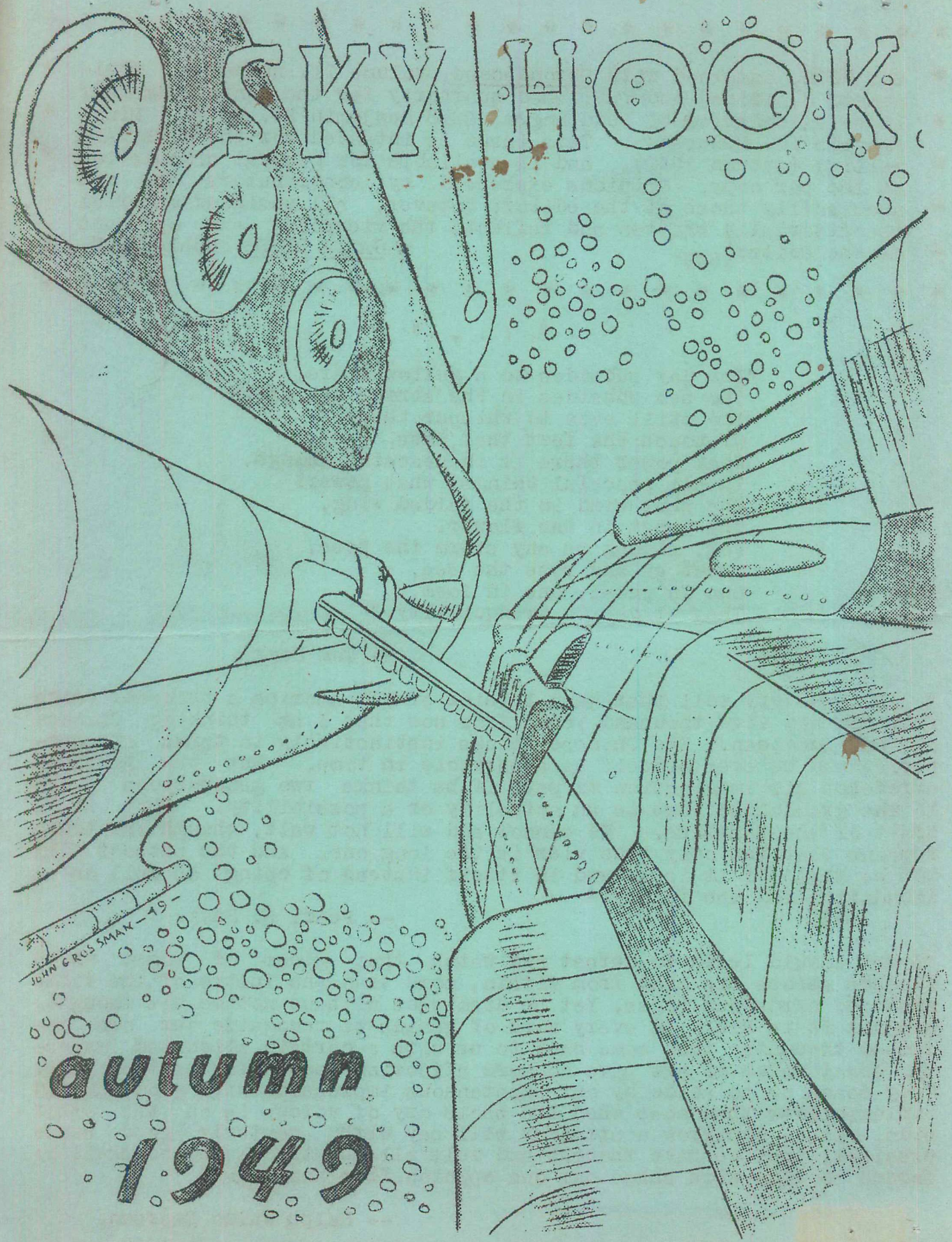


SKY HOOK



JOHN GROSSMAN - 19 -

autumn
1949

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" "

"The day subsides to a yellow flare,
 The sea subsides in the strong sea grass
 Too still even to whisper there
 Or touch the feet that pass.
 What power there is in peaceful things,
 In all peaceful things, what power!
 The shut wind in the folded wing,
 The comet in the flower.
 For, strong as any storm the rose,
 Sweet as any rose the sea,
 One in petal, one in foam,
 They travel to tranquillity."

-- Tom Boggs.

"...I know very well that when I think of our America a thousand years from now and five thousand years from now that I am thinking Chinese and not American. The Chinese thinks instinctively in terms of centuries and he sees himself as a particle in time. But the American stretches his imagination to pain if he thinks two generations ahead to the grandchild that is an actuality or a possibility. That is a trait of the restless. We cannot and will not wait, though the truth remains that the only true view is the long one, and the present will not be right if it is an end in itself instead of being as well as a foundation for the future."

-- Pearl S. Buck.

"A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts: they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else, tomorrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another."

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Other Worlds has joined New Worlds in jumping between two worlds

Twippledop

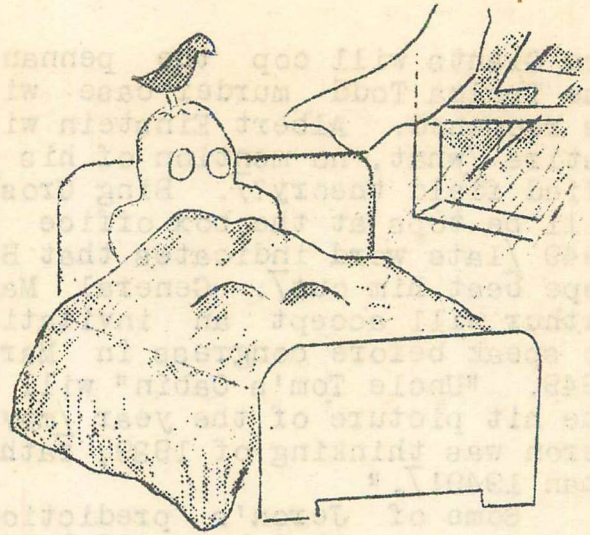
A WORD FROM THE SPONSOR. Of recent issues I have fallen into the bad habit of "explaining" SkHk's features or new policy or something of the sort in Twippledop. A good magazine probably should need no editorial comments as a preface. However: This issue is being postmailed, probably a month or so after the bundle went forth, despite my firm intention of finishing up at least one issue as much as four or five weeks ahead of deadline. When SkHk isn't postmailed, it is usually finished up about 7 days before the bundle is mailed. So I stencilled a good portion of this issue as early as mid - September; part of it was actually on stencil six months previous to that, having been meant for Chronoscope. But as I write this (a week after Thanksgiving) it seems certain that Sky Hook #8 will be the tardiest issue yet.

And I hate to postmail!

As remarked above, some of the items herein were scheduled for Chronoscope #2, which never appeared. All material from that number has either been "farmed out" (Shangri-LA used some of the book reviews originally stencilled for Ron) or will be used in this sterling fanzine. The consequent backlog from taking over the Ron material made it necessary to reject several good items for this issue, but Sky Hook #9 will use up most of the material at hand, and I am again looking for articles to be used here. (No poetry is needed at present, however.)

Next issue will be Sky Hook's second ann-ish, and I'm still undecided whether it will be a particularly gala number or not.

There will be another issue in any event. Even if I have to write the whole thing myself.



HAUNTING HEADLINE. If I someday work on a newspaper, writing headlines for newsstories, and one day I receive copy concerning a great storm that struck the city at 8:55 AM and darkened the area to midnight pitch for ten minutes -- if all that happens, I am all set. I have just thought up the perfect headline for that story, and if it won't fit the narrow confines of a newspaper column, they'll j u s t have to make it a streamer head: KLEINE NACHT AT NINE O'CLOCK.

HOW WRONG CAN YOU BE? In "File 13", a column I write for Arthur H. Rapp's inimitable Spacewarp, I mentioned a few predictions made by one Jeron Criswell, a "psychic" of Hollywood, for the year 1949, and pointed out that he (or she) came out about 9/10s wrong. Since writing that column I happened upon a fuller account of Criswell's startling predictions for '49, and now I find just how fine a prophet good old Jeron is.

Some of the predictions I cannot check, but here are a few of Jeron's jucier ones: "Margaret Truman will appear in a movie; she will also record. Greta Garbo will stage a comeback. So will Norma Shearer, Pola Negri, Mary Pickford, and Mae Murray. /The latter is now in TV, I believe./ Minnesota will end up in the Rose Bowl.

The Giants will cop the pennant. The Thelma Todd murder case will be reopened. Albert Einstein will retire /what, no mention of his unified field theory?/. Bing Crosby will be tops at the box office in 1949 /late word indicates that Bob Hope beat him out/. General MacArthur will accept an invitation to speak before congress in March 1949. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" will be the hit picture of the year /maybe Jeron was thinking of 1929, rather than 1949!/. "

Some of Jeron's predictions were so vague that he could hardly help but come out ahead: "Employment will slacken in some fields. The cold war against Russia will cost billions and solve nothing. Freak weather will make 1949 one of our most violent years. Everyone will be in a mood to give advice, few in the mood to take it. The trend for pictures will be toward the nostalgic."

But Criswell hit a lovely peak when he came up with the "big headlines of 1949", among which were these two: "STALIN DIES IN MOSCOW" and "ADOLF HITLER FOUND ALIVE"!

JEWELS -- CHEAP! For many issues now I've forgotten to let you know -- you loyal fans of this stellar fanzine -- that I have a bunch of back issues available. There are no copies of SkHk #1, and SkHk #4 is in short supply, but otherwise you can obtain copies of any Sky Hooks so far issued at 15¢ each. In addition, there are some copies of Chronoscope #1 (Autumn 1948) for sale, also at 15¢ each. Ron, you remember, featured Doc Keller, Kennedy, Klingbiel, Lilith Lorraine, Rapp, Brazier, etc., and won an "A" rating on Startling's review list.

YULETIDE MEDITATIONS. When I was in the army, far from home, Christmas was a sentimental season. I saw three Yules in khaki, worked all

of them -- the Christmas of 1943 I was on KP, of all things. But despite the relative lack of Christmas decorations and lack of traditional celebration, the farness from home doubtless made many of us in the service more acutely aware that the Yule was coming than we would have been had we been with our families.

At any rate, the Christmases I have spent at home since leaving the army have not meant as much to me as they once did, and I wonder if I am just too old to enjoy this season anymore, or if some other factor is at work?

Of course, year by year, the Yule is becoming more commercialized. Santa Claus plugs bubble gum, and Christmas carols grind out from the department stores more frequently than they do from churches. "All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth" and an awful new one (at least around here) "I Yust Go Nuts at Christmas" have about crowded "The First Noel" and "Silent Night" off the airwaves. A dozen corny record versions of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" stand on dealers' shelves, each of them hammed up for popular appeal and utterly lacking in the true spirit of that classic tale.

In some cities there has been a church campaign to "Put Christ Back in Christmas". These people are using the same methods to sell religion as other people, with just as worthwhile ends, no doubt, are using to sell Lionel electric trains and Chandon Dry Imperial champagne. It is not without irony that these clergymen have to utilize the same commercial mediums they are attacking in order to find a voice.

Merchandizing religious concepts is a bit different from selling toys or wine, though, and it's hard to change anyone's opinions on such a subject unless he is at least halfway convinced already. It will take a great sun change to



"Put Christ Back in Christmas".

A religious approach is not the answer to my quest, anyhow. I suppose the real solution is to have a family of my own. This is a somewhat drastic solution, of course (and not one I plan to try in the foreseeable future!), but one thing I have learned is

that it is really better to give than to receive, and I suspect that this principle applied to kids of my own would do more than anything else to recapture the tinselled Christmas spirit I remember from long ago.

DEPT OF FAIRLY USELESS INFO. If the FAPA keeps on issuing exactly four mailings a year, and the VAPA continues to issue exactly five, both apas will send forth their 150th mailing at the same time -- in 1971. It will take that long for the Vanguard, FAPA's junior by some $7\frac{1}{2}$ years, to catch up to this venerable organization.

THE FANTASY ANNUAL. Since this Twippledop instalment seems to have turned into a plug department, I might as well mention here that if you haven't seen the Fantasy Annual, 1948, you've missed one of the biggest and best fan publications of 1949. Don Wilson and I edited the 120-page volume, so perhaps I should be more modest, but it was the Fantasy Foundation that financed the thing and just in case a plug is needed to assure Ackerman getting his money back, I am willing to submerge my natural modesty.

Anyhow, the book's worth is mostly the result of the hyper material contributed to it by such experts as A. Langley Searles, Sam Moskowitz, Art Rapp, Harry Warner, Francis T. Laney, Con Pederson, Joe Kennedy, Philip Gray, Rick Sneary, and others. These writers review the fantasy microcosm much like the World Almanac reviews the macrocosm.

Send your buck to Forrest J Ackerman, Box 6151, Metro Station, Los Angeles 55, Calif.

SKY HOOK INDEX. Planned for this issue, but postponed till #9, is a supplement: The Sky Hook Index, covering volumes one and two, and whole numbers one through eight.

CALLING DR FREUD DEPT

"Zomba" is the type of picture which must be classified as "off-trail" as it is definitely not a fantasy. It tells of a gorilla's mother-fixation for a lost child it finds in the jungle."

-- Fantasy Times #94,
2d Nov 1949 issue.

Are you SURE this isn't fantastic?

ARTWORK CREDITS: Front cover by John Grossman. Interiors: page 5 -- William Rotsler; page 12 -- Eugene Calewaert; page 15 -- Bob Dougherty. Globlie on page 18 by Radell Nelson. Bacover drawn and stencilled by Howard Miller, who also did the heading for "Lovecraft is 86".

LOVECRAFT is 86

by Francis T. Laney

"86". -- Waitress slang for sold out, no more left, out of stock, finished, all done, passe.

-McGivern, Dictionary of Modern Slang

HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT is dead. It would be a good idea to leave him that way, to call a halt to this shameless stirring amongst his bones which has gone far to raise him to the status of a modern myth among fantasites.

Let us try to observe Lovecraft objectively for a moment and see what basis there may be for this quasi-worship of him and his works which has built several fanzines and a small publishing house, and has enabled a number of nonentities to glean a certain amount of vicarious fame by riding on the mouldering coat-tails of a dead man.

Was Lovecraft a success as a commercial writer? The answer is definitely no. He eked out a bare starvation existence doing rewrite work for other writers and through selling perhaps half of a very meager output of his own to one of the lower paying pulp magazines. Lovecraft himself would agree heartily that he was not a commercial success; in many instances in his letters he has stated emphatically that he wanted no part of commercial success anyway, that he considered it beneath his dignity to strive therefor.

Was Lovecraft a success as an artistic writer? Here again the answer seems to be no, although there is more room for doubt than in the previous instance. To determine Lovecraft's artistic stature, we would have first to decide what constitutes artistic success. If realism be any criterion, Lovecraft, a man who knew life only fourth or fifth hand, was a thundering failure. However, subjective horror need not necessarily be realistic, provided that it is presented in such manner as to convey to the reader the same sense of terror felt by the author. Did Lovecraft do this, other than imperfectly and partially? No. He has asserted that his technique was to maintain "a careful realism in every phase of the story except that touching on the one given marvel." (Marginalia, p. 138). Here his utter maladjustment to society has made him incapable of visualising or expressing an even remotely believable locale or action; his best effort is no more than a subjective caricature of reality. Other than through the temporary suspension of belief on the part of the reader, are the mundane settings of Lovecraft's tales even remotely plausible, particularly in the matter of logical motivation and characterization? Did Lovecraft play other than fumblingly on the strings of terror? No indeed. He

had a horror of the sea and of fish, a horror not shared by most of his readers.. It made no difference to Lovecraft -- a fish-being was the quintessence of horror, so he'd say "fish" in a hollow sepulchral voice and wonder why the readers didn't all faint. And he had a most annoying trick of applying totally subjective definitions to different words -- especially ones dealing with age, time, cold, horror -- and he would then pour these words on. The net effect was less one of horrific atmosphere than of overdone hamminess.

And there is of course his worst writing fault, his almost consistent telegraphing of the punch line. Writing up to a twist ending, he would usually give himself away by the time he was halfway through his story. There was none of the skill manifested by James, for example, or Bierce, or Chambers. These men would write up to the very denouement and then, BAM, they would hit the reader in the teeth with a punch line that would rock him on his heels. But they didn't achieve this spectacular result by tipping their hand halfway through the story. It is not entirely possible to determine if Lovecraft considered himself an artistic success, but the weight of evidence seems to be to the contrary. Certainly it is a well-established fact (viz., W. Paul Cook's appreciation of Lovecraft in Beyond the Wall of Sleep) that HPL was forever dissatisfied with his work and constantly wished to disavow all his stories but the most recent one. While of course much of this was perhaps modesty, it scarcely points to any strong feeling of satisfaction with his achievements in his chosen profession.

Was Lovecraft a success as a man? Here we tread on shaky ground. But Dr. David H. Keller's recent psychoanalysis of Lovecraft in Fantasy Commentator (Summer, 1948) at least casts a modicum of doubt on Lovecraft's integration and psychological stability. From all accounts, even his own, Lovecraft seems to have been a profoundly mal-adjusted person, out of step with the world on nearly every phase of life.

There is of course no sense in being worshippers of success. But on the other hand, does it make sense to deify a man who was so completely unsuccessful? Is there any valid reason to use him as the basis on which to establish a cult?

Certainly Lovecraft was a likable fellow, a staunch and loyal friend who gave far too generously of himself to his associates. There can be no question but that his selfless help and encouragement made it possible for several members of the Lovecraft circle to become moderately successful writers. They indubitably felt keen grief at his passing, and most certainly are to be commended for feeling gratitude towards him for his help and encouragement.

But is there any valid reason why a man such as August Derleth, a first class writer in his own right, should attempt to keep the torch burning for Lovecraft when he could take the time and energy and intelligence which has made Arkham House such a successful publishing venture, and write material of his own which is likely to be of far greater importance than anything Lovecraft ever produced?

Is there any valid reason why a character like Francis T. Laney, who never even heard of Lovecraft until three years after his death, should be enabled to build The Acolyte into fame and success in its own little microcosmos, simply by loading the early issues with mouldy scrapings out of HPL's literary breadbox? Certainly it was easier than to build up a top fanzine with genuinely amateur efforts.

Why should any fanzine ever again publish anything by Lovecraft, or even about him? If fanzines more or less drop HPL from consideration, and if Derleth and one or two other pros stop beating the drums for Lovecraft for even as little as one year, HPL will drop back to his proper status in American literature -- almost completely unknown and forgotten.

Of course, Derleth can do as he will, and he will no doubt continue to publish vastly of Lovecraftiana. A man of his prodigious energy and endless contacts can keep the Lovecraft myth alive for many years to come by what might be called artificial respiration. But there is certainly no valid reason for fan publishers to help furnish the iron lung for Lovecraft. Not only is the subject of Lovecraft written out and passe, but the available store of unpublished Lovecraft writings is almost nil. From time to time Derleth may graciously permit some fanzine to publish something by Lovecraft -- he has been more than generous in the past -- but why should fanzines bother with it? If it isn't good enough for Arkham House, is it worth the trouble of stencilling for a fanzine?

It is harder to write original material of merit than to fill a magazine with the refuse from professional authors' wastebaskets. And it is difficult for any amateur editor to forego the egoboo of publishing something by Lovecraft. But why not build up your own stable of writers? Maybe one of them may be a big name in his own right some day. Wouldn't it be better to publish the early stuff by a future great, than the castoffs of a dead questionable?

NOT THE WIND

The wind, or something like the wind,
Pushed strongly on the door that night;
She crossed herself and wondered had she sinned,
Saw in the mirror, face too white,
Turned high the lamp and waited ...
The wind -- for lack of other name
She called it that -- abated.
Perceived absurdity of fear, knew shame,
Till door and light flared outward into darkness,
And something not the wind came rushing in ...
Black terror froze in awful starkness,
The small lost cry too sharp and thin.

-- Genevieve K. Stephens.

"this you must believe"

ONE NIGHT recently I acted as baby sitter for a friend's children and, as the kids were in bed and asleep during the whole evening, I was left with considerable time on my hands. After reading all I could endure of an old Reader's Digest, I was forced to the ultimate antidote for a dull evening: reading the Bible.

Their Bible was a particular version I had never seen before. I copied down the bibliographical data which I record here: "The Holy Bible, with a preface by Rev. William H. McClellan, S. J., with notes by Bishop Challoner; the Douay Bible House, New York, 1941."

According to the Rev. McClellan's preface, which on the whole was quite interesting and informative, the value of this edition of "the Vulgate" lies in Bishop Challoner's footnotes, which were "designed to clarify texts which may be somewhat obscure, or to explain those which have often been misinterpreted by religious prejudice."

I did not read this statement till later, though as printed here it seems a fair statement of a laudable purpose, for whatever reading I have done in the Bible has seemed to require footnotes of the type mentioned, which unfortunately are never to be found. In any case, it is probable that the preface would not have prepared me for the great shock I received upon idly turning to my favorite section of the Bible -- the Song of Songs, the Song of Solomon, or (as it is known in this version) the Canticle of Canticles.

Upon opening the book to the place I was surprised to learn that this Biblical section, which Ernest Sutherland Bates labeled "A Fragmentary Wedding Idyll," actually relates to "the happy union of Christ and his Spouse." This is according to an italicized blurb that precedes the text. The chapter headings were even more surprising to me, and to a pious Christian ~~thou~~bing this version of the holy scriptures for the first time I imagine it would be an even greater surprise to learn that the chapters relate to the following subjects: Chapter one: "The Spouse aspires to an union with Christ. Their mutual love for one another." Chapter two: "Christ caresses his Spouse. He invites her to him." Chapter three: "The Spouse seeks Christ. The glory of his humanity." Chapter four: "Christ sets forth the graces of his Spouse. He declares his love for her." And so on.

It was somewhat of a relief to discover eventually that the Church is the spouse of Christ. This is revealed in Bishop Challoner's heralded footnotes. These helpful explanations are so remarkable that I am reproducing several below, together with the passages to which they refer:

"Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth, for thy breasts are better than wine."

I:1

"In my bed by night I sought him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, and found him not."

III:1

"Thy two breasts like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies...."

IV:5

"The church, the spouse of Christ, prays that he may love and have peace with her, which the spouse prefers to every thing howsoever delicious."

"The Gentiles as in the dark, and seeking in heathen delusion what they could not find, the true God, until Christ revealed his doctrine to them by his watchmen, that is, by the apostles, and teachers, by whom they were converted to the true faith...."

"Mystically to be understood: the love of God, and the love of our neighbours, which are so united as twins which feed among the lilies: that is, the love of God and our neighbours, feeds on the divine mysteries and the holy sacraments, left by Christ to his spouse to feed and nourish her children...."

Occasionally Bishop Challoner's mystic understanding betrayed him and some of the choicer passages are delightfully undefiled by allegorical footnotes. The bishop was unable to concoct any explanation for:

"His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me."

"How beautiful are thy breasts, my sister, my spouse! thy breasts are more beautiful than wine, and the sweet smell of thy ointments above all aromatical spices."

"Thy navel is like a round bowl never wanting cups. Thy belly is like a heap of wheat, set about with lilies."

"Thy lips are as a scarlet lace; and thy speech sweet. Thy cheeks are as a piece of pomegranate, besides that which lieth hid within..."

It is not my purpose to belittle the Catholic religion, the Bible, or even Bishop Challoner, and I don't wish it thought that I am making fun of any of these subjects merely for my own amusement. However, it does seem to me that attaching allegorical meanings to such lines which manifestly need no explanation at all is a dangerous tendency. It is a particularly nauseous remnant of the old belief that sex is evil, and I believe mankind will be a step nearer utopia when all such prudish balderdash has been eradicated.

I wonder what Bishop Challoner could do with a copy of Forever Amber?

SKY HOOK BOOK NOOK

THE BREAKING OF THE SEALS, by Francis Ashton. London: Dakers, 1946.

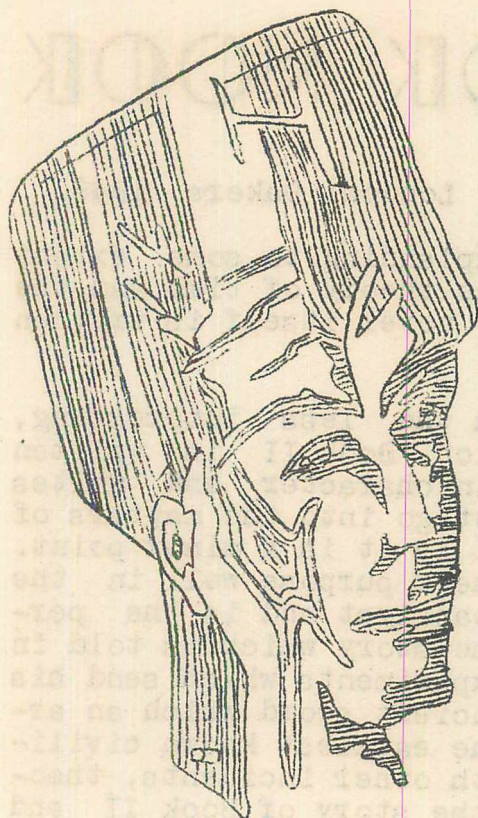
This book has a preface by the author, explaining to some extent his ideas and sources of inspiration behind the theory of time and the fourth dimensional couple with the mind. The novel itself is written in two parts, or Books.

Book I is the smaller of the two and much the less interesting, but it builds up the basic plot threads on which Book II is written and is easily read. Harry Melville is the main character and writes the whole Book in the first person. I will not go into the matters of characterization and list the main characters, as it is a minor point. Suffice it to say that the characters serve their purpose well in the first book. Dr. Kurdt is an unorthodox psychoanalyst and is the person who plays the biggest part in preparing the story which is told in Book II. He persuades Melville to submit to experiments which send his consciousness into the past, upon seeing an ancient sword which an archaeologist has found and claims to antedate the earliest known civilization of Man. Melville's dreams, coupled with other incidents, theories and happenings tie in to give basis for the story of Book II and all fit together perfectly, with none of the loose strings some reviewers glee to find in books.

With no more ado, let's look at Book II. This tale is written by Melville after he has undergone the experiment and his mind has returned to the present. It is the story of the Man Maht and of his rise to power and glory and his defeat and downfall in a civilization of 250,000 years ago. It is the story of the city of Mahbahst which cowers under the god Bahste, who hurtles through the sky thrice daily. And, finally, it is the story of a world twisting in agony as a satellite of Earth, a companion of the Moon, spirals down and falls to earth in great deluges of mud and rains of cosmic fragments, striking terror into the hearts of mankind and, in the final cataclysmic stages, sinking the continents and remaking the face of the earth.

The writing of Francis Ashton is even more striking than Taine's in The Greatest Adventure and The Iron Star, and in the facet of early races and civilizations, better than H. Rider Haggard's. Ashton weaves the cosmic catastrophe into the religion, superstitions and lives of the people, and makes a great saga of the life story of Maht and his Princess Runille. I can't begin to tell of the marches of death through stricken lands after the battle for Mahbahst, nor of the final great hegira of Maht and Runille fleeing for their lives as the earth, under the assault of the crumbling moon, twists and changes, sinks and rises with rivers of fire and mountains of water that break on mountain ranges as if they were sand. All I can say is, get this book and read it, if you want a novel you can't put down until it is finished. The Breaking of the Seals is tops.

IN MY MIND'S EYE



G. Jewett

I HAVE NOT studied enough psychology to write a scientific article about this matter. The only psychology text in my bookcase is Munn's Psychology: The Fundamentals of Human Adjustment, except for Hart's The Psychology of Insanity, which I have been afraid to investigate too closely. Sigmund Freud perhaps devotes a whole chapter to the phenomenon which I am about to describe. Terman probably presents vast data on the subject in one of his texts on the "ability to think in abstract terms". Dozens of other important writers from Ebbinghaus to James Blish may have treated this subject eruditely and exhaustively.

But I have read nothing that touches closely upon the subject discussed in this article, and I therefore wish to present this, not as a serious auto-analysis with solid background, but as a somewhat whimsical excursion into a subject that I find interesting. However, if anyone can enlighten me on whatever

psychological principles are involved, I would like to hear about it. That is, if it isn't something frighteningly Freudian....

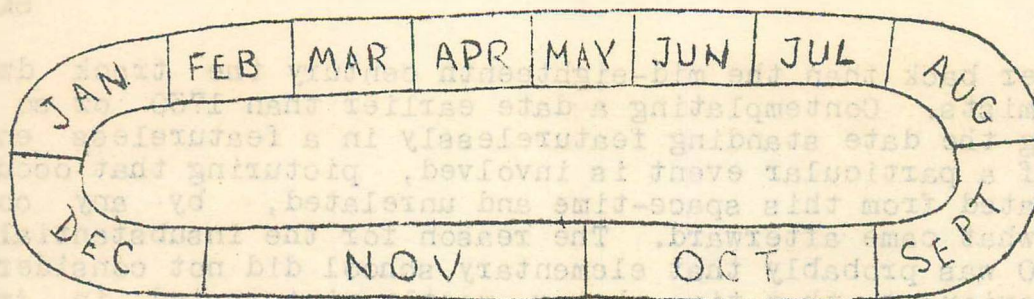
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What does a year look like?

What do the past 150 years look like?

I wonder how many others of you have, like myself, pictured a year in your mind, or formed a mental image of American history snaking away from today into the misty past? For as long as I can remember, probably for as long as I have had any conception of time, I have pictured such abstract terms as a "year" in my mind. It was nevertheless an almost subconscious process, this building up of the picture and the use of it whenever necessary, and only in the past few years did I become fully aware of it: this mental representation that is grooved in my cerebral gallery deeper than that of my "ideal woman".

Figure #1 represents a "year" -- or, at least, the track upon which I imagine all of us travel round and round, month by month, and season by season, as the year advances. It is not supposed to diagram in any obvious way the orbit of the earth around the sun, though this astronomical fact may have influenced the conjuring up of this particular image in the first place. But essentially the sketch represents,

FIGURE
#1

as exactly as possible, what I think a year might look like, if such a term could be reduced to substance.

Putting on paper the exact image I hold in my mind is, of course, exasperatingly impossible. The mental picture is too nebulous and too protean to portray in precise manner. For example, the lengths of the months, as shown here, are not accurate. Months are not separated in so arbitrary a manner in my inner picture; October and November do not seem any lengthier, when viewing that image, than are June and July, but it is necessary to show them here in this manner in order to keep the entire ellipse recognizable and familiar.

Furthermore, in my mind's eye I see this track from a different and changing aspect, depending upon what time of year it is. At this moment (in December) I see the ellipse as if it was a track, and I was sitting in a toy train clicking along it and just about to enter the December-January turn. The turn of the year looms very close, and the new year seems to curve away from me to the right, growing more and more nebulous as I look into the future -- the spring, the summer. Behind, 1949 stretches more tangibly.

The concept of a year "turning" at the end of December was obviously influenced by the calendar, but subtler reasons must be behind the corresponding turn in September. Perhaps the curve there was the result of summer's end and autumn's beginning in that month, or maybe -- if the picture was formed when I was that age -- it resulted from the fact that school always began in September.

Figure #2 shows my mental visualization of the past as a whole, at least for as much of it as it is feasible to show here. I picture the years stringing back in this fashion whenever I trace back history or try to put an occurrence in its proper place in the past. Whenever I think of the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk, for example, I visualize the part of the diagram just at the curve of the years. The establishment of Amazing Stories stands at the bottom of the next dip.

Ordinarily this picture is viewed mentally as if the figure, as shown, was inverted, though a prolonged study of a history book or an historical novel will cause my mind to shoot back along the track till for a while I see the picture from the aspect of 1860 or whatever period I was examining. From 1949, too, the backward span is seen as from the top of an incline, with the years flowing downgrade as far as 1926 -- with a particularly steep dip coming circa 1930 -- and then curving left as if around the base of a hill.

Farther back than the mid-eighteenth century the track dwindles away into mists. Contemplating a date earlier than 1730 or so means visualizing the date standing featurelessly in a featureless environment, or if a particular event is involved, picturing that occurrence as if isolated from this space-time and unrelated, by any concrete means, to what came afterward. The reason for the insubstantial image of pre-1700 was probably that elementary school did not consider much history previous to that time, being mostly interested in American history. Corroborating this is the fact that 1800-1860 is not too clear on this track, but that the track is sharper and firmer after 1860. Grade school history books usually cover the Civil War and after much more thoroughly than any other period since the Revolution.

I think it is significant that 1926, 1860, and 1776, are all at the bottom of a curve. The influence of the figures on a clock's face, with the 6 at the bottom, is very strong.

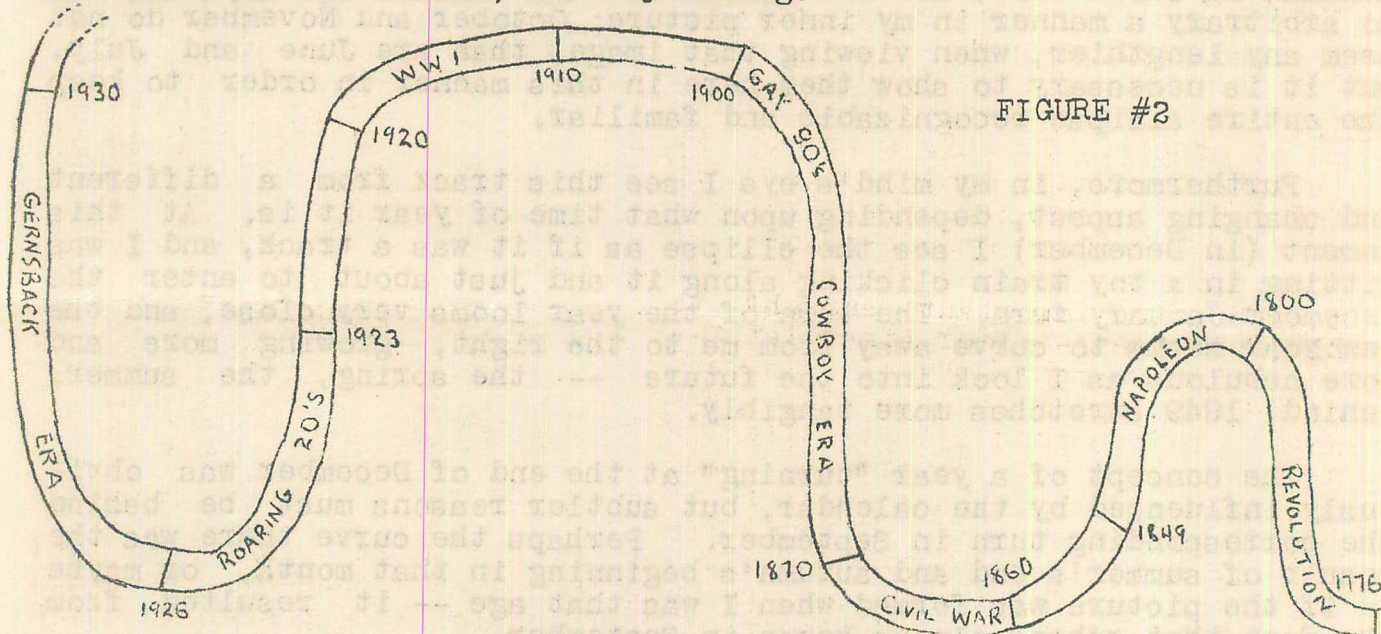


FIGURE #2

Although the track continues vaguely in my mind to the present date, it becomes so nebulous after about 1936 that it would be impossible to picture it even surrealistically on paper. The years since 1936, and the important dates of the era, are considered in their relation to my life and the events thereof. If the occurrence was one in my personal life, it is easy to recollect the details and remember where, in the ribbon of years, it took place. If the event was one of "public history", I can mentally put the date in its proper place in time by remembering where I was and what I was doing just then. I need not, for example, put Pearl Harbor onto a mental graph, for I can remember that on that day I was living in this same house and was listening to the Sunday symphony broadcast when the news came.

I think my visualizations of the year and of the past, as illustrated here, were basically attempts to orient myself in time, by establishing a relationship between myself and history, when I was too young to do this in any way other than that described here.

NON-FAPANS! If there is an "X" here _____, your subscription has expired. An "X" here _____ indicates this is a complimentary copy.

Eye To The Past

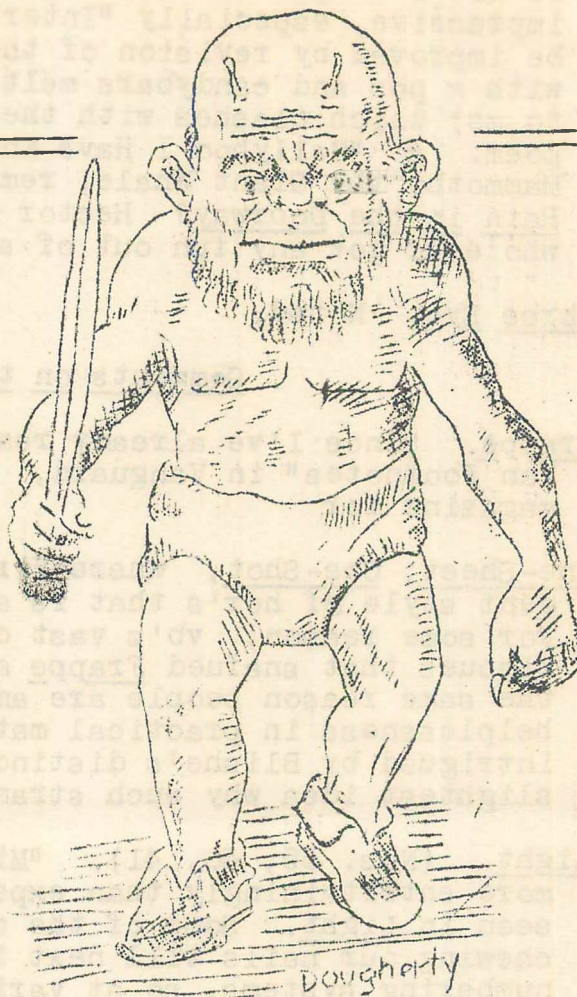
Postmailings of the 47th mailing:

Ysatnaf. (issue #3). How would a psychologist analyze a person who misspells it "microkomos" and later says, "Just noticed we left out one of the O's in microkosmos...."?

Matrixlet. I've no notes on this single-sheet junior edition of Matrix, so I'll go on to

Orky. the single-sheet junior edition of Oracle. Is this a trend? It is rather strange to find Burt pumping for "conscientious criticism" in FAPA, but by someone else other than himself because "F A P A has ceased to be important enough" to him, and then -- four lines later-- admitting he sent Orky out instead of destroying it because "it just might produce some slight effect." If FAPA is not important, what difference does it make whether it has an effect or not? I trust the undecided Mr Stevenson eventually will settle on the opinion that FAPA at least deserves something more than interminable discussion of its worthlessness and remain of that opinion long enough to turn out some articles on another subject.

Green Thoughts. That's a persuasive argument against mailing reviews in the Tiger by the Tail department, especially after comparing "Eye to the Past" with that review of Mr Splopinkheim's Glockingspink to find EttP almost that bad. However, I think Joe is wrong when he thinks it advisable that FAPA editors should consider posterity when publishing their fapazines. In the first place, it's hard to decide what the fan of 1959 would be interested in; sure as sin an item you think he might like will be as passe as the Pro-Scientist movement in ten years, and an item you tossed out as not of long-term interest would have tickled Joe Fann/1959/ all to shreds. This problem isn't unsolvable, of course, but a much simpler solution is simply to ignore the fans of 1959, publish what you're interested in today, reporting it as interestingly as you know how. Chances are, you'll concoct as enjoyable a fanzine for 1959 in this manner as you will by deliberately trying to please those readers of ten years from now. "Who gives a damn about year-old FAPA reviews?" wonders Alpaugh. I, for one, enjoy FAPA reviews that're far older than one year, whether



or not I've got the mailing reviewed. # "Three Poems" were quite impressive, especially "Interlude". However, I think that poem would be improved by revision of the fourth stanza, where blimps fracture with a pop and candybars melt to slop -- a funny situation (at least to me) which clashes with the exalted detachment of the rest of the poem. # "Ballyhoo I Have Known" was wonderful stuff. Speaking of Mammoth the Giant Whale, remember Minnie, the preserved whale, in Rain in the Doorway? Hector Owen & Co. are probably the only people who ever got any fun out of such a sad corpse.

Three Eye. Noted.

Comments on the 48th FAPA mailing

Frappe. Since I've already read and enjoyed Norman L. Knight's "Fortean Footnotes" in Vanguard, I'd gladly trade this 8-page legalength magazine for

One-Sheet, One-Shot, where Virginia Blish shows flashes of that pungent style of her's that is at least one-third of the show in VAPA. For some reason, vb's vast confusion about little things like those miscues that snafued Frappe always fascinates me. Probably it's for the same reason people are amused at stories of Einstein's legendary helplessness in practical matters. # In re Frappe, I'm becoming intrigued by Blishe's distinctive artwork on stencil. I've not the slightest idea why such strange sketches should appeal to me.

Light. (Nos. 39, 40, 41). "Mimeo Ink in My Veins" starts out much more entertainingly than expected; it's about the best thing I've seen in Light. Some of the corny stuff which is supposed to keep us chewing our nails till next issue comes out -- "Where did the two numbering systems, so at variance, come in?" -- and some of the extraneous material about what happened to some obscure Light contributors wasn't interesting to me, but the reminiscences about the genesis of Light itself were uniformly worthwhile and good.

Stellar Bullseye. "Thus is Time" was amusing. # "Portrait of a Young Man With A Vision" sounds representative of the period of 1937 and earlier -- idealistic and written in royal purple. # I wish you had reprinted the Farsaci article about Thrill Bock. I recall with a good deal of nostalgia Littorio's "A Collector Speaks" and "The Golden Dawn", both of which appeared about the time I entered fandom. Larry was no great shakes as a poet, but when he wrote about collecting, he was among the best of article-writers. # So "Stibbard -- guh -- I bet!" meant that you didn't like Burbee's article on Stibbard the Gay? This is harder to fathom than your cryptic remark was!

ATOTE. "The Shed" was much better than earlier salvaged rejects from the Evans' files were. I started it in the middle, mostly to discover whether that blank page caused a break in the continuity of the yarn, and found myself interested enough to go back and read it from the beginning.

"Attention Fans..." Noted.

Leer. Though neatly produced and promising good things this issue was rather dull altogether. Bill James' little fable seemed to me to be the best of the material.

Fan-Dango. "Severing All Links" was an article that needed to be written. Some of us -- and I include myself for using such semantic gimmicks as the one which appears on the ifc of each SkHk -- are far too sold on General Semantics without knowing much about it to deserve much else but castigation. However, I hope everyone will mark Towner's statement that many of General Semantics' "catch phrases" are "valid and intelligent tools in the hands of someone who knows what he is talking about" -- and not dismiss General Semantics as a mere crackpot scheme just because Laney has debunked it. Any system that seems to provide "valid and intelligent tools" for thinking deserves thorough investigation before it is rejected. # Best laugh in the whole mailing was where Towner answered Al Ashley's solemn pronouncement, "The map is not the territory", with "Hey, have you been reading the Oz books again?" # Nuttall continues to be one of my favorite article-writers. Nobody in FAPA writes with as fresh and original a slant as she does automatically, and if she could manage to subdue her bubbling, rushing exuberance and enthusiasm just a wee bit, I think her style would improve. Even as it is, she's among the five top stylists in the organization, according to my calculations. # The Fan-Dango Awards are something possibly deserved by many a member, but I trust they will henceforth be given for more reason than the second and third certificates were awarded this time. Woodman doubtless deserved an award for his all-around fuggheadedness, though I think his statement about calling the flying saucers "flying typewriter spools" because "I am more intelligent than the reporters who dubbed them saucers" and others of that type were meant entirely in irony. But I don't see that Sam or Don Wilson qualified for awards. # I stick to my guns, Towner, in re aSF outdoing Argosy, Collier's, etc., in the matter of its contents achieving book publication. Argosy and most of the slicks have had many of their serials appear in book form, of course, but every serial in aSF from 1939 to 1946 or so, with the lone exception of Raymond F. Jones' "Renaissance", is in book form or is on the schedule of some book publisher. And there is at least one issue of aSF of which all the fiction is in book form. You may be right -- in which case I can justifiably plead that my original remark was merely a punchline conceived at deadline time -- but I still doubt it. # "A Tragedy of Fandom": When the day comes that a Burbee item somehow misses fire with me I'll devote considerable space to comment thereon. But a fable like this one I enjoy so thoroughly that no comment is necessary.

Mindwarp. A very promising newcomer to the mailings, though this time I had read "Torcon Daze" -- which formed the bulk of the issue -- in its earlier appearance. The mailing comments were particularly good and I hope Art will enlarge this department. # In re "Cincy in the Crystal", I strolled past the Netherlands-Plaza when I was in Cincinnati but I didn't think of Bond's stf tale: I remembered instead about a Negro chambermaid there who had recently received a large bequest from a millionaire who had willed her the money just because she was a "hard-working woman". # Did Gernsback say interplanetary travel is impossible? I hadn't heard that before.

Phanteur. From the excerpt from Al Laney's letter it would seem that Al might be more interesting in serious mood than in the guise of "Si N. Tific".

Hazing Stories. The thoroughly irresponsible air of this publication was one of the things about it I liked best. Outside of Wild Hair and other Insurgent mags there are too few wacky zines extant whereas circa 1941 the whimsical fanzine was an institution. # Of the individual items I liked Briggs' "convention" panel on the contents page, and Derry's "A Fie on You, Mister Pavlat", and of course the editorial, "Thru the Haze". Nearly everything was amusing. I'd like to see future issues if they managed to be as frenetically un-stereotyped as this issue was, due to its peculiar genesis. # This mag was fetchingly illustrated, but I doubt if it is one of the most illustrated mimeozines in history. I'll wager Pluto and diablerie, for two, allotted more space per issue to pix than Hazing Stories did. Also the later issues of Eclipse -- and how about the Gilbert-Jenkins fanzine called Fanart?

Catalyst. The multilith process may have other advantages, but in appearance it is inferior to "commercially - produced mimeographing", which it is no more expensive than. At least the fanzines I have seen published by this process have been generally pretty smudgy and blurry. # Just who is James Courzen? I've seen some textbooks he must have written, but he can't be a practicing writer with such a prose style? Leaving his polysyllabic dissertation with the second paragraph I went on to the letter from South Africa written by Mrs Marjorie Russouw. This was a humorous and touching account of a life I'd like to know more about. I especially liked the description of the bathroom where it takes four hours to fill the tub; and the visits of the thirsty farmers; and the birthday party. Fine stuff!

Esdacyos. Though a lot of the material in it was badly outdated, this issue of "EdCo Says" was very promising. All Ed needs to be a top fan is a bit more experience in the field -- to pick up knowledge of such things as even-edging and slipsheeting -- and a little more fan fame so that people won't confuse him with Paul D. Cox of Columbus, Ga. # "From Out of the Mouths of Fans" reminds me of Joe Gilbert's old feature, "Bright Sayings by Children", but it illustrates how fragile a commodity correspondence-humor is -- taking it out of context ruins it utterly. # Dave Thomas' review of Without Sorcery is good on the whole, though I feel he is too enthusiastic about several selections. In particular, I don't consider "Poker Face" remotely "memorable" or "Memorial" especially "effective". And what's so fine about the tagline of "Microcosmic God"? I've always thought "When I think of that, I feel frightened" was the weakest point of the whole story. "Feel frightened" isn't a very forceful remark. # In answer to "Not Exactly A Poll" I'd say Astounding's best years were 1939-42, with 1934-36 a close second. The best serials from the mag? Well, how about "Gray Lensman", "Beyond This Horizon", "Renaissance", "Cosmic



THIRSTS

Engineers", "Methuselah's Children", "Judgment Night" and "Slan"? The way "...And Now You Don't" begins, it may well rate up there, too. # Obliterine colors other than purple and red? I've got some that's yellow -- A.B. Dick brand intended, I presume, to match their yellow Cello type stencils, though I'm using it on these blue ones.

Micron. Tsk, Jack.

Horizons. Do you really mean it, Harry -- that you can't find a sexual motivation in a dream about "wells"? # I agree with you in the opinion that fan activity is no worse for a person than regular nightclubbing or following the ponies, but Laney's point seems to be that the latter are better because they are social, while fandom is mostly a solitary amusement. # The rest of this typically good issue of Horizons is beyond comment, though I enjoyed it all and was enlightened any number of times. Other fapazines are more controversial and some are of more direct interest to me, but I think I learn more from a copy of Horizons than from any other fan mag.

Moonshine. I don't see much use of having gizomometer ratings if you don't say which magazine rated what. # Thanks for the interesting reply to the Poll I Didn't Take and the one Towner didn't take. If I had more time and energy I'd compile a report on the answers I've received. A proposed Poll I Did Take unfortunately fizzled. # Maybe the reason California doesn't figure in stf stories is that the San Andreas fault slipped in 1953. I trust stf locales never center in California as persistently as detective story settings do. Gawd, do I tire of the same old L. A. locale for all these Hammettales and other mysteryarns. # The info about the hobby show was intriguing enough so that I wish Stan had written it up in greater detail.

Fantasy Amateur. I note I fouled up Dale C. Donaldson's name on the waiting list -- called him "Richardson", probably confusing him with D. C. Richardson of the Cincy group. Sorry.

Postmailings

Three Eye. (#4). Noted.

Burblings. Gee, I'm right up there with Al Ashley now, with my name in the title of a Laney article! The article itself would be hard to beat for bladed satire, but it seems in poor taste to write thus of a guy's marriage. Still, it was a very lovely bit of writing.... # I wouldn't say the anecdote in "The Race of Fugghead is Legion" didn't happen, but compare it with the anecdote on p. 70 of Try and Stop Me (paperback edition). # The rest of the magazine was good, being all Burbee. I trust Burbee will reconsider and issue many dozens of Burblings yet.

Hypothesis. Here is a magazine I'd like to see become a regular feature of the mailings. "To Stoke the Fires" is the best single mailing review since Speer quit reviewing. It examines the bundle on a considerably higher plane than did the review of Splopinkheim's Glock-inspink. Fine stuff throughout. # Who goes to burlesque shows? I went in Cincy with a bunch of fans gathered by Ben Singer.... Unfortunately we went to the midnight show, but arrived in time to catch

parts of the acts in an earlier show. The agony of listening to burlesque gags gosseynly dying twice is one unequalled by the tortures of Shey. When going to the burlesque listen to nothing! # The "Eric Russell" who is in VAPA is the author. # Burbee's article on the movies was excellent, though most of it has been said before often enough. "Fort Apache" struck me as good mostly because of the scenes showing cavalry recruits mounting for the first time. That sequence was as good a picture of "G.I.-life-of-the-past" as I have ever seen on film. # The FAPA Index was a worthy project but not of much use stapled in with Hypothesis. Furthermore, the format was confusing. The spaced lettering (i.e., "n e o") was the source of part of it, and the lack of capitals was another. Where is the rest of this index -- the author analysis list you mention, for instance? # This takes care of the "postmailed-with-the-bundle" items and now for the true postmailings, as space will allow....

Ysatnaf. In re Jim Harmon's yarn, which wasn't badly written, I wonder why this particular incident was chosen as the "breaking point"? We will grant that Homer might get fed up some day, but why this day of all days? I'm not convinced that Elsie's saying she was cold would have been the Last Straw. Do I detect the Keller influence in this story? The "fantasy" element at the last was poorly slapped in there. # That thumbnail review of Voltaire's "Candide" failed to mention whether this "great literary work" is a novel, a short story, a narrative poem, or -- could it be? -- a play.

Sparx. Spelman gave me my copy of this at the Cinvention -- in fact, he gave me two, one being my (ahem) contributor's copy. The Asimov section was what made this fanzine worthwhile. Verily, too little has been said about I, Asimov. # I wonder which are the five yarns Campbell rejected that Asimov managed to sell elsewhere? I wouldn't blame Campbell for rejecting something like "The Callistan Menace" or "Half-Breed". Those are very lousily written. In fact, most of Asimov's non-ASF stories up to "The Secret Sense" were. By the way, I recommend "Superneutron" for an anthology -- or has it been outdated by recent scientific data? # Dave Thomas' analysis of the Asimov output to date is well written and intelligent, but I think he missed one thing that distinguishes Asimov tales from most other stories, at least in the pulps: Asimov tells his stories by means of dialog -- usually the quiet conversations of the characters involved as they sit in their own homes. Nearly all the action in an Asimov story is seen in retrospect and not described as it happens.

Proclamation! The joke must be on me: I can't see the humor in this.

Counterproclamation. This summed up my ideas on the matter, more or less, but was not expressed quite like I would have done it.

Chronicler. Have you forgotten the Miniature Mailing of 1948 so soon? It contained at least one example of the phencma~~pon~~ of two fanzines on one sheet of paper: Asp and Half-Asp.

Sky Hook. Mentioned for the record. Three Eye. (#5). Noted.

(Sketlios and Cygni will be reviewed next issue.)

CHRONOSCOPE

WINTER 1948-1949

