea of two men discovering a lost race which would do them harm, but which they finally conquer is a wee bit less than totally original. Yet the story had an atmosphere, the struggles of the two men against the animals were different from the stock combats of pulp fiction, and Kalimar, being quite a guy, has stuck in my memory.

"Blind Alley" pleased me more for its object than for its inherent value. (One of the few things with which I can't sympathize with HIL is his obsession for the past.) I have yet to see a really good fantasy about leprechauns--even Stephen Vincent Benet's attempt was inferior to most of his work--and while "Wheesht!" had its moments, it was hardly a classic. Honorable mention should be made for the first two paragraphs, though. "Sriberdegibit" suffers from the lack of scruples of one Anthony Boucher, who might have in some way stuck in acknowledgement to Gilbert for stealing the plot of "Ruddigore". Not only was it a dastardly trick, but the solution wasn't as convincing in this story as in the operetta: with all the talk of ethics and philosophizing that go on in Boucher's story, the suicide catch could very easily have been considered as invalid.

None of the short stories in this issue impress very greatly. When the day comes that the last story like "The Wishes We Make" is written, let us hope that the plot is given suitable interment, and the whole thing quickly forgotten. Hugh Raymond's short lacked the punch ending that ordinarily makes his fiction stand out above the average. Robert Arthur, as usual, turned in one of his worst stories to a fantasy magazine; why does he keep the best back for Argosy and such places? "A Bargain in Bodies" seemed to this observer a bit overdone, and the heroine wasn't the sort of person you could feel sorry for, yielding to so obvious



## A FIVE-DIGIT OF FIVE-DIGITING

a prank of the old boy. "The Green-eyed Monster" was like something that might have been batted off in a spare evening, though nothing that actually wrong with it. And I wonder who will be next, now that Dracula and Sherlock Holmes have returned to life thanks to Manly Wade Wellman?

I started the July, 1957 Weird Tales with quite a bit of interest, it being the first fairly current issue I'd seen for some time. Unfortunately, it's just another blooper. Dorothy probably tries hard enough, but very apparently doesn't know the difference between the weird and the inexplicable, and I suppose editorial tabus would prevent her from using any really outstanding stuff that should by mistake reach her hands.

The only really good thing in this issue is Ray Bradbury's "The Scythe". That daily stint of writing Ray persisted in for so long is showing its effect--barring Lowndes, Michel and Wollheim, he now sells the best stuff to provinces of any of the fans.

Nothing else in this issue deserves more than passing mention. "The Street of Faces" would come in second, if I had to pick the stories in order of preference, but I've never been able to get up a great deal of enthusiasm about Frank Ome's atmospheric stories. "His Last Appearance" has the negative virtue of being far better than the horrible hack that Bedford-Jones usually turns out. "Lost"--well, I can't find anything to complain about in particular, but equally little to praise. "Hours Truly--Jack the Ripper" suffers from the fact that the ending was painfully obvious all the way from about half-way through, and that was the only thing that might have saved the story. The two novelettes were simply hack stories with stock situations that were all right the first fifty times authors used them; "Legacy in Crystal" and "Tamara, the Georgian Queen" were worse because those stock situations weren't even utilized skilfully. I note with alarm that Lawlor has escaped Palmer's clutches, and is overflowing into other publications. If PAP has had a virtue, it is that the new writers he develops here heretofore confined their damage to Amazing and Fantastic Adventures. If he lets them loose to prey upon other unsuspecting publications, woe unto us all.

I have also perused the May and June Astoundings recently, which interested me somewhat more than their large-size ancestors had been doing for the past year, but still did not inspire me to resume purchasing them from the newsstand as they appear. In May, "Ghost" stood out among the complete stories. It's the sort of the story you suspect Nuttner could turn out every try, if it weren't for the annoying matter of editorial restrictions. "Let's Disappear" had its moments, was probably more interesting to me because I happened to have several free hours and was able to read it from beginning to end uninterruptedly, a luxury I seldom enjoy in the case of magazine stories more than ten pages in length. The characters actually did act human, for which we may all be grateful. "Pacer" was the inevitable horse opera which one must endure every issue. This particular one wasn't quite as bad as others of recent memory, fortunately. And "Fifth Freedom" apparently is one of those stories you just can't do anything about. I know del Rey doesn't feel that way, was probably snickering at the "logic" of the ending, and Campbell may have printed in with tongue in cheek, though after certain remarks in recent editorials, I'm beginning to wonder whether he isn't becoming a real, honest-to-goodness jingoist too. Despite Willy Ley's sincere efforts, "The O. d. ones" didn't escape a textbook atmosphere of a subject which isn't particularly interesting in its details.

As for June, the Lybbias probably ruin the artistic unities of "The World Is Mine", or something, they being entirely unessential to the action; but they were mildly amusing, so what of it? The story didn't produce any guffows from the throat of the Warner, but some snickers did issue forth, and I didn't regret the half hour spent on it. The remainder of the contents of this particular issue were peculiarly uniform in quality, said quality being fairly decent. "Pelagic Spark" just didn't click the whole way home with me; maybe the ridiculous note by Daucher in Brass Tacks alienated my affections too thoroughly at the beginning.

## A FELLOWERS OF LETTERING

"Whom the Gods Love" prove that if anything happens to Siegel and Schuster, Del Rey will be very happy to take over the adventures of Clark Kent, and be even more all-fired patriotic, if such were possible. The theme of Sanctuary was pretty obvious from the beginning--the plot wasn't so transparent, but you could guess pretty easily what was going to happen in the end. A story like this is always slightly flat, anyway, because it doesn't make the heroes very bright, worrying so much over such a small thing, when time travel could be so powerful in winning the war in any number of ways. "Competition", while it possessed nothing to cause it to be particularly memorable, had its points, and refreshingly believable actions in the parts that were meant to be believable. And as to "Calling the Impress", it suffered from the "idea" crime of Campbell's, now slowly vanishing, wherein a certain problem's solution is substituted for a story. It could be much simpler for all concerned, if they'd pose the problem in a thousand words, put the solution in the back of the book, and let the reader figure it out if so inclined, instead of wasting a whole novelette on the matter, when the novelette has little to recommend itself. "Sea of Egster" was one of Rey's better articles; I'll bet he really had to dig for the stuff in that one!

"Father, Darkness", I haven't completed yet. From the first two parts, I'd call it one of the two best 1944 promises stories I've read so far, the other being "Conjure Wife". All of which makes it seem that Leiber is quite a writer, which he positively is. The religious dictatorship angle is far more convincing than in any of the many stories on the same lines that have appeared in theounding since "Sixth Column". The familiar one something about as new as anything can be in the sci. field. Further comments must wait until some kind resident of Hagerstown or Washington County decides he's finished with the July, 1944 Astounding, and brings it in to one of the local second-hand magazine stores.

Since cutting the last two stories, I have finished the March, 1944 Weird Tales, so I might as well get comments on it out of the way, too. "Lil", I think, was the neatest, best thing in the issue, for no particularly sound reason except that it appealed to me, and the subtly skillful narration which produces such nice effect. Bob Arthur's "The Book and the Beast" is probably second-best; I'm worrying myself sick, wondering where I've read it before. I don't think it's a case of plagiarism, though--probably in one of the Canadian issues of WT, which I believe mix up their issues, publishing stories from now and then.

The two novelettes were pretty dismal. "Flight into Destiny" was pure tripe, while Rutter's at least had the advantage of giving the impression that it might have been an excellent story. Best thing in it was the opening paragraph or two. Ray Bradbury's short this issue rather faded, compared with most of his stuff, and was the sort of story which if published in a fanzine the professional author would point to and say that's an example of fan fiction, nice is all right in its way but no editor would think of buying it. I refuse to believe that stories like "No Light for Uncle Henry" have much merit, whether August De leth writes them or not. They seem frightfully hackish, obvious, and unimpressive to me. "The Whispering Wine" had the advantage of a fresh style, and a couple of reasonably good ideas; if they'd been worked up in a less pulpish way, something might have come of the yarn. "A Bottle of Gin" was stock Bloch, the only merit of which is that editors send out checks for such stories. And if not the best, Seabury Quinn's yarn was certainly the most unexpected thing in the issue. I would be the last to call him a good writer, much less a great one, and there is certainly a lot wrong and more mawkish about this story. But you can't deny the narrative skill the fellow possesses, or his knack for putting some really good writing in to the old formulas and situations.

Now then, who will be the next to join the latest and most scholarly fan organization? It's so hoghtone that it doesn't even have a name. You can't have to fill out any coupons or sublet your soul, either. Only requirement: say something derogatory, in print or a letter to me, about "The Turn of the Screw", by James. Widner, Rotman, Spencer, and Warner are charter members. Who will be the next?

SOULI. COULIN

On the worst of possible days, Friday the 15th of August, did arrive in the thriving village of Hagerston one Claude Begler, bent upon finding out if it's true what they say of the town's foremost citizen, Harry Warner. Chief results of this trip were two: it proved how remarkably simple it is to get mixed up over the smallest of affairs, and should serve as horrible example to other fans not to drop in on the farmer without first warning him and then waiting for reply to make certain that circumstances permit this entertaining.

For did, when Claude was here, emphatically not, in fact, only a few hours before I'd dispatched a telegram to another fan who had planned to come up over the weekend, regretfully telling him that I wouldn't be able to invite him after all. So when Claude popped into the office (he arrived a ter I'd gone to work, and my mother sent him down to see me) I felt very bad indeed.

No ve., we did talk and talk until 1 the next morning, and after a night's sleep, met downtown on Sunday morning and had another two hours together, spent in the postoffice, his hotel room, and a restaurant where to the bewilderment of random I must report he ordered milk and orange juice, and I nothing more pernicious and degenerative than root beer.

About that misunderstanding: I think it's classic. Around midnight, when my shift for the night was over, we decided to part until morning. We went out of the building, stood at the door talking for a few minutes; he said he was stopping at the Hayflower; I racked my brains and then remembered a tourist home of that name, and said I'd walk there with him. We started out the street, in the general direction of Chicago and Los Angeles, and came darned near getting there. At least we were outside of town, and I was expecting to see the West Virginia boundary any moment when I decided I'd better let him go the rest of the way alone, and walk the miles back to Bryan Place in order to get some sleep for the morning. It was then that the bomb burst. Isn't this near your home, he asked. No, I said. Aren't you stopping at this tourist home like you said. Not out here, he said. I'm stopping at the Hayflower. It's a hotel about a half block from where you work. I thought, he said, you were walking home--to your home.

So at least we got plenty of exercise that night. Next morning I found out that he'd made a slight mistake in looking at the sign in front of his hotel. It was the Maryland.

MARCHING WITH US AGAIN

Another of those darned post-mailings came. Just to prove my disapproval, I'll brush it off with a cursory review, to leave a little more space in the next Fortions for some stuff I want to publish. The F. L. T. Amer., no. 2 was the only thing that I'd go out to find. I disapprove of putting the enlargement of the organization into effect immediately; suppose someone had his publication all finished before word reached him that 15 extra copies will be needed for this September mailing. The Reader and Collector: vol. 3, no. 2: Very welcome, with general delivery standing out, and the best individual thing the comments on the last page. Where, H. Moenig, can I buy a copy of Fantastic Stories, from which you note on page 2. The Christian Staff, I presume, is one of those chain fanzines. Pegasus, vol. 2, no. 1: Very happy to see it back. The long story is best thing in the issue. I don't pretend to understand the "implications", which probably matters very little. This is about the best thing of its kind I've seen since Doc Lowndes stopped writing space stories. The poetry is none too good--it probably gave the authors pleasure, but of what. Gilbert's article suffers from excessive del but he takes in certain big words, and overuse of accents; but any such survey articles are pleasing to me, as steps to and really thorough classification of fantasy fiction which must come one of these days.

Also have here a copy of the second issue of J. Michael's Browseys, but I shall refrain from mentioning it, since it's not intended for anything but the coming mailing; the same, I presume, holds good for the sheet on uniform book reviews

ON DIT

Originally, this was going to be a monstrous big and choice selections from my correspondence. Actually, since it's now too late to make this issue more than the usual 12 pages, it can be little more than a couple of paragraphs. Next time, I hope to do better, with something really stupendous--practically, unexpurgated excerpts from the dozens and dozens of letters written by the one and so far only Jack Chapman Hinkle! There's enough stuff to fill an entire issue with them, but I'll probably end up with about four pages of their excerpts.

Let us proceed, then, to an example of jolly college days at the University of Arkansas, as described by Emerson Raines: "...I've moved again and am now firmly ensconced in Room 14, Uark Apartments. My nomadic blood is coming out in me I guess. Hope the ghosts didn't drive me out of the Crypt"--he had been living "practically in a graveyard"--"it was a hole comparable to the Fort Hole of Calcutta. When it rained (it's been doing that here as you may have heard) we were flooded and when it got dry it was the dirtiest and dustiest place in the house. So I moved to a place with two big windows, venetian blinds, ventilation, private toilet and shower (the other place was equipped in 1306 it looked like), soft beds (ah!), white plaster walls, and a hardwood floor. I like the set-up a lot better. " This is the wildest place on the campus, but most of that is reputation, for so far as I have seen, the dorm was a lot wilder. One thing that keeps people from playing tricks here is that the prankster is liable to get shot. If you're in the hall and someone hollers "abbit!" you are supposed to duck into the nearest doorway because almost in eadial shot from a twelve-gauge shotgun will be in the hall here go once done. The unpardonable sin here is to steal someone else's liquor "

From Raym Washington: "One of the ideas I've had for a long time regards what I originally shot of fan names before I became acquainted with the fans. For you see when I first entered the quote - 'fold' - unquote, I knew nothing of fans except their names, and their phonetic sounds appealed to me. Strange, fantastic names the fans did have, indeed! I whispered gleefully to my palpitating, 17-year-old heart. Warner, Bronson, Miker, Asterman. The names Harry Warner, Phil Bronson appealed to me particularly, and I revelled in the sensual...cursed spelling!...sensual sound of them. Harry Warner, Jr. What magic lies in that name! " Harry Warner, Jr made me think of a strange fan with starglight in his eyes, who talked in a sepulchral voice and who was accustomed to flitting the far distant spaces, and the mental impression I seem to obtain is a picture of this Warner person in a streamlined rocket-suit, flitting swiftly away into the stars. I repeat, there is magic in the name. " Phil Bronson I saw as a great hulking young man. His name had somehow related to the rumblings and trumplings of elephants. His name also had the ring of far places. He had more vigor than this Warner chap, and was constantly shouting 'Fill 'em up' to the pressmen who scanned over his huge rocketship. " These two impressions I vividly remember, and the others are a bit vague, although I believe the name Acorn made me think of a person who spoke quick, snappy syllables and was always putting on an act. " I believe that I got the impression (above described) of your name from the fact that the first part of Warner, war, rhymes with far, and the name hints of far distances. Her I seemed to translate into meaning that he was at home in far places, a - sh - phonetic compatibility, so to speak. " The name, 'Phil Bronson', seemed to imply what it did because 'Phil' immediately caused me to think of fill, and Bronson sounded to me more or less like the sound an elephant makes when trumpeting, hence also Bronson's supposed huskiness. 'Acorn' of course is self-explanatory. " On some kind of a personality test, perhaps on one where you note the objects that abstract line drawings conveyed to you, the bracket I was in referred to me as the kind of person who expressed himself in symbols rather than direct notations, or something. Anyway, this horrible thing may explain my early idea of what the names of all the fans meant."

I shall be seeing you all again three months from now, barring IA, playoffs.