



Walt Daugherty

BRIDE



Virginia (Jim-E) Lancy



Voice Of Marriage

VOM "covers" a Wedding! This issue is dedicated to Walt Daugherty & his bride of June 2, the former Virginia (Call me "Jim-E") Laney. (She & Fran Laney are investigating their lineage.) Jim-E, who has rejoined the LASFS & is busying herself with the sub-assemblage of Vom even as I stencil, has carryd on a sporadic correspondence with Erle Korshak, John Cunningham & "Renny" Rennison. Walt says: "Making her happy will be my Greatest Project."

ALLONS! FRENCH FAN #1 RETURNS!

J. Gallet foremost stfan of France was last heard from in Vom over 3 yrs ago when he wrote "Vom is like echoes from another world far away from the sorrows of this unhappy continent. But I am full of hope that the day will come again."

The Day has come again --V-E Day! And, on 22 Feb 45, Gallet contacted fandom, saying:

"My last letter to you was dated 24 Sept. 1941. More than three years ago! It is a long, long way back and that period has been crowded with happenings... I won't try to tell you all It would take a book, at least, to do it.

"The Germans came into Southern France. We had to keep on living somehow and believe me it was quite a problem -it still is- with black market prices soaring, for food, for everything in fact. I wrote science articles for serious papers, gossip for movie magazines, stories for juveniles.

"With 1944, the bombings by air became more frequent and the bombs had a deplorable habit of falling much too near my house. August came and Liberation, with fighting in the streets. Happily, except for windows, doors and shutters smashed, a few windowpanes broken and some perilous adventures during the battle in the town, my wife and I came out of it all rather nicely, after a little more than two weeks of living in the cellar, which, by the way, was not too uncomfortable in the warm summer.

"New dailies and magazines were born out of the various underground organizations. I resumed my writing with the first weekly to be published in liberated France -it is an illustrated called "V"- and, later, with some others. This permits me to wait until better times. That is to say when the paper restriction slackens and I will be able to take up old plans. Needless to say, as you know, these are all concerned with scientifiction. And it has been one of my greatest privations since 1940 to be unable to get new american science fiction books or magazines, although I managed, during all that period, to receive English, and occasionally American, magazines, through friends in the Swiss diplomatic service. I had to be rather careful of course as the Germans considered this a capital offence.

"In spite of all, a few science fiction books were published in France. Two novels by my friend Jacques Spitz, whose name you already know: 'La Parcelle "Z"' -parcelle means a very small portion used for scientific experiments- and 'Les Signaux du Soleil' -Signals in the Sun-. Another is coming out soon: 'Alpha du Centaure'. Two novels by a new author, René Barjavel: 'Ravage' (about a cataclysm which all but ends the world) and 'Le Voyageur imprudent -The uncautious Traveller- (time-travel). One novel just out by another friend of mine, Léon Groc, 'La Planète de Cristal' -The Crystal Planet- (travel to a second moon, transparent and inhabited by two- and four-dimensional beings) I helped Groc with his spaceship and such.

"What a letter! I feel I have forgotten the more important things I wanted to tell you. Professor Messac, the nice University man who was so much interested in science fiction and a good friend of Dr. David Keller, was arrested by the Germans and sent to Germany without explanations. He was a great invalid of the first World war. His wife has had no news of him for over six months. My own brother is still a prisoner in reprisal Oflag XC..."

FANS! How about a "hands-across-the-sea" gesture for this long lost & stf starved friend? As a starter, Tigrina & I have dispatcht him the following: ASF 44 Apr, AmS 42 June, TWS 43 Apr, Future 42 Oct, Science Fiction 41 Sep, Startling 45 Win, Astonishing 43 Feb, Super Science 41 Aug, Stirring 41 Feb, Cosmic 41 July, Comet 41 May, FFM 41 Feb, Unk 40 Dec, Planet 43 Win, WT current. Vom urges every true fan to send at least one pro--dated anywhere between '40 & the present--as a gift to Gallet. Fanmag eds, make him up a selection of your back issues. U'll have to fill in the white form inclosed with this Vom & put it in your pkg, affixing the green sticker to the outside of the wrapper & sending the whole first class. Average mag will not cost more than a quarter to mail. Do this very good deed without fail--today.

Georges H. Gallet, 36 Avenue Maréchal Foch, Marseille, France.

VOICE of the IMAGI-NATION, aka VOM, #42. May '45. 15c, 7/\$
4s J Ackerman, Editor-in-Grief; Box 6475, Met Station, Los Angeles 55
(MIMEOD BY GERALD HEWETT)

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FRANCIS "TOWSER" LANEY, Editor the #1 fanmag, Acolyte, doth write from his domicile at 1005 W 35 Pl, LA-7: The Imagi-Nation is populated by a bunch of drones, if they do not appreciate a monthly Voice enough to give with the material. It seems to me that any forum like this is bound to be more interesting if it comes out often enough so that there is good continuity in the discussions. I hope that your appeal for stuff met with sufficient response to warrant the 12 per year publication. (To date--2 wks after the distribution of the last Vom--not one new letter--save Laney's--has been rcvd.)

I'm willing enough to string along with our wandering corporal on fantasts, as an adequate term for what I was calling "fans". But I am afraid Gus is merely giving out with a classification of fantasts and ignoring the stefnists, and I'm wondering if perhaps he is not tending to ignore them, since his own interests seem largely fan or, rather, fantast. He is dead right when he points out that it is impossible to separate stefnists and fantasts--each character in our group is a blend of each in different proportions--however, it seems to me not impossible to classify them on the basis of their trends.

And I can see that Gus is rightfully puzzled over my motivation in trying to do all this "vaporizing about the make-up of our society". OK, chum, I'm just jamming with myself trying to make some sense out of the fact that so many self-termed fans are actually not interested in fantasy, or at least do not have enough interest in it so that one might truthfully call its pursuit a major avocation. Half my stefnistic writings in the past year have been stabs at this, to me, utterly fantastic fact.

Yes, Jack Speer has impressed me profoundly, Gus, but in a family jolonel like the de-nuded VOM, I fear I would have difficulty in explaining it all. Besides, I don't feud any more. I look forward to your return to LA, when, among other things like letting you loose in my books to make up for the inroads I've made in yours, I daresay we can have a lot of fun dissecting "Okie Jack".

I suggest that Joe Kennedy might perhaps be interested in seeing what the HOT JAZZ RECORD BOOK says about Raym Scott, whom it rather damns as a hybrid. I myself do not consider Scott good jazz/swing, but rather a surrealist mode of musical expression in a category by itself. I further consider that the questionable taste of Scott's publicity write-ups tends to prevent one from giving his music the serious consideration it would otherwise receive. This is not to say that I do not like many of his recordings--I most certainly do--but I question if they can be regarded other than as interesting experiments in musical expression.

(.)
The foregoing blank space indicates the moment of silence my typewriter and I observed as we sat in awe and wonder reading (again) Vox Pox. The cockles of my heart are crowing at the vast and huge amount of ego-boo all aimed at me. After all the experience 4e and I have gotten doing stuff for sick fans, I look forward with glee to the time when we can write up Crozetti's elephantiasis or "Tallulah's" change of life or Mel's cutting a tooth! We should be able to acquit ourselves nobly (though I doubt if we'd be acquitted by the rest of fnadom!). #

Questions JOHN

NITKA, 486 Kosciusko St, Bklyn 21, NY: Say, who the dickens is that guy, Kepner, I didn't like his article in VOM #39 any too well, and his his definitions almost floored me. I didn't or don't have time now, but I would like answer it. I don't think he is qualified by either experience or age to call collectors pack-rats as the collectors are the backbone of the present SF cycle and non-collectors who only read to dissemble or throw around assertions are the real trouble makers. Collectors are the ones who put a great deal of money and time into it and put effort and thought into writing articles and other worthwhile projects. Most of these young fellows aren't dry behind the ears yet. (Kepner is. We just lookt. He's as dry as a kite that's 3 martinis to the wind. And if U can make any sense out of that extemporaneous piece of whimsy, U're a better fan than we are, Unger DJinn!) The only reader with the valued background is a collecting reader, right? (Has Nitka a point here? Any protagonists?) #

WALT DUNKELBERGER, enjoying the distinction of having been polled by the Nat'l Fantasy Fan Fed'n as the "Fan Discovery of '44", takes a pole & jousts at judicial Jack Speer: In VOM #39 Jack Speer's letter offers a challenge to my veracity. Intended or not - I don't care to let it slip by. I'm very glad that Mr Speer agrees with me on the point that there can be no definition of obscenity. Any attempt at a definition would only be setting one's own prejudices and opinions up in opposition to another's...but somehow - possibly the way he said it - causes me to believe that Speer missed that the fact that that was the point I was making.

The question of censorship and rights of first class mail are the ones on which I seem to be challenged - so I'll be specific in my cases.

First - if Speer will reconsider the case he cited of censorship - he'll find that it is a case of plain military censorship in direct compliance with the expressed objectives of the military forces. If the same remarks had been made about an enemy town not yet captured the remarks would not have been censored.

Now to my specific instances - During the conversations about NUZ, The subject of sending nude "art" photos, cartoon books and similar items was discussed and I was informed that unless a definite complaint was made first class mail is never touched. It enjoys all the privileges for which it is intended: strictly personal and private. While any other class mail is open to "postal inspection" by any authorized mail handler. True that the government frequently acts as the complaining agent and maintains inspectors to catch such "violations" but they are instructed to stick to commercial mailings.

On many occasions I have received stories, pictures and other items that would be termed pornographic in charac-

ter thru the mail from the Pacific theatre of war. I brought three of these into the discussions. Each was from a different area (therefore different censor). Each contained some item that was obviously a flagrant violation of the obscenity ruling. (to be specific - a set of 18 photos depicting the "deflowering" of a virgin from approach thru the completion of the act in closeups with all of the choice phrases so dear to the type of individual who gloats over that sort of thing ...another set of photos was of a group of perverts taken in various poses with appropriate captions...the third was a set of stories). These items were taken from the bodies of Jap prisoners or dead or had been distributed by one means or another as propaganda.

Using these as specific cases it was pointed out to me that: 1/ they came in personal & private first class mail; 2/ Although censored - the censorship was military in nature and the items did not constitute anything of a military nature. 3/ Unless I wished to make a complaint about the matter the postal department weren't interested.

The whole purpose of the discussion was to show the complainant (in the case of NUZ) that she didn't have a case and that the postal department was not interested, unless she preferred to place the charges in a criminal court. The whole thing was dropped while in the informal state.

Sooo- if I may - obscenity cannot be defined and first class mail enjoys a privilege of personal and private distinction not granted to other classes of mail regardless of the "censorship" service.

So a word of warning might be appropos: If you intend publishing something of a "doubtful" nature be sure that only the right people get it. No complaint - no prosecution. #

initialletter
mailing--&

Bernard J. H. ... MD (Mimeografer's Devil) adresses his to Vom from the LASFS Clubroom (his practiclly his dwelling--adres):

It seems to me that in these latter years of the VoM dynasty the old girl isnt quite up to par. What has happened to those glorious issues with sixteen pages or more? (They have now become 8-to-the-par!) And what has happened to those wonderfull feuds that used to cause so much controversy? (The wonder-fool feuds became passé with the passing of the Feud-al System.) And (groan)the most horrible part of all is actually allowing the old rag to fall to sixth place- and tied with diablerie at that!! (Why, don't U think we're fit to be tied--with diablerie?) Have you no pride? (Plenty! We've pride into more fan affairs--!) Even though ye mag has dropped from first to sixth (bah, six rears its head), gotten thin as an Martian alley-cat (which is just one shade thinner than a Venusian aksis-cat), and stopped printing anything worth wasting mimeo ink on(present letter obviously no exception) (obviously) it still manages by some accident to have a few passable articles. The letter in the #37 by Fan Dunkleburger was well worth the effort, and the article by Bloch was excellent. Fraulien (hold that) (it's a pleasure) Tigrina in the current ish has a very nice little dittyin reply to Mr. Blochs letter, and I heartily agree with her. Should 4e acquire a wife, it would be an occasion throughout all fandom for great mourning-and for 4sJ too, not the woman. Who wants a wife, anyhow? Maybe you do need something to keep you company on those long winter evenings, but if you can think of anything better than a copy of Astounding, let me know, will you? (Yes; Amazing. It makes a bigger & better blaze.) #

PVT JOE

Gibson

reported on 15 Apr: So here I am in missive on a Heinie portable that has sides which I haven't touched a typer in some months, maybe a year. So here I am wheezing on a Chelsea and reporting on the activities of Gibson's Galactic Raiders Ml. We came into Krefeld behind the Infantry joes. We crossed the Rhine and have been going like a bat out of hell courtesy the Ninth Army ever since. We helped in the assault on Hanover. Now of course we're way the hell past Hanover. In fact we would like very much to visit Berlin. In case you don'tremember, I'm in heavy artillery. Only we've been kicking these heavy artillery pieces along like they wuz 105's. Now is that or is that not the way to win a war?

Things have been very quiet with us nevertheless. I now have a Jerry sub-machine gun that's the equivalent of our Tommy gun. No Luger though, dammit. Guess I'll have to knock out a damned machine-gun nest to get one of those.

Combat

really takes you out of contact of those groups who peddle the discussion on postwar peace and stuff. The civilians back home I guess are kept up pretty much on that, so youse fans must have plenty to talk about. I hated to see Roosevelt cash out at a time like this, but I guess that now the people won't be so inclined to depend so entirely on a national leader to make the peace decisions for them, and take a greater interest in seeing that they are made for the best.

Combat really takes you out of contact with the ways of civilized peoples, too, if there is such. I can imagine how us guys would be if we landed in the middle of Los Angeles right now. We'd walk into a beer joint, point at all the whiskey, stick a gun in the bartender's belly, and say "Verooten !" Whereupon we would proceed to liberate the godly nectar. All slaves of the Hollywood producers would be freed and treated with gusto, especially those more prominent and betterknown figures. (Such as Carolandis & Lana Turner?) Flatly speaking we would simply tear hell out of the place in the usual custom. Liberation is a wonderful thing.

What gripes my ??? is to hear some of these ????? Heinie civilians about a bunch of busted dishes.

The Stars and Stripes mentions that the Army bigwigs in Washington see the end of organized resistance by the Nazis in a matter of days. Those ????? should come out here and find out what the hell the score is. Those Nazi rats will be organizing patrols and bandit raids on us for

the next ten years. This is strictly Injun territory. (Five foregoing deletions--better known as searizations--were not made by either army or postal authorities.) #

Tuned for Terror,
#40, Rothman says
worthy of ranking with the best in music. While I am not wroth, man, I still disagree.

Robert Bloch

- author of the Weiradio program, Stay
discourses about phantomias; In Vom
in effect that fantastic music is not

Haven't read any articles on fantasy music, but I've heard of them and assume Rothman must have seen some. And as an aficionado of the stuff, I'd like to dispute his contentions.

I believe that fantasy music does rate with the best. By fantasy music I do not mean:

(a) atonality or dissonance in modern music
(b) music based on a fantastic theme which is used merely as an excuse for conventionalized scoring; such as is the case with Gounod's FAUST, Strauss's TILL EULENSPIEGEL, or Mendelssohn's MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. Even Wagner's great RING cycle contains little actual fantasy music compared to its preponderant bulk of straight operatic material.

(c) children's music based on fairy-tale or whimsy; items like Tchaikowsky's NUTCRACKER SUITE, Eric Coates' CINDERELLA, Ravel's MOTTER GOOSE SUITE, Humperdink's HANSEL AND GRETEL, Pierne's ENTRANCE OF THE LITTLE FAUNS, or THE SLEEPING BEAUTY BALLET (Tchaikowsky again).

(d) funeral marches, elegies, or pavannes are also to be eliminated from consideration.

What have we left?

I think there is still a great body of standard classical compositions that can be accepted as "fantasy music".... i.e., program music utilizing a weird theme and interpreting same in musical terms. And I think a mere consideration of titles and composers serves to reinforce my contention that this work ranks with the best.

Here's a partial list. I've confined it to RECORDED music, and for the sake of the morbidly curious I've placed an asterisk (*) behind the titles I personally esteem.

To begin with, there's Berlioz and his SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE...Debussy's AFTERNOON OF A FAUN...Dukas' SORCEROR'S APPRENTICE...De Falla's EL AMOR BRUJO, particularly the RITUAL DANCE OF FIRE...Grieg's Third Symphony ("ILIA MOUROMETZ")...good old Grieg's MARCH OF THE DWARFS and IN THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING* from PEER GYNT. Then there's Gustav Holst's THE PLANETS, with NEPTUNE, THE MYSTIC, MARS THE BRINGER OF WAR* and the incomparable URANUS, THE MAGICIAN.

Liadov's ENCHANTED LAKE and KIKIMORA...Loeffler's PAGAN POEM and his recorded SONGS...Gustav Mahler's SONG OF THE EARTH...Moussorgsky's A NIGHT ON A BARE

MOUNTAIN* and GNOMES and THE WITCH from PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION.

Prokofieff has given us the FIENDS INFERNAL* bit from his LOVE FOR THREE ORANGES...Rachmaninoff (the Russians love this stuff, as you can observe from this listing) offers THE ISLE OF THE DEAD in particular. Ravel's DAPHNIS ET CHLOE* in both suites 1 and 2 is weird. Respighi's PINES OF ROME contains PINES NEAR A CATACOMB and the sonorous PINES OF THE APPIAN WAY*...Rimsky-Korsakow's ANTAR SYMPHONY*(NUMBER 2)...COQ D'OR...and of course, SCHERERAZADE, should be on any list considering the field.

Sibelius has contributed THE SWAN OF TUONELA*, TAPIOLA, LEMMINKAENEN'S HOMEWARD JOURNEY, EN SAGA, and THE OCEANIDES. Richard Strauss' TOD UND VERKLARUNG is nice, particularly the "TOD" part.

And no list would be complete without Stravinsky's RITE OF SPRING*, FIREBIRD* and PETROUCHKA*, as well as his HISTOIRE DU SOLDAT, which is a bit more extreme.

Our own Deems Taylor has composed THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS*...in modern music we have the THINGS TO COME themes, as any sf-fan knows...and of course we mustn't forget Tchaikowsky's SWAN LAKE BALLET (particularly the NUMBER ONE SCENE*) his FRANCESCA DA RIMINI and the MANFRED SYMPHONY.

This cursory listing does not pretend to be at all comprehensive, even in the field of currently available recordings...but it does, I feel, demonstrate that many of our leading composers have produced major works in the field of fantasy music; works conceded to be their "best" or ranking with their "best".

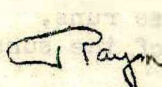
(Anybody wondering why I didn't mention VALSE TRISTE or DANS MACABRE in this listing can go crawl off and die: I think both of these numbers are terrific letdowns in terms of fantasy music when you compare their program notes with the actual themes. VALSE TRISTE is pleasantly melancholy music...DANS MACABRE is green and stunted corn. In my opinion, neither can be legitimately included)

In closing, before Rothman or anyone else has a hemorrhage, I will publicly admit what they probably suspect -- my favorite composer is George Gershwin. #

Michael ROSENBLUM, #1 Anglofan, reports a personal conversation with OLAF STAPLEDON!



THE FINAL SPEAKER IN A SERIES OF SIX LECTURES ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL; A DELEGATE ORGANISATION OF BODIES INTERESTED IN PROBLEMS OF PEACE; WAS NONE OTHER THAN DR W. OLAF STAPLEDON; POSSESSOR OF A "REMARKABLE SCIENTIFIC IMAGINATION" & WELL KNOWN TO SCIENCE FICTION FANS. HE SPOKE ON "RECONSTRUCTION & WORLD REVOLUTION". AS I HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN THE ORGANISATION OF THESE LECTURES, I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY OF HAVING A FEW WORDS WITH STAPLEDON BOTH BEFORE & AFTER HIS LECTURE, BESIDES GETTING A NUMBER OF COPIES OF HIS BOOKS AUTOGRAPHED. IN APPEARANCE STAPLEDON IS SLIGHT, ABOUT 5 FT 8 INS TALL, FRESH COMPLEXTIONED WITH VIGOROUS UPSTANDING HAIR OF AN IRON-GREY COLOUR & LOOKING ABOUT HALF HIS AGE. HE SPEAKS FAIRLY RAPIDLY, WITH A GOOD FLOW OF LANGUAGE & HAS NO PARTICULAR MANNERISMS. ON MENTIONING SCIENCE FICTION, HE ASKED ME IF I KNEW WALTER H GILLINGS, & THEN WE HAD A BRIEF THREE-CORNERED CONVERSATION WITH PROFESSOR JOHN W HARVEY OF LEEDS UNIVERSITY AS TO WHETHER ANY OF THE WORKS OF H.G. WELLS HAD INFLUENCED STAPLEDON'S CONCEPTS. STAPLEDON THOUGHT NOT & REFLECTED THAT HE HAD ONLY RECENTLY READ MUCH OF WELLS FOR THE FIRST TIME. HE ALSO DEPRECIATED HIS "LAST MEN IN LONDON" AS A HURRIEDLY WRITTEN WORK HE WASN'T FOND OF & TIME PREVENTED ME FROM DISAGREEING. A LATER CONVERSATION INCLUDED A MENTION THAT HE HAD RECENTLY DINED WITH P.E. CLEATOR, FOUNDER OF THE BRITISH INTERPLANETARY SOCIETY, THAT HE DIDNT CONSIDER HIMSELF PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN SCIENCE FICTION, BUT PREFERRED TO WORK IN WHATEVER WAYS HE COULD FOR THE CREATING & ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORLD-MIND & WORLD CONSIDERATION. WHEN I TOLD HIM MOST SCIENCEFICTIONISTS WOULD AGREE WITH HIM & CONSIDERED STF AS A TOOL TO THAT END, HE WAS A LITTLE INCREDULOUS, I'M AFRAID.

 of 117 Hamilton St, Live Oak, Fla, is in a diplomatic mood, having just rcvd his hischool diploma & completed arrangements to "live in a cultural atmosphere with the resources of a mammoth Library at my command."

I am thinking about the great influence that stf and fandom have had on my life. Like most fans, I was a natural introvert, and in my case unfavorable circumstances heightened my tendency to live alone. Now, I don't want to pursue this "emotional stripe-tease" too far, and give the gory details; suffice to say that science-fiction was at one time the breath of life to me, the wondrous fairy-land in which a riotous imagination might revel, the ideal realm of escape from a world that held little in the way of satisfaction otherwise. For years my reading was almost totally confined to the various stf mags, with the exception of Astounding which I did not read regularly until later, and The Phantom Detective. As I grew up, I began to realize that this sort of one-sidedness was not good for the building-up of the proverbial "broad cultural background" that my excursions into fantasy led me to desire, but I am convinced that my intense and prolonged reading of stf and weird did me more good than I would have received if I had read exclusively Western or Detective in the same period of time.

Now, there are a great many books that I intend to read before I die, and as I go along I will undoubtedly discover others. My desire now is to gain as much knowledge as possible (during my span of life) about just what has gone before, and what is happening in the present. If my greatest hopes for the success of my serious poetry come about, I will be able to do this; otherwise, I will devote my limited reading time to the classics of literature, rather than fritter away my time with contemporary trash (and, much as it grieves my heart to do it, I must of course class a great amount of stf under this heading).

Forry, I used to feel more sympathy for your stfanaticism than I do now. A diet of nothing but stf is the lesser of several evils, but is still an evil to be avoided.

Well, to run briefly over my fan history. Even before I became active, I felt that my favorite literature was of profound significance, and I felt a sense of kinship with other readers. I enjoyed a marvelous sensation of belonging to a group, of having access to the type of fiction that I was most suited to read. I had seen a copy of Sun Spots and The Alchemist also when I sent Tucker 50¢ in January '41 for a subscription to Lez. That is what marked the turning point, my metamorphosis from a passive reader to an active fan. Having letters published in AMAZING and Lez, joining the numerous stfclubs sponsored by the prozines, and opening a lengthy correspondence with Harry Schmarje are highlights of my earlier period. I was stenciling the first issue of Scientifun the Sunday afternoon of December 7 when the news about the bombing of Pearl Harbor and Oahu Island came in over the air. Scientifun ran its brief and somewhat nauseating course, and died ignobly. My comparative poverty of Raym-published fanzines is due entirely to the fact that I have never owned a mimeograph, and frequently—habitually—could not afford to buy materials. I earned money to publish the first Scientifun by climbing the tall pecan trees in my yard, shaking off the nuts, then gathering them laboriously and selling them on the market at the prevailing pound-rate. Now, isn't that touching?

I have always corresponded fitfully, sometimes regularly. Schmarje and I, at the height of our youthful verbosity, exchanged 6-page letters almost weekly. Now I wish that a great many letters that I have written in the past would obligingly crumble into ashes, but, alas, that is not to be.

Fanning now occupies considerably more space in my modest budget than formerly—yearly renewals in FAPA, NFFF, etc—but I read much less stf than I did formerly. In recent months I have even neglected ASTOUNDING. I am not proud of this latter failing, and hope to make up for it in the future. The stf-world is simply no longer adequate for me as an all-in-all. This apparent about-face of philosophy is not a recent and clear-cut turnabout, as one might be led to believe upon reading my recent writings in an idealistic vein; I believe that stfnists are potentially capable of forming an overall organization to help mould the future, and I am still heartily enthusiastic about Richard Tooker's liberal ideas. But as time goes on I am getting an increasingly clear picture of what can be done and what can not in the immediate future.

The Cosmic Circle was, of course, the most momentous cycle of my fan career. I have set forth my stand in FAPA and elsewhere; no need to rehash it now; I will only reiterate that I think it would have done more good than harm had I been in control from the start. People are still asking me what became of Degler, and I am still telling them that I do not know. I last saw him in August, 1944, and have not heard from him since.

I do sometimes hear from Harry Schmarje. At last report he was attending the University of Iowa and still thinking of his old pals, Mort Handler, Charles McNutt, and the Raym.

Well, I have gone through a lot of emotional plunges and intellectual flights during my fan years, and I have made a few friends who are worthy of the name, several associates whose correspondence I welcome, and two or three enemies who simply have no use for me and my writing. One may classify an "average" fan only within very broad and hazy outlines, but I feel that I differ from most fans because of my intense interest in poetry. I have studied English poetry extensively since the Fall of 1943, and I am as familiar with Tennyson, Keats, Shelley, Swinburne, Rossetti, etc., as I once was with Heinlein, Wellman, Kummer, Kuttner, or Hawkins. I have been delighted to discover that, in the best poetry, there is frequently expressed ideals worthy of the most forward-looking scientific-tionist. Take Shelley, with his burning idealism for bettering mankind; take Tennyson, read his Locksley Hall with its description of air combat in the future, and the optimistic note

"Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

Poe is probably best known to sfanatics; and his moody and utterly fantastic poems are enough to thrill any lover of fantasy. And there are weird jewels of fanciful description, not only in Sterling, but in Wilde, Rossetti, and most of the others. Think what a fine drawing Finlay could do to illustrate this stanza from Rossetti's "Love's Nocturne":

Poets' fancies all are there:
There the elf-girls flood with wings
Valleys full of plaintive air;
There breathe perfumes; there in rings
Whirl the foam-bewildered springs;
Siren there
Winds her dizzy hair and sings.

Such is the bent of the Raym in these closing days of the European war. Fandom knows practically nothing of my serious verse yet; all I have presented thus far consists largely of whimsicalities and parodies.

This letter has been very inadequate and much more loosely-constructed than I hoped it would be; still, I believe that it contains the essence of the reminiscent, philosophic, perhaps sentimental mood in which I find myself. Originally intended to fill your need, it has in part filled mine, for to me the past is never dead, and, since congenial souls are few, I am glad to send it on. Within a short time a radical change in my environment will take place; I have felt the need of writing something to mark off my long period of uncertainty and adolescence, and what better audience than the gentlemen of fandom? For I do like and respect the fans, and can number among my well-wishers names like Ackerman, Wollheim, Shaw, Wilimczyk, Warner, and Fred Baker. I like and respect the fans because they number men like Joseph Gilbert, Richard Tooker, and Bill Temple, whose political and personal philosophies would do credit to any citizen of any nation. Yes, and because fandom contains thinkers like Jimmy Kepner, and poets like Lowndes and Chauvenet, and artists like Widenbeck and Hunt. And I am pleased to say that I have made up with Lane; simply by not making any more references to the injustice I still feel that he did me, and that we now correspond in a cordial vein.

Faces—names—events—magazines—tempests in a teapot. Memories bring no bitterness, only a slow smile, and far-gazing eyes, and perhaps a sigh. I would like to meet you all personally, to get your slant on life, to exchange ideas with you. I would like to talk to you and to help you to see that I am not so naive as some of critics have made me out. What lies beyond death? Since I do not know, it is my desire to live the best life possible, to broaden my intellectual horizons to the farthest limits, to help others who have an instinct for good, and to write the best that I know how, to popularize art and science and to over-simplify if necessary in order to attain this worthy end. It seems to me the height of absurdity that youth is not taught the basic principles of the laws and workings of our universe until, in adolescence, they enroll for courses in Physics or Chemistry. The laws of inertia should be taught in the first grade, the structure of matter not much further along, and all the details of sex that a child's mind is capable of understanding should be given him in a natural manner at whatever age he inquires. #

WIDNER, Cpl. of the Climatic Research Lab, Lawrence, Mass, gives hel
to the belle from Bx 13: Tigrina is full of fertilizer. Death is
not a goal. It is merely an annoying phenomenon connected with life
Like the CQ coming along & putting out the lights when you're in the

(I'm enclosing a small sub)

middle of an interesting story in Astounding.

As EEEvans has so ably put forth in TIME-BINDER, unmitigated selfishness, such as T displays, is no guarantee of happiness. In fact, it is usually a guarantee of unhappiness. Since none of us remotely approach the genius required to change the present fubar state of affairs directly, but do have enuf intelligence to see that it is fubar, about the only course left to us is to concentrate on producing more of the kind of citizens who would constitute a decent civilization if given half a chance. Four or five Widners can accomplish a heck of a lot more than one. Anyone who finds children a burden & an addition to the struggle is a self-admitted failure. It is the sign of a maladjusted personality, a quitter, & a coward.

Whether she likes it or not, the truth is that Tigrina is maladjusted & should see a psychiatrist. She has overcompensated for a too-strict upbringing to such an extent that her views on life are decidedly warped.

However, I think she is basically all right, & could turn into a definitely worthwhile person if she would drop some of her queer fixations while they are still mostly talk. I don't think she really believes most of her inane chatter, but she can kid herself into it if she keeps it up long enuf.

Incidentally, the old adage "Like father, like son," has a great deal of truth in it. It doesn't mean that the child must follow in the identical groove of the parents (it would be a great pity if it did!), but will turn out to be in the same general pattern. T thinks her case refutes this, but it really proves it. Her parents had a screwball iron-bound outlook, & so has she, albeit she peers from another window. Not only is there the influence of heredity acting on a child, but the even more powerful force of environment. When J.B. Watson, the psychologist, said that he could take an infant, & bring it up to be a useful citizen, a murderous criminal, or a hopeless crackpot, he wasn't kidding. If Tigrina would take the trouble to read a few of the studies on genius & heredity, she would discover that the best guarantee of being successful in life, is to have parents who were successful. & I will lay 8 to 5 with anybody, that one or more of my children will have an interest in stfantasy, without me trying to shove it down their gullets - which would be the surest way to make them hate it....

& for a parting shot, Tigrina - if you think that "One's only ultimate goal is death." - you can attain that goal any time you wish, with one swell foop!

Gus Willmorth's calm & logical remarks are a refreshing oasis in the welter of ravings & feeble nonsense. His classifications of fen is about as sensible an approach to the problem as I've yet seen. Check & double check on his comments anent sex.

Add Raymond Scott titles: TWILITE IN TURKEY, BOY SCOUT IN SWITZERLAND, & CLARINET IN A HAUNTED HOUSE. Larry Clinton's "Studies" weren't so bad either. E.G. STUDY IN BROWN; --BLUE; --RED; --SURREALISM. Topping either of these, however, are the waxings of Joe Marsala, particularly MIDNITE. Distilled jazz, you might call it.

Rosco wrights a good epistle. #

A NOTE FROM "DUNK": The recent "air" that Military Censorship got in the press and on the air should adequately take care of the question raised a couple of issues ago in VOM.

Remember--they decided that anything was "censorable" only if military security was involved. That should just about take care of that problem permanently. Of course there'll always be a few "Mother Grundys" who'll take things into their own hands. #

PAR AVION de M'SIEU MILTY dans PARIS: DEAR VOIX DE L'IMAGINATION:

TAKE NOTE OF THAT. IN ISSUE NO. 39 YOU CALL IT VOICI L'IMAGINATION, WHICH MEANS "HERE IS THE IMAGINATION." WHICH MAY BE TRUE, BUT IT AIN'T YOUR TITLE. (C'etait un "pun". --Pun-dit) ALL OF WHICH DEMONSTRATES THAT I AIN'T BEEN STUDYING FRENCH AT THE RED CROSS CLUB FOR NOTHING. (U mean theyve actually charged U? Grande skandale!)

I ATTENDED A MOVIE GIVEN AS A WEEKLY EVENT BY "LE CERCLE DU CINEMA" AT LA SALLE DES ARTS ET METIERS. AND OF ALL THINGS, LAST NIGHT THEY SHOWED TWO FANTASIES: "LE CABINET DU DOCTEUR CALIGARI", AND A FILM DATED 1921 CALLED "NOSFERATU LE VAMPIRE." THE LATTER IS A GERMAN VERSION OF DRACULA. THAT IS, I ASSUME IT IS GERMAN, BUT THERE WERE SOME TITLES, HURRIEDLY SKIPPED OVER, WHICH APPEARED TO BE IN SOME LANGUAGE SUCH AS HUNGARIAN OR ROUMANIAN. AND FOR THE FIRST TIME I SAW PICTURES OF THE ACTUAL CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS OF TRANSYLVANIA. PRETTY RUGGED PLACE.

"THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI" IS MUCH MORE FANTASTIC THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE. I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST A STRAIGHT HORROR PICTURE, BUT THE SETTINGS AND ATMOSPHERE MAKE IT A MOST UNUSUAL IMAGINATIVE WORK. THE ONLY THING I'VE SEEN LIKE IT IS "THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER," A SURREALIST MOVIE I SAW IN NEW YORK A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO. THAT WAS PROBABLY THE MOST IMAGINATIVE THING EVER DONE IN THE MOVIES. I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT, BUT IT WAS SHORE INTERESTING.

SPEAKING OF IMAGINATIVE THINGS, THE OPERA HERE DOES A FINE PIECE OF WORK ON BERLIOZ' "THE DAMNATION OF FAUST." IT'S MORE OF AN ORATORIO WITH COSTUMES AND SCENERY THAN AN OPERA, AND MUCH OF THE FANTASTIC SCENERY IS ACCOMPLISHED BY CONSTANTLY-CHANGING PROJECTIONS ON THE BACKDROP.

I WILL BE SENDING SHORTLY A COUPLE OF FRENCH MAGAZINES AND A COMIC BOOK. THE LATTER IS A THING CALLED "LES HOMMES IMMORTELS", AND CONCERNS A LOST CIVILIZATION IN THE ANDES MOUNTAINS ABOUT THE SAME STYLE AS BRICK BLADFORD. WHEN I BOUGHT THE THING THE LADY AT THE NEWSSTAND SAID "C'EST POUR LES ENFANTS," AND I SAID TO HER "JE SUIS UN ENFANT." AH, THESE CRAZY AMERICAINS. #

V O M

#42

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