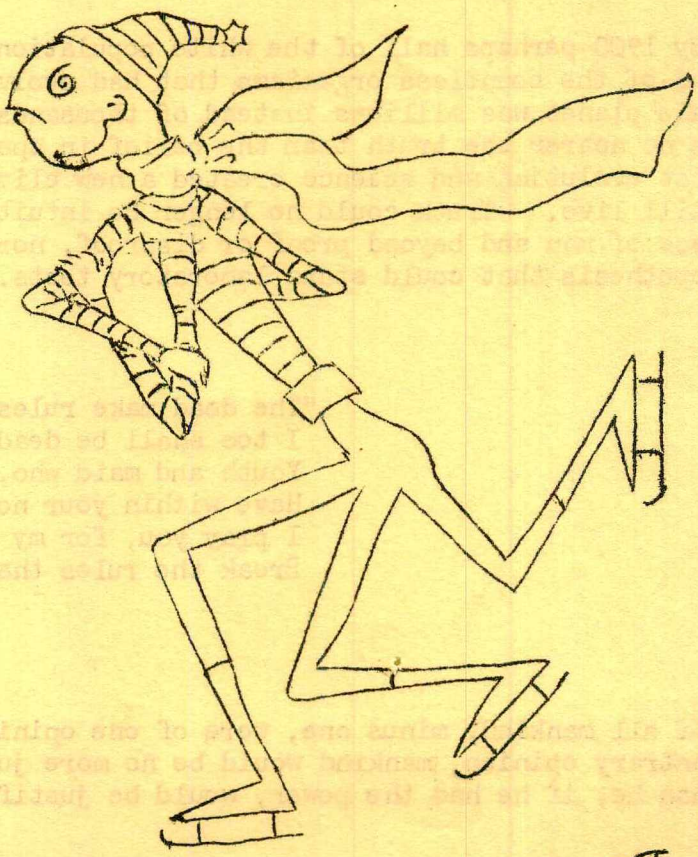
SKY HOOK

WINTER 1951-2

NUMBER 12



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". . . . ."

"Winter is icummen in,
Lhude sing Goddamm,
Raineth drop and staineth slop,
And how the wind doth ramm!
Sing: Goddamm.
Skiddeth bus and sloppeth us,
An ague hath my ham.
Freezeth river, turneth liver,
Damn you, sing: Goddamm.
Goddamm, Goddamm, 'tis why I am, Goddamm,
So 'gainst the winter's balm.
Sing goddamm, damm, sing Goddamm,
Sing goddamm, sing goddamm, DAMM.

-- Ezra Pound,
"Ancient Music."

"By 1900 perhaps half of the white population held the belief that man was merely one of the countless organisms that had evolved from the primordial slime, and that this planet was millions instead of thousands of years old. Possibly this belief is no nearer the truth than the belief in special creation; the important thing is that evolution and science created a new climate of opinion, and one in which we still live. Truth could no longer be intuitive, plucked from the inner consciousness of man and beyond proof or disproof, nor yet what God revealed to man; but a hypothesis that could stand laboratory tests."

-- Morison and Commager,
Growth of the American Republic.

"The dead make rules, and I obey.
I too shall be dead some day.
Youth and maid who, past my death,
Have within your nostrils breath,
I pray you, for my own pain's sake,
Break the rules that I shall make."

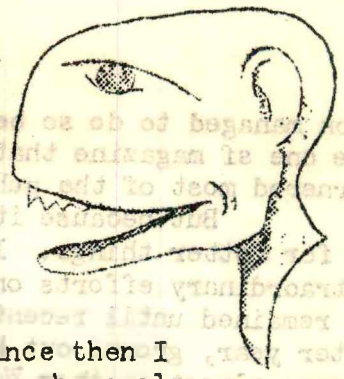
-- Mary Carolyn Davies,
"The Dead Make Rules."

"If all mankind, minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."

-- John Stuart Mill.

I love each and every woman but I hate women.

TWIPPLE



TALKING TO MYSELF

Four years ago, in February 1948, I published the first issue of Sky Hook. For almost a year previously I had co-edited with Bob Stein the biweekly newsie Tympani, and since then I have published a goodly number of titles, including several ephemeral subscription fanzines, but Sky Hook became my favorite brainchild as soon as it was born. It remains my pet, and — though my outlook, especially on things fannish, has changed in four years -- I'm still just as interested in fapublishing as I ever was. Therefore, I see no reason to doubt that Sky Hook will see other birthdays beyond this fourth one.

Next issue Sky Hook will undergo a minor remodeling job. During its four years SkHk's format has remained basically the same, but in volume IV, number 1, a change will take place. The "....." department will for the first time be found elsewhere in the magazine than on the ifc. Next issue will, indeed, find the ifc completely bare of print.

This format change is designed to display the cover picture in all its glory, unmarred by the bleed-through of pigment and oil from the ifc quotes. Henry Chabot's cover (and all but two covers in the past) suffered from this handicap, but in the future the cover illustration will have the covering-sheet all to itself.

By the way, I need covers for future issues -- though the next cover is tentatively set. If you're interested in drawing a SkHk cover, drop me a line and I'll tell you what I want. I'll state one of the requirements right here: the season of the year for which the issue is dated must be inferrable from the illustration alone. Preferably there should be a science fictional or fantasy element in the picture too, but this isn't absolutely necessary.

NEGLECTED CUSTOM

Speaking of the "....." department, I quoted part of a Carl Sandburg poem in Sky Hook #1 as sort of a masthead motto, and I fully intended to reprint it each year in the SkHk ann-ish as a reaffirmation of that motto (or as close to a motto as Sky Hook ever will have). But I always forgot or somehow neglected to follow my original resolve, so here for the first time since issue number one are those lines from Carl Sandburg's "The People Will Live On":

In the darkness with a great bundle of grief
the people march.
In the night, and overhead a shovel of stars
for keeps, the people march:
'Where to? what next?'

SCREEN AFTER SCREEN GOES DOWN

Galaxy's founding may prove to be the best thing that ever happened to Astounding Science Fiction. Six years ago aSF paradoxically was possessed of the highest reputation any science fiction magazine had ever achieved and, at the same time, was sinking to the very nadir of its career under Campbell. The war was to blame more than Campbell in both cases: it had increased public interest in science fiction; and it had taken most of Campbell's great writers away from their typewriters. At war's end it was just a case of aSF's living up to its reputation, and it

soon managed to do so because it was already the acknowledged leader in the field -- the one sf magazine that had a glorious past and was therefore the publication that garnered most of the publicity. All writers were naturally anxious to sell to it.

But because it was the towering giant of sf, aSF had no incentive to reach up for better things. It was selling well and receiving fine material without any extraordinary efforts on the part of the editor. Therefore, it became the magazine it remained until recently: the dependable publication that, month after month, year after year, ground out bales of fine stories but never did anything spectacular. It became almost another Weird Tales. You bought the magazine knowing that there was a story or two in it that would interest you, but you never riffled the pages excitedly, wondering, "What's the Campbell laddie up to this month?"

Then Galaxy burst onto the scene -- a flashy and impressive newcomer that had the audacity to challenge Astounding as it had never been challenged since 1934. GSF moved right into Campbell's field and cracked his monopoly wide open. And so science fiction's own cold war began.

Now a hot war seems to have broken out. The allegation in some fanzine or other that there is a personal feud between Campbell and Gold dating back to 1937, and the squabble over aSF's "theft" of the Galaxy cover format indicate that from now on the competition is in dead earnest.

The cover controversy is amusing. The Galaxy cover isn't new. Comet used a very similar format back in 1940-1; moreover, the 1952 Wonder Story Annual flaunts the same sort of cover. But the fact that Campbell took it over without apologies is a good sign. It shows that even if he's lost his originality he still has a good editorial eye. It shows, too, that he realizes that everything is fair in love and war. Gold, I note, is still talking about sportsmanship.

The fiercer the competition becomes, the better I'll enjoy it. I'd like to see Campbell deflate Gold a little by pointing out that Galaxy was a dead steal from aSF in many respects to begin with. Galaxy, I think, is a little cocky. But most of all I want to see Gold keep the pressure on Campbell till aSF is forced entirely from its old rut and decides to show Galaxy what a really great sf magazine is like. Then, maybe, we'll see aSF return to the golden age -- thanks to Gold!

WHAT HISTORY D'YA READ?

Thomas B. Costain, who wrote such popular historical novels as The Moneyman and Ride With Me, is the author of a new non-fiction series called "The Pageant of England" in which he makes history "read like a novel." The two titles published so far, The Conquerors and The Magnificent Century, cover English history up to the death of Henry III in 1272. Though these books no doubt panegyrize the whole "pageant" as the struggle of the Common Man against the divine right of kings, I think writing history for the layman is a basically good idea. However, I'm not sure whether I want to read Costain's history. I'm afraid it must be pretty inaccurate.

In the introduction to his novel The Black Rose Costain eulogizes Edward I as "the greatest of English kings" -- an estimate with which I won't quarrel -- although he admits that Edward's "determination to conquer Scotland cast a shadow on his memory (he was the 'Proud Edward' of 'Scots, Wha' Hae')." I'm not a Trevelyan, but I think that parenthetical remark is thoroughly wrong. Edward I fought Scotland (what old English king didn't?), conquered it in 1296, and crushed fresh resistance in 1305 by capturing and executing William Wallace. But "Scots, Wha' Hae" concerns the battle of Bannockburn in June 1314 in which Robert Bruce and his pikemen defeated the English cavalry. The English king and leader in 1314 was not Edward I, who had died seven years before, but his son, Edward II.

On second thought, maybe I will read the third volume of "The Pageant of England" when it comes out -- just to see when Bannockburn was fought on Costain's own particular time track. If the battle was fought under Edward I, it may be that

the English won. The first Edward was a greater general than the second. Maybe I have failed to see the full implications of that phrase about making history "read like a novel"!

CHANGING TIMES

For 20 years science fiction fans fought against the great American fallacy that because a work of art does not appeal to the mass mind -- isn't a poll winner, a best seller, a "great story from which a great movie was made" -- it is no good. The day has now arrived when we must fight against the intellectual snobbery that says that because a work of art does attract the masses it is no good.

"THE BREAKING WAVES DASHED HIGH -- "

It's a favorite pastime of grammar school teachers — and many high school teachers -- to require their students to memorize poetry. I never figured out exactly what "learning by heart" Longfellow's "Children's Hour" or Whittier's "Barefoot Boy" was supposed to accomplish -- apart from giving one something to quote as the title of a fine literary work like this article. I suspect the teachers merely believed that students would get into less mischief while memorizing Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man" than in scrawling certain other memorized verses on back fences.

At any rate, taking inventory I find a number of these learned-by-heart poems have remained with me, in whole or more often in part, in the years since I left high school. Portia's exalted mercy still droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven; Lord Byron's Marathon still looks at the sea; and Blake's tyger still burns bright in the forests of the night. I still pluck Tennyson's flower from the crannied wall, and with Browning wish I were in England when April's there. Of course many another memorized poem has gone glimmering away -- most of Wordsworth (who was my poetic ideal when I was ten) except "The Daffodils"; almost all except the line I utilized as a title above, from "Landing of the Pilgrims"; and everything but the ghostly remembrance of Alice (or Phoebe?) Cary's "October's Bright Blue Weather." I wonder how many poems I still know by heart from my school days? Fifty, a hundred, perhaps, though likely less, and certainly none longer than "Kubla Khan." Who was it knew "Paradise Lost" in its entirety?

Wrt poems, if any, do you know by heart? SaM, do you still know every move that portentous raven made? Anybody know "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" or "The Waste Land" by heart?

I GIVE UP, TONY!

For the first time in my life I've subscribed to a science fiction magazine. Always before I've been content to buy them from the newsstand. But for a number of months now I've been the recipient of occasional postalcards from the Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction offering a four- (or is it five- ?) issue subscription for one dollar. No doubt you have received them too. Naturally I disregarded them. I threw away two or three such cards, but one day early in the year, I opened my mailbox to find four such postals had come at the same time. This was too much. I sent them to F&SF with a dollar, remarking that since I was enclosing four cards the subscription really should cost but 25¢, and that if they were good sports they'd return the rest of that dollar. They aren't good sports, but they have sent the first issue on my subscription. I'm satisfied. F&SF is a pretty good magazine.

What the #%"&!! is the CCF?

LOST WORLD OF ATLANTIS

by PHIL RASCH

FEW WORDS in the English language have the power to invoke such clear-cut images as are connected with the name of Atlantis. We may not have the faintest conception of London, Paris, Berlin, or Rome, but every fantasy fan knows Atlantis was a marvelous stone city, inhabited by stalwart men and beautiful women. Behind it were mountains studded with active volcanoes; before it was a busy harbor, teeming with the argosies of a thriving commerce. Literally millions of words have been written on the subject, most of them devoted to a more or less acrimonious discussion as to whether Atlantis ever actually existed.

The argument began with the Timaeus and the Critias, two Socratic dialogs written by an estimable Greek gentleman named Aristokles, but better known to us by his nickname of "Broad Shoulders," that is, Plato. According to Plato, his ancestor Solon the Wise had visited Egypt about 600 B. C. The early Greeks had a pretty good opinion of themselves and we may assume that Solon was not deterred by any scruples of false modesty when telling the Egyptians of the glories of his country and its history. It must have been a terrible blow to his self-esteem when a priest of Sais bluntly replied,

> "O Solon, Solon, you Hellenes are never anything but children....I mean to say...that in mind you are all young; there is no old opinion handed down among you by ancient tradition, nor any science which is hoary with age... You do not know that there dwelt formerly in your land the fairest and noblest race of men which ever lived, and that you and your whole city are descended from a small seed or remnant of them which survived."

When the amazed Greek pressed him for further details, the priest explained that 9000 years previously

> "there was an island situated in front of the straits which are by you called the pillars of Heracles; the island was larger than Libya and Asia put together....Now in this island of Atlantis there was a great and wonderful empire which had rule over the whole island and several others, and over parts of the continent; and, furthermore, the men of Atlantis had subjected the parts of Libya within the columns of Heracles as far as Egypt, and of Europe as far as Tyrrhenia. This vast power, gathered into one, endeavored to subdue at a blow our country and yours and the whole of the region within the straits; and then, Solon, your country...defeated and triumphed over the invaders and preserved from slavery those who were not yet subjugated, and generously liberated all the rest of us who dwell within the pillars...But afterward there occurred violent earthquakes and floods, and in a single day and night of misfortune all your warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner disappeared in the depths of the sea."

The account given in these dialogs takes up several pages and goes into considerable detail concerning the history, appearance, and government of Atlantis. Something of the fascination the subject has held through the ages may be gathered from the fact that a bibliography of Atlantis compiled by Gattefosse and Roux in 1926 listed some 1700 items. Certainly scores of other books have appeared since then.

According to James Bramwell's admirable Lost Atlantis there are now eight main hypotheses of Atlantis:

1. It was in America. This theory was strengthened by the discovery of the great stone cities and advanced civilization of the Mayas and by the fact that the native name for Mexico was Aztlan. It received the support of such notables as Sir Francis Bacon and Alexander de Humboldt.

2. It was in North Africa. Berlioux believed he had located Atlantis at the foot of the Moroccan Atlas mountains. He held that the blond, blue-eyed natives sometimes found in that region were their descendants. In his Mysterious Sahara and In Search of Lost Worlds Count Byron Kuhn de Prorok claimed to have found traces of Atlantis in the Sahara. Borchardt and Hermann believed it to have been located in Tunisia. None of these theories have found favor with the professional archaelogists.

3. It was in Nigeria. Frobenius argued that King Solomon received his "gold, and silver, and elephants' teeth, and apes, and peacocks" (3 Kings 10:22) from Atlantis, i.e., Yorubaland, Nigeria, Africa. He believed the Hebrew word for "peacocks" is an erroneous reading for a very similar word meaning "Ethiopian slaves."

4. It was in Tartessos. Schulten and Hennig held it was situated at the mouth of the Guadalquivir river, near Cadiz, Spain, and was the biblical Tarshish. No traces of such a city have ever been found. Mrs Wishaw, a director of the Anglo-Spanish-American School of Archaelogy, was certain it lies beneath the city of Seville.

5. There were two Atlantises. Karst suggested there was an Atlantis in the Indo-Persian ocean between the southeast coast of Arabia, Madagascar, and Ceylon. From it came the Ibero-Ethiopian peoples when it disappeared at the beginning of the ice age. A second Atlantis stretched from Tunis and Morocco to include what are now the Cape Verde islands, the Canaries, and the Azores. It was attached to Italy by a Sicilian-Tunisian land bridge. Plato's story is a confused memory of these two Atlantises and of the floods which destroyed them.

6. It was between Ireland and Brittany. Dr F. Gidon maintained, primarily on botanical evidence, that during the bronze age the land between Ireland and Brittany sank, creating the English channel. The early Celts are identified as Atlanteans thus driven from their homeland.

7. It represents a memory of the flooding of the Mediterranean basin. The Mediterranean basin originally consisted of two great lakes, separated by a Sicilian land bridge. About 15,000 years ago the end of the last ice age raised the level of the Atlantic so that it burst through the Strait of Gibraltar and created what is now the Mediterranean sea. This is the only explanation of the story of Atlantis acceptable to most modern geologists.

(In passing, one general criticism may be leveled at most of the above theories. It seems rather illogical to accept Plato's descriptions of details of government, dress, etc., and then to insist that he must have been wrong about such a major point as the location of the land which he described.)

8. It was an island in the Atlantic ocean. This theory was first supported by Cadet in 1787. It is now so generally accepted that the previous seven theories are comparitively unimportant. We shall consider the evidence for it in some detail.

Here in America the cornerstone of belief for those holding this view is Atlantis: the Antediluvian World, first published in 1882. The author was one Ignatius Donnelly, a remarkable man who is far less generally known than he deserves to be. The vitality of his reasoning is shown by the fact that at the present time a new edition of his book is in preparation in England. Donnelly's arguments may be summarized as follows:

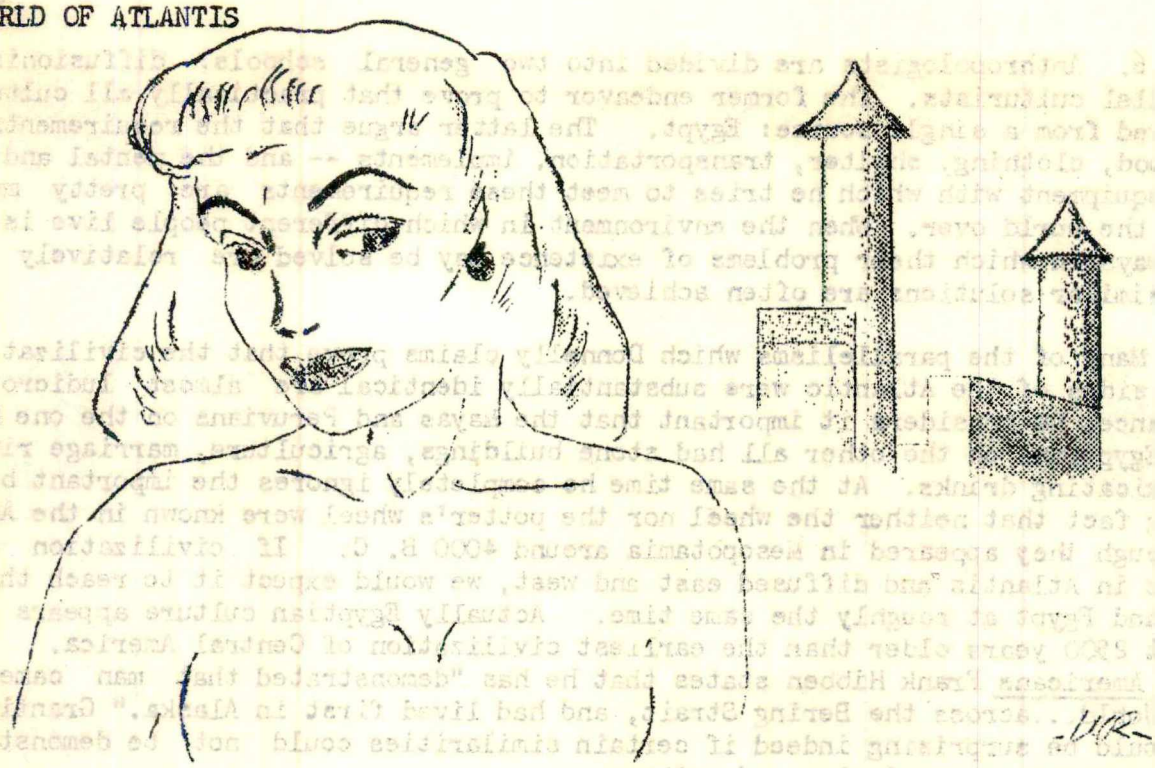
1. The story reported by Plato was a factual historical account, which is substantiated by the chronicles and myths of other peoples. 2. Geological evidence shows that vast masses of land once existed in the region where Atlantis was located by Plato, and therefore such an island must have existed. The Azores were mountain peaks of this island. 3. There is nothing inherently improbable or impossible in the story that Atlantis was destroyed in a single day and night. 4. The flora and fauna of the Old World and the New are so similar there once must have been a bridge of land by which they passed from one continent to the other. 5. The story of the catastrophe of Atlantis is preserved in the diluvial legends found in the traditions of the Hebrews, Chaldeans, Arameans, Iranians, East Indians, Greeks, Welsh, Scandinavians, Amerinds, and other peoples.

6. On both sides of the Atlantic civilizations were substantially identical. Therefore, they must have had a common origin. The parallelisms alleged are far too numerous to be repeated here. They include such varied items as complexion of the peoples, presence of leprosy, the phonetic alphabet, shape of pottery vases, etc. 7. The mythologies of the Old World are distorted recollections of Atlantis. The Garden of Eden, Olympus, and Asgard are identified as Atlantis, and the Phoenician, Greek, and Scandinavian gods as Atlantean kings. 8. Central America, Mexico, Egypt, the Mound Builders of the Mississippi valley, the Iberians of Italy, France, and Spain, the Quichuas of Peru, the non-negroid peoples of Africa, and the Irish are descendants of colonies from Atlantis. 9. The Aryans are descendants of Japheth, youngest son of Noah, a patriarch who escaped from deluged Atlantis.

This curious mixture of fact and fancy is more interesting than convincing. Let us consider it point by point.

1. No mention of Atlantis other than Plato's tale is to be found in the Greek, Roman, Egyptian, or Babylonian literature which has come down to us. Aristotle, the great pupil of Plato, assumed the story was simply an allegory to expound Plato's social ideals. The archaelogists of the American School of Classical Studies have excavated parts of Athens down to bedrock. Dug into the rock itself have been found bronze age tombs dating back to only 1400 B. C. At this period Athens was probably a small outpost of Mycenae inhabited by members of a white race originally from northern Africa. It was just about this time that the Indo-European people we call the Greeks, and who numbered Plato's ancestors in their ranks, swept down from the north. Obviously, then, no great Grecian city existed on this site nearly 12,000 years ago. As a matter of fact, the oldest city of which we have knowledge was Heliopolis, which was destroyed by war about 5000 B. C.

2. A mid-Atlantic ridge actually exists, dividing the Atlantic ocean from Iceland almost to Antarctica and breaking the surface at the Azores and a few other points. "Its windings reflect with extraordinary accuracy the shape of the continents on either side." Geologists are divided over whether it was part of the original mass in which the Americas, Europe, and Africa made up one continent, or is a young mountain system which is slowly rising as the gap between the four continents increases. At the present rate of drift the Old and New Worlds are separating at the rate of about three feet every one hundred years. This would mean they were joined about 80,000 years ago. Presumably any island centered around the Azores



would have been destroyed about the time the separation commenced. However, the existence of the first of our own species in Europe, Cro-Magnon man, cannot be traced back more than 25,000 years. An Atlantis destroyed 55,000 years before our ancestors are known to have appeared on the scene does not help matters.

3. With the possibility of the destruction of Atlantis in a single day and night we shall not quarrel; the probability of such a happening is quite another matter. On 28 August 1884 the explosion of Mount Krakatoa in the Strait of Sunda killed 36,380 people. The explosion of Mount Pelee, Martinique, on 8 May 1902 brought death to another 30,000. Even these, the most terrible earth convulsions of our era, were on a comparitively small scale, and there seems to be sound geological reasons for not believing that any continent ever disappeared overnight.

4. Donnelly apparently arrived at the conclusion that the flora and fauna of the Old and the New Worlds are very similar by the simple process of ignoring contradictory evidence. According to John Collier's The Indians of America, the inhabitants of the New World possessed maize, potato, sweet potato, tapioca, pineapple, avocado, artichoke, peanuts, the cultivated strawberry, lima and frijole and kidney and tonka beans, squash, pumpkin, chocolate, rubber, quinine, cocaine, tobacco, maple sugar, pecans, brazil nuts, butternuts, sarsaparilla, and nearly 40 other lesser crops which were unknown in Europe. Of all the domesticated animals of the Old World, the dog was the only one to be found in the New. The existence of certain similar wild animals in America, Asia, and Europe may be satisfactorily accounted for by the hypothesis of a land bridge existing between Asia and America in the Bering sea as a result of the lowering of the sea level during the last ice age. Even today only 56 miles of comparitively shallow water separates the two continents and this short hiatus is interrupted by the Diomede islands. Each year this gap freezes over and traders move back and forth from Siberia to Alaska over the ice.

5. Almost every place settled by man has been subjected from time to time to tremendous floods. The fact that most peoples have traditions of all-destroying deluges can hardly be taken as proof that they all refer to any one given flood, be it Atlantean or biblical. In many cases the details and even the fundamental ideas of the legends are different.

6. Anthropologists are divided into two general schools: diffusionists and parallel culturists. The former endeavor to prove that practically all cultures are derived from a single source: Egypt. The latter argue that the requirements of man -- food, clothing, shelter, transportation, implements -- and the mental and physical equipment with which he tries to meet these requirements are pretty much the same the world over. When the environment in which different people live is similar the ways in which their problems of existence may be solved are relatively limited and similar solutions are often achieved.

Many of the parallelisms which Donnelly claims prove that the civilizations on both sides of the Atlantic were substantially identical are almost ludicrous. For instance, he considers it important that the Mayas and Peruvians on the one hand and the Egyptians on the other all had stone buildings, agriculture, marriage rites, and intoxicating drinks. At the same time he completely ignores the important but damaging fact that neither the wheel nor the potter's wheel were known in the Americas, although they appeared in Mesopotamia around 4000 B. C. If civilization actually arose in Atlantis and diffused east and west, we would expect it to reach the Americas and Egypt at roughly the same time. Actually Egyptian culture appears to be at least 2500 years older than the earliest civilization of Central America. In The Lost Americans Frank Hibben states that he has "demonstrated that man came to the New World...across the Bering Strait, and had lived first in Alaska." Granting this, it would be surprising indeed if certain similarities could not be demonstrated in such matters as complexion and pottery.

7. Donnelly's arguments are at least ingenious and the mythological nature of Eden, Olympus, and Asgard makes it very difficult to discuss them with any degree of confidence. Most scientists believe that mankind had a single place of origin and that it was somewhere in Asia. If the traditional paradises of various people are indeed the same, it would seem more likely that they represent race memories of Asia than of Atlantis.

8. Here again Donnelly's "proofs" that various peoples are descendants of colonies from Atlantis are made of selected items — correspondences in such matters as complexion, prevalence of diluvial legends, the fact that the Peruvians, Central Americans, Mound Builders, Egyptians, and others built large artificial mounds, etc. Here again his points are interesting, but parallel culture development seems a much more likely hypothesis. Donnelly of course quotes the tradition of Quetzalcoatl, the legendary great god who came to the Mayas from the east, established a prosperous and peaceful rule, incurred the enmity of greater gods, and was forced to leave his people, sailing away again to the east. This story has become a more or less standard "proof"; rare indeed is the pro-Atlantis writer who does not repeat it. Usually Quetzalcoatl is identified with Poseidon and described as the leader who brought the Mayas from sinking Atlantis to Central America.

The worth of the tale as evidence of Atlantis depends largely upon its being taken at its face value, and such action can hardly be justified. In The Indians of the Americas John Collier tells us that Quetzalcoatl the man was a Toltec king who died on 5 April 1208. Quetzalcoatl the legend represents in his coming from the east the race memory of the conquest of the late-Mayan civilization by the Toltecs; the greater gods who drove him away were the Chichimec people, who in turn conquered the Toltecs.

9. The claim that the Aryans are descendants of Japheth, youngest son of Noah, is chiefly interesting as an example of the way Donnelly twists fact and fable to substantiate his thesis. He first accepts Plato's story of an Atlantis existing 12,000 years ago and then argues that a biblical patriarch who survived a deluge of approximately 4300 years ago was a survivor of the destruction of that Atlantis!

According to the book from which he took the story of Noah, man appeared on this earth somewhere between 6000 and 10,000 years ago -- a considerable time after Atlantis had allegedly attained a very high civilization! And what is an Aryan? The word is given to the parent language from which the Indo-European group (Sanskrit, Old Persian, German, English, Latin, Greek, Armenian, and Slavic) have evolved. Klineberg points out in his Race Differences that "if such a language is spoken by Negroes or Polynesians, they too may legitimately be called by that name."

No attempt has been made here to deal with the various occult theories of Atlantis. The "Akashic Records" from which they are drawn form no part of scientific knowledge. Indeed, occultists and scientists tend to hold each other in mutual contempt and neither can be judged by the other's standards. The story of Atlantis is both fascinating and appealing, but if we eschew all Shaverian hypotheses we cannot but find ourselves in full agreement with

Arthur Woodward, chief curator of history and anthropology at the Los Angeles County Museum: "...nor has there ever been any definite evidence uncovered concerning lurid tales which abound through the west of lost cities, Atlantean tribes, or prehistoric peoples fleeing from sinking continents";

Frank C. Hibben, professor of anthropology, University of New Mexico: "/The theory of Atlantis/ is supported by no geological or archaeological facts either in Europe or America";

L. Sprague de Camp, famous fantasy author: "The most reasonable way to regard Plato's story of Atlantis would seem to be as an impressive if abortive attempt at a politico-historical romance...."

THE END

Shoveling By Woods

Whose grounds these are I ought to know;
He owns a house in town, although
He has me working 'way out here
To clear his country place of snow.

My little spouse must think it queer
That I'm not home with night so near,
But for his weekend house-guests' sake
I must be sure his walks are clear.

My boss would roar at my mistake
If I too soon my leave should take,
His swank estate left buried deep
And drifted deeper with each flake.

I'd like the snow piled white and steep
But I've the premises to keep,
And walks to clear before I sleep,
My back to break before I sleep.

-- SIRAK PAMPALONIAN (1943).

ARTWORK CREDITS: Front cover by Henry Chabot. Back cover by William Rotsler. Pix on page 3 and 9, and lettering on page 14, by Rotsler. Pic on page 12 by Chabot.

. . . NOT IN SIN . . .

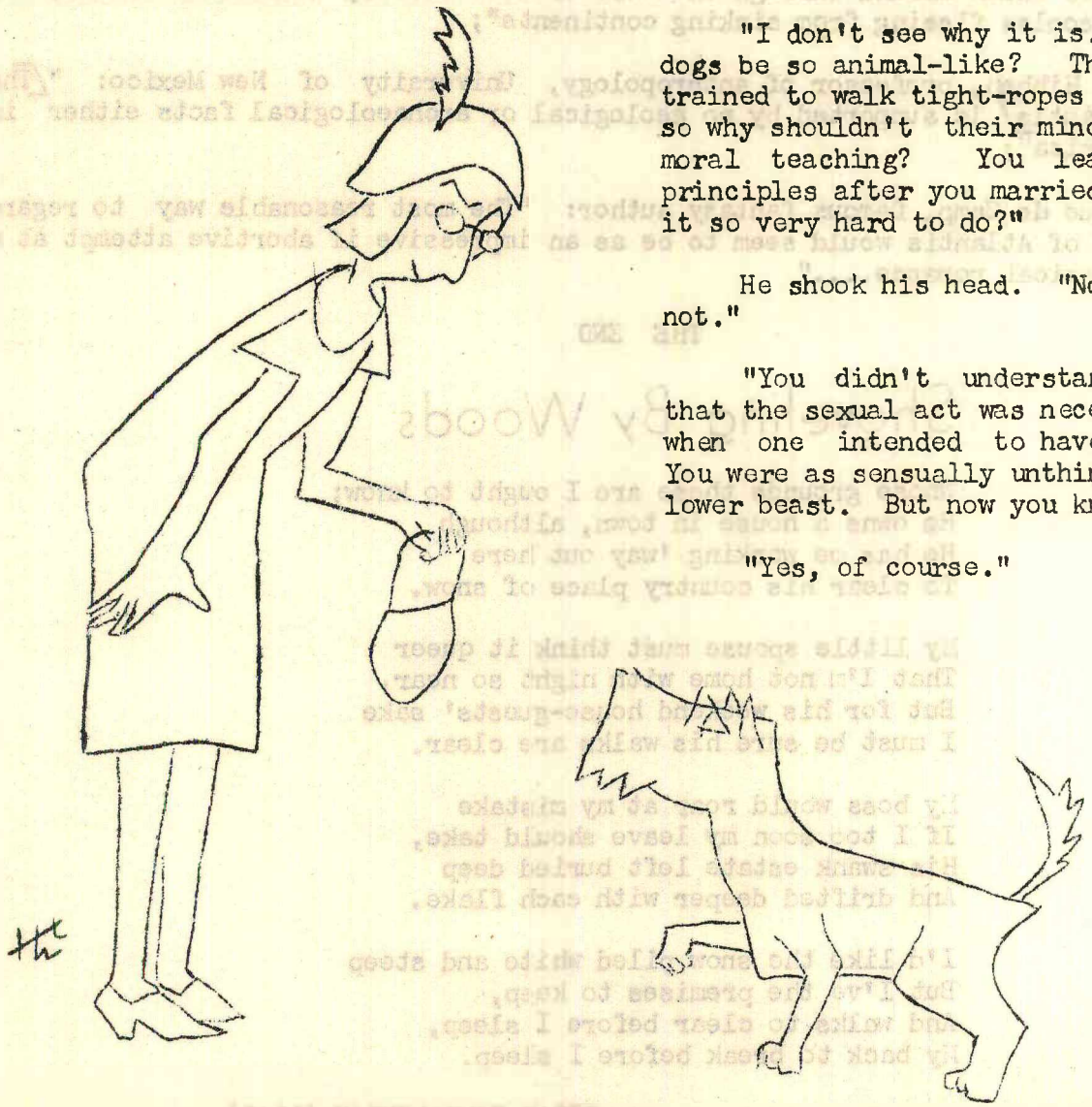
by Charles Burbee

"I HATE to think of it," said Mrs Qwerty. "My own little girl being violated by a sensual hound. The thought chills me, Herbert."

"Well," said her husband, "if you want Penny to have pups, how else can you manage?"

"I don't know yet, but I am not going to breed her till I am sure we can find a high-principled male who can shut his mind to the sensual pleasure connected with the matter. I want him to think of the patter of tiny feet and the joyous squeals of pups dashing about."

Herbert grunted. "Well, that's pretty much to ask of a dog, don't you think, dear?"



"I don't see why it is. Why should dogs be so animal-like? They can be trained to walk tight-ropes and dance, so why shouldn't their minds open to moral teaching? You learned moral principles after you married me -- was it so very hard to do?"

He shook his head. "No, of course not."

"You didn't understand at first that the sexual act was necessary only when one intended to have children. You were as sensually unthinking as any lower beast. But now you know better."

"Yes, of course."

"And I believe any dog can learn what a man can. Of course I don't mean it the way it sounds."

Mrs Qwerty visited animal shelters the next several days, searching for a true mate for her Penny. The puppies must be of the best, conceived not in sin, but in the highest principles possible on earth. She had promised puppies to several of her friends, and she wanted these pups to remind their owners every day of the infallible Mrs Qwerty. They could do that by the dignity of their bearing, the dignity that only animals conceived in purity could possess.

And so she searched the pounds. And one day her eyes met a pair of kindred eyes in the pens and Kimball Kinnison was redeemed from the gas chamber. Mrs Qwerty knew at once that this was her Penny's future mate. Something magical had passed between the eyes of Mrs Qwerty and Kimball instantly.

It was sort of psychic. Kimball had been born in an old apple box amid a pile of shaved science fiction magazines; it was indeed the first practical use ever discovered for old sf mags. His early weeks had been spent wallowing amid shredded pages of Gernsback, Campbell, and Palmer publications. He had slept on Marchioni and Paul and had messed on Gallun and de Camp. He had rolled on Heinlein and sometimes burped on Bradbury. In some ways it was an ideal environment. It gave him broad mental horizons and a fine mind. It may also have caused him to need glasses and be underweight. It did give him shining inquiring eyes, and it was the enchanted look in those eyes that had attracted Mrs Qwerty, for she, too, spent many hours reading sf mags.

She took Kimball Kinnison home and introduced him to Penny. It was not yet mating time. Mrs Qwerty was merely being foresighted. She needed time to prepare Kimball for the great moment.

She put him through a daily program. She played him sacred music on the phonograph and piano and read to him aloud from books on how to be a father. She read him books on child psychology and stories with morals. Of course, all these stories were directed at improving humans, not dogs, but she didn't think of this, and besides she wasn't clever enough to write her own material.

Anyhow, she knew she was getting through to him because he had such a sensitive doggish face and besides, hadn't she named him after the Gray Lensman?

Kimball just lay there listening to her as she spoke or made music for him. He knew he'd have the hell whipped out of him if he didn't. Kimball wagged his tail for her, too, because he knew it was a good idea. But he really wagged his tail for Mr Qwerty. In fact, Kimball often thought that he and Herbert had a lot in common.

At last came the time. Penny had been showing unmistakable signs and other dogs were spending altogether too much time around the house.

Mr Qwerty was at his chess club, where he went twice a week.

Mrs Qwerty turned Penny and Kimball loose together in the yard and stood there watching. She told herself that it was not wrong to watch, that she felt like a great ecclesiastic watching her acolytes perform a sacred rite.

(Concluded on page 16)

Pro-phile

This department will, I hope, appear regularly in Sky Hook -- because the necessity of obtaining material for this department will compell me to keep up with my sf reading which too often is neglected for Higher Things. Stories will be reviewed in no descernible order, a practice that reflects my eclectic, not to say erratic, reading habits of late. Material will, however, be divided into two sections. The first part will consider current stories, and the second stories from my older files -- yarns I overlooked when the magazine was new or stories in back issues I only recently obtained.

In a way, I hate to inaugerate this department now. For best presentation of material I find that I must violate a dictate of the style book I published only last mailing: I must underline rather than quote story-titles in this department and leave magazine-titles ununderlined. When format commands, I obey!

* * *

To Explain Mrs Thompson (aSF, Nov 51). The blurb, "Nothing readily imaginable could more thoroughly demolish the whole structure of human science than the appearance of so ordinary a sight as a human face -- in the wrong place," typifies John's preoccupation with the prestige of science. It's his feeble attempt at salvaging a wee something from this completely anti-scientific story. A less preoccupied blurb-writer might have written, "Nothing more horrible can be readily imagined than...." # The Wheel (SS, Jan 52) represents a neat handling of another antiscience angle. I don't entirely blame these post-atomigeddon people for outlawing wheels. They've exchanged material security for something better: security from the fear of annihilation. Our world, as long as it exists henceforth, must forever live under the threat of the atomic bomb, which one dissenting nation, party, clique, or group can drop on the rest of us. What mass psychoses may this omnipresent danger build up? I envy the wheelless people. # I'm coming to feel that sf should treat anti-science implicitly as well as explicitly. Bradbury's nightmares are good enough, but they aren't anti-science; they aren't science even negatively. What I want to see is a rational view of irrationality. # Is it possible that a wheelless culture such as theirs could rise from the ruins of ours while a common name like Davie still survives? How long would it take the culture to evolve? A millennium or more.

As wearisome as these moon-miner yarns are, where the characteristics of the Forty-Niners are attributed to space pioneers, The Great Idea (SS, Jan 52) was refreshing. It's good to read a tale these days in which space travel isn't a matter of packing a bag and whooming off to Deneb III as nonchalantly as a businessman of 1952 taking the morning Hiawatha for Chicago. # How Green Was My Martian (SS, Jan 52). God. This was a farce in more ways than one. # I wish F&SF would stick to Salter-type covers and not try to compete with aSF and Galaxy in spacescapery. The Bonestell on the February cover is almighty drab and forbidding. # I see F&SF falling into that type of advertising where big names in one field suddenly become experts in another. I can't say I'm very flattered that Sammy Kaye enthusiastically endorses F&SF. # Was If Grant Had Been Drinking at Appomattox (F&SF, Feb 52) new to anybody? I'd read it before, and Lee Hoffman says it's in several Thurber collections. It was wonderful anyway. # On the other hand, The 8:29 (F&SF, Feb 52) was about as pale an imitation of Walter Mitty as that Danny Kaye movie was. What's the proper frame of mind to enjoy a contrived fairy tale like this? # Ugly Sister

(F&SF, Feb 52). This sour-grapes version of "Cinderella" might have succeeded, except that the climactic scene at the ball is glossed over and never explained in any rational terms. Was this the author's subtle way of preserving the sanctity of the original? Even so, it was a letdown.

The Hole in the Moon (F&SF, Feb 52) was skilful, maybe, but it was too damn feminine. Like G. M. Carr's lacy fanzine covers, it was not for me. # Flood (F&SF Feb 52) had about as much human interest as a city engineer's report to the city council. # Minister Without Portfolio (F&SF, Feb 52): Mrs Chriswell was too naive for words, and the e-t's were just as bad. They would have done well taking the '48 Gallupoll. If author Mildred Clingerman is the dish the editors claim, I'drather have had her pic rather than her story. Better luck nextime. # You might say that Bradbury's method is to follow "if" trends to their logical conclusions and then to multiply by 4. The Pedestrian is as foolishly improbable as "Revolt of the Pedestrians," which is why it reads like a fairy tale instead of sf. I should think the sidewalks would have been worn free of grass by the people who rushed to their corner grocer to buy a box of Squeegies. Or, if the TV trend continues, the programs themselves are going to drive more and more people into the streets.

Dead End (GSF, Jan 52) is a disturbing story, full of frightening implications, not the least of which is that TV commercials like those of 1952 will persist till 2512. # I didn't understand why eating in public was immoral. Does the taboo perform some indespensible function in society? # Why should humans have the power to command pseudo-life? That would be psychologically unbalancing in itself, wouldn't it? # I liked the idea of "courtship bowers." # Special Delivery (Imag, Jan 52) wasn't badly written, but I gave up on this story as soon as the nature of the aliens' invasion plan was revealed. I find it hard to identify myself with heroes who are from alien planets, no matter how humanoid they be. # I see that cover artist Bill Terry made the alien ships flying saucers. This wasn't made explicit in the yarn. # The Most Horrible Story (Imag, Jan 52) was so routine a "Surprise! You're dead!" story that I'll pass it as noted. # Earth-Mars 12 (WSA, 1952). I'd never read this before, but it reminded me a lot of Cummings' stuff, especially his "Voyage 13." Is Gabriel Wilson a Cummings pename? # The end was needlessly bloody. # Around Infinity (WSA, 1952). "Damn Einstein!" # Schomburg's cover for this WSA is in the good old Paul groove, but it's a whole lot brighter and slicker.

I don't remember offhand if anyone said so before, but The Brain Stealers of Mars (WSA, 1952) is obviously the direct forbear of "Who Goes There?" The solution in this yarn to the problem of which is the original and which the imitation Penton and Blake is, I think, more ingenious than the blood-test criterion proposed in the later story. But this was far from the polished story that "Who Goes There?" was. # I didn't much like the Fortean theory that visits to Earth by centauroid Martians gave us our legends of centaurs. # And what kind of centaurs have "long, powerful fingers"? # "Evolution is always trying to produce an animal that can survive anywhere, conquer all enemies, the fittest of the surviving fit," says Penton. Isn't he confusing cause and effect? From a blind adjustive process, caused by a changing environment, he elevates evolution to the status of a conscious directive influence. Three new volcanoes suddenly become active in California, their thick smoke blotting out a certain percentage of the Golden State's advertised sunshine. By evolution the lizards, over many years, adapt themselves to the darker, chillier climate. All right. Did evolution cause the volcanoes to rear up in the Sierras? # If evolution is concerned about creating a species that can survive anywhere, why didn't it have the foresight to leave us our gills -- so we could live in the sea whence we came, as well as on the land? # Campbell's editorial Proposed History (aSF, Jan 52) seems to discern a similar directive force behind the evolution of man from homo

sapiens to homo superior. For some reason not stated, homo superior is always concerned with conquest and empire building -- a curious preoccupation indeed. Making a Roman or Assyrian empire is just as natural to him as making a nest is to the oriole: there is a subconscious compulsion behind it all. But on second thought, perhaps it is just a matter of definition: homo superior (Campbell version) is the species of man who has been successful in empire-building.

The Eostefnal Age

The Man Who Fought a Fly (Amz, Oct 32), by Leslie F. Stone, was better written than many a present day yarn, though it could have been trimmed a lot and the dialog was painfully stilted. A dull story, but one which can be intellectually appreciated. # The Great Invasion of 1955 (Amz, Oct 32), by J. David Reid. Typical of the '30s in stressing scientific content over dramatic values, this yarn amused me wryly by dismissing a slight case of attempted murder with "Incidentally, it might have been an accident, but my car was run into by a large car driven by a Japanese chauffeur," while a high school level discussion of atomic decomposition took up almost a whole page. # Follow the Rocket Trail (Ast, Sep 36), by Warner Van Lorne, was like most of Van Lorne's yarns -- a synopsis from which a good story might be written. It is a history of the catastrophe, not a description of how the protagonists faced world's end. # A manuscript like this both weakens and strengthens the theory that Van Lorne was a Tremaine pename. It seems too incompetent to be written by a top-notch man like F.O.T.; on the other hand, I can't imagine him accepting such a thing from anybody but himself.

They've got a moon in this town, too.

...NOT IN SIN... (Concluded from page 13)

In the yard, Kimball first rushed toward this suddenly fascinating female. He hadn't thought much of her before but right now love burned madly inside him. But suddenly he checked his charge. The thought hit him that this act could have serious consequences. What price must be paid for a few minutes of fun? For the life of him he could not remember a marriage ceremony. And he was unemployed. What sort of man would he be, bringing nameless babies into the world, he, with no visible means of support? This was wrong, wrong!

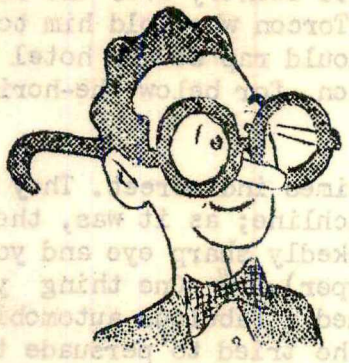
Slowly he slumped to the grass and played over in his mind a recording of "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder, I'll Be There," complete with needle scratch.

When Mrs Qwerty saw that her plan had failed, she broke down. She collapsed on the sofa and wept herself sick, and that was the way Mr Qwerty found her when he returned from his twice-weekly visit to the whorehouse.

Strike Roscoe a mighty blow --

"Fuggy (adj.) (Of persons) ... b. fond of sedentary pursuits at home, rather than sports, etc., in the open..."

-- New Standard dictionary.



EYE TO THE PAST

Postmailings to the fifty-sixth FAPA mailing, summer 1951:

Fanews Magazine. "The Man Who Abolished War" reminded me of E. Phillips Oppenheim's "The Man Who Saved the World," a Collier's serial about 1935. I thought that, by this time, the theory that wars would stop if a terrible enough weapon was discovered had been quietly discarded, having been empirically proved wrong. I don't remember this potboiler appearing in the Minneapolis Sunday Tribune, as you say it did. One tends to forget unpleasant things.... # Dr Keller's notion in "Dragon's Blood" that no good essays are being written today seems just as fallacious as his statement that Montaigne's writings were "a new form of expression." # Gad, I'm on the brink of dementia praecox! I often read Emerson (but never Addison) for recreation. Even "'mid the blare of a million radios" I read "The Oversoul," not to mention "Self-reliance" and "Nature." Anyway, Keller's essay was charming — one of the best things of his that's ever appeared in a fanzine.

The Fantasy Ammeter. A good job and a clever title.

The Fantasy Armature. Whatever you think of Laney's solution to the presidential tie problem, you should appreciate his prompt action. I didn't relish the prospect of having a rudderless FAPA cruising madly along, with a mailing scheduled to appear in six or seven weeks. I was glad somebody took the bull by the horns. I mixed metaphors, but you know what I mean.

Moonshine. How about numbering, or at least dating, the next issue -- which I trust will appear long ere the critical day of this membership year. # "La tienda sin nombre" as the name of a shop is in the same category as the non-offices the Outlander non-officers non-hold, but it has a pleasant lilt to it that's missing from the title Mag Without A Name.

Fantasia. Gad, so you're soliciting "the best in...weird...stories" for the revived Futurist! Sic transit gloria.... But I'm glad the title's being continued.

Comments on the fifty-seventh FAPA mailing, autumn 1951:

Astounding Letters. This was quite interesting, but I hope spaceships drink milk before we have another issue. One is sufficient. # I didn't know James Blish is a Chicagoan. He's never admitted this dark secret in any autobiographical notes that I've seen.

Light. "I Meet the Income Tax Inspector" and the ad for Sammy's Used Girl Mart were the best items in these two issues, I thought. # I'm surprised to learn that the

international border is a dividing line for slang. But then the usages you mention aren't ones likely to be spread from country to country over the radio. This reminds me of the girl Manson Brackney met at the Torcon who told him to be sure to "knock her up in the morning." She meant he should rap at her hotel room door to waken her. # What's the scientific explanation for below-the-horizon reception of FM and TV?

Snulbug. The biographies were fascinating, if sometimes indiscreet. They might have been improved by integration and building to a punchline; as it was, their content triumphed over poor presentation. You have a wickedly sharp eye and you set down your impressions with a pretty incisive pen (or typer). # One thing you should have reported about Kenny Gray is that he once owned a fabulous automobile yclept the Flying Cloud. One night it bit his hand when he tried to persuade the speedometer to work by hammering it with his fist. That old car vibrated so much that voices rising above the sound came out in faint, piercing counterpoint. # In re the Orban illustration for Kenny's "Smaller Than You Think," there was also the singular fact that the spaceman sitting at the control board looked a lot like Kenny -- though Orban has never met Kenny. # The imaginary interview was the best of the series so far, but it was only mildly libelous. Are you softening? I wonder what editors really do with the stamps on return envelopes for mss they buy?

Jabberwocky. There's much good rambling material in this issue. Especially "Jabberwocky is for good clean living. ((The above is in answer to countless thousands of fans who have asked us to outline our policy.))" # I hope you live up to your promise to have "at least one piece of material in every mailing." Vain hope.

Science Fiction Five-Yearly. I don't agree with the guy who said this issue "out-Plutoed Pluto" but it was a major effort and one of the brightest things I've seen in FAPA. One thing I'd criticize about the format is that it's merely the same old Quandry format done more carefully. The nice thing about one-shots is that they give you a chance to experiment with different types of format. Otherwise, I'll leave to others the raves on the multicolor mimeography and remark merely that your black mimeography for the textual matter is outstandingly sharp and clear. (But don't think I don't appreciate the multicolor. I've owned a model L Speedoprint, too, and I know what a struggle it must have been to obtain perfect registry of five colors.) # The material was pretty disappointing, especially Robert Bloch and Jack Speer. I'd never read the famous "After 1939 -- What?" It only illustrated, better even than the early Sustaining Programs, how much Jack's writing style has improved in 14 years. # The fan portraits, apparently sketched from photos, were excellent. Tucker and the Coles showed up best. # Was Al Weinstein really a girl? Heesh was prominent in fandom during the time I was in the army and the name is one I only vaguely recognize from secondhand copies of wartime fanzines. # "Bureau of Fanalysis" is a mutant idea. The one for Rich Elsberry came out neatest, but Laney's was funniest. # But even funnier were the 1950 NFFF laureate poll results. Except for a couple items like Futurist ranking ahead of Slant and Spacewarp, the "best fanzines" results weren't too wild. But I'd say offhand that at least eight of the top ten fans listed didn't belong there -- with all due regard to them personally.

Horizons. I doubt that FAPA could be held legally responsible for libelous or obscene matter circulated in a postposting over which the official editor exercised no control. That would be a sly way to wreck this club if you were a jealous Sap: join FAPA just long enough to issue a postmailing that would bring the post office down on our necks. # Should a reviewer strive to interest people who are not interested in the item being reviewed? I shrink from the Huneker tradition of making the review a lesser-order work of art on the same theme as the object under

consideration, and I think the primary aim should be toward enlightening those who may be interested in the reviewed work. Of course there's no objection if a review is interesting in itself, but a critic should be under no obligation to make it so. # Your remarks on Pederson's poem were excellent. # Whoa, Harry. HPL explicitly criticized Winesburg, Ohio, only for its use of "tame backstairs gossip" and implicitly condemned it only as part of the school of those who "pry behind exteriors and unveil nasty hidden motives and secret stigmata." He said no mumbling word about the characterization in Sherwood Anderson's stories. But in your comments you apparently take for granted that "creating a really believable human character" is the aim of all literature. Others such as Virginia Woolf have believed it is, but is it? I don't believe so, and I think that, within the frame of its own tradition, Lovecraft's work is just as outstanding as Anderson's work is in the naturalistic tradition. Therefore, at least as a peer Lovecraft had a right to criticize Anderson. As an expert, he had no more right than Anderson would have had criticizing HPL. # "Burning Bright" was more intriguing to me as a glimpse behind the scenes of the Hagerstown newspaper than as a firsthand report of a possible Fortean occurrence. # "Back to Methuselah" is one of those things I'm going to read next rainy evening. From your synopsis it seems pretty typically Shavian, especially in its variation on the old Butlerian theme that will-power can direct evolution. # Shaw often grows cowardly in the last act of his plays. For instance, in "Candida" the dramatic problem of whether she should run off with her lover or stay with her husband is resolved by having her stay -- because, she says, her husband needs her more! The place where his cowardice gives me the most kick, though, is in "Mrs Warren's Profession," where Mrs Warren's daughter, after play-length indecision, finally condemns her mother's profession (operating brothels) on the grounds that it is capitalistic! # A tentative attempt to answer the "fallacy" that men "do not grow wise, they grow careful": growing careful is part of growing wise. # "Post-Mortem" proved highly enjoyable, but I'd like to know how he kept getting letters and fanzines ten years after leaving fandom. Was this story supposed to have allegorical overtones?

Pamphrey. Either your dictionary is unabridgeder than mine or else pamphrey is a commoner word over there. What exactly is a pamphrey? # The fabulous remark was indeed fabulous.

Ysatnafets. Nor can you bring about prosperity by encouraging thrift, Abe. # Since I liked Norman L. Knight's "Fugitive from Vangard," "Testament of Abukii," and his other short stories much better than "Once in a Blue Moon," I'd be much happier to learn of a Knight collection rather than a book version of one minor novelette. # "The Case of the Stolen White Egoboo" was a sharp takeoff on Perry Mason, and I am a Mason admirer, but I liked it.

Irusaben. But Bob, of all places why do you choose West Cupcake, N.Y., to gafiate in during the summer? What strange allure has this loveliest village of the plain -- and what's her telephone number? # Well, I haven't read "Beyond Pluto" in its FSM reprint, but I still remember it as one of the top yarns from the Gernsback era. (For more praise of this story see Norman Stanley's review of it in an issue of Scientifictionist.) I still read Planet when I have the chance; I consider it one of the top five sf magazines. Planet knows that people buy it to enjoy.

Targets of Opportunity. I don't know what happened to your amendment proposal, but I don't believe that I (then vice-president) got more than a postal from you, notifying me that such a proposal was being sent in. In other constitutional amendments I know about, the proposal was carboncopied; the prexy got the original with signatures, and the other officers got carbons. This seems the best practice in such matters. # It would be fun to travel through the past like J. Wesley Smith

but I don't believe I'd care to stay anywhere in the past. Dark as these times are, I'm just curious enough to stick around to see what's going to happen. # Erect a statue to Warner's friend who started the practice of sending back empty business-reply envelopes? Why, in a long-ago instalment of "File 13" I recommended a similar procedure as a small means of venting one's spleen on wack organizations, and Clive Johnson in Slant sneered at the idea. Do you still want to put up your statue in the face of this critical judgment? # But a baby's innate fear of falling doesn't make sense. A fear is useless if it can't spur one to act — and what can a baby do about it even if he is in danger of falling?

Chooog (I won't write out that full title!). I enjoy ramblings like this, though an individzine type beta is normally diffuse and therefore lacks the punch of the alpha type. # I like this format passing well, but I do think folding to half-legalsize rather than cutting would have made a neater magazine. By the way, when a stationery store clerk showed me some stencils lined for use in half-lettersize leaflets I asked her if there were stencils for making half-legalsize. "Oh, no," she said. "Nobody would publish a leaflet of that size. It makes too square a page." # Willis' letter about midnight choo-chcos leaving for Alabam' reminds me of the time when, as an air force public relations man, I was writing a news-story about one of our B-24s which was nameless but had made some sort of a reputation

They Wore Black Coats

They wore black coats
And mourned their dead.
"This slaughter must be
Stopped," they said.

They asked each other
The question "How?"
And answered "By killing
Each other now."

-- LEE HOFFMAN.

for itself in Eighth Air Force raids on Germany. I got tired of using such identifying phrases as "Captain So-and-So's plane" and decided that it would simplify matters if this bomber had a name. Most planes had fanciful names like "Sacktime" or "Massachusetts Gal." So I looked up the pilot's hometown, found it was in Alabama, and instantly christened the B-24 "Midnight Choo-Choo" for story purposes. Months later, newspaper clippings came back with the story printed as I wrote it, but the crew of that nameless plane never came in and asked where I got the idea that they flew the "Midnight Choo-Choo." Maybe they liked the name so well they officially adopted it. # There is probably a Washington A. C. Isn't there a Washington athletic club, Evans? # Sounds like you've got fantastically lousy railroad service down in Georgia, Lee. Haven't the railroads recovered yet from Sherman's march? # I enjoyed your after-the-convention report. You have a reporter's eye for significant and interesting details. If I was still running Tympani, I'd have you under contract to cover the next convention.

The Star Rover. "October Observations" may be the most important article in the whole autumn mailing; at least it is the best article yet on the aSF-Galaxy rivalry that I've seen. # I think it might be helpful, and not too misleading, to explain the differences between aSF and Galaxy by defining their basic philosophies. Astounding falls into the "enlightenment" tradition where America's deepest poli-

tical and social roots begin. This is the doctrine that stressed "natural rights," reason as the absolute ruler of human life, and above all the belief in progress. Campbell's editorials stem from this orientation: evil is the result of ignorance and there is no depravity that cannot be overcome by science and technology. Man is perfectible. Dianetics, certainly, is the apex of this idea, and fictionally it can be seen in stories of far planets where man's superior culture replaces the primitive e-t civilization. Doc Smith's sagas and Asimov's galactic empires are representative. Galaxy, on the other hand, falls into the Romantic tradition, but less exactly. Nevertheless, the tendency can be seen in the stress on irrationality in man, the emphasis on self-expression and emotion and spontaneity, rather than on the precision of science and logic. Truth is subjective, rather than objective. It's significant that Bradbury has appeared in Galaxy, for he falls into the Romantic tradition with his lack of faith in science and his essential irrationality. Leiber's "Coming Attraction" is another indication that comes easily to mind. A story like "Beyond Bedlam" also illustrates GSF's Romantic tendency by stressing esthetic qualities. ASF, instinctively feeling, perhaps, that a preoccupation with style is frivolous escapism that forecloses against a practical or realistic content, almost invariably emphasizes the idea or concept of the story, often printing yarns like "Trip One" or "A Subway Named Mobius" that are completely naive as regards the art of fiction. # Perhaps needless to say, I don't put forward this analysis in complete seriousness. For one thing, you'll easily name stories in each magazine which don't fall into these traditions -- simply because their editors know a good story when they see one and aren't above buying one that is really worthwhile, even if it doesn't fit into the magazine's intellectual climate. For another, both Galaxy and aSF do presumably believe in progress -- if not in rationality as the guide toward good. One has only to read Gold's January 1952 editorial to check that. But their methods for furthering progress differ. Campbell often tries to scare us into changing for the better: the 1946-7 atomic bomb stories warned us what will happen if we don't mend our ways. But in these yarns there was seldom a basic acceptance of the irrational quality of man's mind, and I think it probable that Campbell understands mankind's evil genius no better than did HGWells. # In any case, I think that in broad outline these analyses may be valid. I can't quite imagine Ray Bradbury's "The Fireman" in aSF. And it is almost as hard to imagine dianetics being propagandized in Galaxy. (In fact, those of us who prefer Galaxy may be naturally anti-dianetics, because we fear that dianetics, if it proved workable, would function to submerge the individual's uniqueness by "adjusting" people to the norm. When everybody is a clear, we'll all be beautifully sane and normal -- normal, that is, according to a system whose standards are as false as Giles Habibula's teeth.)

Gentlefen. This doesn't answer the big question: why did you part from The Big O?

Fan-Dango. "Sound and the Common Man" is inspiring on first reading, but when one gets down to technical details his enthusiasm evaporates. I am afraid assembling an outfit like yours isn't as simple as it sounds. You say you know nothing about electronics, but you know more than I do. When you speak of "double amplifiers," "coaxial speakers," "Jones plugs and jacks," "bass reflex cabinets," etc., you are Satan Strong, scourge of the spaceways, converting a micro-ultra-philtmeter into a von Krockmeier hyperspace lever, as far as I can understand. # I told you about the radio service man who told me it was impossible to connect a wirecorder to the voice coils of a radio. # Needless to say, I endorse your Mezrab review to the same percentage that Ivory soap is supposed to be pure. Somebody or other wrote me, "Were you the double-barrelled stinker who turned back issues of Mezrab over to Laney to review? That's merely a rhetorical question. I don't really give a cuss." No comment! # I found the battleships article quite interesting. I knew that captured ships are often commissioned and used, but the "world market

in used warships" is a revelation. How about in the old days? Did the English ever commission captured Spanish galleons in her navy? # The remarks about the expansion of the navy in 1898 prompt me to ask if you know of a book that deals specifically with the renaissance of the American navy in the decade or so prior to the Spanish-American war? # Towner, you chastise people for writing articles "analyzing" you without having met you, then you end your own article by saying, "people that I know to be all right...can drop in here any old time and be warmly welcomed." Without having met us, how can you be sure we're "all right"?

Lark. As usual, neat in format, sensible in content.

Duckspeak. The ramblings I enjoyed very much, but the diesel engine piece was almost a total loss. The mention of shoe coupons in this piece indicates how old it was -- unless the manuscript was somehow wafted pastward from the near future, when I expect shoe coupons will reappear. # How many diesel-electric locomotives does your company sell during an average business day? # Your mailing comments were excellent, especially the one on Fantasy Jackass -- the best review of that magazine that I've seen. # It's funny how easily Hoffman's writings are recognized as "cute stuff" now that she's known to be a "cute kid." I don't blame you -- I suddenly acquired the same faculty myself.

Gem Tones /volume binder/. This will never be used because (a) I keep my FAPA mailings in separate bundles in their original envelopes; and (b) three issues of Gem Tones would hardly fit under this cover without bulging.

Gem Tones. You actually like Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, you say, because you think "poems ought to say something." You needn't apologize for liking either poet, but if it's obscurity you object to, lines from Emily like "Creation seemed a mighty crack/To make me visible" aren't instantly apprehensible, and as for Walt Whitman, many find his "There Was A Child Went Forth" obscure. Asked what it meant he replied, "I wonder what? I wonder what? Maybe it has no meaning." # The prose manner of much modern poetry is a reaction against the airy flights of Romantic poetry. It's based on the premise that man wasn't made to fly, and should therefore keep one foot on the ground. Wallace Stevens speaks of "getting down to the essential prose of things," and Ezra Pound was fond of saying "Poetry should be at least as well-written as prose." # Yours is the most distortedly optimistic view of the twentieth century since Lowell Schmaltz' in "The Man Who Knew Coolidge" by Sinclair Lewis. Really now, G. M., is it that wonderful? After two world wars, under the shadow of the Bomb, you still sing hyms to progress? Your paeans are part of the previous century; the notion that we're at the apex "to which civilization and philosophy has painfully struggled up the pyramid of time from a desert of savagery" is out of fashion. The straight line of progress that points ever upward has been abandoned, as Tindall says, "and even Toynbee, expressing a demoded hope, makes use of circles, the comfort and expression of declining periods." # A man from 1852 would probably be overwhelmed by the "architectural mountains" and the "neon signs, glowing with colors unimagined a generation ago," but the insistent flash of BEER -- Budweiser -- BEER -- Budweiser would mean the same thing to him as to us. And he would enter the place to find people acting exactly as they did back in his century. And he'd see that your glorious twentieth century city is a sham. # If your objection to "companionate marriage" is merely semantic, G. M., call it a "pleasure partnership" instead. But I doubt if that will satisfy you. I sort of infer that from your statement that "the only reason for having two sexes is procreation" and that "any coming together of male and female in the procreative act with intent to evade the consequences of that act is prostituting the purpose which made the pleasure possible." If you must advocate "sex for procreation only," please don't speak as if it was a law of

nature that such should be the case. There are no "shoulds" in natural law, but only in moral law. Natural laws can't be broken because they are merely descriptive; they tell what is the case, not what ought to be. If people indulge in coitus for mere pleasure (there are a few such people, I believe), then that is part of the natural law because it is the case. # On the other hand, if you reconsider and advance your belief as an ethical precept, you'll have to justify it beyond reiterating the observable fact that reproduction of their kind is the only thing most species accomplish on earth. If man, as a part of nature, must in your judgment operate within this same natural order, then you'll have to denounce as a "prostitution" of life many things other than sex for pleasure alone. Civilization (your glorious twentieth century) is superfluous because it isn't part of the "processes of nature." We must cast aside art, literature, industry, science, and even crifanac, because we are here to reproduce our kind and most of us can't do that at the opera, library, shop, lab, or club meeting. "Go, my son, leave your typewriter and fanzine stencil. Go forth and, as devoutly as possible, multiply."

Unasked Opinion. After your panegyrics to the twentieth century, it was predictable that you should dislike Moby Dick, that great revelation of the horror you fail to see behind the fancy facade of your city. For a believer in Progress with a capital P it's probably sickening to see that man's struggle against evil is in vain ("the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago"). But it is also inspiring (to me) to know that he struggles indomitably ("Thus, I give up the spear!"). # Fout on your theory that Melville was trying merely "to tell a good story." If you can't infer something beyond that from such chapters as "The Whiteness of the Whale" and "The Doubloon," at least you can find a deeper intention in such passages as this: "The whale-line folds the whole boat in its complicated coils, twisting and writhing around it in almost every direction.... But why say more? All men live enveloped in whale-lines."

Revoltin' Development. My god, every city in the country would climb out of the red if it slapped $100 fine on every possessor of obscene pictures. What next?

Platform. Why do you support 18-year-old voting? I never quite followed that old argument that "if they're old enough to fight, they're old enough to vote." Why not argue "if they're old enough to walk, they're old enough to learn to read"? That may not be your reason for advocating a lower voting age, but my own inclination is toward raising the voting age. It should be at least 25, and maybe 28.

Shadowland. Classy stuff, but nothing to argue about. Let's see some more, though.

Wastebasket. Your material is still extremely heterogeneous, but it is rapidly improving in quality. Morse's "The Bradbury Chronicles" is the best fannish critique on Bradbury yet, in my opinion. It's too bad Morse made it so hard to take seriously. He rhapsodizes too much: he chortles over the "drools of delight /for Bradbury/ such as fell upon Hemingway, Steinbeck," insists that "Bradbury deserves to take his place among the acknowledged masters of the writing craft — if not in the leading position," and states without qualification that "Kaleidoscope" "ranks with the best short stories of all time." Bradbury may be good, but I doubt if he is quite ready to challenge Tolstoy's or Hawthorne's place in the firmament, and overenthusiastic praise of this sort may do him more harm than good. # I'd like to see Morse justify his point that "Bradbury wants to make men...put their house in order." It's hard to say (see remarks under The Star Rover for my thoughts on intent and method of philosophy in sf), but it seems to me that Bradbury's message is that man can never put his house in order. # I shudder to note that the Faulkner thing was the first of a series.

O hoon of my delight

QUOTE — UNQUOTE

ROBERT BRIGGS dissents: Your argument with Marion Bradley interests me for some reason. Now she thinks that the poem in question has meaning. You say that is has. I should like to know why a poem should have meaning. Let's change that to why a message. I detest paintings with a message for it always gets in the way of the artist. # This business of using symbols for which you substitute a thought or feeling does not convince me when used pictorially and I am equally hostile to its use in poetry. You can't call a collection of symbols art. Egyptian hieroglyphs are symbols that stand for complicated ideas, but they are writing, not art. When they are art, it is because of the designing of the symbol, not the meaning. Who cares about the meaning of poetry if it doesn't "sound" right? Whether that poem has meaning or not, doesn't interest me. I don't think it sounds musical. "The purpose of poetry is delight." (Battery "A" First AAA Training battalion, Fort Bliss , Texas).

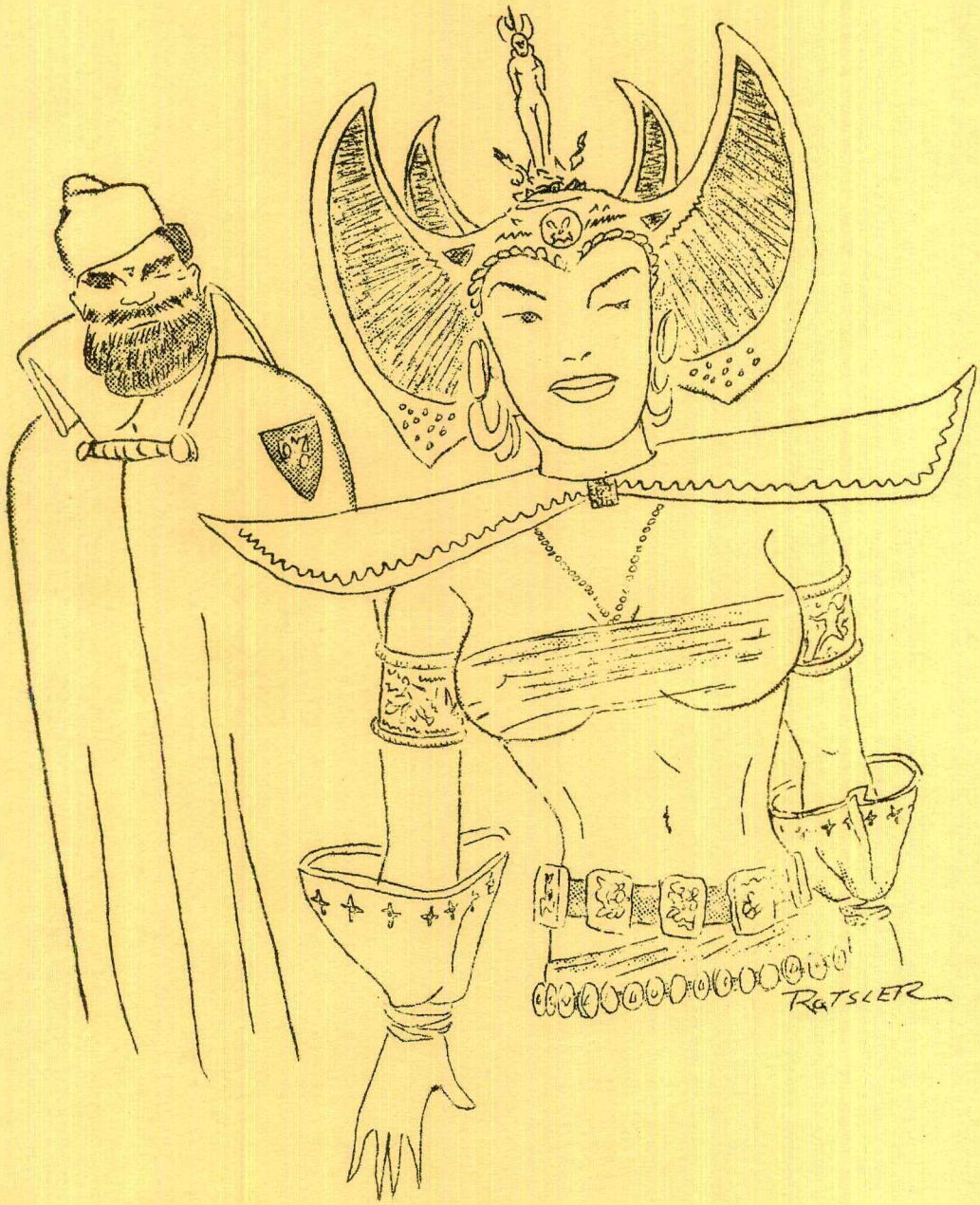
I agree with you that form is as important as content, at least in most cases, but I don't agree that the purpose of all poetry is delight. The effect of such poems as "War is Kind," "Beauty Hurts Mr Vinal," and "Cliff Klingenhagen" is certainly more intellectual than esthetic.

JOE KENNEDY types: Sky Hook and accompanying fapazines got here at an opportune moment. In another couple hours I'll hafta get on a train and return to Great Lakes, my holiday leave being (sob) over. I'm glad they came before I left, for I had a lot of fun reading 'em. # Skip-rope Rimes was a highly valuable collection, and I intend to file it inside my copy of Lomax's American Ballads and Folk Songs. Several of the rimes I've heard variations of; did you collect these yourself on the streets of Minneapolis, perchance? "Jesus, lover of my soul,/Lead me to the sugar bowl" is lovely. "Room for rent..." is mildly shocking. Gee canyuhimagine lil innocent girls jumping rope to such a thing. My puritan streak is scandalized. # The Gafia Press Style Book interested. Toward the end of Vampire's career I made up a style sheet just for kicks, but didn't adhere to it too consistently, I fear. Your preferred spelling "likable" is thoroly likeable. But what have you got against "fall" -- that fine old Anglo-Saxon name for the season, which I believe was intended to denote what the leaves do every autumn. (Gawd!) Owell, over preferences in language there's no point in disputing! # Sky Hook is in fine fettle. Virginia Blish's shrewd and ambitious prose portrait certainly helped distinguish the issue, as did your neat reply to the classic objection, "What good is poetry that doesn't mean anything?" # The interlineation at the bottom of page 13 and the quote from the F & SF book company's list handed me a couple of huge chortles. # Thankee for the nice things you say in your mailing comments on Spearhead. As for poetry that combines transcendency and crass commonplaces, I just gotta quote you something I came across the other day in E. E. Cummings' Collected Poems, and which has ever since haunted me:

"by little accurate angels thickly which tread
the serene nervous light of paradise --
by angelfaces clustered like bright lice..."

There's more to it, but in those three lines are the most fascinating image. Ah, well. No doubt to Marion Bradley that would be nonsense! (84 Baker av., Dover, NJ)

Most of the verses in Skip-rope Rimes were taken from an article in the Minneapolis Tribune last spring. Some were culled from Botkin's A Treasury of American Folklore. I've heard variations to some of them. # I've nothing against using "fall" for "autumn," but the latter is a much more beautiful word, don't you think?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