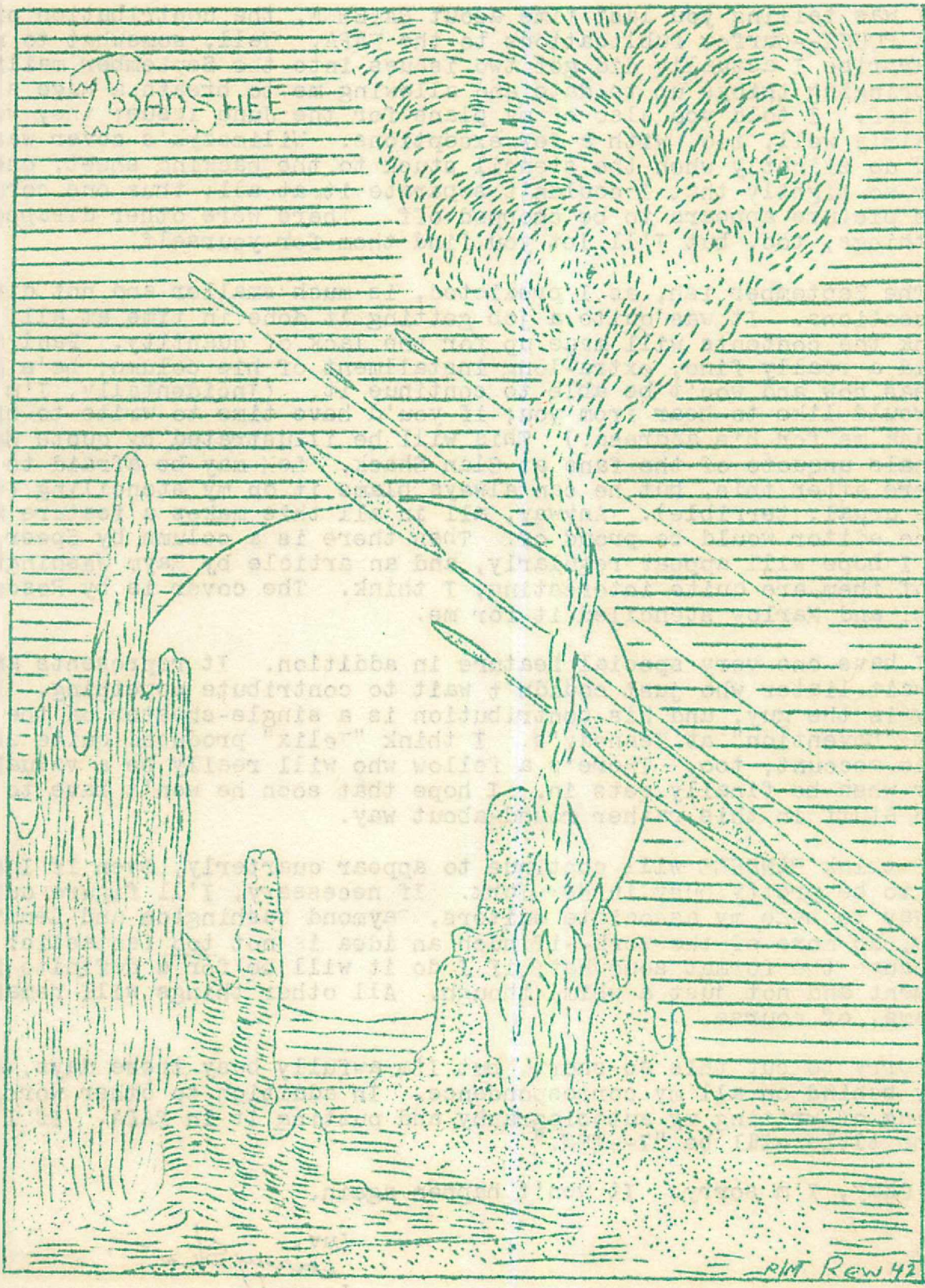


6 of year



1301 State Street
Schenectady 4, New York
September, 1944

Dear Joe,

I was telling you last time about BANSHEE, the contribution of WANDON HOUSE--Curfew Publications to the FAPA. Well, somewhat to my own surprise I actually did get two issues into the September mailing, thus bringing things up to date and allowing me to breath a huge sigh of relief. I told you also of my plans for the June issue; they worked out fairly well, too, with a few exceptions. Wilimczyk's cover was messed up slightly when the stencil stuck to the backing sheet, one corner so tightly that I couldn't separate it at all; thus one corner of the picture appears to be chopped off. There were other disappointing things, too, but I'll let you find them for yourself.

The September ish, as I predicted, is much smaller and not divided into sections. It was quite a job getting it done in time at all. But I think the contents will make up for the lack of quantity. Paul Spencer did a really fine, extra-long installment of his column; he's gone overseas now and won't be able to continue it. (Incidentally, I'm sure Paul would like to hear from you; if you'd have time to write to him just ask me for his address.) This will be illustrated by quote Marlow originals unquote of the fans at Slan Shack. Lem may be afraid to go up there after this, but he can always blame it on my stenciling (which is, as usual, terrible). Anyway, all in all this makes a feature any fanzine editor would be proud of. Then there is a column by Speer, which I hope will appear regularly, and an article by Raym Washington. Both of them are quite interesting, I think. The cover is by Rosco E. Wright, and Marlow stenciled it for me.

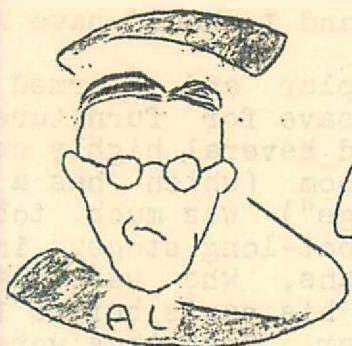
I have one very special feature in addition. It represents an FAPA wait-lister who just couldn't wait to contribute something. Russ Wilsey is the guy, and his contribution is a single-sheeter on the recent "Dovention" at Kennedy's. I think "Felix" produced quite an enjoyable account, too. There's a fellow who will really be a valuable member when he finally gets in. I hope that soon he won't have to send in his stuff in this rather round-about way.

I think BANSHEE will continue to appear quarterly, even if I am going to be pretty busy in New York. If necessary, I'll figure out some way to make my associate editors, Raymond Washington and Leonard Marlow, do more of the work--if such an idea is not too fantastic! I may change the format somewhat; if I do it will be for a definite improvement and not just a whim, though. All other things will remain the same, of course.

Sorry to cut this so short, but I'm awfully busy these days, and am way behind on all my correspondence. In addition to other work, I'm thinking of writing my autobiography and putting it in FAPA. If I do it, the title will be "I--TGM."

Okay, I'm sorry. It won't happen again.

Luv,
Larry Shaw
Larry



WANSONG

of the *Spence*

Concluding-----Quibblings

BY

PFC. PAUL SPENCER

Yes, after this installment your patience will no longer be taxed, nor your intelligence insulted, by my rantings. Comforting thought, isn't it? No doubt you can guess the reason for this column's demise; before the time you read this (long before, if Shaw follows his past schedule!) I will have left the USA--for, incidentally, the first time. After many false alarms, I am finally going overseas, and expect to lose all contact with the FAPA and most of my contact with fandom in general. This is being written at Selfridge Field, Michigan, one of those places where they help you kill time until the boat docks.

I was pleased to be sent here, because I had heard rumors of notable fan activity in Michigan, and had some notion of getting in on it. Well, I succeeded in getting to Slan Shack, and while this did not result in a rise in Michigan's activity quota, it means at least a slight increase in mine, for behold below a lengthy account of my experiences at that far-famed and legend-haunted domicile.

* * *

I arrived in Battle Creek around 10 PM, phoned Slan Shack, and was told by Walt that Counts would call for me in Asthmatic Anna (this unselfish gesture on Walt's part was no doubt noted by the Recording Angel). In order to identify myself, I dashed up and down in front of the bus station waving a copy of FFM, much to the puzzlement and even fear of the passersby. Just as a nearby cop was starting in my direction with a sarcastic expression on his face, a car pulled up, bulging with slen. Something, which proved to be Walt's head, was thrust out a window, and hollered to me to jump in. Which I did. Present in the car were Liebscher's body (alive and feebly kicking), Mari Beth Wheeler, Ed and Mrs. Counts, and several small slen whom I never identified but suspect to be Countses. I had been happily holding hands with Mari Beth for several minutes when Walt asked me to let go, as he wanted to

blow his nose. Darn my night-blindness anyway--and I should have known that La Wheeler's hands wouldn't be so clammy.

In due course of time we arrived at 25 Poplar and stormed the gates. The living room proved to be deserted save for furniture, a piano, a radio-phonograph, three bookcases, and several highly chromatic originals. In the dining room (which has a sign over the door reading "Royal Gorge") was much tobacco smoke, emanating mainly from a foot-long stogey in the mouth of E. E. ("Th' Ol' Foo") Evans, who was playing poker with Ashley, Counts (back at his cards before I got through the front door), and Tucker. Greetings were exchanged, and I declined an offer to be dealt in on the game (cards bore me; moreover, entirely too much money was changing hands--I later found out that Evans had lost some \$70, but he promises to reimburse the NFFF when he



gets a chance. Suddenly I was forced to shield my eyes from a frightful glare, under which was Abby Lu, brandishing a bottle of coke under my nose and urging me to have a snort. Which I forthwith did. Thelma Morgan put in an appearance, but, having the mis'ry, soon retired.

I was not long allowed to watch the NFFF funds melt away from under Evans' clutching fingers, for Walt soon seized me and, along with Mari Beth, carried me off to the second floor to see his collection. In Chanticleering, Walt's hangout, I was dazzled by umpty-ump gorgeous originals by Paul, Finlay, St. John, et al. As I was testing the paint on a beautiful MacCauley, Walt called to my attention a bookcase beside the bed (does he read himself to sleep, I wonder?). Uttering feeble cries of rapture, I fell upon my knees before the hallowed treasures: bound sets of Unknown and FFM--a complete John Taine--"Sinister Barrier" in book form--"Darkness and Dawn"--and many more reasons why I envy Walt. But I was not allowed to gloat for long; "Come on, Faul," says Liebscher, "I want to show you my books."

"Your books?" I shrilled. "You mean--you mean, these don't count?" Silently Liebscher dragged me into Shottle Bop (the attic) and stood me before a long line of bookshelves crammed, stuffed, overflowing with all the fantasy books you've ever heard of, and plenty more besides. Vaguely conscious that the other walls were lined with magazines and that more magazines were piled on tables and on the floor, I fell to drooling over the luscious volumes before me, as Walt rubbed his hands together gleefully, and Mari Beth extolled the virtues of "After the Afternoon." Oh, my, what bitter joy to paw through those serried volumes of imaginative epics!

Finally I was persuaded to go downstairs again, where Walt insisted on playing for me his composition "American Futurama." I, being so injudicious as to praise it and liken it to the music of George Gershwin, was forced to listen to a recording of Oscar Levant playing Gershwin's piano concerto. During the performance, Tucker set up some weird apparatus before me and set off a blinding explosion. I strongly fear he now has my soul inside that little black box.



After this harrowing experience, and as the womenfolk scurried off to their lairs, we men (no comments from the gallery, please) gathered in the Zoo (living room) for a bit of gum-beating. We talked until three AM or later, and I doubt that, after we left the original subject of the NFFF, a single even remotely rational statement was made. The fireworks started with a Probability Zero (and I do mean zero) of Al's,

and developed into a discussion of Time. More new ideas and thought-variant conceptions were introduced than in all the Tremaine Astoundings and Hornig Wonders combined. I'd love to transcribe that discussion here, but I understand Ashley has copyrighted it for a Lez article, under the sonorous title "Slobwise in Time; or, At Bay with the Ages."

We retired bleary-eyes, thankful that the next day was Sunday and we could sleep late (Abby Lu had said something about eight o'clock, but we just laughed at her).

Well, I slept in the Temple of Th' Ol' Foo--that is, I tried to sleep. But there's always a catch in Atrocity Al's hospitality; in this case it was the bed springs. ((Insert by E. E. Evans: I'll have you know I slept on the floor, without benefit of any springs at all. That Spencer chap has a nerve.)) These springs gave forth a tinny wheeze every time I breathed; now, that gets nerve-wracking after the first couple of hours, and you see the dawn in with foam dribbling from your lips. At least, I d'd--loathsome picture, isn't it?

Along about 10:30 we crawled groggily to our feet, dressed, and sallied forth into Royal Gorge, where food of every variety awaited voracious slen. I, accustomed to a light breakfast, satisfied myself with fruit juice, cereal, milk, toast mit jam, and doughnuts--much to Abby Lu's horror. Jack and Pfc. Tyrone were making goo-goo eyes at each other, that being their wedding day. Walt, the unromantic reprobate, fell into the spirit of things (or was it the sewer?) with some dirty jokes. More goo-goo eyes passed between Tucker and Mari Beth. (Contemplate that sentence for a while; doesn't it make your blood run cold?)

Shortly after breakfast the hallowed precincts were invaded by hordes of heathen--wedding guests. The Spence, as always in the presence of normality, became uncomfortable, and fled to the refuge of the morning's funnies. Ultimately came the big moment: Walt seated himself at the piano and struck up Wagner's Wedding March; the bride and bridegroom came forth, both shivering with awe, and were solemnly united. Since everyone else kissed the bride, I decided not to lose out, and finally succeeded in catching her and holding her still long enough to satisfy my depraved lust. Shortly after, Jack and Ty vanished to be seen no more that day.

The unbelievers gradually dribbled away, leaving us to our antics. Ensued a moving drama by Liebscher and Tucker; a prehistoric play about Neanderthalers, spoken entirely in Neanderthalese. If you haven't heard Liebscher and Tucker talk Neanderthalese, you can't imagine what it's like, which is perhaps a mercy. But it ran something like this, and I hope I'm getting paid by the word:

L.: Ugh!
T.: Ugh!

L.: Ugh-ugh!
T.: Ugh-ugh-ugh!
L.: Ugh!
T.: Ugh-ugh!
L.: Ugh-ugh!
T.: Ugh-ugh-ugh!
L.: Ugh!



ABBY LU



TUCKER

T.: Ugh!

And so on ad nauseam. Some attempt was made to drag Al into it as a female, but for unstated reasons he did not feel suited to the part.

It was at about this time that I left, which may or may not be significant.

However, I was daring enough to return the following weekend, and to my dismay found lurking at Slan Shack the Horror out of Ziff-Davis, Frnk Robinson. Oh, my. Pumping my hand, it leered and whispered evilly, "Was ist mehr schön als Kulturleben?" Was, indeed?

As Frnk retired to Royal Gorge for the usual poker-game, Walt and I filled our arms with albums of records, and nearly wore out the phonograph playing Wagnerian excerpts, Ravel's eery "La Valse," the Waltz Movement from "Der Rosenkavalier," De Falla's "Nights in the Gardens of Spain," ktp. Then once more I was dragged Chanticleeringward, and parked myself before the books there, and panted with desire. Jack showed up with some of his unpublished drawings, which called forth more droolings; Frnk snuck in and started explaining How We Do It Up At Ziff-Davis. Abby Lu stuck in her head and was not allowed to get away; I dragged from her the secret of the next Lensman story, and goshwowboyoboy, I can hardly wait! And in the wee sma' hours we drifted off to beddy-bye, I this time with Liebscher, who didn't quite succeed in kicking me onto the floor.

Next morning Frankie emerged in stocking feet from Artesian Well (Jack's room) and beckoned me to follow him. So we tiptoed downstairs, through Royal Gorge (shuddering as we passed the door macabrely labelled "We Never Found Out"), and into the Nitrosyncretic Lab ("She works here"), better known to pagans as the kitchen. There, to make no bones about it, we raided the icebox and adjacent cupboards; Abby Lu walked in on us, but let us get away with the swag, seeing as how it was in our stomachs.



FRNK

As far as I recall, I spent the rest of the morning talking with Frankie, who took on the hopeless task of convincing me that Palmer is a right guy. Evans, come to think of it, managed to get a few words in edgewise, and permitted us to read some amusing letters from Doc Smith.

All too soon, traintime rolled around. Frnk haunted me down to the station, and with deep emotion (what emotion, it were rude to inquire) I bid him and Slan Shack farewell.

Not for very long, however; two weeks later I, not knowing when enough's enough, once more imposed on the Ashleys' hospitality. Since this thing is quite lengthy enough as it is, I cannot do more than mention Al's vain endeavors to bind his fanzines in loose-leaf notebooks (I'd grab a mag eagerly out of his hands, he'd grab it back, we'd tussle, and rrrrip!)--Walt laughing fit to kill at the wrong places in a book review I read to him--my beating Thelma into sewing on a button for me--Ashley imitating a monkey! (it haunts me in my nightmares)--and my wild spree with the record collection when I was left alone save for tone-deaf Thelma. Suffice it that Slan Shack and the Slan Shackers gave me the time of my life. In all seriousness, I shall always feel indebted to the gang for their hospitality and good fellowship. A grand bunch of people, no getting around it.

* * *

And now, in my characteristic hackneyed fashion, I proceed to Review the Mailing. Any resemblance to intelligent comments is entirely accidental.

On top of the pile I discover FAN SLANTS. Lessee what's within... Oh, yes, one of the mailing's highlights, Wollheim's "The Origin of Fandom." Interesting, and crammed with information hitherto unknown to me. But what about the Terrestrial Fantascience Guild? And then around '37 Lou Kuslan sent out a hekto'd sheet announcing an abortive something called, I believe, the American Fantasy Association--was that ever more than a name? ((Not much more, anyway; the first--March, 1938 --issue of the official AMERICAN FANTASY MAGAZINE, edited by Tsurasi and carrying a lead article by Acting President Wiggins, was never even completed. --Larry)) And here I find Laney--yes, it's Laney--talking deprecatingly about "the obscene argot of the gutter." This, I suppose, is sheer schizophrenia. The litho memorial to the LASFS--prema-
 ture, one is happy to note--interests perverted me mainly by reason of that beautiful emblem on the tombstone: Is that actually used by the club, or is it just something dreamed up by the artist? ((The former. --LTS)) In any event, it's splendid. Yeah, the gal's nice too, but my Puritan blood still objects. Mr. Brown, you are a man of remarkable--of all too rare--literary discernment. I quote: "'The Voyage of the Elerkentwangle' is a sure bet for any 'fanthology'." Remind me to include you in my will. Moreover, Von Blipstein is seriously considering sparing you when he wipes out humanity. (Wisecracks are in order.) ((That will leave just Mr. Brown, Von Blipstein, and The Spence, won't it? You asked for it. --Von Shawstein))

THE PHANTAGRAPH's point about literature being bunk is weak, to say the least. "One With the Wind" is a curious example to give of fine literature--straw man, I'd say. I feel that there is so much really fine literature and valuable non-fiction that no one can hope to read it all. What I try to do is to get the part that is most essential and which interests me most. I read fantasy because I like fantasy, but I don't like it so well I could get along on a steady diet of it. Even if I could "get along," it'd be unhealthy. The author of this article seems to consider general literature a sort of sideline to the pursuit of fantasy; actually, fantasy should, I think, be considered one facet of literature--in our case the most interesting, but not warranting neglect of the other facets. McLaughlin is certainly promising, whatever Tuturian lurks behind the name--"The Silence" in particular was fine.

I'm grateful to Ashley for publishing BLACK AND WHITE: but it merely serves to convince me that Speer's case is hopeless. His article is so silly it simply proves that his anti-Negro feeling rests on an emotional rather than a logical basis. Incidentally, I recall one of my teachers in junior high school predicting that all Americans will be light brown a century or so hence; steel yourself for a blow, Jack: I did not find the idea unpleasant! Actually, however, the probability of extensive interbreeding seems slight even if it did matter. And after all, if you oppose the mating of blacks and whites you can no doubt prove that the Anglo-Saxon race or the Teutonic race, or whatever race you think you belong to (see "Ancestral Voices"), is superior to one or another different white race, and that hence that inferior race should be segregated and treated as sub-human. But why argue? It won't affect Speer's opinion.

ARCADIA, as written by Honig, is rather on the vicious side; as edited by Watson, it is execrable. Anyone who will accept material sent to him in good faith for publication and insert sarcastic remarks showing the author in an unflattering light is violating a fundamental



MARI BETH

law of publishing ethics. Public apologies are in order.

READER AND COLLECTOR's assortment of Hodgson eulogies is interesting, and a welcome relief from the anti-hiss campaign; more particularly, it is wickedly tantalizing. However, Derleth has decided to publish, someday, a Hodgson omnibus, wherefore let there be libations poured in his honor!

TOWARD TOMORROW continues to be good, though I'd like to see more material of the type requested editorially in No. 1--1. e., articles seriously considering problems of the future, scientific, sociological, esthetic, or what have you. "Born on Earth" is well written (except for a few slips like "an Utopia" and "to wetly gasp"), but somewhat anticlimatic. Karden shows promise.

BLITHERINGS: Do you really expect me to wrestle with that spelling?

BANSHEE: Shaw's pubs are of unusually sustained quality, nor is this due solely to the presence therein of my writings. Moreover, Shaw manages (by, I imagine, much elbowgrease) to give his mags an admirable neatness which is worthy of emulation.

I'm glad to see Laney indicate at least a certain amount of regret about the last FAN-DANGO. As I have stated before, Laney has been and should continue to be one of the most outstanding fans, and FAN-DANGO can be counted upon for intelligence and interest; as long, that is, as the Laniac's base instincts don't overcome his good taste (yes, he apparently has some).

You'd's remarks in the FA are very interesting, and I look forward to the time when he will be able to express himself at greater length and more often. I disagree, however, on this business of a post-war Socialist Europe. For not only is the U. S. A. violently reactionary, but so is Britain (that is, the British government, notably Churchill) and, as a temporary policy, the U. S. S. R. These three nations have done everything they could to trample all liberal--which in this case means all democratic--movements in conquered or liberated countries. Examples? What about the support of Badoglio, even after formation of the more liberal Bonomi government? And the long reluctance to grant recognition to the French Committee of National Liberation? And the general support given the status quo ante, to say nothing of the favor shown the fascist government of Spain? As for China, I fail to see how the regime of Chiang K'ai-Shek holds forth promise of being "very left."

As for Cunningham, since when does one vote people into the FAPA?

TAKE-OFF! is amoozin'. I wonder what Raym's ardent, satirical interest in Nazi Germany indicates psychologically. I also wonder how long it will be before he sees the light about the Cosmic Circle.

FAN-TODS is super, as usual. I'm afraid, Norm, that Tremaine edited out much of the repetition in "At the Mountains of Madness." Crutch's letter is superb. I can't imagine anyone being satisfied with a first draft, though I myself make only superficial revisions, such as changing one word to another, polishing up a phrase, etc. Ah, the Great Staple War! Floods of nostalgia overwhelm me. Though that business got out of hand, I'd like to see another prozine letters-department allowing such enjoyable bits of whimsy.

I'm glad to see that YHOS is still with us, even though reduced in size.



TY



THELMA

Speer's investigations of Degler are very interesting indeed. If his claims are false, Claude, why not sue?

XENON continues to be good, though I am still baffled by "The Curse of Bankarr." It seems to be some sort of satire, but it's too subtle for me. Anyone care to explain? ((It's simple, chum. Palmer and Campbell are the respective editors of those names; Alicia is a typical fan. The curse was placed on Palmer by Bankarr, which means Banker, which means money. Always out for money, and hence making his mags too commercial, Palmer can never have a fan to love him for long; they all go over to Campbell eventually. All clear? (Clear that Shaw is batty, no doubt.) And incidentally, XENON is no longer a Fapazine; Rouze is going to publish something else for us and keep this one for the subscribing rabble, he sez. --Shaw))



JACK

MEMOIRS OF A SUPERFLUOUS FAN is a worthy project, but all this careful explanation of the LA squabble, by so many different parties, serves merely to confuse. One moment I side with the Knaves, then I read something else and side with the LASFS, then back again, and so on. I gather, on the whole, that both sides displayed very little tact. But I am told all's well once more in Shangri-LA, so (if that happy state continues) I hope the whole thing will soon be forgotten.

So this issue of LIGHT is cleaned up, eh? Hm.

And here I see that Ollie Saari has joined our ranks. Kaor!

Next my view is assailed by numerous things put out by the Cosmic Circle-Planet Fantasy Federation-World Science Fantasy Association-Futura. What percentage of these is FAPA material? Very little. What percentage is worth reading? Yes, indeed. (No, Claude, that is not a compliment.)

EN GARDE is not, of late, so good as were the first few issues, but it's still highly entertaining. And the covers--glory be to Weidenbeck!

A TALE OF THE 'EVANS is, if I remember correctly, rather meatier than last time. The non-stifnal articles were welcome, though I prefer to have the major part of a fapazine devoted to fantasy or fandom. The bit on coöperatives is stimulating; can it be that we have in Th' Ol' Foo a budding leftist?

I've told Walt personally what I think of his WRAMBLINGS; namely that it's a good and valuable little 'zine, but should contain material besides book notes. What do the rest of you think?

Aha! Is this a printed fapazine I espy? Yes indeed, 'tis ELNURINGS, and a worthy effort. I could dispense with the inventions, though something in the line of the screwy devices Widner describes might liven things up.

ECCENTRIC'S ORBIT: And welcome to you, Mike! Ah, "Forgotten Masterpieces"--there are many such. "The Stars Look Down" was indeed good, but not quite as good as all that, as further study of general literature should prove. Myself, I've always had a soft spot in my heart for R. DeWitt Miller's "The Shapes" in Astounding in '35 or '36. Anybody remember it? A Fortean short with a beaut of an ending. And remember the quiet beauty of "The Eternal Vigil" in a 1934 Wonder? And C. A. Smith's "Visitors from Mlok" in Wonder and "The Ice Demon" in Weird. Also Held's marvelous Wonder serial "The Death of Iron." And Frank K. Kelly's melancholy tales of interplanetary pioneering. . . . I could



COURTS

go on forever.

AGENBITE OF INWIT is not up to par--too short, not enough Lowndes. The Lovecraftian thing is not worthy of Wollheim, being a too straight-faced treatment of an absurd theme. Some of HPL's mannerisms are well-captured, but some obvious ones are missed. DAW is better in his own style--one of my favorites, in fact.

I am surprised that Warner fails to take Doc up on the subject of Furtwaengler. It is true that this eminent conductor once protested against the discrimination against the Jews, but under pressure he conformed to the New Order--"gleichgeschaltet," I believe, is the word--and has for some time been, like the Dutch quisling Mengelberg, a loyal servant of Nazism. Add Oberth--said to have invented the robot bombs--and Richard Strauss, and to the best of my knowledge you have all the important people who have kowtowed to Hitler (come to think of it, I believe Kirsten Flagstad has had some truck with the Nazis, though I may be wrong). As regards Strauss, it is hard to believe that such a violent individualist, composer of such sentimental music as "Don Quixote," could really take Nazism to his heart; and there is evidence to support the thesis that his real role has been one of passive resistance. You hear a lot about his being named President of the Reichsmusikkammer and his composing a piece for the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Less is said about the fact that his opera "Die Schweigsame Frau," which showed signs of being a big hit, was banned because the libretto was by a Jew (as is that of "Der Rosenkavalier"--I wonder what became of that); and he "resigned" from the Musikkammer post very shortly after it was given to him. During the last war he grumbled about the way it interfered with his work; and recently refused to take refugees from Berlin into his home as "guests of Hitler," on the grounds that "I didn't start this war." Stop and think a minute what that statement means in Naziland. Strauss never was much of a humanitarian--he has been utterly absorbed in his art--but I think an injustice has been done in calling him a Nazi! It is possible, I suppose, that Furtwaengler's case is similar, but I know of no evidence to support that belief, except that early statement. Mengelberg apparently is an active Nazi.

And that--except possibly for one or two items which did not impress me very profoundly one way or the other--covers this mailing. May we have many more of such size and quality!

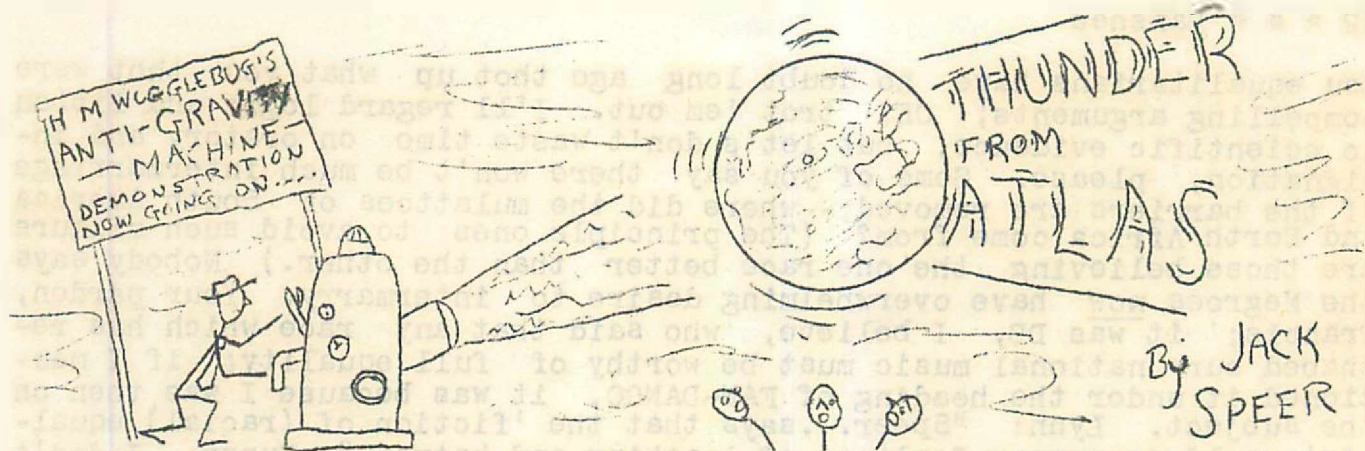
* * *

I recently read three books on Liebscher's recommendation, and I must admit the boy knows whereof he speaks. "Out of this World" may have escaped your notice, being one of the Penguin pocket books, which are not as widely circulated as they should be. This is a collection of "pure" fantasies by Wells, Benet, Collier, Dunsany, etc., all of fairly high quality and not to my knowledge previously anthologized. Perhaps the special treat is Jack London's "The Scarlet Flague," but the book is worth looking up if only for the editor's biting comment on science fiction.

"Portrait of Jenny," by Robert Nathan, is, rather surprisingly, fantasy. It's also a story of truly rare beauty, and I recommend it heartily to those who are fond of delicate fantasy and fine writing.

"The Burning Court," by John Dickson Carr, available in a pocket edition, doesn't look like fantasy, and despite the eery atmosphere and strange occurrences in it, you won't be sure whether it's fantasy or

((continued on page 13))



First, a quotation to point up another entendre in the title:

"Next in line is our young friend Jack,

With a chip on his shoulder and the world on his back."

It's time we faced the probability that in the future even more than at present there are going to be more people wanting into FAPA than we can accommodate. The lately proposed amendment made quantity the criterion for retention of membership. But weren't we agreed that there was plenty of quantity, and the thing to look for is quality? Who shall judge quality is of course a difficult question; for something like membership, we aren't willing to entrust it to any one person or committee. The whole membership must decide. Theoretically it might be nice to judge those already in, but kicking someone out thru the volition of others would cause ill feeling outweighing the advantage. But vacancies are occurring all the time, and we could make quality judgements the test of admission--the present practice of letting them in in the order they filed seems to have no great merit. Suppose every so often, as several places are open, everyone voted on who from the waiting list should fill those places, and new members were admitted according to the priority thus established. Those still kept out could console themselves with the thought (quite possibly true) that members just weren't well enuf acquainted with them. This would encourage contributions to FAPazines. And it would provide a check against undesirable characters entering automatically.

Response has been gratifying on the question of a new terminology. Let's play around with the various suggestions a while before trying to make up our collective mind. Comments: I'm afraid you do have to snuffle "stefnist," Norm; I had a cold at the time and didn't notice. But it can't sound any worse than "numismatist" and "philatelist," and I suggest it as an official designation at least. For familiar use, both "im" and "tem" sound pretty good. They would be confusing ("M" or "him" and "Tim") to an outsider, but we assume they're not to be used to the uninitiate without explanation. "Imaginist" doesn't sound so good; suggests "imagining things" rather than "imagination," DTs rather than s-f; or it may be mistaken for a school of art. It's no use trying to find a self-explanatory word; a phrase like "devotee of science-fiction and fantasy" must serve that need. Thompson asked for a vocabulary with the root "stef." STEFNEWS, whose authorship he missed, gave some. "Stefzines" for fanzines, "prozines" for the pros. This may look ambiguous, but we've always used such words as "scientific-tional" to mean "pertaining to fandom" as well as "pertaining to the pros." Where it's necessary to distinguish, how about the adjective "stefnic" for pro stuff, "stefnistic" for fanism, "stefnal" for both?

In connexion with the color question, I have a lot on my hands.

You equalitarians have no doubt long ago thot up what you thot were compelling arguments; OK, trot 'em out. I'll regard logic and listen to scientific evidence, but let's don't waste time on oratory and indignation, please. Some of you say there won't be much intermarriage if the barriers are removed;--where did the mulattoes of South America and North Africa come from? (The principle ones to avoid such mixture are those believing the one race better than the other.) Nobody says the Negroes now have overwhelming desire to intermarry. Your pardon, Francis; it was DB, I believe, who said that any race which has reshaped our national music must be worthy of full equality; if I mentioned it under the heading of FAN-DANCO, it was because I was then on the subject. Lynn: "Speer...says that the 'fiction of (racial) equality' would encourage feelings of loathing and hatred." Funny, I don't remember saying that. Seedy: My attitude on unions appears to have undergone a reversal in the past twelvemonth, which may be what's confused you. Somehow, I don't think the S-F DEMOCRAT did anything to increase feelings of loathing and hatred (--except such as are directed against Jack F Speer). The connection between equalitarianism and economic and political progressivism is not clear, tho the same people usually hold both advocacies. Can you elucidate? I suspect several people will jump on the alphabetic anecdote in BLACK AND WHITE. At the time I wrote it I had heard little about quote progressive education unquote, which some of the negroes may have suffered from. The point is not entirely lost--note that whites didn't need any alphabetic chart to guide them. However, I wouldn't have mentioned it if I'd been more familiar with "progressive" schools. DeeBee: Negroes and Amerinds average in the low 80s on IQ tests as compared to 100 of whites and Orientals; due to the shape of the distribution curve, that puts them 'way down in percentiles (80% in the lowest 1/5 by army tests). It's notable that our biologist doesn't base his plea on an assumption of equality.

Some comments on the ethical questions raised by Kepner: Absolute prohibition is one thing and a ban on clubroom drinking is another. For one thing, there is the bad reputation likely to be given the place --but there is a bad tendency lately for ims to refer questions of ethics ontirely to outer compulsions. Another point against drinking is that younger people are led by example to drink, when they are by age, and possibly by permanent makeup, unable to handle it. Laney's talk about the pleasantly numbing effect of liquor suggests a retreat from life, when he claims to have mastered it so well. Another thing, a guy that's been boozing has a bad breath and even the not exactly tight, is likely to make himself obnoxious to people who are sober. My belief is that you shouldn't give a bit more leeway to a man when he's drunk; if he becomes offensive, cut him cold or throw him out if necessary. There's considerable talk under the head of "social equality" for women. Whatever that means, it can't imply that we pretend there aren't two sexes, that perversions are only relative, that women are really men. The difference must be recognized, and courtesy is part of the recognition of it. Another ethical question: Seems to me a guy must be a confirmed skunk who'll say, throe months after joining an organization, "Now that I, it has been demonstrated, have control of the club...."

The book on reformers that Kepner reviewed seems to overlook the existence of another type of reform quite different from the prohibitionist's--the kind who sees things are stinkingly wrong in current society and sets himself to fix them.

Laney talks about keeping profanity out of JAPazines, and in the same issue has another of his disgusting figures of speech about Degler. Don't think that using a Latin instead of Anglo-Saxon root will save you from the censor; personally, I think it makes a bad remark worse. For some reason the armynian abbreviations seem to carry little objectionable connotation.

"What Juffus overlooks is that soldiers who are kept in the states rarely have any choice in the matter." What many GIS overlook is that their civilian contemporaries rarely have any choice in the matter. Sometimes they think as if a 4F is a dirty slacker and sometimes they think as if he's a lucky devil; but there are millions of 4Fs and others pitifully desirous of getting into uniform in any capacity. Being in a semi-military community now, I've gotten a closer view of army life. It seems to be quite unpleasant, at least for our kind of people. Nevertheless, I say, I'd rather be in the army than out. You wouldn't if you knew what it's like, they answer. Anyway, that's the way I feel. But it's not what you will, it's what happens to you that determines your status in wartime. Which suggests a basic illogic in esprit de corps among veterans as against civilians. Incidentally, the "GI Bill of Rights" is an amazingly sensible and moderate act. Unless much worse things are to come, the veterans may not disgrace themselves this time.

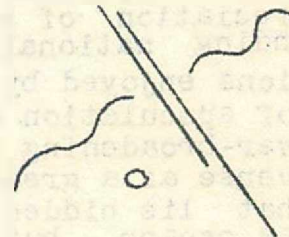
Evans' article on cooperatives hit a subject I've been curious about. Even if they finally got all the retail trade, tho, they'd still be far from dominating our economy. I'm afraid that in a free-for-all race between co-ops and cartels, the latter would win hands down.

And so I leave you with this Thot of the Month: "Nor have we ever misrepresented the club.... Since everyone joined of their own free will, therefor no one fell for anything!!"

* * * * *

--- WHOOSHERIAD ---

Quadruple whooshes standing in a row
One gave a breath and they all let go
Two swapped a dingbat with a letter o
Three starred a mandible shook to mean no
Four were all the whooshes standing just so



--Roy St. John Le Claire

* * * * *

SWANSONG OF THE SPENCE

((continued from page 10))

not until the very end. This, too, I recommend, as a surprise-crammed and splendidly written hair-raiser almost suspiciously in the tradition of Unknown. You must read it!

* * *

While this column is written by a soldier, it does not necessarily reflect the reviews of the War Department nor does it constitute an endorsement of this product.

ALL REVOIR!



My Ideals of Fandom

A RAYMIC REBUTTAL

by Raymond Washington, Jr.

Francis T. Laney's "My Ideals of Fandom," in the June 1944 issue of SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, deserves more than a passing comment. It is representative of a trend of thought now dominant among the so-called mature fans: namely, that fandom should be nothing more than a conglomeration of local clubs, not encompassed by one large over-all organization such as the NFFF and the Cosmic Circle; and that furthermore, fandom should be merely a "passing stage for most of its followers."

This negative attitude is distinctly undesirable. Mr. Laney limits legitimate fan activity to reading, writing, drawing, and collecting material of a scientific, weird, or fantastic nature. Any other "functions" are "wholly extraneous." The hobby should remain "purist." Introverted members who find it impossible to adjust to the world in general try to find in fandom a "substitute microcosmos." These pitiful and frustrated individuals cling to the husk of fandom long after they have outgrown it because it gave them their first chance for self-expression. Or so it says in the magazine.

Let us look at the matter from a different angle. Science fiction fosters and encourages broad and sweeping concepts of existence, a proper appreciation of science, and a liberal and progressive attitude transcending nationalism, racial prejudice, and various other mental limitations enjoyed by the human race. Science fiction unfolds new vistas of speculation and imagination to the inquisitive and searching mind--ever-broadening horizons embracing all creation and interpreting the universe as a great sea of mystery man must plumb for gems of knowledge that lie hidden from the casual eye. Science fiction is not a worthless escape, but a dynamic philosophy, a creed that gives its adherents a proper perspective from which to judge transient events--a perspective that the human race in general may attain at some distant time in the future.

Hear Richard Tooker in the May 29 FTF:

"I am a great lover of science fiction and fantasy fiction. It depicts man's highest reach toward perfection. Any changes for the better in civilization have been first plowed out of the future by science and fantastic fiction. A great politician might not be a fiction writer, but he would use the processes of fiction when he conceives a better world, a peace assuring world, without want and without intolerance."

Unfortunately for certain individuals, Mr. Tooker cannot be accused of adolescence, arrested development, delusions of grandeur, paranoia, insanity, or any of those other delectable judgments rendered from on high, from the Holy Throne of Cynicism. Mr. Tooker's article

from there on is worthy of the closest attention and scrutiny. If stfians have that kind of mental makeup, they are beyond doubt superior creatures--if not mentally or physically, then by virtue of the attitudes and theories they possess.

Now we come to fandom. Fandom, of course, includes only a small number of the scientificion enthusiasts and "cosmic-minded" people who follow the field. There is a ring of truth in Laney's implication that fan bickerings and personalities do not enter the "purist" state which is solely concerned with reading, etc. But there are many influential fans who will not concede that fandom should be tied to any commercial apron-strings. We owe science-fiction a debt, for that is what brought us together. But we are under no moral compulsion to remain in the purist state. Our philosophy must be all-embracing. It must touch on the past and live in the present as well as in the future. We must live our beliefs and not be afraid to express them. We must be proud of our literature and its futurian ideals. We must be sturdy dreamers.

It is true that, if the Laney philosophy prevails, there would be little purpose in national organizations for fans. But if organized fandom is to bind itself together and be a force for good, for progress, in the world of the present, then one all-inclusive club must come into being. All fans have an inherent desire to associate with others of their kind. They usually enter the field when their idealism is at white heat. Were there a movement ready to direct their energies and enthusiasms into the proper channels, instead of letting them burn themselves out in exuberant outbursts of which they will later be ashamed, we might go far.

A notable similarity occurs between Laney's article and Volume One of Yerke's MEMOIRS OF A SUPERFLUOUS FAN. Both of them lay down the general rule that fandom is a state to be outgrown, but that of course there are a "limited few whose maintenance of their interest in actual fantasy can scarcely be called arrested development." We should all be grateful to our betters for not condemning anyone! It is presumed that they shall be the judges of who falls into this elite group and who does not.

Fandom needs a purpose and a goal. The kind of social folderol scientificional club described by Laney, in which the mainstay would be the "unorganized activity of the individual members," consisting primarily of such non-stfnic diversions as dancing, drinking, dirty-joke sessions, etc, is simply a dead end leading to stagnation and perversion of the purposes for which the club was organized. Fans who favor the Laney type of club certainly should not be coerced to endure a serious-minded group with a schedule of truly scientificional programs--indeed, there is no way to enforce such an involuntary attendance, even were the "true" fans thus inclined--but, on the other hand, fandom at large certainly does not have to assimilate their decrees as the last word in smartness and modernity. There is a reservoir of potential reformers in fandom. That the world is sadly in need of reforming, none can deny. If an organized fandom can work toward that end, subordinating personalities and conflicting dislikes for the common good, fandom will become more than a fundamentally meaningless structure, beset on one hand by naive but sincere newcomers, and on the other by sneering veterans whose own lack of faith contributed to the present situation.

Even if our proposed contribution to world progress is very small, in fact practically nil (which I believe is too pessimistic an observation), all would benefit from the association and stimulation involved;

and there would be gained a real satisfaction from knowing that they sincerely tried, and that they might, in the distant future, by acknowledged as heralds of history, visionaries, prophets, who foresaw the world to come but were able to impart only a tiny momentum to the inertia of their day.

For science fiction fans are far advanced in comparison to prevailing modes of thought, advanced certainly by their concepts and philosophies, and perhaps by their mentalities. Most fans have this inborn feeling, this cosmic spark within them, but as there is no existing medium whereby they may actually work for their beliefs, they gradually learn to hide their earlier hopes under a shield of realism and sometimes cynicism; in time they may actually become ashamed of their youthful dreams. The tragedy of this situation need not be described. The self-perpetuating cycle always presents the same uncaring front to new fans who are entering the field and who are capable of becoming mature persons of great moral earnestness--if there is a place for them in some national organization, bent on assisting the growth of science fiction and its ideals for the purpose of re-molding the earth nearer to the heart's desire of the Utopiaists. For although a perfect world may be nothing but a will-o'-the-wisp, we can advance far along the road. Instead of allowing our faces to become more and more smug and self-satisfied with each passing year, we should apply the lessons of our maturity to our discarded visions. We should temper the fire of youth with the broadening of experience.

We must not strive toward perfection, lest we be disappointed. Our immediate aims must be modest. But we must keep in sight our ultimate goal and not dally along the way. I believe that a national organization for fans, dedicated to the previously expressed aims, is a natural and inevitable consequence of the prolonged association of people with a higher philosophy. If the N. F. F. F. and similar endeavors have failed, it is because the fans as a body are not yet ready to accept their ordained role among the spiritual leaders of mankind--or because the national organizations contented themselves with petty goals as their distant objectives. Immediate objects and long-range projects must be clearly defined and differentiated.

These are my ideals of fandom. I believe in them. I have devoted a great deal of thought to them, and I think they are sound. Besides my work in the much-disputed Cosmic Circle, I am an NFFF member and I expect to remain a fan and a believer in futurianism for the rest of my life. The preceding philosophy was by no means evolved exclusively by myself. Not infrequently have I come across similar expressions in the fan press. For such ideals are deeply rooted in the science fiction enthusiast. They only need to be correlated and wrought into a workable statement of principles. We are imbued with conceptions above and beyond everyday trivialities. We are not mutations of a coming race; merely human beings endowed with a transcendent perception of contemporary and historic truths. Together, on many a strange voyage into the unknown, we have eagerly dipped into the future, far as human eye could see, seen the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be... it has been our lonely delight to follow knowledge, like a sinking star...and all experience is an arch wherethrough gleams that untraveled world...that world of the future chronicled in so many varied accounts of cent-a-word dreamers. Fans will reach their fullest expressions of self only when they are united and working in harmony for a futurian goal. In many ways we are the children of the future and recognize ourselves as such. And the future belongs to those who prepare for it.

Dovervention

Vol. I, No. I.

A "One Shot" Publication

August 28, 49

(Being a blow by blow description of the First Expeditionary Force of Queens' venture into the wilds of N.J. in search of rare item known as "fan-vention." Published by Felix.)

DOVENTIONS! ESCAPDES

HELD: At the sumptuous Kennedy mansion, Baker-on-the-Viaduct.....

HOLDER: The renowned fan and intellectual, Mr. Joe Kennedy.....

ATTENDEES: Mr. Kennedy; Mr; and Mrs. Wollheim; Sam Moskowitz; Gerry de la Ree and girl friend; Al Weinstein; Austin Hamel; Paul Miles ; George Fox; et Felix.....

PREFACE: On the night of August the 25th there gathered at the home of Wollheim sundry fans, all with the singular intention of invading Dover, N.J., the coming Sunday. These fans being Austin Hamel, Al Weinstein, Monroe Kuttner and Felix. It was decided that the trio of Hamel, Weinstein, and Kuttner would meet the trio of Wollheim, Belter and Wilsey at the Hudson Tube at 11:15 Sunday morning. Unfortunately the latter trio miscalculated by one hour and so rode to Dover via Lackawanna R.R. alone.

DOVENTION!: We departed from the Hoboken station on board the 1:00 train. At first the journey presented dull and gloomy scenery, but presently we arrived in a more picturesque setting, to arrive at last at the Dover station. Our instructions had been to take any up-going bus. Our immediate mental vision was a helicopter-bus which would whisk us to some mountain retreat. Upon departing from the Lack. RR, we failed to discover a town, much less an up-going bus. After parading up and down a street occupied by a theater and five and ten, we arrived at the fateful conclusion that "this" must be Dover! As to the general emptiness of the place, we laid it to some flood which must have washed a greater part of the town away recently. The up-going buses not being present, we struck out in a general southwest direction and presently came upon a shady, quiet path labeled Baker Ave. Consultation resulted in the opinion that "This" was "the" street. Hiking up this winding byway, we came to 84 Baker Ave., from whence floated voices of odd and peculiar tones. This, we reasoned, must be our destination. Upon entrance we discovered the Dovention spread about the Kennedy living room. Conversations of various natures proceeded, varied with an interval of picture taking. A set of five pictures may be obtained from Mr. Kennedy for fifty cents, showing the Dovention in various phases.

Page Two

A buffet supper furnished fuel for further escapades, but as curfew neared, we were forced to take leave. Everyone, with the exception of Kennedy and Miles hastened to board the 6:58 train. The ride home was a hilarious journey occupied in the main with putting apart the latest issue of Sun Spots and sending it out the window in the form of paper airplanes. As de la Ree stared with glazed eyes as his precious work waffered away he was heard to mutter, "Just wait till I get home, I'm going to cut a per dolls out of Felix."

Fox disappeared along the way, it is feared he fell (pushed?) out the window somewhere in the neighborhood of Orange. Sam and Gerry plus girl left us at Newark and the united trios continued alone undaunted. It might be well to mention at this point that Monroe Kuttner was in a state of invisibility all day and so his company was rather boring.

At Hoboken the trios once more parted, as W, B, and W wished to view this quaint hole in the ground, while A&A departed for The Imperial Dominion of LaGuardia. The sight-seeing tour took a few short minutes, Hoboken is best left to the imagination. However, the ferry ride back to the city so absorbed the interest of Felix that a severe case of deadness due to drowning threatened. Thus passed a hectic day, may another come again.....

F I N I S

Felix



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