

A happy 1948 to all you good people. This begins another issue of Horizons, which, to pass from the general to the specific, is volume 9, number 2, FAPA number 27, whole number 33, VAPA number 7, and the Winter, 1947-48 issue. Harry Warner, Jr., 303 Bryan Place, Hagerstown, Maryland, is responsible, and reproduction is from the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble limeograph.

In the Beginning

All appearances to the contrary, this is a genuine Warner publication. Macbeth, which served so long and faithfully for letter-writing and stencil-cutting during my first ten years in fandom, has been turned out to stud, and this new typewriter has been acquired. I don't know what its stenciling peculiarities are and haven't had time to do any testing before starting this issue of Horizons, so you may see some pretty weird reproduction this time. The kinks should be ironed out by the next issue.

One difficulty ~~of the machine~~ lies in the name for this typewriter. I toyed for a moment with the obvious solution of calling it Macbeth II, but instantly decided that to be impractical, for it does not murder sleep in the manner which earned its predecessor the name. Tentatively, I have christened the machine Ophelia, because of something Hamlet says about her voice being soft and gentle. However, only a civil ceremony has been held to affirm the name, and I am open to suggestions before conducting the full religious baptismal services.

It is quite obvious that I can't review this issue all the publications that the FAPA and VAPA have produced since the last reviews. The two FAPA mailings contain 350 pages of magazines, there are 150 pages of stuff in the two VAPA bundles, and a fair-sized stack of postmailed FAPA stuff to boot. Comments on everything is out of the question, since I have only two stencils left besides the rest of this one for that purpose. Therefore, the following will be greatly curtailed, and mention of a magazine will depend on whether I have anything to say about it, not on its value. I hope to get back into the swing of things next time, if the mailings from the FAPA resume some semblance of order.

To the VAPA first: One last word about SPQR. I knew what it meant when I first read the poem, but only more or less accidentally, through something I'd read a few weeks earlier. I think it was a risky choice, since there must be lots of ~~well~~ well educated people who never ran across the matter or have forgotten it; and the varied reactions indicate that it means something radically different to different people, just as much as those people think differently about Rome at its height of power. "Dunno whether Vortex was printed as well as set in German". I'm inclined to guess that it was; at least I can't imagine the huge pile of matrices or all that type being imported. And who was Addison Sims? Apparently my literature experiences in childhood were not complete; all the others are old friends! "I can't imagine what you mean by "extreme repetitiousness" when you refer to the Eroica, Doc (and I don't think you'll find either praise or criticism of the work from 18th century listeners!) If you think that Beethoven establishes his emotional and logical points over and over, you're flying in the face of all the competent musical criticism of the last century. If you're referring simply to the "repetitiousness" of the es, it's a provable matter and you're wrong. If Beethoven had worked out his materials as thor-

oughly in the Eroica as in the majority of his earlier compositions, the first movement alone would last for about an hour. The Eroica is a long composition, that is quite true; but the length results from the then unprecedented size of the musical periods and the length of the themes themselves. ' ' After thinking matters over, Seedy, I'll stick to my original statements about the worthlessness of bases in a future war, and retract my suggestions about those 40 acres in Montana. It looks now very much as if it won't matter whether the long-range flying missiles are accurate enough; they'll probably be so powerful that it doesn't particularly matter in what part of the enemy's country they hit. Whoops, I see it wasn't Seedy to bring up the matter. Well, never mind. ' ' Aside to Jim: Nothing that looked like Quarterly was in my bundle. If the advance from that publication was something I really ought to see, could you forward a copy? ' ' I understand that the variance in quality of various copies of a particular record release is an inescapable flaw that goes with mass production, Doc. The Concert Hall Society people admit freely that they couldn't obtain their superb surfaces if they tried to issue more than 5,000 copies of each recording. ' ' I had hoped for a more favorable response to my VAPA-FAPA merger suggestion, and I don't intend to press it, since it isn't a matter of tremendous importance, one way or the other. But I'd like to point out here that my sole grounds for making the suggestion in the first place were those of convenience. It would be so much easier for members who belong to both groups to send out only one bundle of their publications, pay dues only once, vote only once, worry about only one set of officers. And Doc, you know as well as I do that the quality of publications now circulated through the VAPA couldn't be altered if the letter-symbol were changed to FAPA or PAPA or KAMA or whatever you. I'm positive that there's a lot in the FAPA to interest VAPA members, and vice versa, and would suggest that VAPA members who feel as I do should at least make a start by joining the FAPA now. There are vacancies in the membership ranks.

As for the FAPA mailings, it were advisable to toss in my laureate nominations, I presume. For the allegedly summer mailing, then, I'd say something like this: editing and publishing, Crane-Wesson, Hart, Speer; poetry, nothing worth mentioning for first or second, Hart third; fiction, Cheney second, no other nominations; humor, Laney first, Burbee second, nothing third; articles, Wesson first, Laney second, E.E. Evans third; art, Gibson first, Rogers second, whoever is responsible in The Thing, third; best in mailing, Crane-Wesson, first; Speer, second; Laney third. Not too many comments to be made on this mailing, I think. But prosperity really did turn out to be just around the corner, didn't it, Juffus? And I thought that even the Bible put creation 50% farther back than your 2,000 years. ' ' Was "The Man Who Was Thurston" intended as funny as it really is in The Thing? ' ' "Ratanaka" annoys me by its alliteration, which just doesn't go in English. But for that, I'd have put it at the poetry rating top for the mailing. Rather odd, incidentally, to see my initials all over this issue; I think that Wesson is the first fan to bob up with the same initials since I've been active. ' ' I can't regret the collapse of Rome, Harold. It did unify part of the northern hemisphere of the western world for a few centuries; so what? It stamped out a hundred cultures that might have proven far more important to the future of civilization. It pro-

duced almost nothing of cultural value--some literature that is about on the same level with the stuff published today in the Saturday Evening Post, no music that has survived, no plays, that are worthy of mention, some bad examples of Grecian influence in painting and sculpture. Quite true, Rome built roads; but so did Mussolini. Science was at a virtual standstill, and no first-rate philosophy came forth. The only thing Rome could do was conquer; it did that exceedingly well, using methods that even Hitler failed to improve on. The decline of Greece and all that it stood for is what we should really bemoan. " And so to the best in the autumn FAPA mailing: editing and publishing; nothing strikes me as particular superior in format or reproduction; poetry, put Dragonette second, and forget the other two places; fiction, Perdue, first, Keller, second, Kenney, third; humor, Kenney, first, Keller, second, Perdue, third (and in the line above, it should be Kennedy, not Kenney); articles, Rothman, first, Burbee second, VKTBlish, third; art, Kenney, first, and there's nothing else there; best in the mailing, Kenney, first, Rothman, second, and Burbee, third. " Elmer, if you can produce something as beautifully thought out and carefully produced as the disaster plan for an unimportant thing like your job, why not come forth with really good stuff for something really important, like the FAPA? " The Keller story strikes me as an excellent example of an author burlesquing his own style. I don't know whether the good colonel intended it that way or not; of course; it would have been a beautiful story with a decent ending. " More selectivity would have helped your account of the trip, Everett. It really doesn't interest anyone to know that it rained while you were in a particular town, unless that rain caused your left ear to melt away. A lot more of your opinion on various things, and more detailed accounts of the out-of-the-way things that happened would have made it a really good travelogue. " Now that it's all over, I might point out that the Big Pond Fund lottery caused every fan editor who publicized it to violate the postal laws and regulations. I'm inclined to think that the money realized would be best spent in sending boxes of food to the fans in England. The Philcon, by the way, could turn out to be the real decisive point in convention history, as the first one that proved really beneficial to the professionals who attended. I wouldn't be at all surprised to see the conventions eventually become more interesting and profitable to the authors, editors, and publishers than to the fans. " You can always obtain the Avon Fantasy Reader by mail, Don; in fact, apparently I'll have to do it myself in the future, and in the long run it'll be easier than chasing all over town trying to find a copy. I still think you ought to cash in on your present experiences by writing science fiction that deals with irrigation and waterway control problems in distant planets. " Dale Hart becomes my favorite fan; by admitting that college isn't much use. " The local library's copy of "Crock of Gold" has the same sort of penciled notation about its quality as literature as Ackerman's "Moon Is Feminine." I penciled a withering retort on the same page, in the hopes that the original critic would some day borrow the book again. " Me, I'm keeping strictly neutral in the Burbee-Perdue tangle. My only reference to FAPA politics this issue, therefore, consists of my approval of the decision to consider the new constitution as legally passed and in operation.

Listen, the Woodwind!

My writings have a tendency to hit two extremes. I ramble for hundreds of words about matters which could have been dismissed in a sentence, but I expend only a phrase on a mystifying statement that later needs full explanation. That is what happened when I said that my attentive listening limit for serious music runs around a half-hour. Some expansion of this thought might be worthwhile here. I plan also to touch in a few vaguely related topics, so this article is guaranteed in advance to ramble and diverge widely from the beginning point.

Music happens to be the one art that ordinarily is fundamentally not utilitarian or message-bearing in the ordinary senses of those words. Architecture, pottery, and similar art objects have no "meaning" in the dictionary sense but their function enters into their worth. All the other arts--painting, the drama, poetry, and literature, for instance--convey a message in words, or one that can be translated into words fairly easily, and that message assists in the comprehension of the intent of the work of art. (Remember what Weinbaum wrote in "The New Adam" about the aesthetic value of a field of swaying grain?) The worth as art does not depend on the message or the utility, but it does form something to which the mind can fasten.

Music is different. Except when it's tied to another art, as in song or the ballet, music is music. It is not a "language" as some of the music appreciation courses claim, nor is it frozen architecture, nor audible emotions. It is itself, it's music. As such, it is the hardest of all arts for the mind to focus upon. The least distraction sets up a chain of thoughts in the listener that causes him to sway attention from the tones. When there is a "program" to go with the music, or when it's a song or for a ballet, the distracting influence is worsened. (Incidentally, this is the root of most of the sloppy writing about music, and the endless borrowing of terms from other fields of art--color, form, romanticism, and the like--to attempt to describe musical phenomena.)

I'm inclined to think that many music lovers have never listened to a piece of music with really full attention. Full attention is something quite different from listening to music with a knowledge of its technical side; the musically uneducated person can listen as carefully as Toscanini. I don't claim, naturally, that anyone should listen with equal intensity to Johann Strauss waltzes and to Beethoven string quartets. Nor does it do harm to listen only casually to great music, when real concentration is impossible. The real point is that every listener should give every composition the courtesy of a few really devoted hearings. There ought to be as much concentration on good music, once in a while at least, as Milty gives to his physics textbooks, as much as you'd bestow upon a book of Spengler or Korzybski, as much as an intelligent audience gives to a great play. I think that the creations of the greatest composers are potentially as important today as the most important science, the most important philosophy, if men would but listen.

I don't intend to give here a course of instruction in the art of good listening; and am inclined to think it's a salvation which most persons must work out in their own way. Certainly the

first step is to shun the music appreciation courses and books that are intended for this purpose. Instead, I would like to hear from anyone who has found the art of listening with full attention to music, retaining full emotional and mental energy, for longer than a half-hour at a stretch. That's the fault I find with my knight in shining armor, Wagner--I'm exhausted at the end of the first act, if I give it more than half my mind. The Italians seldom run much longer than a half-hour per act in their operas; maybe they're wiser than we think.

The list of things that distract from full listening is manifold. The phonograph and radio have been added to it in recent years, which brings the sermon to its second topic. I've owned a record player for a year now, and am more convinced than ever that most record collectors lose sight of the main object, the enjoyment of music, in their desperate struggle for the highest fidelity and most inspired performances. They argue for hours over the merits of the half-dozen interpretations of a Tschaikovsky symphony; without once questioning the really basic matter: is the symphony worth listening to in the first place?

Here's where attentive listening ties in with record buying. It can prevent purchases of music that you will tire of quickly. There is a huge mass of recorded stuff that sounds as good as the genuine masterworks, when heard with only one ear open. Saint Saens, Liszt, and a lot of Richard Strauss fall into their category. If you allow the rough impression of the sounds to intoxicate the ear, you rush out and buy the records. Later, you regret the enthusiasm. With closer attention, you'll tire of the music more rapidly, probably in time to save your money before you buy the records.

Looking at it the other way around, modern music would have a much better reception if people listened to it, and really concentrated. Music that pioneers does not sound as good as the more familiar and orthodox stuff. It takes real concentration to find the new beauties, the rules of operation, and to grow accustomed to new time-scales. The people who have gone down in history because they insulted this or that great classic composition shouldn't be blamed too much; it often requires several close hearings to comprehend the real values.

Bill Danner may have something, when he suspects that my hearing isn't all that it should be. But even if he's right, I don't think that my main points are undermined. My ears are good enough to distinguish at least three types of records--Victor, Columbia, and the FFRR Decca--simply from the sound, when I hear an unfamiliar recording. If they're that good, I think they are good enough to hear the differences in tonal worth that is alleged to exist among the needles and record players. They just don't hear them. I don't think that most of them exist, except in the minds of the record fiends. Those that do exist are not more material in the enjoyment of music than the slight differences in sound among the major record companies' output mentioned above.

.....
Famous Fantastic Fysteries

(for pianists only)

There is a slightly awkward progression for the left hand in the very first line of Scriabine's opus 5, number 2 Nocturne. It consists mostly of descending fifths, and in the Marks edition is given the following fingering: 2, 1, 2, 6, 1, 2, 5.

Disney and Chaplin

I swore off the motion pictures as an early New Year's resolution back in November, after sweating blood through the non-musical parts of "Carnegie Hall." However, just before that decision, I had seen "Fantasia" for the second time. It gave me a severe jolt, to realize how far the star of Disney has fallen.

There are a lot of parallels between Disney and another great Hollywood figure, Charlie Chaplin. Both provided entertainment, which is no simple thing to do, and a very important thing to do. But both became convinced halfway through their careers that they constituted a Social Force or possessed a Mission. The entertainment value of both immediately sagged and collapsed, as they became aware of what some people claimed they were doing.

I was born a little too late to see much of Chaplin, so I can't judge properly his motion pictures. But from the revivals I've seen, I'd guess that the weighty pronouncements during the '20s about his endeavors were true only insofar as they would apply to most of the other good comedy the world has ~~na~~ ever known. And without having seen "Monsieur Verdoux," I'd still gamble a guess that the loss of the comedy and the entertainment is far greater than the value of the efforts at socially significant pictures that Chaplin has given the world since he Became Aware.

Disney, probably with no other motive other than that of making money, popularized a new art form, the animated cartoon. Unfortunately, he too listened to the voices from the world of culture and became convinced that he must (a) bring great music into combination with pictures or if not that (b) merge the animated cartoons with photography into still another art form and in any event (c) not continue to do a blasphemous thing like continue to entertain people.

"Fantasia" marked the peak and beginning of the fall of Disney. There isn't much point in philosophizing about the combination of good music and pictures, and its artistic effect. The pictures win out over the music, every time, in attracting attention, no matter how great the music may be. The human has depended so much more on his eyes than on his ears from time immemorial that the music never stands a chance. However, I do find that the "Rites of Spring" section no longer interests me for either pictures or music. First time I saw it, the music was new to me, and I thought for two or three years that it was the finest modern composition in the world. I don't think there is much incongruity between pictures and music in "Fantasia," either, except in the "Pastoral Symphony" sequence. It's not easy to pin down what constitutes passion and voluptuousness in music, and I've never been able to figure out why those experiments with hypnosis that Havelock Ellis cites should have shown Massenet's music to give the greatest sexual stimulus. But I agree with Ernest Newman, when he says that if anyone's music is sexless, it's Beethoven's. Of all Beethoven's music, the "Pastoral" with its orthodox harmonies, formula-like melodies, and repetitive developments, is the last that should be illustrated by sex-mad pagan creatures.

More important, Disney's art itself is essentially sexless, and suffers when it tries to surpass that limitation. It is essentially the art of childhood. No one remembers the ending of "Now White" and Minnie Mouse never approaches the reality of Mick-

Raymond Palmer's Most Fantastic Adventure

The current rhubarb over sending fanzines to Amazing Stories for that publication's new review columns fail to stir me to the depths. I'm inclined to think that it's unwise to cooperate with Palmer, because of the crackpots it may draw into fandom, but I don't feel moved enough to crusade in the matter.

However, this does point up and bring to a climax the unfathomable series of antics in which Palmer has indulged, ever since he took the job as editor of Amazing. He has blown alternately hot and cold toward fans. Most of those who have visited him have found him the finest of hosts. He has been generous with original pictures and manuscripts for auctions, and has been cooperative in publicizing fan endeavors, when in his good mood. Conversely, there have been the violent attacks in his editor's column on active fandom, his constant harping on the impotency of fandom because of its numerical weakness, and the mess caused by the critical letter from some one in New York a short while back.

In the past, I've been wrong in attempting to predict the future at Ziff-Davis. But I think that I have an entirely new angle on the puzzle now, and one that would explain why I've been wrong so often before in attempts to figure out what would happen next.

The theory is simply that Palmer is suffering from a guilt complex, probably unbeknownst to himself, and that fandom is the basis of this neurosis. It's a supposition that Palmer certainly isn't going to agree to, publicly, and probably not privately. But if it's right, it explains why he hasn't followed his own advice and the logical course: ignore fandom completely.

There is no manner of proving the idea, unless Palmer undergoes psychoanalytic treatment or commits deeds that leave no doubt about their motivation. But I think that the evidence is strong.

Think back over the case history of the subject under examination. Palmer was a pioneer fan. He belonged to the small group that led the fan field back in the early depression years. That group produced magazines like The Fantasy Fan, The Time Traveler, and Fantasy Magazine--fanzines that for all-around worth have never been matched up to now. Everything indicates that Palmer was tremendously sincere in his interest in science fiction and fandom in those days. He was popular among fans and professionals, had some success as a writer for the prozines, and he did not leave fandom under spectacular or unpleasant circumstances.

Now, consider the manner in which this pioneer fandom gave way to new blood. It saw the things that it held sacred, collapsing on all sides. The life of the prozines was precarious, the fanzines were disappearing, barbarian youths were invading fandom. When you or I lose interest today, we know that it is unfortunate but normal; that group had no precedent to judge from. Some of this early fandom vanished utterly from the field. Others maintained contact in honorable ways. Schwartz became an agent, Ruppert a printer. Weisinger, it is true, edited a prozine with lowered literary standards, but succeeded in publishing a lot of excellent stuff in its pages. Palmer slipped back into obscurity--until the call from Ziff-Davis was sounded.

If there was a conscious debate in Palmer between his ideals as a fan and the business man, the business man won. He didn't refuse the job, and didn't take it only on condition that he be permitted to publish good science fiction. He accepted whole-

heartedly the pulp magazine philosophy of materialism. For one who had given up fandom, it was obviously the profitable and obvious course of action.

Now, in some ideal scheme of things where the eternal verities are ascertainable, fandom would be unimportant, no doubt. It seems overwhelmingly unimportant in this world, to the person who has never participated. It seems unimportant to a person who has been part of it and then dropped it. But the point is: fandom is tremendously important to an individual, when that person has an interest and activity in the field. Like every other activity on which an individual spends hundreds of hours, fandom influences to a certain extent his future thinking, beliefs, and even actions. When those future actions, in the form of his daily job, are like a distorted ghost of fandom, dealing as they do with science fiction and authors and letters to the editor, the subconscious can have a real field day.

I think that Palmer is subconsciously attempting to subdue the sense of guilt that he feels in prostituting science fiction. I think that this conflict is the reason for his continued attention to the field of fandom, which he has so often written off as a force which cannot possibly affect his magazines. I think that his frantic efforts to pass off the Shaver mythos as truth--whether he believes in them or not--serves as compensation for the fact that he knows Shaver's stories are bad fiction. I think it is significant that one of his principal satellites, Bill Hamling, is a person who tried to conquer fandom in a few months and failed ingloriously.

I don't think that the day will ever come when Ray Palmer will ignore fandom. I think it's still a motivating factor in his life, and I don't think this theory will be proved wrong unless the day when Palmer ignores fandom does arrive.

.....

Have the Newsies Missed This? Department

From the Baltimore Evening Sun:

Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, Dec. 15. (Reuter)--Arthur Machen, the British novelist who originated the famous World War I legend of "The Angels of Mons," died here today at the age of 84.

Deeply affected by the battle of Mons, in which 5,000 British soldiers were killed in August, 1914, Machen wrote shortly afterward a striking but wholly imaginative story, in which St. George and a host of English women were made to succor the hard-pressed British Army and rout the Germans.

It was soon rumored that the tale was true, soldiers claimed to have seen the heavenly vision, and the legend was born.

.....

General Semantics Department

Raymond A. Palmer, in January, 1948, Amazing Stories:

In order to study a language based in something before the birth of this planet, we must discard the books that have been written on language, and approach the study with a completely blank mind. You cannot argue the Alphabet on the basis of Chaucer or modern semantics. Take just the two letters T and D and go to work. If you can attribute your results to pure chance, you have upset the whole apparatus of science, because then the whole law of probability is just pure chance.

When We Were Very Young

The winter mailing of the FAPA five years ago hit a peak for fine-looking publications that has never been excelled, and it contained a lot of well written stuff, too. The mailing was one of the fattest in history, and junk was at a minimum. It was one of the few mailings in which the art work was outstanding. A half-dozen publications had excellent covers--a striking silk-screened lunar scene in blue and black on Censored, superb airbrush jobs on two Ashley publications, some of Widner's best line work on the covers of Yhos and Horizons, and a "blue-line" job by Rosco Wright on Phanny. ' ' It certainly doesn't seem like five years since the afternoon I sat and read Speer's moderately epic "Konan" and found it good. Re-reading snatches today causes a slight revision of that high opinion--I think Juffus himself would refuse to write a line like "Half-draped across a low ~~man~~ pneumatic chair's broad arms" today. But the work never received the attention it deserves. ' ' Also worthy of inclusion in an anthology is "A Bit of Genealogy" from The Futurian Review. That was in the days when professionally published stuff from the Futurians was apt to appear under the names of people whose family name was Conway, and this listing was intended to show everyone the true Conway family history. Included are George Washington Conway, strangled by Tory nurse in 1787; Pious Peter Conway, idiot, born 1842 shortly after the disappearance of a large female ape from a circus; Wormwood Kermit Conway II $\frac{1}{2}$, a monstrosity that lived only two hours; Hamlet Hannibal Conway, about whom we know nothing, other than the fact that he "was hatched"; and Clitoria Conway, who in 1918 went for a ride with a "nice man with a green beard." ' ' I suggest that everyone who owns a copy read the "Announcement" on page four of the magazine that Ashley was forced to complete. I only now begin to sense all the double meanings that went into it for the benefit of the future. ' ' In Sardonyx, Russell Chauvenet said that the only horror story that ever gave him the horrors is Robert Hich-en's "How Love Came to Professor Guildea." ' ' Probably the very worst publication ever to hit an FAPA mailing, Rus Wood's Pogorus, was unfortunately included, with its weird patriotic tone, its "good Japs are dead Japs" refrain, and its ultimate in anti-climaxes: "Rus Wood is biting his fingernails down to the stump, hoping that the stork will beat the draft board to his door." ' ' Fan-Tods made its first appearance in an FAPA mailing, and Norm was already apologizing for the rush and inadequacy of the issue. ' ' Incidentally, I was practising shorthand when this mailing appeared, filled all the margins of the magazines with my pothooks, and wish desperately that I could decipher them now. They are all comments on the contents of the publications, and would be an invaluable guide to the way I felt about things in general five years ago. ' ' Speer was prophetic in Ramblings though no one quite knew then what was going to happen: "Like Santayana's Last Puritan, Singleton has nothing in particular to live for. He bitterly dislikes the war, tho he toys with the idea of enlisting in the Marines or Navy. He would like to go back to Texas for a six-months' vacation and a chance to think. If he eventually reorganizes himself on a more successful basis, it will not be the Singleton we knew at Chicago. If he doesn't, he might as well, from a purely selfish estimate of the situation, do what we had he did." But, come to think of it, what did happen?

EUGENE SUE
The Wandering Jew

I was very anxious to speed up my French reading pace. The local library is not equipped with a vast section of books in that language, but it does own a four-volume set of Sue's "Le Juif Errante." Working from time to time over a six-month period, I struggled through the set, and picked up some of the desired facility in reading French. ' ' Unfortunately, from the standpoint of either fantasy or of real literature, the story stinks. Its preservation in an English translation in The Modern Library edition simply reflects on the good taste of those who choose the titles for that series. ' ' "The Wandering Jew" is written on a big scale, no doubt about that. The title character is the laborer who refused to help Christ just before the Crucifixion, and as a result was doomed to walk the world, endlessly and immortally. Sue adds to that legend a tendency for the Wandering Jew to carry cholera wherever he goes, and throws in for good measure a Wandering Jewess in the period of Herodiade. Both of the wanderers are tired of their pedestrian life, remorseful, and are unable to find death. ' ' However, they merely bob up from time to time through the main plot that constitutes the bulk of the long story, and their presence in the yarn is the only fantasy element. The main story revolves around an immense heritage that has been accumulating for 150 years for the descendants of a wealthy man. This gentleman had left tokens of identity with his descendants, warning them to gather on a prescribed day in a certain house to share in the divvying up. ' ' However, Eugene Sue apparently hated the Jesuits with an all-consuming enthusiasm, and he turns them into the villains of the book. The Jesuits want this immense heritage for their own society, and the novel is concerned with the struggle between the Rennepont descendants for the money against the Jesuits. ' ' The extreme anti-clerical attitude would mar the story, if there were anything to mar. As it is, every incident in the book is hopelessly artificial, told at boring length, and the characters are unbelievably good or bad, depending on whether a particular character is one of the descendants or a Jesuit. There is also a strenuous effort to shock the reader with assorted tortures, gory deaths, and exotic incidents. By the time the final chapter is reached, everyone of importance on both sides has been killed off by cholera, poison, hydrophobia, duels, labor riots, remorse, a leap from a high window, and assorted other lethal measures. The heritage has also been destroyed by fire. The few characters who are still alive settle down to a life as farmers in a way that is grotesquely but straightfacedly reminiscent of "Candide." And the two wandering Hebrews, whose fate is apparently linked up in some unrelated manner with the Rennepont family, achieve death near the end of the book. ' ' Sue manages to find room for many pages of reflections of a sociological nature, and usually devoted ten or twenty thousand words of his story to illustrate his meaning on each of these matters. It is impossible to find fault with the things he advocates--higher wages for virtuous young working girls, for instance--but the artistic effect is hardly enhanced by this procedure. ' ' The only part of the entire work that is remotely impressive is contained in a few pages, wherein the testator's house is opened for the first time in 150 years. An almost believable atmosphere is built up, only to be destroyed soon when the long arm of the Jesuits and coincidences are once more extended.