
WRITER'S DIGEST

The Leading and Largest Writer's Magazine

RICHARD K. ABBOTT, *Editor*

A. M. MATHIEU, *Business Manager*

V. SLAUGHTER, FRANCES ROCKWELL, MINNA BARDON, *Managing Editors*



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FROM: Leonard L. Bass
Program Supervisor
GANG BUSTERS
501 Madison Avenue
New York City

Crimes Bring Pocket Money

CHECKS for twenty-five, thirty-five, fifty and sixty dollars will soon be arriving at the mailing addresses of "Gang Busters" representatives.

For "Gang Busters" began another series October 10th. Much has been written about the factual detective-magazine field. There is a radio counterpart to this medium that has received little attention.

At different times there have been as much as a half-dozen "cops and robbers" shows on the air.

Such writers as Harlan Mendenhall of Oklahoma, Jack Heil in Ohio, Ernest Warden in Kansas, Joe Abrams and Frank Hay in New Orleans, Al Weisman in St. Louis,

Phil Glanzer up in Canada, frequently submit material to "Gang Busters."

Frankly, "Gang Busters" is a tough market. First, because the competition is pretty keen. You're up against top-notchers in the business. But nobody has exclusive territory. Nobody automatically gets a first. It is strictly first come, first served on coverage and no favorites played.

Second, we give no byline, use no pictures—and rip your material apart! Your material is used as the basis of our radio dramatization and when you hear the broadcast, it is entirely different from the account you submitted. But that's radio.

The last point is the rate of payment:

twenty-five dollars on acceptance of an ordered narrative, plus twenty-five dollars as soon as the case is broadcast in a one week program. If the case runs two weeks, there's a third twenty-five dollars. Plus bonuses for extra work done.

Admittedly, these rates do not compare favorably with the detective magazines. But here's the advantage: I do not ask for prior or exclusive coverage. I'm willing to sit back and let you submit your material to the magazines first. Even to other programs featuring crime dramatizations.

After you've been paid for all your leg work and the market is pretty well closed, you can come to "Gang Busters." And in one broadcast we'll reach more persons than all the detective magazines and other detective radio programs combined.

Here's what I'm after:

The *ideal* GANG BUSTERS case takes in the following points:

1. The case should be concerned with the activities of an organized gang: at least one key criminal with one or more accomplices.
2. This organized gang should have committed a series of crimes of major importance.
3. The minor incidents of the case can go back fifteen or twenty years, so long as the major activities occurred in the past decade. If, however, there is a "super" case, we'll extend our deadline to the 1920's.
4. There should be good police work throughout the case. If a case shows *exceptionally brilliant* police investigation and deduction, we may waive the three preceding requirements.
The case preferably should involve the work of local police or law enforcement departments, or State police bureaus. Cases illustrating the activities of Federal agencies are acceptable, but we want that agency's permission first.
5. The case must be legally acceptable: all major members of the gang must be deceased or still imprisoned for long terms, with small chance of release before expiration of sentence.

TABOO: Cases involving sabotage, sex, insanity, narcotics, crimes committed under the influence of intoxicants, or individual crimes such as murder for revenge.

HOW TO SUBMIT: We require a three-page outline of a proposed case to determine its suitability and to check our file for duplication of material.

The outline should sketch chronologically the activities of the gang, and should include names, dates, places, loot, present status of the criminals, and an indication of the police work involved.

Address all communications to me and I'll answer promptly.

SHORT STORY CONTEST

The editors of *Mademoiselle*, 1 East 57th Street, New York City, announce a short story contest, with the following prizes:

First Prize \$500

Second Prize \$250

and 3 additional prizes of \$50.00 each.

Entries must reach *Mademoiselle* on or before midnight, February 1, 1942.

By this Contest *Mademoiselle* hopes to give encouragement to young writers of talent. Stories containing distinctive writing and original treatment, combined with some artistic form, will be given preference.

Stories may be on any theme of particular interest to young women under thirty.

Length limit—4000 words. Longer stories will not be considered.

Manuscripts of stories submitted must be typewritten, double-spaced, or legibly written by hand. The name and address of the author must appear on each story submitted.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope must accompany each manuscript. Although reasonable care will be given each MS., *Mademoiselle* can assume no responsibility for the loss of any submitted story.

This Contest is open to men and women—under thirty years of age.

P. P. C.

In the Digest for September, page 42, we published a letter from Henry Tillinger, 19 West 44th St., New York City, requesting photographs of superior quality that "tell a story." Also action pics. Prints wanted 8x10 glossy. Also 4x5 color for magazine covers. We omitted the name of this picture syndicate which is *Pictorial Publishing Company*. This is a new, rather small pic syndicate and we believe it to be reliable.

Fresh Out of Lavender

By ALICE DOUGLAS KELLY

Author of Fiction in the Leading Women's Magazines

THE EDITOR of a national woman's magazine said to me a few weeks ago, "You know, we can't get our advertising men to read our fiction. They think we're still done up in old lace and smell of lavender.

That, apparently, is what a great many people of both sexes *do* think about women's magazine fiction. If you suggest to students of writing that they slant their stories toward this well-paying, mass-circulation market the young women look at you as if you suggested that they limit their talent to the production of "Dotty Dimple" stories; the young men with all the disgust they would show should you advise them to wear pastel blue shirts and flowers in their hair.

Most beginning writers have definite and largely erroneous opinions. They regard slanting as pure imitation; form as suicidal to art, and they all want to make the *Saturday Evening Post* whether or not they have the kind of experience or talent necessary to write stories acceptable to that magazine. They pine for quality and see slicks and pulps, not as different techniques of writing which they are, but only as better and worse types of fiction. The women feel that they aren't doing real writing unless they use the technique of a problem novel on a three thousand word short. And the men apparently agree that to create tales about anything but tough detectives, football games, or bull fights is a mark of effeminacy.

These errors and others you can combat and eventually eliminate. You can persuade strong men that other strong men, their fathers to mention only a few, have presumably loved, proposed and even married.

So that they need not draw their heroes as misogynists or furtively sketch their heroes' big moments as crosses between shop window mannequins and blushing how-dare-you-sir belles of the nineties. Women can be made to see that they can draw convincing characters and create intricate plots within the compass of commercial short stories without necessarily emasculating their genius.

But the women's magazines are hard to sell to the majority of aspirants. Almost all beginning writers and students appear to have in their mind's eye a composite picture of this large audience as a homespun person who functions only in the kitchen or maternity ward, who lives in the hinterlands, has the mentality of a backward child, the sophistication of a Salem witch-burner and the literary tastes of a partial illiterate. Actually, surveys show that the readers of the women's magazine are a fairly representative feminine cross section of the country. Women in big cities, in small towns, in suburbs and in rural centers, all buy these magazines. And, in these different localities, the women buyers range in background and education from teachers in colleges or schools, to housewives who are back of the civic improvements and the culture clubs of their community.

No man's circulation magazine can say that it pleases all of its readers all the time. This is as true of *Collier's* and of *Red Book*, as it is of *McCall's* or the *Woman's Home Companion*. It is true, too, that there are inevitable taboos in all fiction destined for man's circulation. But why it should be supposed that these taboos are worse in the women's magazines, or that only innocuous, weak and saccharine tales may be offered to





"Read the rules first! Maybe the Snezzle Auto Contest doesn't require contestants to send in tops."

the female of the species is a deep dark mystery to me.

"But aren't women more easily shocked?" one beginning writer recently asked me. "Don't they shrink from reality, and just want pretty stories that won't make them think?"

What women?

This is 1941, remember? It's been quite a while since ladies swooned; or handed rosebuds to their husbands across the tiny garments; several decades since unmarried girls had either to waste away at home or be disinherited for taking up an unmaidenly occupation like nursing or acting or doing typing for some big coarse man. Farmer's wives are no longer invariably worn drabs with lacklustre eyes who bear children while the dinner is cooking and have no neighbors nearer than five miles up a bumpy road.

To coin a phrase, times have changed. The status of women has changed. Science has been as busy as a little bee producing radios, and cheap cars, and clinics, and anaesthetics for childbirth. Women vote and are civic-minded and career-minded and well-groomed and breadwinners and everything.

They have more free time, too, now that excellent baby food comes in cans, and vacuum cleaners take up the dust instead of spreading it around over grandma's rag rug.

And they use that time to be good citizens; competent, business-like housekeepers; wise, unsentimental well-instructed mothers. And

they use it for professions and part time work, for constructive hobbies and for reading the women's magazines.

And what do they find in the latter? Let us take non-fiction first. Looking at random through a pile of old McCall's, Companion's, Journals, and Good Housekeeping, dating from 1935 to mid-summer, 1941, I find an astonishingly varied collection of articles.

Aside from advice on home management, child training, cooking, interior decorating, and styles, there are articles on music, on books and plays, on good citizenship, on putting down crime and the prevention, cure, or control of such diseases as cancer, rheumatic fever, arthritis, diabetes, and many others. Other subjects range in importance from the proper way to build an iceboat, a playhouse or an outdoor grill, to various problems of democracy, dictatorships, foreign situations and national defense.

Why should minds which demand and assimilate such subjects as these, be satisfied with vapid and lifeless fiction? The editors know they will not. That is why editors have changed their books to keep pace with modern women and their positions in the world. Editors had to do this in order for their magazines to survive.

They continue to recognize that women like to read about problems which affect them, and these include love, marriage, parental-filial relationships, the temptations of youth and of age, holding the affection of husbands and lovers, keeping youthful and desirable, and a host of other vital themes which cannot be dismissed as purely either sentimental or innocuous.

It may be true that women are especially fastidious in the matter of expression, that they prefer to have scenes of passion, sin, indiscretion, temptation, cruelty, or conflict treated with more restraint than men do. If that is true, it concerns only vocabulary and not the subject matter.

The women's magazines buy stories on almost every problem of interest to women, provided the subject is interestingly and constructively handled, the story is well-written and the ordinary standards of good taste are maintained. Read them and see.

Again looking through our old magazines,

this time for fiction, we find in the *Companion* of 1933, Rebecca West's "Salt of the Earth," a magnificent two part story. During the last two years—again only skimming the surface—we find worthy of note in any field of popular writing Judith Kelly's Harper Prize Novel, "Marriage is a Private Affair" running in the *Journal*, and a cut version of "H. M. Pulham, Esq." by John Marquard in *McCall's*.

"The Long and the Short of It," a short story by Dorothea Malm in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, "Ask Your Father" by Hilda Mauck in *McCall's*, "How Long Do You Give Me?" by Augusta Tucker in *Good House*, are all arresting, strong, and interesting stories.

Leafing through the pages of these magazines the names of the women writers we see indicate the high standards of both the editors and their public; Pearl Buck, Mary Hastings Bradley, Fanny Heaslip Lea, Sophie Kerr, Margaret Lee Runbeck, Margaret Cullin Banning, Barbara Aldrich, and many others as distinguished. All these have craftsmanship, sound psychology, knowledge of human nature and a gift for straightforward tale telling.

Besides them, in increasing numbers come the men's names. Booth Tarkington, Robert Nathan, Clarence Budington Kelland, Edmund Ware, Burnham Carter, James Warner Bellah, Stephen Vincent Beuet, Dwight Mitchell Wiley, and T. S. Stribling, have all been published in the women's magazines.

Quite a roll call, taken all together and none writers of continuations of the "Five Little Peppers."

But even after all this has been said, there will still arise a feeble cry,

"But you have to write from the woman's angle. Give the woman's point of view."

I said feeble cry! I meant feeble-minded. Anyone would think men and women lived on separate planets, spoke different languages, and carried on the race by test tube. Men and women differ physically. But we are not required to write anatomical or biological treatises for the fiction department of any magazine. What women's magazines want are stories which deal with the interests of women. And at least seven tenths of the



"Ether is on priority, so we'll have to try a substitute."

interests of average women have to do with men.

Women have husbands, sweethearts, brothers, fathers, sons, bosses, co-workers and the friends of same. They deal with tradesmen, school principals, drivers of public conveyances and salesmen. Men fight for them, work for them and are divorced by them.

There would seem to be a little story material right there. But the beginning writer goes right on thinking that to hold the interest of these millions of literate women, you have to discourse solely upon the technique of tatting and allied diversions.

A short time ago a young man, a writer and a good one, sent a story to a woman's magazine with the following graceful and intelligent covering letter:

Dear Miss Whoosit, he wrote . . .
I am enclosing a story which I'll be glad to let you have. It's really too good for your magazine.

The story was, as it happens, not one of the young man's best efforts, and it was, inevitably, since he has not been writing long, about a bull fighter. Most young men writers have to spend a year or two getting the bull out of their systems, just as beginning women writers have to get the good earth out of theirs.

There was nothing wrong with writing

about a bull fight for a Woman's Magazine. But what he *should* have done was to bring in the mother or sweetheart of the bullfighter, or even the cow the bull left behind.

The daddy bull writer of them all certainly got his women interest into "For Whom The Bells Toll."

The women's magazines want new names and fresh talent just as every magazine does. (I assume that any writer who has reached the point where he's good enough to aim at the women's magazines no longer has any nonsensical ideas about non-reading editors, editorial plagiarism, and all the other myths of the amateur.) Editors, without exception, are helpful to anyone whose material interests them.

They pay exceedingly well and very promptly. And they read promptly, too. I have had decisions from all the women's group in less than two weeks: sometimes in a few days. Once I got an okay on the first half of a single shot in forty-eight hours and an affirmative decision on the finished story in six hours.

I have had an editor in this group not only give me practically unlimited time to discuss ideas in her office, but she also allowed me to bring my problems with regard to the story I was doing for her, to her country home where she was trying to enjoy a well-earned vacation.

In short, the women's magazine editors are as courteous and encouraging as all other good editors and the group is a splendid, secure and broad-minded market. Anyone who ignores it, if they can make it, is ignoring a well-marked, pleasant high-road to success.

THE following openings of women's magazine stories appeared in *McCall's*, and Miss Constance Smith, fiction editor of that magazine, selected them as samples of the kind of writing that she finds appealing.

From "*THE BABY THAT NEVER CRIED*," by Charles Hoffman.

When it was all over, I went back out into the hall. My mother was there, and Lila's mother. It must have been about three-thirty. The hall was cold

and dark. Everything was very quiet. I guess they could tell, before I started talking, what I was going to say, because my mother said, "Oh!" And Lila's mother said, "Monty . . . !" And I said, "The baby's dead. It never started to breathe. It was a little boy. Lila's all right. She's out. Like a light."

I want to go back here, for a minute. I want to digress. Put it in italics, if you want. Put it in parentheses.

It was a sunny morning, a sunny Sunday May morning. Lila had on a peach-colored housecoat, and I was still in my pajamas. And we were sitting in that red-and-white dinette in the old apartment in the country, the one we had after we were married—before we moved into the cottage—so we would have another bedroom. For the baby.

"*BE BIGGER THAN YOU ARE*" by Laurie Hillier.

"I'd much rather he was born in the tube at Leicester Square," Felicity had said, "if you were there."

Neal had his back toward her, gazing out the taped window. "Think how you'd feel later, going to the matinee or meeting me for lunch, and always stumbling over the place where he was born."

"I'd like it."

"And think what an awkward place to put up a monument, 'Christian Chisholm McIntyre, Prime Minister of England. Born, July, 1940, on this platform—'"

"I won't go to the States!"

"You *shall* go!" Neal began to pace up and down, glaring. If he let his face soften one instant, he would not be able to glare. He said, fiercely, "Felicity! Face facts! I'd probably be in the air, I wouldn't be here. It might be in an air raid or a gas attack." He looked at her from the corner of a grim gray eye to see if she was standing it. She was standing it. "I *know* you don't want to cross the Atlantic alone. I *know* you don't want to go to the Duane's in Massachusetts even though they were old

friends of your mother's. I know everything. But there are times, Felicity, when you have to be bigger than you are—"

That was unfortunate. "I'm big enough already," said Felicity.

Neal dropped on his knees beside her and smothered her in his arms.

But the baby was born in a hospital in Boston

These excerpts from stories in *McCall's* were also scissored by our Miss Smith as examples of smooth paper woman's magazine writing that will bear study.

Excerpt from "*Image of Louise*" by Felix Noland . . . the story of a High School girl whose two older sisters had both "gone wrong", and with whom the nice little girls at school were not supposed to associate.

Out from the dark shadows of the trees she stepped, and stood still for a moment, her head lifted as if she were listening. Then with her white middy blouse blown tight against the sharp points of her breasts, she started toward us—not directly, but with quick, uncertain movements, her eyes all the time fixed in the distance, lustrous and shy. There was something about her that made you think of a young doe setting its arched hooves in wariness ahead, a trembling upon it, and the soft polished brown eyes so asking . . . Across the cindery clay yard she stalked, her beautiful red mouth held still, a sheen on her skin like wet autumn leaves, and you could see the boys halt in their tracks as she passed. You could see them fling up their hands to their neckties, as if to loosen them for the sudden rush of blood that stole to their whetted faces. "Hey, there—Louise!"

With one accord, we whirled. It was Spike Hunter, the captain of the basketball team, and though we all stared, breathless, he kept his eyes on his sneakers as he ran. "Louise!"

She flung us a last imploring glance, bowed her head, wheeled and went leaping up the cement walk to the entrance of the gray stucco building, her slim heels tap-tapping, while back of her



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"After fifteen years of writing he no longer needs a chair!"

crept Spike, a faint smile on his lips and his eyes very black in his keen white face. "Louise!"

"*Love Without Laughter* by Helen Hull (novel) . . . A woman, twenty years married, is about to tell her husband the truth about a youthful indiscretion which she believes he already suspects.

She went slowly about the room, turning off the lights. She set the night latch on the front door and climbed the stairs. Quietly she touched the handle of her door, entered and closed the door behind her. If she made no sound, Edwin might think she had not yet come up. She knew he was awake for there was a thin line of light under his door.

Stealthily she made her preparations for the night. When she had nothing more to do, she stood beside her bed, her fingers pulling at the cord of her bathrobe. If I don't go in, she thought, if again tonight I do not open that door, Edwin will know I am afraid. Each hour increases my guilt. She moved across the room, and then could not lift her hand to the glass knob. What would she say? She didn't know her entering speech, she thought grimly, there was no one in the prompter's box to aid her. She sat down on the bench in front of the dressing-table, setting her teeth against their chattering.

TURN OUT FOR THE TEAM!

By SEABURN BROWN

Author of more than 200 published sport stories

WHO CAN predict the sort of world we shall have following the next World War Armistice. We may be a happy and confident nation; may be sad and discouraged; may come out economically sound; may come out neck deep in the worst slough of depression of all history. This general uncertainty, to be sure, the beginning writer faces on the same footing with the young butcher, young baker and young candlestick maker.

But on the other hand, the budding author has one certainty ahead.

It is the certainty of one major market upon which he may depend. This market is the sport fiction market. The young writer who sets out now to build a reputation among sport-fiction fans will hold the rail position on the soundest nag in the after-war scramble.

As might be suspected, the first story I ever sold was a sport story. And through the long years since I have "majored" in sports. I have wandered, pleasantly enough, into sleuthing, cow-punching and love making, fictionally speaking; but in the main have written sports, through good times and depression times, and have packed various magazines with enough sport copy to bulk a fair-sized hunk of *Gone With The Wind*.

My writing preferences, however, have no bearing on the case I am out to prove. Let's go back to 1919—the spring and summer of 1919. By millions men had trooped home from war service. From a Seattle naval reserve camp, where with thousands of other very young chaps I spent a few months drilling and wondering what a battleship (none of us ever saw one) looked like, I was back home in a typical American small town—Stanwood, Wash., population around a thou-

sand, up and coming, paved streets and civic pride and all.

The thing I found that is pertinent here was a boom sweeping the old home town—and surrounding towns and countryside. It wasn't a boom in the business of the town's two sawmills. It was a boom in sports, a spectacular, unprecedented boom that stands out in retrospect as a phenomenon of the times.

For one thing, the town went baseball crazy. The whole town: old and young, men, women and kids. A grandstand was built, a diamond laid out, a cracker-jack bush league outfit scheduling games, before you could say "batter up!" in shorthand. On Sundays, the populace abandoned porch rockers and yard swings and picnic grounds in order to pack the ball park, where many a week's wages was bet and many a nose punched while Stanwood's team—all local players excepting a pitcher hired from outside semi-pro ranks—fought for glory. A victory was a civic triumph. Defeat settled upon the entire population a spell of civic blues.

Golf wasn't an established sport in the typical American small town in 1919. But the sale of boxing gloves and tennis rackets and duck guns and basketball equipment and the like kept step with the baseball revival. The Commercial Club of Stanwood invited the Mt. Vernon business leaders to a boxing smoker, held in that universal small-town institution the Odd Fellows Hall. Professionals boxed the main event. Amateurs, recruited from the family garages where the town's youth was striving to master the arts and mysteries of pugilism, filled out the card. One lanky boy of 19 made the mistake of thinking ownership of a set of boxing gloves conferred,

by some occult osmosis, superiority in their use. He took an unholy beating from a robust shoe shiner in the semi-windup, and promptly and permanently retired from the ring. I wince to this day when I think of that shoe shiner's right to my midriff. People hiked, rode, swam, fished, skated, camped, and joined in team games.

The boom that swept Stanwood swept all towns, all sections, all cities.

Through the early '20's the fever rose. It brought the million-dollar gate to boxing. It brought intercollegiate football to the front with such a steam-roller rush that huge stadiums rapidly became a possibility and then a sensational reality and then a commonplace. It brought the Babe Ruthian era of fabulous salaries and gigantic parks to baseball. It made an intercontinental event of a tennis match between two girls: I rolled out of bed long before daybreak in California to help get out a newspaper extra when pig-tailed Helen Wills played Suzanne Lenglen in France.

The fervor for sports will come again as one of the results of a tremendous revulsion of the public mind from years of apprehension, doubt and danger, with a consequent "escape" swing-over to release in lusty pursuit of pure pleasure.

The spiritual depression and genuine fear of this war period are more profound already than the period of '14-'18. When the sun of peace breaks through the grim war coluds of today, 130,000,000 Americans are going to blow their tops in the celebration of all celebrations of all time—and how!

This slant shows us a paradox: The sports craze of 1919 and the next few years found no corresponding sports boom in pulp fiction. Sport news boomed—sports sections of newspapers ballooned to the hoggish share of news space they retain to this day, and sports editors and writers became gents of stature around newspaper plants. Yet the dusty files of the pulp books of those years reveal virtually nothing of that furor. Fiction trends must always lag behind actual trends in public thinking and desires; but in this case the fiction lag was so great that the war had been over more than a decade before the publishers of this republic's pulps discovered the overlooked great "natural." After the public

had lived through its boisterous golden age of real sport, with its overtones of jazz and flag-pole sitting, and simmered down to a life of normal days and nights, the pulps first yelled for copy in volume and set out to man the stands with sports-packed magazines!

As late as 1928 and '29, there were not more than three or four pulps devoted exclusively to sport fiction, I'm sure. Offhand I can recall but two: *Fight Stories* and *Sport Story*. A few other pulps—*Ace-High*, *Top-Notch*, *Short Stories* and the late *Triple-X* among them—would be salted with occasional sport yarns.

Today there are around a dozen and a half pulp magazines printing sport stuff and nothing but sport stuff from cover to cover! There are as many sport fiction pulps as romantic love pulps. The sport pulps outnumber the science fiction and fantasy magazines, and the sports outnumber all war, air-war, air, supernatural, weird and horror magazines added together!

The rugged, savage, submerged nine-tenths of man's spirit is predatory and bellicose, desiring mightily to break a head here and crack a chin there.

All competitive sport contests are miniature wars. All the emotions of war—the lusts and fears, the joy in victory and anguish in defeat—are lived through indeed in the bleachers. In any rugged sport the partisan fan finds his racial love for combat fed and satisfied. He identifies himself with the bleeding, berserk fullback who drives through for the last yard and the winning touchdown over hated—yes *hated*, at the moment—Podunk College. All he has done has been leap on his seat, smash his hat and yell his lungs out—but in so doing he has traveled back a thousand generations to his heart's desire: he has led his tribesmen in battle, has crushed the foe, has gloried in victory for his neck of the woods.

How To Do It

WHAT makes a sport story click? Like all specialties, sport writing has idiosyncracies and taboos that plague the novice sorely, but which are simple enough when unraveled. I'll try here to make plain the major fundamentals of sport-story fictioneering, which I learned the hard way; by mak-

ing mistakes and having them pointed out to me by nobly patient editors.

Basically, the plot and theme of a good sport story may be indistinguishable from the plot and theme of a good love story or good western story or good most-any-sort-of-story. For all stories (we are dealing, of course, with popular fiction—not with literary psychological studies and stream-of-consciousness stories) that load the newsstands today have one basic theme. That theme is the struggle of some man or woman to overcome difficulty—to defeat misfortune or viciousness that stands in the way of success or happiness. The great surgeon whose operating hand becomes useless at the height of his brilliant career is confronted by a tragedy precisely parallel to the tragedy of a pitching ace whose arm goes dead on the eve of a world series in which he is slated to be the mound star. Either situation might provide the beginning of a story—introducing the hero and the problem he must face. How he fights to overcome his difficulty—the *conflict*, his gains and his setbacks, glimpses of victory and threats of utter defeat—makes up the body of the story. The climax of the story brings the outcome—final victory or final defeat. If defeat is our hero's portion, the story is a tragedy. If he wins, we have a happy-ending yarn—which is the only sort of yarn printed by the magazines we're thinking of here, and so the only sort of yarn we are concerned with.

Let's apply this general theme to the field of sport in a particular story, then examine the results. I have an especial reason for using a story I wrote several years ago when the spitball was being legislated out of organized baseball.

The Basic Theme of All Popular Fiction

The opening situation finds an old, fading pitcher, down in the class D minors after a big league career, getting by in grand style because he's a master of the spitball and with a team in a small league where the delivery is legal.

He's Up

With his spitter, the old pitcher is virtually unbeatable. Without it, he is helpless.

He's Down

The owner of a rival club stops him by railroading through a league ruling banning the spitball—right now.

A Tough Problem Faces the Hero

Here is our tough predicament. What to do? The problem *must be solved*.

The team is losing, the owner is about to can the useless old pitcher, and the team manager is giving up all hope of a pennant when the latter thinks up a solution.

The Solution

It is a hot summer in a hot part of the country. The players perspire copiously on the field. The spitball is simply a baseball partly wet and part dry. The wet area of the surface offers less resistance to air friction than the dry area, and this causes the ball to take deceptive hops and breaks. The league ban applies to moistening the ball with saliva—but there is nothing to prevent a pitcher from wiping the rivulets of sweat from his brow to moisten the ball. So our old pitcher becomes effective again with what might be called a sweat-ball. And our problem is solved—*seemingly*.

The Solution Fails

But presently our spitballer finds himself unable to use his "sweat-ball" spitter for lack of sweat. To his and the manager's puzzlement and dismay, the old chap doesn't perspire on face or forehead, no matter how great the heat.

Dirty Work at the Crossroads

Since he perspires from the neck down, the manager finally solves this step of the problem, too—though meanwhile precious ground is lost in the pennant race. Following a hunch and sleuthing a bit, the manager catches a hireling of the rival club owner sprinkling a strong perspiration-checking powder into the wash-bowl the pitcher plunges his head into each morning. Once more our pitcher sweats normally from all pores—and our problem is again solved—*seemingly*.

Handicapped Hero Faces the Climax

Now, though, we come to our toughest hurdle: The crucial final game of the season, the game on which hangs the pennant, brings the bitter league rivals together. The team of our heroes hasn't a chance. The owner of the enemy team has no need of trickery to stop our spitballer, who is the only pitcher we have capable of winning on this day. For it is a cold, raw day. The crowd shivers. It is utterly impossible for the old pitcher to work up a sweat in the chill air. He is like Samson shorn. The game must be won—but the man who must win it can't sweat and therefore can't pitch. The problem that must again be solved *now seems insolvable indeed*.

Yet our pitcher must sweat and win the game—else our story falls to pieces.

The Final Solution, Born of a Careful Plant

In his desperation, the manager of our team gets inspiration by sight of a ventriloquist he spots in the grand stand. Recognizing the man and recalling his abilities from having seen him in a show a night or so back, the manager hustles the man to the players' dugout and pays him handsomely to hypnotize the old pitcher into the belief that it is a torrid day—that the field is baking under a scorching sun. Under this hypnotic conviction, the pitcher gushes perspiration, stops the enemy hitters—and the game is won, the pennant with it, and our problem is solved and our story happily ended.

I have outlined this yarn in some detail for the reason that it provides guinea-pig material for our purpose here.

FIRST, let's consider the negative side:

I sent this story, as written above, to *Short Stories*. Roy de S. Horn was then editor there. He sent the yarn back to me, with the objection that the climax *wouldn't be believable to the minds of most readers of his magazine*. Pulp readers, I learned from him and other good editors, are long enough on credulity but are very short on imagination—short indeed. They must believe that every event in a story could "really happen," and they will believe that quite improbable things could "really happen" if they are

events of the earth earthy; but once a story gets away from things that can be touched and seen, the pulp reader goes skeptic on you and the story is spoiled for him.* In this case, *homo pulp reader* would find no difficulty believing that a pitcher could substitute perspiration for saliva in throwing the spitball, nor in believing that powder introduced into the water of a man's morning ablutions could preclude sweating for the day. Sweat is real; all men and some animals sweat. Drug stores sell preparations for the control of perspiration. But when it comes to making a man sweat on a cold day by such hocus-pocus as hypnotism!—come again, mister, you can't kid us!

So I threw out my hypnotist and rewrote my climax solution to the story problem. Just as the game was getting under way (I rewrote), an aviator made a forced landing in the ball park. The flyer had been trying for altitude in an open plane, and to keep from freezing had worn a leather jacket electrically heated by wiring interlaced in the jacket's wool lining. Our manager buys the jacket, claps it on the spitballer, turns the juice on full blast. The heat of the jacket makes the old boy sweat plenty—and so the game is won. I shipped the story back to Editor Horn—who promptly bought it. *It now had a believable climax*. A leather jacket, electrically heated, is real. You can see it and touch it. And heat does make people perspire. I was careful to have my manager cut the leather from the right sleeve of the jacket, so the pitcher's flinging arm wouldn't be hampered.

The element of plausibility is, to be sure, by no means confined to the sport story as a necessary pulp ingredient. But the sport story writer must be triply careful on this point at all times and at all stages in every yarn. When mere improbability causes a sport fan to balk at a yarn, you may well imagine the plight of the luckless author who makes a flat error on the hard facts of sport rules or records! Caustic letters pour into

*The exception to this is the fantasy field. Readers assume as soon as they pick up a fantasy magazine that events will occur beyond the realm of their experience. For further information on fantasy and science fiction see October, *WRITER'S DIGEST*.

office of editor and mail-box of writer. Error is the unforgivable sin in the eyes of the sport-story fan.

Men who have never been outside the U. S. A. have written successful adventure stories laid in Africa or India—but then their readers, 100 to 1, have never seen Africa or India either. Staid old authors who married their childhood sweethearts immediately after high school and have raised large families have written successful stories of hot-cha love in exotic atmosphere. But then, most of their readers haven't had much experience in hot-cha love in exotic atmosphere. Such writers are comparatively safe from reader challenges. But no fan is more knowing than your sport fan. And he expects the author to know as much as he does—and he, too often it may seem, knows all the answers. And to him the author of a story *containing a few technical slips is a phony*—no matter how excellent the story may be otherwise.

It isn't, of course, essential that a sport fictioneer make of himself a walking encyclopaedia of sport history and rules. It is easy for him to protect himself with a habit of checking every statement of sport *fact* he uses, before sending out any yarn.

NOW, let's consider our guinea-pig story from the positive side:

Plot. This is the action-story formula in plot construction.

In the first step, the hero or principal character finds himself in trouble of some sort—in a serious predicament difficult of solution. He sets out to solve his difficulty. He achieves an *apparent* solution. Suddenly the solution proves false—and he is back in the original predicament; his plight worse, if anything, than before.

The second step is, essentially, a repetition of the first step. Again the hero sets off, this time on a *new tack*, however, to solve his problem. Again he *seemingly* succeeds—and again his *apparent* success proves false—and again he is back in the original predicament. And this time his plight is worse than ever (*how can our pitcher be made to sweat on a cold day?*)!

The third step is still another try, on still another *new tack*, to solve the difficulty. But this time our solution is not only *apparent*, it

is *actual*. This time we do solve our difficulty (or our hero does). And our plot is complete; our story over.

The Moral Must Be There

Moral. Theme or moral or motif—call it what you will—is an important ingredient in the sport story as in all stories. It is well for the beginner to mark this, whatever type of story he wishes to write! Even this simple, light, story cited here has a theme. It can be stated, *You can lick any trouble if you keep on punching.* Or, *Perseverance wins*, as the copy-books have it. The homely old maxims and Sunday School mottoes are plastered all over the pages of sport magazines, if you boil them down so to speak. Take our guinea-pig:

Paddle your own canoe, the Lord helps those who help themselves, etc. Well, our pitcher and manager win their fight themselves. They plan and work their way out of their difficulties as they present themselves. They ask no help from others, nor from luck.

Right will prevail. No matter what underhanded deceits the villain of the piece resorts to (in this story or any story), he loses in the end to the *fair and above board* tactics of the hero. If this weren't the law of the pulp sport story, the villain would often come out on top in the end, for the unwritten law (of the pulps) is that the hero must never stoop to "low cunning," to anything that smacks of hitting below the belt, no matter what the evil provocation nor how dirtily the battle may be waged by the forces opposed to him.

All this may seem ridiculously puritanical in the harsh real world of today—but perhaps, indeed quite likely, as time goes on magazine readers will be even more demanding of the homely virtues in their fiction as a place of psychical escape from a world of reality grown too revolting for endurance.

In the sport stories that now sell, that have sold, and will sell in the future, the hero proves that honesty is the best policy, right triumphs, and courage and confidence win. Right or wrong—that holds.

Conflict. Conflict is, of course, the life-blood of your story. If your conflict is strong—the obstacles to your hero's triumph forbidding and dangerous and frequent, and his battles to surmount them desperate and bitter—your story has suspense and reader in-

terest. But your conflict must involve your theme to make your story strong.

Once, in a long novelette, I sent my hero through several long games. But the action of these games contributed to the *real conflict* of my story *theme*: My hero, a marvelous basketball shot, was torn between the ambition to break all records as an individual scorer and the duty of subordinating that ambition to the need for winning games for his school and coach through team play as a cog in the machine. The conflict between personal ambition and sense of school loyalty was heightened by the physical conflict of the games played—and so the story held up and was readily sold.

Conflict blends into plot, naturally, and both blend with theme—and the combination, with good, hard writing, make up into a good sport story.

The sport-writing varsity isn't a cinch to make—no good team is. But there's a spot open for every writer who can show the stuff. And there's nothing to stop you from turning out for the team—and shooting for any or all of a fine list of markets:

Ace Sports, 67 West 44th Street, New York City.

All-American Athlete, 922 Hoe Avenue, New York City.

Baseball Stories, 461 8th Avenue, New York City.

Complete Sports, 330 West 42nd Street, New York City.

Dime Sports, 205 East 42nd Street, New York City.

Fight Stories, 461 8th Avenue, New York City.

Popular Sports, 10 East 40th Street, New York City.

Sporting News, (features; non-fiction) 10th and Olive Streets, St. Louis, Mo.

Sports Action, 330 West 42nd Street, New York City.

Sports Fiction, 60 Hudson Street, New York City.

Sports Novels, 205 East 42nd Street, New York City.

Sport Story Magazine, 79 7th Avenue, New York City.

Sports Winners, 60 Hudson Street, New York City.



"Must you come in and disturb me when I am writing?"

Ten Story Sports, 60 Hudson Street, New York City.

Thrilling Football, 10 East 40th Street, New York City.

Thrilling Sports, 10 East 40th Street, New York City.

12 Sports Aces, 67 West 44th Street, New York City.

Do You Know Horses?

Sir:

We are interested in hearing from young writers and particularly those who are familiar with horses and matters pertaining to horsemanship.

We can use short stories and an occasional poem, and articles dealing entirely with riders, rides, and things pertaining to horses.

We pay at the rate of a half a cent a word on publication of all accepted material.

THE RIDER'S REVIEW,
Walter N. Whitney,
262 Bryant St., Buffalo, N. Y.

Sir:

You may be interested in adding to your Market Notes the news that *The Step Ladder* will pay \$5.00 each month, starting January, 1942, to the person who can fill its last page. An essay or little short-short story, 250 words in length (and high in quality), would fill the page; or two good sonnets or a lyric of not more than 24 lines would not exceed our space. Submissions should be sent to *The Step Ladder*, 4917 Blackstone Avenue, Chicago, Ill., marked for the attention of Last-Page Editor.

RACHEL ALBRIGHT,
Last-Page Editor,

NEW YORK MARKET LETTER

BY HARRIET A. BRADFIELD

A LOT of writers have known Lionel White as an editor. He started *True* for The Country Press (Fawcett Publications). Later, he joined Hillman and started several successful magazines in the fact-detective field. Now, here he is, set up on his own as the name-man in *White Publications*, at 67 West 44th Street.

As you might expect, one of the first magazines he is working on is a fact-detective book. The company has taken over *Feature Detective Cases* from Manton Publishing Company of 122 East 42nd Street. The first issue under the new editorship will be February, and the market is open now for material. Exposés are wanted, and any good story with a crime angle, even if not the usual kind. There should be a sex angle on the straight fact-detective stories. And the writer should provide pictures whenever possible; the more, the better. An important point to note is that the editor does not want cases which have been used in any of the other fact-detective magazines. And he has a very complete file of cases covered in the past by all such magazines, by which to check whether or not a case has been used. So be sure of yourself on that count. As is usual in this field, you should query the editor first about the case you wish to cover. Give names, dates, location, and a list of possible pictures. Doing this first saves work in the event that the particular crime does not seem suitable to the magazine, or perhaps is being covered by someone else. Stories themselves should be written in such a way as to catch and hold the readers' attention, as Mr. White emphasizes that story interest is his chief standard for deciding on acceptability of the completed story. Payment will be a cent and a half, on acceptance; and up to two cents a word for especially good stories. Lengths may run from 4,500 to 5,000 words. Pictures are paid for on publication; \$3 for each one used.

The first of the White Publications to ap-

pear on the stands is called *Play*—a pictorial magazine of the entertainment world. The only market here is pictures, singly and in series. Singles rate \$5 each; larger series are paid for by special arrangement.

Other magazines are in the works and will be announced shortly. Address is 67 West 44th Street. And as there are other publishing houses in this same building, be sure to include the name of the house, *White Publications*, on your envelope. This is important to note, as most of the complaints about non-delivery of mail to magazines in large office buildings appear to be due to insufficient address.

HILLMAN Periodicals are continuing to expand*. The latest addition reported is in the movie fan field. Mrs. May Kelley, who has been editing several similar magazines for Ideal Publishing Company, has gone over to start a similar magazine for Hillman. Address: 1476 Broadway.

Several important changes have been made recently in the editorial staff of *Liberty*. Mabel Search is now the Fiction Editor. She was formerly with *Pictorial Review* and *Good Housekeeping*.

The former Fiction Editor of *Liberty*, Olin H. Clark, is now *Article Editor*. He says that he hopes the fiction writers with whom he has had such pleasant contact will keep in touch with him, though now, as far as his duties are concerned, he moves to another group of writers. Here are some helpful suggestions which would-be contributors of non-fiction to this magazine should read:

In planning an article for possible submission to *Liberty*, the writer should send in to the editor, first, an outline or digest of the subject as he would like to present it. This saves time all around, especially in the case of a subject on which immediate publication is tires of the stars. Its appeal is more youth-

* But we have discontinued their comics.

imperative to its interests. And it helps to have a check on whether the subject is of interest to the editor at all, or is being covered by someone else. Articles aren't like stories. A good story is a good story, even if it lies around in the safe for months before publication. But most articles have to get into print while they are hot. And don't think Mr. Clark singles out newcomers for these previews. Big-name people, such as Mrs. Roosevelt, John Erskine, and Dorothy Parker, always submit an outline first. So why not you?

Make it definite and detailed. Half the letters of inquiry sound about like this: "I am prepared to write an article of any length you desire on the subject of basketball. Are you interested?" Such a letter is useless, because it gives no idea whatever of what the article would consist of, whether of technicalities, of personalities, or a hundred other angles. Be explicit! The address of *Liberty* is 122 East 42nd Street.

True Romances, *True Experiences* and *True Love and Romances* (Macfadden) have been undergoing a change of editorial policy which is extremely important for confession story writers to note. You may not begin to see its real force in the magazines until about the February issues. But the buying department is working on this new angle right now. Henry Lieferant, editor of these three magazines, has given me so clear and detailed a statement of this new type of story, that I want to quote it for the benefit of all who are interested in these three monthlies.

"We like beautifully written stories, stories with a spiritual uplift. We do not write down to our readers; we write up to them because we respect them as people we know. We want stories which deal with life's problems, ones that interest American readers today. Naturally we want a great deal of romance and glamor and beauty in the presentation. We all know what romance means, but the word glamor might be misunderstood. We do not mean by this café society or stories about millionaires and heiresses, though if such a story is well done it will have a place in our magazines. We believe that many people struggling today, who want to get married, have much romance in their lives. Stories of courtship and young marriage are especially

welcome. Love doesn't necessarily end at the altar—it usually begins and life's problems are by no means settled with the wedding ceremony—they usually begin.

"We do not want sordid stories or stories of unpleasant sex or adultery or anything which is immoral. Love, by all means, should play a vital and important part, and should be a major portion of the story, but love cleanly presented in its most beautiful aspects, Courtship, young marriage, wifehood, motherhood, family life dramatically and romantically presented, are what we are seeking.

"We often use the words 'recognition problems' when we write to our authors. By this we mean situations in which any American family might recognize themselves: something that might happen to the Jones family and the Smith family. And let us emphasize that we love beautiful writing—at times poetic, at times realistic, at times emotional.

"Stories of 5,000 to 6,000 words are especially welcome; 5,000 words is the ideal length for us at present. Book-length novels of 16,000 words (no more, no less) are always in demand. Two-part serials of 10,000 to 12,000 words (6,000 each part) are always welcome, as are three-part serials (5,000 to 6,000 words in each part). All stories are first-person. We pay a minimum of 2 cents per word for short stories, more than that for book-length, and 3 cents for serials. Stories are read promptly and usually accepted and paid for within five to fourteen days." Address for *True Romances*, *True Experiences* and *True Love and Romances*: 122 East 42nd Street.

Miss Muriel Babcock has been made executive editor of the Ideal Women's Group, replacing May Kelley, who is now with Hillman. On *Movie Life*, Miss Hallie Pomeroy is the new associate editor. This is an all-picture magazine. On *Movies*, Miss Babcock is the editor. This one uses some articles but, like other fan publications, writers should be accredited by the Hayes office in Hollywood. Address: 122 East 42nd Street (Ideal).

Movie Stars Parade, started as a quarterly, is now appearing on a monthly schedule. There's a new associate editor, Miss Pat Murphy. This book emphasizes glamor pic-

ful and glamorous than the others. Here, too, an occasional article, but subject to the usual restrictions as regard writers. Address: 122 East 42nd Street (Ideal).

Personal Romances (Ideal) has been making conspicuous strides in circulation, and just to keep up the good work is adding more pages, more pictures, some exciting new features, more stories, and a book-length, with the January issue. Right now the market is especially open for these longer novelettes of 10,000 up to 15,000 words. There's always a good opening for an appealing story of 4,000 to 6,000 words; and, if very good, one of 3,000 to 3,500 words. "Good" means character development, plenty of emotion, and a strong plot. Miss Ethel Pomeroy, editor, says that she is looking for stories about people who are not only sympathetically depicted, but who are nice people with right motives. They make mistakes through weakness or wrong decisions; they realize their mistakes too late, but still they have the problem to work out to a satisfactory conclusion. This makes for stronger and more interesting people. For a good example, read "Because I Betrayed Him" in the December issue (on sale the first of November). Though not a typical confessional story, it has very strong emotional values. The whole issue is a very good one to study. Payment is a cent a word, on publication at present. Address: 122 East 42nd Street (Ideal).

Scoop is the new title for the monthly previously called *Friday* when a weekly. Interested chiefly in ideas for picture articles of the exposé type. Dan Gillmor is editor. Address: 114 East 32nd Street. This still works the left side of the street.

American Girl has moved to new offices at 155 East 44th Street. This is the official magazine of the Girl Scouts, edited by Mrs. Anne Stoddard. It was formerly at 14 West 49th Street. There has been no change in requirements for material.

Street & Smith has two more magazines of the Comics type: *Pioneer Picture Stories* and *Trail Blazers*, both quarterlies. This makes eight, edited by William J. DeGrouchy. *Bill Barnes Comics*, *Doc Savage Comics* and *Army and Navy Comics* are quarterlies. *The Shadow Comics*, *Sports Comics*, and *Super-Magician Comics* are bi-monthlies. There is

a small market for good plot ideas or character suggestions, with payment according to value. Address: 79 Seventh Avenue.

Publication on the two new magazines announced as being edited for the Newsstand group by J. Alvin Kugelmass, has been delayed. They should be appearing about this time. Titles later. Address: 330 West 42nd Street.

Smash Stories, edited for Manton Publishing Company by Robert T. Gebler, has been suspended. The address was 122 East 42nd Street.

Miss Mary Rollins tells me that the second issue and those following will be the best to study for an idea of what she wants in *Real Story*. Stories should be about young characters. If there is a marriage problem, it should be one of the first and "hardest" year. The flavor of youth and vitality is important. Writing should be alive and vibrant. And it may be as frank as the young moderns are themselves. Now that the magazine is established, reports will be faster. Payment is two cents a word, on acceptance. Address: 1476 Broadway (Hillman).

Miss Daisy Bacon passes on to you several definite points about the new policy on *Detective Story Magazine* (Street & Smith). Lengths: Shorts up to 7,500 to 8,000 words; novelettes, 8,500 to 12,000 words; short novels, up to 25,000. All stories are to be complete; no serials at present. In regard to off-trail or fact-detective stories, it would be best to query her first. In all stories, a modern setting is desired. Authors should be thoroughly familiar with the ones they use. For example, the story leading the November issue, "Suitable for Framing," concerns murders in an advertising agency. Its author has been for years an advertising copy writer. And as a result her story is real and convincing, and full of excellent color. The average detective writer knows his characters but not his backgrounds, according to this editor. So take note. Address: 79 Seventh Avenue.

John Nanovic seldom has any changes to report on the six magazines he edits for Street & Smith. But here are his chief needs: On all six, he can use shorts up to 6,000 words. He would like a few off-trail stories for all

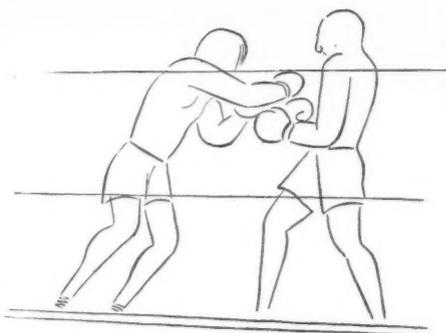
six. The top length open to free-lance writers is 20,000 words, no higher. Those character-novels are all done by special arrangement, for *The Avenger*, *The Shadow*, *The Whisperer*, *Doc Savage*. But on *Clues* and *Mystery Magazine*, in which there is no special serial character, the long novel is an open market. *Clues* needs some good strong detective stories of about 15,000 to 20,000 words each. *Mystery Magazine* wants novelettes of 15,000 words with a strong menace angle. There is no market on any of these for fact articles. Address: 79 Seventh Avenue.

Florence McChesney reports that *Five Novels* needs detective-murder novelettes and colorful foreign-adventure stories. Lengths run between 18,000 and 20,000 words. Payment is a cent and a quarter, on acceptance. Stories must be strictly masculine in type. Address: 149 Madison Avenue (Dell).

For *Sweetheart Stories*, Miss McChesney cries for love, love, and more love. Strong love conflicts are essential. A slight misunderstanding between a boy and a girl is not sufficient for this market. Lengths: shorts, 4,000 to 7,000; novelettes, 10,000 to 12,000. No serials. But occasionally a super-good 15,000-wor-der goes over. Payment is a cent a word, on acceptance. Address: 149 Madison Avenue (Dell).

The third magazine edited by Miss McChesney is *All Western*. At present a quarterly, buying is slow and reports may be, too. Varied backgrounds are wanted. Good humor, if possible. And this magazine will use the definitely character type of story. No stories under 4,500 words. Shorts to 7,000; novelettes, 10,000 to 15,000; novels, 18,000 to 20,000. Payment on acceptance, at a cent and a quarter. Address: 149 Madison Avenue (Dell).

All-Star Love (Munsey) is looking for shorts with a patriotic thread of interest, similar to "Keep 'Em Flying," by Marguerite Rogers, in the December issue (on sale November first). But it's important to know the background for anything with an Army, Navy, etc., background. Miss Fairgrieve would also like to see ideas, with the first few thousand words, for 20,000-word novelettes for this magazine. For both *All-Star* and *All-Star Love*, she announces that she is definitely not in the market, and does not expect



"McMurk rushes at Franko with both arms swinging. Franko backs away to the center of the ring. They clinch. They clinch again. The referee warns McMurk about breaking clean then Franko . . ."

to be, for any verse. Story payment is a cent a word and up, on acceptance. Address: 280 Broadway.

Love Book (Popular) and *Love Short Stories* (Fictioneers) both need shorts of 3,000 to 5,000 words. Stories now should be just as high-spirited and gay as can be. Get plenty of plot underneath, and a layer of gay courage over all. A typical example is "Play Girl," by Claire Pomeroy, in the December issue of *Love Book* (on sale October 20). A good issue to study. Both these magazines are good markets for stories with men in the Services as heroes. But be sure you get the details right. It isn't fair to try to put things over on the readers. You can get in touch with the Public Relations officer at your nearest Army Camp; he'll set you straight on anything important to the setting, if it's an Army Camp. Jane Littell edits both of these. Address: 205 East 42nd Street.

Do any pen-and-ink or brush artists living in New York read the DIGEST? Miss Littell is looking for some new illustrators, who can do glamorous love scenes. She can't use wash drawings.

Fiction House seldom has changes to an-

(Continued to page 54)

LINGO—MINE RUN

THIS is the language of the coal fields. We're going to take it mine run, without any frazzles. But first, if you're going to be my chalk-eye, we gotta go by the wash house and get you diked out in a flannel shirt, heavy rubber boots, pants with padded knees, and stash a bug-eye on your head.

There goes the work whistle—we're just in time to catch the first man-trip. Get all the way in, 'cause this buggy is gonna do a smoky-joe highball.

Mine run—coal as it comes from the pit, ungraded.

Chalk-eye—a helper or apprentice.

Bug-eye—an electric battery light, worn on the cap.

Wasp-nest—a small accumulation of inflammable gas.

Man-trip—cars which carry workmen in and out of mine.

Brushing—removal of rock top to increase height of passage.

Buggy, or bus—a mine car.

Dirt mark—a score against a miner for loading impurities.

Gob—the refuse pile inside a mine.

Gob lice—a miner is said to be in danger of catching gob lice when he sits on the gob when he should be working.

Hardsock—a hand rock drill.

Panther—a hard rock formation often found in the coal vein; when struck with a drill the result is a screaming sound.

Windy—a faulty powder shot.

Face—the front of a coal wall.

Pillow—a block of coal left as a top support.

Room—an individual work place.

Long wall—the modern system; many workmen on one wall, loading on a conveyor.

Crosscut—a hole driven through a coal wall as an air passage.

Brattice—a stoppage of wood, curtain, or rock used to close a crosscut when it is no longer needed.

Air course—a passage driven parallel to main workings, providing an intake or exit for the air current.

Permissible—an explosive specified as safe for blasting.

Prop—a support, usually of wood, to set under rock top.

Prop tunes—mine props like fiddle strings must be in "tune"; a miner taps them with his sledge, and from the tone given off knows if they are properly set.

Top talk—the cracking and popping sounds by rock top which is loose and threatening to fall.

Silent top—rock formations which fall without warning sounds.

Sump—an underground pond; usually prepared as a pump station.

Pigeon hole—a small, shallow workings.

Strip pit—a shallow workings where the vein is mined by removing the dirt above it.

Shaft—a straight up-and-down entrance.

Slope—a downward inclined main passage.

Drift—an upward inclined main passage.

Death watch—the pit top gathering of wives, children, and relatives of workmen following an explosion.

Rebound—the kick-back of an explosion from against the closed ends of the mine passages.

Afterdamp—poisonous gases, mainly carbon monoxide, found in mines following explosions.

Firedamp—the common inflammable mine gas.

Blackdamp, or chokedamp—a non-explosive gas, carbon dioxide, usually found in abandoned workings.

Bug dust, or muck—finely slacked coal, mainly the product of the cutting machine. Usually highly explosive.

Fire-boss—a local mine inspector.

Safety—a lamp used to detect gases.

Dead line—three crosses (XXX) meaning stop, an accumulation of gas or other unsafe

conditions beyond.

Haw-bush—a local strike; began as a secret pass word when union meetings had to be held out in the Haw bushes.

Scissorbill—one who works overtime without proper pay.

Snake-stomper—an unexperienced hand who takes a regular job.

Mulewhip fever—the ambition of a youngster to become a mule-driver.

Steel Jenny—an electric motor used underground to pull coal cars formerly pulled by mules or jennys.

Monster, or Snagged-toothed monster—coal cutting machine.

Trapper—a mine doorkeeper.

Hog—one who loads an unusual amount of coal.

Blow-off—the signal by the mine whistle for no work tomorrow; usually one blast.

Oriental Angle

Sir:

We can use:

1. Non-political feature articles on Oriental lands—articles should be based on first-hand knowledge. \$25 for one or two outstanding feature articles for each issue; not over 2,000 words.
2. Fiction—must be on Catholic foreign missions—3c a word for short shorts up to 900 words; 2c a word for 900-1800 words; 1½c a word for 1800-3000 words.
3. We buy photographs of Oriental people and scenes.

No war stories, articles or photos. We are a monthly Catholic foreign mission magazine.

The Field Afar,
Maryknoll, N. Y.

REV. JOHN C. MURRETT, M. M., *Editor.*

Good Business

Sir:

Very sorry to have to ask you to make this retraction for us but through a misunderstanding Mr. Kugelmass, who was to assist me in editing the detective books wrote in and told you what was in our hearts, but which alas we found would not be good business if we were to consider present competition in the factual detective field.

We do want stories with sex angles but the detective slant must be pointed up at all times. We want above all *good detective yarns*. If the story should lend itself to an interesting sex angle, by all means do not cut it out. If it needs toning down, we'll do it. A little gruesomeness does not frighten us at all. We do not, however, want stories dealing with out and out rape cases. If there is a rape angle, it must be incidental.

Mr. Kugelmass has returned to his first love, our pictorial magazines, so please direct manuscripts as usual to the undersigned or the respective magazine aimed for.

ROBERT E. LEVEE, *Editor,*
Complete Detective Cases,
Amazing Detective Cases,
National Detective Cases.

330 W. 42d St., New York City.

Garden Market

Sir:

We shall appreciate your informing your readers in your next issue that in December and January we shall be buying articles for the 1942 edition of *Lawn and Garden*. Contents emphasize how-to-do, with aim of helping readers create more beautiful surroundings for their homes. Study of first issue is urged. Payment is on acceptance at three cents a word for articles accompanied by suitable photographs and/or sketches. Deadline is January 15. Bill Williams and Charles Bonsted, Editors.

LAWN AND GARDEN,
Fawcett Publications Incorporated,
1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

How Many More?

Sir:

You suggested in your letter of June 12 to winners of the *Digest-Liberty* short-short story contest that all winners notify you "when, as and if" they sell their prize winning entries.

The yarn, "*Nancy Crowns A King*," has just been sold to Daisy Bacon, editor of *Detective Story* magazine, by my agent, August Lenniger.

KENNETH A. FOWLER
522 Van Cortlandt Park Avenue
Yonkers, New York

Play Bureau

Sir:

We are in the market for unpublished plays and skits, preferably material copyrighted in author's names, suitable for sponsorship by social and fraternal organizations and community theater groups. Nothing too lavish or expensive to produce. Running time from ten minutes to three hours.

Some for outright purchase, others to be handled on commission basis or set fee paid to author for each presentation of play. Author to specify preference, rates.

All manuscripts to be accompanied by stamped return envelope. Plays will be read upon receipt and unavailable ones returned promptly.

Sincerely,

NINA H. UTTER, *Manager,*
Utter Entertainment Bureau,
188 W. Union St., Newark, N. Y.

LET'S MAKE AN HONEST LOVING

By MAUREEN DALY

WE need more *honest* loving. Love doesn't come only, as many magazine stories would make one think, to glamor-eyed girls sitting in open convertibles with the handsome sons of oil tycoons, all silhouetted against a low-slung harvest moon. How many fingers would you need to count the times the boss' son suddenly fell in love with the humble stenographer who has adoringly been taking his dictation through all those lonely months? And do you remember many summers when some wealthy male summer colonist has roused himself, all bronzed from the sun, to rescue a pretty waitress from the resort, caught out sail-boating in a squall on her afternoon off—and promptly falls in love with her because she has “such silly ideas in her lovely little head?” It doesn't happen at all. At least, not often enough to warrant story writers making all love tales glitter with glamor. Why doesn't someone tell how it *really* happens?

Not all writers have the opportunity of taking a thrilling South Sea journey on a tramp steamer or running amuck with a gangster's girl—all of which would make good story material. All writers cannot take the time or the money to search out vicarious thrills that can be converted into breath-

taking plots. But one thing we all have in common—one thing that can be written, re-written and worked all over again without losing freshness, vitality and appeal. One thing authors all have in common—at some time or other they all fall in love.

Among the foremost of writers' credos is the success rule: “Write from your own experience.” From full-fledged big-name authors as from instructors in creative writing classes comes the advice—“a truthful and actual account usually makes the most vital and convincing reading.” All of which harks back to the question—“And what author has never been in love?”

While I was in high-school a few years ago I had a Senior English teacher who daily preached to us the maxim—“Write from your own experience, students. From your own experience.” About that time two things were happening. I was in the throes of the usual adolescent agony of being disappointed in love and the closing date for the annual short story contest sponsored for high-school students throughout the United States by *Scholastic* magazine was drawing near. It was killing two birds with one story, really, for I followed the teacher's advice and also found an actual relief in putting down the sadness of my experience on

Maureen Daly, born Castlecaufield, County Tyrone, Ireland, in 1921, came to America three years later, and has lived in Wisconsin ever since. She graduated from St. Mary's Springs Academy in Fond du Lac and is now a Senior at Rosary College, River Forest, Illinois.

She writes: “I have three sisters; the youngest Sheila John, is interested in writing—has sold her seventh story. Is determined to beat me to the Pulitzer Prize (I rather think she will). My first story, written when fifteen and called “Fifteen,” won fourth place in *Scholastic* contest for high school students; next year a story, “Sixteen,” won first place.

“My short stories have sold to *Vogue*, *Mademoiselle*, *Red Book* and *Cosmopolitan* magazines, and a novel to Dodd Mead—“*Seventeenth Summer*.” Hobbies—poor golfer, splashy swimmer; can't play bridge. Everything seems fun to me, but I can't do any of it very well.”

paper. The story worked out itself. I was sixteen. I had gone skating—around my home in Wisconsin ice-skating is considered the best way to spend a winter evening. I met a boy. Not the usual sort of boy but one who seemed to want to laugh at the things I wanted to laugh at, a boy whose hand felt warm in mine, a boy who talked about the things I liked to talk about and who seemed to be saying something to me when he wasn't even talking at all. That kind of a boy. It left me at first with a new sort of glow inside that later turned into an aching lonesomeness. That boy walked home with me from the skating rink. It was just a few blocks, but the moon was low in the sky and the air was soft with new snow. A week went by, a week during which my ring was keyed high to catch the ring of the telephone and my whole heart was waiting for the sound of his voice. But he didn't call and before the week was out I realized he never would.

It might seem silly to talk about teen-aged "children" falling in love, but I really don't think so. I didn't think so then nor do I now. That first disappointment is the growing-up point in the adolescent life. It is important.

I wrote down exactly how it happened to me and how I felt. It was short and the words were simple but the story caught on. It caught on because it was true and no one can resist work with a ring of sincerity and the poignant touch of real feeling. The story was called *Sixteen* and won first place in the *Scholastic* contest that year, an award that carried with it a cash prize and an expense-paid visit in New York City. Later the same story was reprinted by *Red-book* magazine as the *Encore of the Month* and was selected by Harry Hansen to appear in the *O. Henry Collection of Best Short Stories of 1938*. It has since appeared in numerous anthologies and textbooks. *Vogue* Magazine commented on it by saying it was "scaringly honest." After four years it is possible to look at a piece of work with more perspective, to judge it impersonally as if it were the work of another writer. And with that perspective, it can be seen that the chief merits of *Sixteen* are its honesty

and the note of sincerity that makes you believe that it is the story of an actual love.

What Juliet ever felt so mournful as a high-school Senior whose mother tells her tersely that she is far too young to go out with boys? And what Juliet feels more palpitating eagerness than she who steals out to meet her teen-aged Romeo for a forbidden coke? Aren't they all stories? The boys and girls who gather around under street lights on summer evenings and the sixteen-year old, suddenly studious, who finds it imperative that he walk to the public library to do home-work every night? The fresh and poignant romances that show themselves in initials carved on drugstore tables and an exchange of class rings? Aren't they all stories?

LATE last fall I heard of the *Dodd, Mead Intercollegiate Fellowship* which was to be awarded for the best novel submitted by any student in the colleges or universities of United States and Canada. It offered a \$1,000 cash award prior to publication besides an excellent publicity build-up for any "first" novelist. So I began sorting out the stray ideas in my head. I remembered still what the high-school English teacher had emphasized so strongly—"Write from your own experience."

It isn't that I want to harp on this idea just to get it across. It is just that I am convinced that the theory is almost infallible.

For the subject of the book I went back to the summer a few years ago when I first fell in love and wrote the novel around it. It was not a one-night affair that is suitable for short stories but the whole full story of a first love with all the pain and fresh joy of growing up mixed with the strange wonder of falling in love. It took place in my own town, a town with three theatres, two high schools and a Y. M. C. A., and the story is simple and actual. The book is called *Seventeenth Summer* and won first place in the *Dodd Mead Intercollegiate Contest* and will come off the press early next year.

Many of the public prefer their love less of the "puppy" variety. Yet the same policy of honesty holds true for effectiveness in all stages of romances. Must adult love in writ-

ing always be mingled with orchids and suave conversation? Must it be colored with heavy emotional turmoil—the agonizing torment of wandering husbands or beautiful wayward wives? Did anyone ever write a good love story about the woman who does her own washing and gets up half an hour early every morning to pack her husband's lunch pail? The woman who hires a neighbor girl to stay with the children while she and her husband go to the movies once a week? All loving doesn't take place on expensive week-end cruises or in plush-carpeted drawing rooms with tinkling cocktails and Japanese houseboys.

Interesting, indeed, would be the story of the girl who came home from the office after an honest day's work and pressed her own formal to wear to the country club dance. And wouldn't it be interesting, too, if she were *not* the belle of the ball, if she did *not* outshine the wealthy, snobbish banker's daughter who had come in a Milgrim's original—if she did nothing at all but have a very good time with the boy she came with and practice up on some new dance steps? Most modern youth stories either have the pretty heroine drink too much, drive too fast and be too untactful or else she just realizes in time that it is best to be ladylike and is so, so happy in the morning.

But maybe all that is necessary to make a good story—to make a substantial plot, to build up climax and to add dash. And maybe not. Ask anyone who has just been kissed for the first time whether it was dull or not. It may have been by a soda-jerker in the high-school drug-store, by a fellow working for a finance company or the boy next door who was so good at playing cowboy several years ago—but it wasn't dull. Love is never dull. That is why, in the frantic search for ideas that authors periodically go through, it seems only natural that they should turn more often to their own love affairs, not of course, turning magazines into scandal sheets—names and characters can be tactfully camouflaged—but the feeling, the sincerity and the strength would be there. After all, love is the linking emotion that creates sympathy and understanding. Love is the thing that *makes* peoples lives, that makes them grow and feel and think.

It isn't just a silly thing for moony-eyed adolescents. It is the biggest thing in life. In fact, it is so big that it actually makes its own plots. That is why it is so unnecessary to contrive elaborate settings to stage it, to draw superficial, super-emotional characters to put it across. Why not just tell the truth?

If everyone wrote the true story of how they fell in love there would be a good story for every person who had taken up his pencil. Such simple, personal experience coupled with sincerity and ability for expression makes the stories that bring poignant memories and reminiscent sighs. Such universal experiences make interesting reading — so why not have more of them? After all, we can't all fall in love in silver foxes with orchids in our hair.

Where Are They Now?

Sir:

An orchid to you for your very evident desire to really help us scribblers. You had never heard of me when I wrote you recently asking for some advice on a problem that had me stumped, but the answer came back as promptly as though I were your number one subscriber—and it was just as helpful.

In glancing over back copies of the DIGEST, I find myself wishing that you could cook up some way to finish all the things you start. What, for instance, ever became of Lola Hess, the lady with the cows, the yen, and no fence? (August, 1940.) Where are the writing gypsies, Clee and Betty Woods, these days? (Sept., 1940.) Did C. L. Cleaves, "En route," ever sell his book? (July, 1939.) What is the sequel to Art Burk's "*Folks, I'm Bleeding?*" (March, 1939.)

Would-be women writers who say, "I'd write if it weren't for the children," always leave me vaguely irritated. What better possible REASON could there be for being your best self, than a family? And no one who really wants to write is his best self if he doesn't actually write a little every day.

I'm the mother of three, the oldest eight years old. We have a seven room house, and I do my own work, and still find time to write. Not as much as I'd like to, but something nearly every day. I've sold articles, but so far the love story eds have sent back my stuff, sometimes, however, with helpful notes. I want to make this field, and have just sent A. Lenniger, a couple of yarns and we'll see what happens.

MRS. EVIS JOBERG,
109 W. Galer St., Seattle, Wash.

● R. S. V. P., Clee Woods, Art Burks, C. L. Cleaves and Lola Hess.—*Ed.*

November Humor Markets

BY DON ULSH

This month is a good time to remind you again that editors are not interested in your Thanksgiving ideas or your Xmas gags now, Both November and Xmas issues are off the presses and in the hands of the distributors as you read this. We keep repeating this for the benefit of those gag writers who still insist on sending in material too late. A good rule is to send your stuff two or three months in advance of the months you are slanting for. Right now editors are buying for late winter.

Gags magazine announce that an added section of comic strips, twelve panels, full page size will be used in future issues of *Gags* if they can find the material for such a feature. The ideas should be adult stuff with accent on the humor. They do not want the regular newspaper continued story type of thing but funny stuff, each strip complete in itself. Address roughs of your comic to Charles Rubino, *Gags* magazine, 731 Plymouth Court, Chicago, Ill.

Colliers, 250 Park Avenue, New York City. Called, and rightly so, the biggest free lance cartooning market in the world. If you can crash in here and stay in you will inherit the highest rates in the gag game. Gurney Williams, humor editor, gives your roughs the once over. *Colliers* must be slanted and current issues should be studied carefully before you offer material. They promote features, series such as Crockett Johnsons eyeball pantomime, Reynolds "Butch" and others. The art meeting is held on Fridays when Mr. Williams cream of the weeks crop of roughs is presented. About twenty of these are bought each week. Reports are rapid and naturally payment is on acceptance. Your first sale to *Colliers* will bring you thirty dollars.

American magazine, 250 Park Ave., New York City. Gurney Williams also scans your roughs for this big handsome monthly. The slant is entirely different from *Colliers*. Human Interest, Home stuff and Slap stick situations are used mostly but again we say *Study* the magazine. The rates are the same as *Colliers*, starting at \$30 and moving up if you can keep up the pace.

The New Yorker, 25 West 43rd, New York City. Life in a recent issue featuring some reproductions of Peter Arnos work from the *New Yorker* stated "Arno is reputed to receive \$500.00 apiece for fifty cartoons a year." This gives you an idea why the *New Yorker* is referred to by gag artists as the Top. To crash the gates of this Utopia all that is needed is an idea the *New Yorker* likes and a drawing of the idea that they like. "That's all boys!" Your roughs will be kindly received and if you should get an OK on one of them they will ask for permission to farm your idea out to one of their *New Yorker* artists. If the artist they choose makes an acceptable drawing of your idea you will be

paid \$20 for the use of it. More if you are a consistent contributor who can ring the bell often. In case the artist fails to please the *New Yorker* with his drawing of your idea your rough will be returned with a note of sympathy. However, usually the artist they chose turns in a successful art job and everyone concerned is happy about the whole thing. If you can click here the other 499 magazines buying gags in this country will have to stagger along without you.

Saturday Evening Post, Philadelphia, Pa. Douglas Borgsted former free lance gag artist, and a good one, scans your hopeful roughs here. Payment on acceptance starts at \$30 and goes up according to your sales record with the *Post*. No particular slant but good art work is a *Must* here. Reports are within a week. Occasionally the *Post* will buy an idea and farm it out to some artist they think particularly suited for that idea but mostly you do your own drawings on OKs.

Liberty, 122 East 42nd, pays a flat rate of \$20 on acceptance. Reports are slow but when a "buying mood" is on they will OK in bunches. Many beginners crash here. Study the magazine for slant.

Book Clubs

Sir:

Answering your reader's query, here is the list of book clubs appearing on page 307 of the *American Book Trade Directory*, for which you asked:

- Book of the Month Club, Inc., 385 Madison Ave., N. Y.
- Book Union, 381 Fourth Ave., N. Y.
- Catholic Book Club, 140 E. 45th St., N. Y.
- Cooperative Book Club, 118 E. 28th St., N. Y.
- Crime Club, Doubleday, Doran & Co., 14 W. 49th St., N. Y.
- Dollar Book Club, Doubleday, Doran & Co., 14 W. 49th St., N. Y.
- Freethought Book Club, 317 E. 34th St., N. Y.
- French Book Club (The), 556 Madison Ave., New York.
- French Book of the Month Club, Inc., 385 Madison Ave., N. Y.
- Junior Literary Guild, 14 W. 49th St., N. Y.
- Limited Editions Club (Geo. Macy), 595 Madison Ave., N. Y.
- Literary Guild of America, 14 W. 49th St., N. Y.
- Pamphlet Club, 207 Atlantic St., Stamford, Conn.
- Pro Parvulus Book Club, 207 Atlantic St., Stamford, Conn.
- Religious Book Club, 80 Lafayette St., N. Y.
- Scientific Book Club, 80 Lafayette St., N. Y.
- The Spiritual Book Associates, 415 Lexington Ave., N. Y.

REFERENCE DEPARTMENT,
Public Library of Cincinnati.

• Most book clubs do not buy direct, nor should MSS. be sent to them. They buy direct from the original publisher. In the *DIGEST* for December we will publish the requirements of those book clubs buying direct from authors.—Ed.

CALLING ALL COMICS

By ROBERT TURNER

THERE are 120 comic magazines buying nearly 2,000,000 words a month, and today more and more of this material is being bought free lance.

Experience has shown that it simply isn't possible to hire staff men who are competent enough both to write *and* draw a strip. Staff men who do nothing else but write strips grow stale. Therefore, the free lancer is now being invited to come in.

In the *DIGEST* for October I explained how the comic magazines work and how to write a comic strip synopsis. It is with this synopsis that the writer secures his entree to the comic magazine editor.

The purpose of this article is to show how to write the strips from this synopsis, payment for which is from \$5 to \$25. In other words, first you sell the synopsis itself, and then you get a chance to sell a script made from your own synopsis.

An artist will of course draw the pictures, from the direction on your script. Good art can save even a poor story script. A script, no matter how perfectly handled, can never survive poor art. The tenuous text of "Skippy," for instance, would not survive bad art.

The free lance comic strip writer should give the artist all the help possible. Describe in detail what is to be drawn in every panel, help him to visualize the scene. If this is done correctly, it cannot fail to stimulate him to better handling of the scenes.

There is no limit to what can be done in the way of picture-story-telling. Narrative hooks, flashbacks, transitions, characterization, all these tricks used in regular story writing can be applied to this form, and often have their value enhanced by careful coupling of narrative and art work in a well animated series of scenes. Let's see how some of these things are worked out.

(The facing picture and other art work

is from *Our Flag Comics*, October, 1941.) The main idea is to simplify the distinction between caption, scene, and dialogue, for the artist.

The Flag

PAGE I

PANEL I. . . (Top two thirds of page, title panel.)

INTRODUCTORY CAPTION. . . When John Courtney, wounded war veteran and flag maker, who has become known as "Old Glory," found a baby on his doorstep, he took the infant boy in and raised him as his own son. The boy had a strange birthmark on his chest in the shape of an American flag. As the boy grew to manhood, he developed amazing powers. The strength of a hundred men, the speed of the wind, the power to resist gravity and immunity to harm. With these powers, Jim Courtney becomes widely known as THE FLAG—nemeses of all who attempt harm to America!

SCENE. . . (Big splash picture of The Flag in his red, white and blue costume, upsetting an armored truck carrying armed thugs, on the street of a town.)

PANEL 2. . . (Medium shot of three men striding along. Men are well dressed, average type.)

MAN—There's the shop of that flag maker known as Old Glory!

MAN—We'll give the old buzzard a break and let him have the business.

PANEL 3. . . (Closeup from behind heads of men as they enter Old Glory's shop, showing Old Glory facing them. He is sitting in wheel chair, working on American Flag. Show other flags on walls behind him.)

OLD GLORY—Morning, gentlemen. What can I do for you?

MAN—We're from the Daily Clarion. Our paper's planning to hold a rally and we'll need a big American flag to give it a patriotic front!

PANEL 4. . . (Closeup of sneering, grinning face of man.)

MAN—We want the cheapest flag you can make. We don't care if it's cheesecloth as long as it doesn't cost much!

(Page I of script ends here.)

THE FLAG

WHEN JOHN COURTNEY, WOUNDED WAR VETERAN AND FLAG MAKER, WHO HAS BECOME KNOWN AS 'OLD GLORY' FOUND A BABY ON HIS DOORSTEP HE TOOK THE INFANT BOY IN AND RAISED HIM AS HIS OWN SON. THE BOY HAD A STRANGE BIRTH MARK ON HIS CHEST IN THE SHAPE OF AN AMERICAN FLAG. AS THE BOY GREW TO MANHOOD HE DEVELOPED AMAZING POWERS: THE STRENGTH OF A HUNDRED MEN, THE SPEED OF THE WIND, THE POWER TO RESIST GRAVITY AND IMMUNITY TO HARM. WITH THESE POWERS JIM COURTNEY BECAME WIDELY KNOWN AS **THE FLAG-NEMESIS** OF ALL WHO ATTEMPT HARM TO AMERICA!



THERE'S THE SHOP OF THAT FLAG MAKER KNOWN AS OLD GLORY!

WE'LL GIVE THE OLD BUZZARD A BREAK AND LET HIM HAVE THE BUSINESS!



MORNING, GENTLEMEN. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

WE'RE FROM THE DAILY CLARION. OUR PAPER'S PLANNING TO HOLD A RALLY AND WE'LL NEED A BIG AMERICAN FLAG TO GIVE IT A PATRIOTIC FRONT!



WE WANT THE CHEAPEST FLAG YOU CAN MAKE. WE DON'T CARE IF IT'S CHEESE CLOTH AS LONG AS IT DOESN'T COST MUCH!

The first panel of the first page of a script serves as a narrative hook in the short story. It must introduce your main character or characters. This opening scene may be either symbolic of the idea of the whole story, giving a hint of things to come later in the story, or it can begin your story right there. The former is most favored, because often the opening panels of the story proper are used to build up the menace or set the stage for events to come.

The Introductory Caption is used to tell as tersely and simply as possible who your main character is and what his special powers are, if any.

This opening panel can take up half the first page, two thirds of it, or occasionally the entire first page. The only thing to go by is what has been done on that feature in previous issues.

The rest of the page begins the actual story. Notice that the three men visiting Old Glory, even though minor characters, are stamped as cheap mugs to be disliked by the reader, through their references to "the old buzzard!" and the description of the flag they want to purchase. The story then unfolds a plot by a big manufacturer who also owns a chain of newspapers to use his power and wealth and enormous facilities to try and destroy American morale and make the country ripe for his taking over as dictator. Of course he is stopped by the efforts of Old Glory and his adopted son, the patriotic

superman hero known as "The Flag."

I mentioned before that a comic writer must do a script tease. Think of your plot as a burlesque performer, if I may be so lurid, with each page stripping away a little more of the plot, making the reader want to see yet *more*. Tease the reader. Whenever possible, make the last panel of each page end in high suspense, thugs about to kill the girl, hero prostrate before an onrushing steam roller, and so on. It's the old cliff-hanger, serial gag.

Comics are primarily *picture* stories. Let the artist and his pictures tell the story as much as possible. If the scene calls for the heroine to be churned through terrible rapids, don't clutter up the thing with a caption describing "the raging torrents," et al. Let the artist show that.

If you run into trouble with transitions, here's a simple, colorful trick to cover lengthy time lapses, routine activities of characters, and still advance the picture story with each panel. It's from the same episode of "The Flag."

The Flag has just rescued a girl reporter from creeps trying to kill her to silence her. She has information that the managing editor of her paper is really a wanted, escaped convict. The girl has to get to a phone, report this to the police. The hero, meanwhile, has to do something constructive and get some information on his own hook. He gets out of his fancy costume, goes back to his real char-



acter as Jim Courtney, visits the library to check on the owner of this string of newspapers. But the story cannot be slowed up by showing the girl phoning, the hero changing clothes, going to the library, pouring over books, step by step. It is done this way, in three small panel-scenes.

PANEL 1. . . . (Birds eye view of Flag and girl standing in front of drug store, talking.)

FLAG—You go into this store and telephone that information about Kagle to the police. They'll take care of him. I'll check on Foxson!

GIRL—All right—I'm not afraid with you helping me!

PANEL 2. . . .

CAPTION. . . . THE FLAG becomes Jim Courtney once more and goes to the public library. . . .

SCENE. . . . (Medium shot, rear view of Jim, standing in front of library shelves, taking down books.)

JIM—This "Who's Who" ought to tell me about Foxson.

PANEL 3. . . . (Closeup of uniformed cop lounging in police station, watching in background desk sergeant talking on phone.)

SERGEANT—That's quite an accusation, Miss Blair. If you'll come down and talk to us further, we'll check on the story.

Here you see the prime purpose of captions—to cover transitions, briefly as possible. Dialogue balloons should put across information for the advancement of the story or to dramatize necessary explanatory matter. Never crowd an individual panel with too much dialogue. A good idea is to keep single balloons under twenty-five words. You'd be

surprised, with careful condensing, what can be told in twenty-five words. If there is a lot of explanatory matter that requires more wordage, carry it over into two or several panels, getting some kind of action into each one at the same time. Here is a sample of how that is done.

(See sample from comic page.)

The reason for this is simple. Too much lettering in a panel cuts down the amount of room the artist has to draw in. Even if you should slip over a script with too many word-crowded panels, the artist has to run into it. He'll cuss you. He might even slip a bug into the editor's ear that you don't know your business. That's understandable, too. The artist's end of these picture stories is difficult enough. Make it harder and he'll fix your literary wagon.

Another thing comic book artists don't like is for you to call for too many characters to appear in any one panel. The same objection applies to too many panels on one page depicting violent action on a large scale, without allowing proper room for it. When a strip has big explosion scenes, or the hero battling a mob of crooks, or showing a fleet of airplanes, battleships or trucks in action, the artist needs plenty of room. When such scenes are included limit your page to five or six panels.

You'll be amazed at what a good artist can do with a little space, how he can almost tell a story itself in one small panel. Here's





where your Hollywood movie direction comes in:

PANEL 8

CAPTION. . . . And while Magno and Davey languish in a cell, The Cobra summons all the underworld riff-raff to his Copper City. . .

SCENE. . . . (Closeup of several tough looking guys, with a long string of others fading into the background as they enter the copper city.)

THUG—Who is this guy, the Cobra? What will we have to do as members of his Copperhead army?

THUG—Search me, but for what he's paying us, I'd do anything!

That's from a "Magno, The Magnetic Man" story drawn by Jim Mooney, one of the best, and appearing in Ace's *Super-Mystery Comics* for December.

If, for instance, you have a poolroom scene, tell your artist to show the smoke wreathing through the bright cones of light, the shadows, the tough character with the cigaret

pasted to his lower lip. The artist working on your script may have done a couple of pages already when he comes to this spot. It may be late at night and he's bushed. Stimulate him with your word picture. Help him to *see* the scene.

Take a scene where your characters are in a prison cell, talking. You have no action there, so you substitute drama through your presentation of the scene. Instruct the artist to show the scene as though the reader was on the outside, looking through iron bars at the prisoners. Tell him to show the shadows of the bars falling across the floor.

Vary your scenes and give breakup to the finished page by calling on the artist to use closeups and longshots and medium shots. Good examples these three types of views are these taken from *Stars and Stripes Comics* for November, from the lead and title feature.

CLOSEUPS are best called for when you want attention focused on a particular character, or important dialogue that a minor character is uttering. Medium and longshots are used depending on the number of characters to be used in a scene. In a longshot, the full figures are made real small and the background played up. This allows for a lot of figures to be shown engaged in violent action. Medium shots can show one or two figures in closer perspective in action.

When you hit a slow-moving part of your story where characters have to do a lot of talking and there isn't much physical action, pep things up with dramatic angle shots or by having the character doing something as



he talks, lighting a cigaret, or twirling his hat, loading a gun.

Occasional use of a montage type shot is effective, to cover a lot in one panel, like this —

PANEL 8

CAPTION. . . . Even as the Cobra speaks in schools all over the United States, the Copperheads are running wild.

SCENE. . . . (Montage shot of map of U. S. background, with small shots of Copperheads doing their dirty work, super-imposed against it.)



WITHIN the last six months an important new use for the comic book format has been found. This is the field of "fact" comics. This was started by Parent's Magazine Press, Inc., publishers of *True Comics*, *Real Heroes* and *Calling All Girls*. These books feature true stories of historic and scientific events and personalities and widely varied types of fact material, put out in "comics" form.

Since *Parent's Magazine Press, Inc.*, broke the ice, several other companies have also put out similar books.

Recent issues of *True Comics* has featured picture stories on the lives of Fiorello La Guardia, New York's fighting mayor, Winston Churchill, Father Duffy, G-Man Hoover and stories of famous events such as the battle fought and won against yellow fever, the story of the circus, "Defying Death Above Niagara," the Fight For Texas Independence, etc.

In a special interview for this article I met and discussed the field with Mr. George J. Hecht, president and publisher of Parent's Magazine Press, Inc., and his editor, Mr. William D. Allen.

Both men expressed the opinion that it was time the better writing brains of the country were attracted to the field. They emphasized the fact that the comics industry is not a fleeting thing, but is here to stay. Their demand for material for their fact comics was decryied by these gentlemen. They are wide open and pay for their scripts starts at \$3.00 per page. They insist on absolute, thoroughly checked authenticity of material.

Their books feature big name advisory boards and are contributed to by such well known literary figures as Henrik Willem Van Loon. The promotion of their periodicals is

first class and hooked up with various educational programs.

The difficulty in getting material for their books, Mr. Allen reported to me, is that contributors do not seem to have the comics "slant." They do not visualize a story to be told in pictures.

Some of the principal faults Mr. Allen cited in reference to outside contributions were wordiness—too many and too long captions that could be edited or condensed to a terse sentence or two, or eliminated entirely. Repetition of scenes. For instance several scripts were received there featuring the life of the man who started the American Society For the Prevention of Cruelty To Animals. The scripts offered scene after scene of this gentleman interfering with men maltreating beasts. Certainly the story of that man's great struggle offered more variety of incidents than that.

What should be done with these fact comics, is to take a topic and milk out a variety of dramatic highlights and tie them excitingly together, taking advantage of combined art and narrative as I've suggested.

How this may be accomplished in the fact comic field may be shown by a script I did for *World Famous Heroes Magazine*, published by Comic Corporation of America, called "*Hero In The News*." It concerns a young soldier (Private Robert Abate), home on leave who rescues his aged mother when their home goes up in flames.

PANEL 4. . . . (Abate rushes through thick
(Continued on page 47)

"I LOVE YOU, ERMINTRUDE!"

By DENIS PLIMMER

Being a few observations on play-making right from the horse's mouth

FORTY-FIFTH STREET was choked up with trucks that morning, trucks from theatrical storehouses, from scene-painting studios, from costume houses. Half a dozen wide scenery doors made black holes in the sides of theatres, and from them drifted the cool sweet smell of a darkened stage. Actors stood in small clusters, their features sharply defined by the clear sunshine of early autumn. In front of the Booth Theatre where "Claudia" is playing stood solid John Golden, that play's producer, talking to a newspaperman about the new Broadway which is extending to the army camps this year. The mighty mite, Lee Shubert, controller of millions and proprietor of a large percentage of the legitimate theatres of America, strode hurriedly through the alley which was named after him and after his partner-brother, J. J.

In front of the Music Box stood George Kaufman conferring with Morrie Jacobs, general manager for the late Sam Harris who produced so many of the Kaufman successes. Brawny men in overalls swung great twelve-foot flats out of the panting trucks and hurried them into the dimness of theatres. Along Forty-fifth Street there was an air of great business. Half a dozen new shows were moving into as many theatres, and several hundred actors were standing on those echoing dusty stages tirelessly saying, "I love you, Ermintrude. God damn it, look out where you're going with that scenery! Darling—"

A new season was beginning on old Broadway.

Where does the writer fit into all this? I talked to one dramatist with a dozen Broadway productions behind him.

"It's tougher than ever today. This is go-

ing to be a good season. There's plenty of money coming out of hiding. More perhaps than at any time since '29. But audiences are highly critical. There's precious little room on our stages these days for the flip farce, the pompous orotund tragedy, the comedy about who sleeps in whose bed. Broadway now represents one of the few places on earth where the stage is a free force. Naturally the public demands that an intelligent use be made of this freedom."

I asked what chance a new writer had to make a living writing plays for the Broadway theatre.

"The chance of a snowball in hell," the dramatist replied bluntly.

"Then you would advise a new writer to ignore Broadway as an outlet for his work?"

A 30-foot backdrop rolled on its batten materialized between us as we stepped apart. The "pallbearers" whisked it into the Plymouth Theatre where it is now a part of that stirring play of wartime England, "*The Wookey*". I repeated my question.

"I would advise the new writer," my friend replied, "to think very seriously—not of Broadway, but of himself. Has he got what Broadway needs? Has he got legitimate drama in his heart? Has he the ability to devise situations and to write lines that will explode in the middle of a stage? Is he another Robert Sherwood, for instance?"

I suggested that a few minutes in Ralph's over a beer, where we'd be less likely to get chopped down by a centre door fancy, would help. We dodged a part of the deck of the "Titanic," skipped nimbly from in front of a large truck in the center of the street, and dived down the short flight of steps which

leads to the small but famous theatrical hang-out. What *Twenty-One* and *The Stork* are to arrived celebrities of the theatre and allied arts during their non-working hours, Ralph's is to all theatre folk, great and small, while they are actively on the job. We pulled up to the bar and had Joe siphon us a couple of light beers. Ralph greeted my playwright friend with a brief nod. Ralph is a friendly man, but impartial. John Barrymore would mean no more to him than you or I. Perhaps not as much.

"Now," said my companion after a lengthy sip, "you're trying to find out what chance a young writer or a working writer has in crashing these Broadway stage-doors and I've said he has a damned poor chance. I say that because you've got to have something very special which you don't have to have to be a pulp-writer, slick-writer, or novelist. You've got to have a sense of theatre, a thorough comprehension of the theatrical medium, a grasp of its enormous possibilities and its irritating limitations. Too, you've got to have a sound knowledge of the physical side of stagecraft. You've got to know what the scenic artist's scope is, and what an actor can get away with without looking like a bloody fool. You've got to *know* plays and players. In general the theatre is no place for an uninhibited genius. You've got to be practical."

I asked how this could be accomplished.

He said, "Go to the theatre if you can. Try a very good amateur theatre if there are



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"You think you characterize when you do a story for the *Post*. The *Post's* characters are flat compared to the characters in a Broadway success. Compare, for example, the doctor in 'End of Summer' by Behrman with such top-notch *Post* characters as Mr. Tutt, that earthworm tractor fellow, or Glencannon of the 'Inchcliffe Castle'. The *Post* has some grand writers, but they're not called upon to create people who will actually live and breathe in the *vesh* before a thousand pairs of critical eyes."

He took another pull at his beer.

"Still, if you've got one hell of a lot on the ball, you might crash Broadway. And when you do, you'll make bigger money than you can make in any other branch of writing. A hit play can mean upwards of a thousand a week to the writer from the Broadway production, and any fabulous sum you like to name for the movie rights. To give you a comparison, Hemingway's novel 'For Whom the Bell Tolls,' fetched \$75,000 from Hollywood, and that novel was a great piece of work by a great artist. But the Fields-Chodorov-McKenny 'My Sister, Eileen,' still running at the Biltmore, was bought for the films at a price of \$225,000.

"On the other hand, when plays flop on Broadway, they flop awfully fast. In other words, professionally dramatists seem to be either very rich men or very poor ones."

I suggested that it was a gamble.

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"Theatrical writing most of all."

Suppose you had written a play, I wondered. What was the next step?

The dramatist pondered, then said, "You could peddle it around to the managers, I guess. You can get their names easily enough. But you won't get a sympathetic reading unless you're very very lucky. I would suggest an agent. One who's specialized in selling plays, one who can show you a list of Broadway productions he has arranged. There aren't many of them who are worth their salt. The *DIGEST* might recommend a sound one. Or the Dramatist's Guild."

Did the unproduced dramatist have to join this Guild?

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We finished our drinks My companion ordered another.

"It's a crazy branch of writing to get into," he reflected. "It's the only one in which there's no way of getting yourself an assured income. Famous dramatist's have written plays at the height of their careers which failed. Unknown young men have written world successes. There's no iron-clad rags-to-riches formula in the theatre. I've made—and lost—two fortunes on Broadway. But I'm not kicking. Got a new show coming on this December. And maybe there'll be a third fortune." He lifted his second drink. "Skool!"

I left him there at the bar and went up to the street. For a second I was dazzled by the clear flash of the autumn sunshine. Then a voice pierced the winey air, high flung above the shouts of truck-drivers and the gasp of gears being shifted.

"I love you, Ermintrude. God damn it, look out where you're going with that scenery!"

Show business . . .

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Error of the Month

Sir:

On page 34 (October) it is indicated that the
"Catholic Market Letter" is continued on page 63.
It should of course read, "continued on page 51."
That would straighten everything out.

As the indication of continuation now stands, I
wouldn't be surprised to receive articles "dealing
with the operation and maintenance practices of
truck fleet operations, laundries, dairies, department
stores, utilities, coal dealers, bottlers, newspapers,
etc., etc."

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The following are the rules of the contest:

(1) Any author, regardless of age or nationality,
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(2) In general, 70,000 words shall be considered
a minimum length for eligible manuscripts, unless
a shorter manuscript should, in the opinion of the
judges, seem too excellent to be excluded.

(3) While no restrictions are placed on the
nature of manuscripts submitted, the award is
intended for an original work designed to be read
by the general public. Hence technical works in
the field of the sciences are naturally excluded, as
are works of a very limited and scholarly interest.

(4) An author may submit any number of
manuscripts.

(5) Works in a foreign language are ineligible
unless accompanied by an English translation.

(6) In order to qualify for the award, a manu-
script must be delivered to the publishers or
postmarked not later than May 1, 1942, and
must be accompanied by a letter from the author
or his representative, stating that it is to be entered
in the contest. Manuscripts should be addressed
to Harper's 125th Anniversary Contest, *Harper and
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(7) The award will be announced about July 1,
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Calling Albany

Sir:

Since your columns have performed so nobly in bringing together published and unpublished writers in other cities, I'm wondering whether this notice published in your *Forum* wouldn't serve to do the same for Albany and Capital District scriveners? Lord knows, there are many of them, of all ages, doing, or trying to do, all kinds of writing.

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THOMAS REID,

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, ETC., of WRITER'S DIGEST, published monthly at Cincinnati, Ohio, for October 1, 1941. Required by the Act of Congress, August 24, 1912.

Publisher—Wilbert Rosenthal, Cincinnati, Ohio; Editor, R. K. Abbott, Cincinnati, Ohio; Business Manager, Aron M. Mathieu, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Owners—Automobile Digest Publishing Corp., Wilbert Rosenthal, L. A. Thelen, A. M. Mathieu, all of Cincinnati, Ohio.

There are no bondholders, mortgagees, or other security holders.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 1st day of October, 1941.

(Signed) A. M. MATHIEU.
(Signed) A. M. SCHONEBERGER,
Notary Public.

Commission expires December 30, 1942.

The Comics Are Calling

(Continued from page 39)

smoke toward stairs, as another man watches.)

MAN—You're going to get trapped up there! The smoke is getting thicker by the second!

ABATE—I've got to go upstairs! My mother is up there helpless!

PANEL 5. . . (Medium shot of Abate rushing upstairs through the clouds of smoke.)

ABATE—Poor Mom. I've got to get to her—got to!

PANEL 6. . . (Longshot of the stairs, with Abate reaching the top. Show flames and smoke.)

ABATE—Made it (cough-cough) up here all right!

There is no need for this type of comics to be dull just because they deal with fact instead of fiction.

Mr. Allen suggests that people best suited to do true comic work are those with research facilities at their fingertips, teachers, historians, librarians.

Calling All Girls, the third of Mr. Hecht's juvenile books, uses a combination of comics and straight text-type fiction. This latter type story, several of which are used per issue, seem to be a high class teen-age girl's story and the pay for them is three cents a word, with lengths running up to 2500.

So there is the comics field, fact or fiction to suit your taste, waiting, wide open. Names don't count, here. Everybody starts from the same mark. Get busy, writers.

A COMPLETE LIST OF PUBLISHERS OF COMIC MAGAZINES APPEARED IN THE DIGEST FOR OCTOBER. LETTERS FROM SOME OF THESE PUBLISHERS APPEAR IN "THE FORUM" THIS MONTH. MORE WILL BE PUBLISHED NEXT MONTH.

Ace Comics

Sir:

I would very much like to have you note—perhaps in the Forum, but some place where it will be seen, that Frederick Gardener, *Ace Magazines, Inc.*, 67 W. 44th St., New York City, is wide open for new adventures for his established features in the five comic books he edits, namely, *Our Flag Comics*, *Banner Comics*, *Four Favorites Comics*, *Super-Mystery Comics* and *Lightning Comics*.

By one of those freak tricks of the mind, I completely missed including *Ace Magazines* in my October article. For which I got all kinds of hell from Fred. This is one of my own best markets for my own comic strips and synopses, and I can recommend it as prompt-paying.

ROBERT TURNER,

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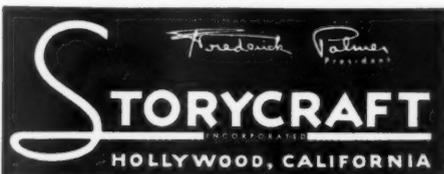
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The foregoing copy came to me unexpectedly and without warning and I have let it go through verbatim. Nothing more seems necessary except to repeat Mr. Phillips' suggestion that you mail the coupon right away.—FREDERICK PALMER.



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AN IDEA A DAY

Monthly Chart for Article Writers

By FRANK A. DICKSON



FOR NOVEMBER

1. A "SHUT-IN" CLUB OF YOUR STATE. Interview the president for your information. The article's slant: the great benefit of the club to the members. The number of members and their various handicaps. Correspondence and exchange of photographs between the members. Gifts to the "shut-ins," as wheel chairs and radios. The library of the club. Methods of amusement. MARKET: State newspapers.

2. EXPERIENCES OF A VETERAN WATCH REPAIRER OF YOUR CITY. The most common "ills" of a watch. Some of the most unusual timepieces, as well as the most expensive, "doctored" by the subject. The repairer's advice to watch owners could be used as the article's opening. MARKET: A local newspaper.

3. A LARGE TURTLE FARM OF YOUR SECTION. In the feature, give an insight into the raising of turtles. The largest turtles on the farm. The market for turtle meat; uses for the shells. Deal with turtle habits. MARKET: Sectional newspapers. A nature periodical and a juvenile magazine should accept this.

4. THE DREDGING OF HISTORIC RIVERS. Have such operations in your state brought to light interesting relics, as cannon balls or even ships that were sunk in time of warfare? Dredging might reveal hidden treasure or evidence that could provide a solution to a big-time crime! Slant: how dredgers disclose the secrets of river beds. Details about dredging; the apparatus. MARKET: State newspapers.

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5. GIFTS TO THE LOCAL MAYOR. How visitors to the city often present the chief executive with gifts, as agricultural or industrial products, in bids for publicity. The strangest of the presents. Objects from distant states and abroad.

6. COLLEGE STUDENTS OF YOUR STATE WHO HAVE COME LONG DISTANCES FOR THEIR HIGHER EDUCATION. Slant: the zest of these collegians for extensive schooling. Are some from foreign countries? Their impressions of the state, as in regard to manners, customs, educational facilities, and, last but not least, the opposite sex. The students' leading ambitions. MARKET: State newspapers.

7. THE MOST HISTORIC POSTOFFICE QUARTERS IN YOUR SECTION. Slant: the improvement in postal service during the post-office's existence. Does the building's history date back to the days when the town received its mail by horseback and stagecoach? The earliest postmasters there. How frequently did the postoffice get its mail, and what were the postage rates during that pioneer period? Recent repairs and installation of modern equipment.

8. AGED MEN AND WOMEN OF YOUR CITY WHO ARE ARDENT WALKERS. Do some of them walk several miles a day for exercise in order to keep in good health? What have been their greatest walking distances in a single day? The kinds of shoes worn by the walkers.

9. CHURCHES OF YOUR STATE THAT ARE USED BY MORE THAN ONE DENOMINATION. How two or more denominations jointly own the church building and divide the time for the services. Slant: the harmony among the denominations. Veteran ministers of the different congregations; you can base the article on their recollections. MARKET: State newspapers. Vend the article to a religious publication.

10. THE MANUFACTURE OF ARTIFICIAL FLOWERS. Let local residents, preferably widows or crippled persons, tell how they derive a good income from their sale. How the flowers are made. The best months and the best occasions for the flowers' sale.

11. ARMISTICE DAY. Winners of the Alfred B. Nobel prize for peace. In 1901, the first year, the winners were Henri Dunant, of Switzerland, and Frederic Passy, a Frenchman. Woodrow Wilson won the prize in 1919.

12. A TWIN CLUB IN THE STATE. The organizer and his interest in families containing twins. Features of the unique organization; the officials. The number of applications for membership; the youngest and the oldest members. Dissimilar twins, as short and tall or lean and fat. MARKET: State newspapers.

13. MIDGET AUTOMOBILE RACING. Slant: the popularity of this form of racing. For your material, have an interview with a champion. Men in your state who have such racing as a full-time occupation. Leading drivers and

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15. THE OLDEST BRIDGES IN YOUR SECTION. Their builders; the kind of timber. Features of the construction. How the bridges have withstood floods. If an ancient span is to be replaced by a new bridge at an early date, employ that fact in the opening, making a news "lead." **MARKET:** Sectional newspapers.

16. VETERAN GATEKEEPERS OF YOUR CITY. Their number of years in this work. The most interesting fairs or expositions where they have served. How they deal with gate-crashers; tricks of gate-crashers that have been successful. The gatekeepers' remarkable memory of faces. **MARKET:** A local newspaper.

17. LODGES OF FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS IN YOUR STATE THAT HAVE REACHED THE CENTENNIAL MARK. Slant: the growth of the lodges during their century of duration. The centennial celebration. The beginning of the lodges and the number of members since that time. The first meeting place and later ones; present quarters. Current officers. **MARKET:** State newspapers. A fraternal magazine would like it.

18. UMBRELLAS WITH A PAST. Hand-made, gold-headed umbrellas with interesting histories. The oldest umbrellas locally. Umbrellas that have been recovered many years after their loss. **MARKET:** A local newspaper.

19. OFFICERS WHO ARE CARRYING ON THE REPUTATION OF THEIR FAMILY IN LAW ENFORCEMENT. Men of your state who have been elected to succeed their fathers, brothers, grandfathers, or uncles as officers. In the opening, state the number of years members of the family have been peace preservers. **MARKET:** State newspapers.

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21. PROFESSORS OF SPEECH AT COLLEGES IN YOUR STATE. Their methods of correction of speech defects. A description of the vocal mechanism of a person. The professor's experiences with stutters, 1,300,000, of whom are estimated to be in the United States. Slant: how miracles are performed for speech defectives.

22. EXPERIENCES OF A TRUANT OFFICER. How he is a "feared" person among children, as he supervises attendance in the schools. Investigation into truancy cases, by personal visits and also by telephone. The extent of girls who play hooky; of boys. Slant: in all probability, the officer is friendly, despite the popular notion of his hard-boiledness.

23. USE OF THE LIE DETECTOR IN YOUR STATE. Cities of the state that are extensive users of this aid to officers. The invention of the device. How the detector has led to the solution of major crimes; describe such a case for your article's opening.

24. A FEMININE ARCHITECT OF YOUR SECTION. Her preparation for such a career. Design problems she has solved. Some of her most notable buildings and houses. Her creative ability. Slant: a woman knows how a home should be made. MARKET: Sectional newspapers.

25. A WAR DIARY BY A LOCAL RESIDENT. More than likely, some local participant of the War Between the States or World War No. 1 kept a daily record. His account of major engagements and his part in them.

26. BOYS WHO WIN COOKING CONTESTS, AS AT COUNTY AND STATE FAIRS. Their skill in making cakes, biscuits, candy, and the like. Some schools offer home economics courses for boys. Youths who intend to become hotel chefs. MARKET: State newspapers.

27. THANKSGIVING DAY. The love of local dignitaries, as the mayor, for pumpkin pie. Have some of these citizens been unusually successful raisers of pumpkins, turkey?

28. CRIMES AMONG THE PRESENT-DAY INDIANS. The most common law violations at Indian reservations. Some of the most baffling murder mysteries. Strange motives for crimes. The worst known criminals of the Indian race. MARKET: A local newspaper. This should sell to a crime magazine.

29. THE EARLIEST PHOTOGRAPHS OF YOUR CITY. The photographer and his career. How the pictures have been preserved. The business establishments and dwellings in the photographs that are still standing

30. CHURCHES IN YOUR STATE THAT ARE NOTED FOR THE LARGE NUMBER OF WEDDINGS IN THEM. Record years. The months of the most weddings. How about June, called the "Month of Brides"? The most elaborate ceremonies; the most unique. MARKET: State newspapers.

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New York Market Letter*(Continued from page 27)*

nounce. But as there is a fair market for new material at a cent a word minimum, on average, writers will be interested in the current needs: *Northwest Romances* is open mostly for long novelettes. *Fight Stories* wants novelettes of 10,000 to 15,000 words; no articles now. *Detective Book* can use shorts up to 4,000 words. (The long novel is a second-serial book, also published in book form.) *Wings* is open for novelettes; best lengths run from 10,000 to 15,000 words. *Action* and *Lariat* are each open for long novelettes of 20,000 words and shorter ones of 10,000 to 15,000 words. *Frontier*, *Jungle Stories* and *Planet Stories* are open, according to the type of magazine, for novels, novelettes, and shorts. Malcolm Reiss is managing editor of this group. Address: 480 Eighth Avenue.

With the appearance of the several new pulps announced last month, Al Norton of Popular-Fictioneers is a tremendous yawning cavern of a market to buy for all the time. All his magazines are open, he tells me. But here are the most important items:

Big Book Detective and *New Detective* need a lot of shorts up to 6,000 words. So does *10-Story Mystery*. These are Fictioneers, and pay a minimum of a half-cent per word, on acceptance. In both detective and mystery fields, Editor Norton would like some short fact articles, lengths up to 4,000 or 4,500 words. He has been using one in each issue so far, so you can get the best idea of what's what by studying the magazines. Rates depend on the value of the subject.

Western Tales (Fictioneers) is another book which Mr. Norton is having trouble getting enough good material for. Shorts up to 6,000 are especially in demand.

Dime Sports is now a good field for new writers, and the editor is on the outlook for

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them. This is a Popular pulp, and pays a cent a word minimum. Editor: Al Norton.

Astounding Stories and *Super-Science* have been made into quarterlies. But the market is open. Editor Norton will welcome an occasional story which is definitely off-trail. Any story with a basis of science is good material for both magazines, if it does not deal with the supernatural. Some fantastic stories are used in both, however, provided they have a basis in science. (Fictioneers; half-cent minimum.)

All the magazines listed above as edited by Al Norton should be addressed at 205 East 42nd Street.

American Boy, originally bought by Curtis, was then sold by Curtis to a bright and energetic young man whose previous experience has been automotive. Why Curtis bought and sold *American Boy* in a period of less than a month is a mystery. At this writing, *American Boy* has the best name in the juvenile field—and an unknown future. We sincerely hope it will continue to be issued.

We regret very much to hear of the deaths recently of Miss Gertrude B. Lane, editor of *Woman's Home Companion*, and of Lee F. Hartman, editor of *Harper's*.

Frederick Lewis Allen as editor-in-chief of *Harper's Magazine*, succeeds the late Lee Foster Hartman.

Mr. Allen becomes the sixth editor-in-chief of *Harper's Magazine*, which began publication in 1850, ninety-one years ago. From the beginning, *Harpers* has been a part of the publishing house of Harper and Brothers, which was founded in 1817, and which will celebrate its 125th anniversary during the coming year.

Mr. Allen has been a member of the editorial staff of *Harpers* for eighteen years, having served as assistant editor from 1923 to 1931, and as associate editor from 1931 until now. He is the author of three books, "*Only Yesterday*," "*The Lords of Creation*" and "*Since Yesterday*," and has collaborated with his wife, Agnes Rogers, on two volumes of pictures and text, "*The American Procession*" and "*Metropolis*." He is also the author of numerous magazine articles.

The dynasty of editors of *Harper's Magazine* started with Henry J. Raymond, who later founded the *New York Times*. Ray-

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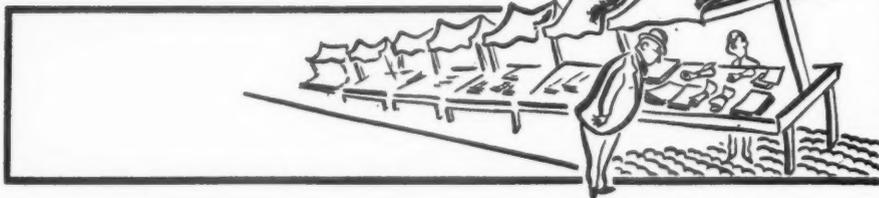
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Houghton Mifflin Co..... 2 Park Ave., Boston, Mass.	2,500	Life-in-America Award for factual books of the American scene.
Alfred A. Knopf..... 501 Madison Ave., N. Y. C.	500 250	May 31, 1942. For juvenile books, fiction or non-fiction ages 8-15; and under 8.

WRITER'S MARKET



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American Greeting Publishers, 1300 West 78th Street, Cleveland, Ohio. Virginia Strang, Editor. "We no longer buy formal verses on the open market. However, we do buy humorous, clever and novelty ideas for all occasions and consider them at any time during the year. We prefer to receive material from experienced greeting card writers only; continue to pay the best rates; report within two weeks."

The Buzza Company, 1006 West Lake Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Katherine Barkley Persons, Editor. "We want sentiment material, either prose or verse, which is simple in style and thought. Each sentiment MUST CONTAIN either a wish, a compliment or a greeting, and MUST be written from the standpoint of the recipient. Query the editor for information on seasonal deadlines. We do not buy photographs. Poetry should be from two to eight lines—general, family, religious and humorous. Reports are in one week. Payment is 50c per line."

Gartner & Bender, Inc., 1104 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Miss Beatrice Peiman, Editor. "We use greeting card verse—4 to 8 lines for Christmas, Birthday, Convalescent, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Graduation, Anniversary, Congratulatory, Wedding, Easter, Valentine, Thanksgiving, etc. Must contain a wish. Simple, direct material preferred; avoid inversions, dialects, slang, archaic forms. Very little comic material. We do not buy photographs, but occasionally buy drawings or sketches. Reports are from two weeks to a month. Payment is 50c per line."

Julius Pollak and Sons, Inc., 141-155 East 25th Street, New York City. Miss Ethel Fisher, Editor. "During the course of the year, we use sentiments for the following occasions: Birthday, Everyday, Christmas and New Year, Easter, Mother's Day and Father's Day. 4 or 8 line verses; prose sentiments; novelty and comic ideas. Reports are made within two weeks. We pay 50c per line, on acceptance. Current needs: Birthday and Everyday."

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sions. We do not buy photographs. Reports immediately. Payment is 50c a line, promptly and all year round."

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Class Magazine Markets

Forbes Magazine, 120 Fifth Avenue, New York City. B. C. Forbes, Editor. Issued semi-monthly; 25c a copy; \$4.00 a year. "We use articles on business trends, business personalities, factual interpretations, new business and industrial ideas; 500 to 1500 words. We do not use fiction or poetry. We do buy photographs. Reports are in ten days. Good rates on publication."

Lawn and Garden Handbook, 1501 Broadway, New York City. Bill Williams and Charles Bonsted, Editors. Issued annually, in February; 50c a copy. We use authoritative articles, from 1500-2000 words in length, which will help small-home owner develop and improve his grounds, with suitable drawings or photographs (8 x 10 preferred). Many photos used, with \$5.00 paid for each accepted. Articles draw 2c-3c per word, on acceptance. We do not use fiction or poetry. Reports are within a week."

Nation's Business, 1615 H. Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Merle Thorpe, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$3.00 a year. "We use timely articles on the relations between Government and business. Exposition of novelties and changes which affect the markets of other businesses. Human interest stories about business men and success stories of individual firms and companies. Full-length articles to 2500 words. Short text and pictures with regard to unusual enterprises in the byways as well as the highways of business. We do not use fiction. We do buy photographs, but seldom buy poetry. Reports are in one week. Rates vary. Payment on acceptance."

Popular Mechanics Magazine, 200 East Ontario Street, Chicago, Illinois. H. W. Magee, Managing Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$2.50 a year. "We do not use fiction. Cover fields of science, mechanics and invention drama-

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Popular Science Monthly, 353 Fourth Avenue, New York City. Charles McLendon, Editor. Issued monthly; 15c a copy; \$1.50 a year. "We use feature articles and shorts on scientific achievements in industry and in the laboratory. No fiction and no poetry. We do buy photographs. Reports are in two weeks. Payment up to 10c a word, on acceptance."

Experimental and Verse Magazine Markets

Books Abroad, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. Roy Temple House, Editor. Issued quarterly; 50c a copy; \$2.00 a year; \$3.00 for two years. "We use 1900 word articles on living writers and current cultural movements in foreign countries. 200 word notes on new books in languages other than English. We do not use fiction, photographs, or poetry. Reports are in two weeks. No payment."

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The Kapustkan Magazine, 5013 South Throop Street, Chicago, Illinois. Bruce and Stan Kapustkan, Editors. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$2.00 a year. Mimeographed. "We are searching for social satires on the order of Voltaire, Rousseau and Mark Twain. Articles, fiction and interviews. Length up to 5,000 words. Poetry that is vital with vision, and timely. No payment."

Reflections, 117 East Street, Oneonta, N. Y. Mary M. Hamilton, Editor. Poetry magazine. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. "Reports are in three weeks at least. No payment."

The Silver Bough, 1823 Sawtelle Blvd., West Los Angeles, Calif. Dion O'Donnell, Editor. Issued quarterly; 50c a copy; \$2.00 a year. "We use unusual stories of mood—1000 words, not over 1200 at most. Good writing and character development or presentation preferred. Not interested in formula, plot or characters. We use critical literary articles, usually by arrangement, on social evaluations of institutional education, or regional life. We occasionally buy photographs. The poetry we use must have validity. Reports are in ten days. Payment is by arrangement, minimum \$1.00."

The Tanager, Box 66, Grinnell, Iowa. Henry Alden, Editor. Issued February, April, June, October and December; 30c a copy; \$1.50 a year. Published by Grinnell College. "We have no restrictions on type or length, but we prefer stories under 5,000 words. No restrictions on articles except they should have literary merit. We use poetry, but no photographs. Reports from one to three weeks. No pay—two contributors' copies."

Confession Magazines

Modern Romances, 149 Madison Avenue, New York City. Hazel L. Berge, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. Confession (first-person) type magazine. "We use short shorts to 3000 words, short stories to 6000 words, book-lengths to 20,000 words, and novelettes 9000 to 10,000 words. We use articles dealing with sex or love problems—study magazine for slant. We do not buy photographs or poetry. There is no set time on reports—we attempt to give 3 weeks report. Payment is 2c, on acceptance."

Personal Romances, 122 East 42nd Street, New York City. Ethel M. Pomeroy, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. Confession type magazine. "We use young love stories of the true confession type. We do not, however, want the time worn formula story. We want stories based on modern problems as they affect young lovers or young married folk. Carefully plotted and with full emotional values. Short stories between 4000 and 5000 words, novelettes 10,000 to 15,000 words. We also use short inspirational articles not over 500 words, or anything of interest to young people. We do not buy photographs. We use short lyric verse, but at present we are over-stocked. Reports are within a month. Pay-

ment is 1c a word for stories. 25c a line for verse on publication."

True Confessions, 1501 Broadway, New York City. Beatrice Lubitz, Editor. Confession type magazine. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. "We use short stories from 5000 to 7500 words in length; novelettes of 24,000 words; three part serials around 15,000 words. We also use fact stories, around 5000 words in length, concerning people in the public eye who have a confession story to tell. Also use timely articles by social workers and educators on subjects of interest to our million and a quarter circulation, composed largely of women. We buy photographs, paying \$3.00 each. We also buy poetry at 25c a line. Love poetry with a "rueful" note is acceptable. Reports are in approximately 2 to 3 weeks. Payment of 2c a word is made on acceptance."

Humor Markets

Film Fun, 149 Madison Avenue, New York City. Charles D. Saxon, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. Picture humor book. "We use humorous stories—2000 word limit, dialogue sketches, gags, also scripts for photo sets. We buy photographs and short humorous rhymes. Reports are in two weeks. Payment is \$1.50 for gags; other material varies in price."

The Funnies and Popular Comics, 149 Madison Avenue, New York City. Charles D. Saxon, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. "We buy for each of these magazines 6 or 8 pages a month free-lance. We want description of panels for artwork, including continuity and dialogue. We do not buy photographs or poetry. Reports are in two weeks. Payment is \$2.50 a page up."

Judge, Ambler, Pa. W. Newbold Ely, Editor. Issued monthly; 15c a copy; \$1.50 a year. Humorous magazine. "We use material not over 1000 words, preferably 500; short humorous paragraphs and sentences; short humorous poems. We do not buy photographs. Reports are in 24 hours. Payment is made 30 days after publication date."

1000 Jokes, 149 Madison Avenue, New York City. Charles D. Saxon, Editor. Issued quarterly; 10c a copy. "We use gags and short humorous rhymes. We do not buy photographs. Reports are in two weeks. Payment is 50c a gag; poetry varies in price."

The Pulp

Action Stories, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York City. Malcolm Reiss, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 20c a copy; \$1.25 a year. "We use 10,000 to 20,000 word western novelettes. We do not buy photographs or poetry. Reports are in two weeks. Payment is 1c on acceptance."

Best Western, 330 West 42nd Street, New York City. Robert O. Erisman, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 15c a copy. "We use all lengths of fiction to 40,000. Shorts will have best chance for newcomers. Modern, mature copy, with emphasis as heavy on character set-up as on action. Girl

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- Would the story be improved by boiling the first three pages down to a half page?
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interest okay, but not necessary except in novel-lengths; never, though, from girl's angle. Reports are in 10 days. Payment is 1/2c up."

Complete Western, 330 W. 42nd Street, New York City. Robert O. Erisman, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 15c a copy. "We have same requirements as 'Best Western.'"

Frontier Stories, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York City. Malcolm Reiss, Editor. Issued quarterly; 20c a copy; 80c a year. "We use novels of 20,000 words, novelettes from 10,000 to 15,000 words and shorts from 5000 to 8000 words of the Old West (covered wagon). We also use fact stories of Old West, 1000 to 4500 words. We do not buy poetry and very seldom buy photographs. Reports are in two weeks. Payment is 1c on acceptance."

Lariat Story Magazine, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York City. Malcolm Reiss, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 20c a copy; \$1.25 a year. "We use western novelettes of 10,000 to 20,000 words. We do not buy photographs or poetry. Reports are in two weeks. Payment is 1c on acceptance."

Popular Western, 10 East 40th Street, New York City. Leo Margulies, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 10c a copy; 60c a year. "We use shorts to 6000 words and novelettes of 8000 to 10,000 words. Payment is 1/2c on acceptance."

Two Gun Western, 330 West 42nd Street, New York City. Robert O. Erisman, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 15c a copy. "We have same requirements as 'Best Western.'"

Western Novel and Short Stories, 330 West 42nd Street, New York City. Robert O. Erisman, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 15c a copy. "We have same requirements as 'Best Western.'"

Western Short Stories, 330 West 42nd Street, New York City. Robert O. Erisman, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 10c a copy. "We use shorts to 8000. Modern copy, mature plotting, with equal emphasis on character treatment and action. Girl interest preferred, but never from girl's angle. Reports are in 10 days. Payment is 1/2c up."

Exciting Western, 10 East 40th Street, New York City. Leo Margulies, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 10c a copy. "We use three novelettes of 8000 to 10,000 words in each issue. Shorts up to 6000. Payment is 1/2c, on acceptance."

Range Riders Western, 10 East 40th Street, New York City. Leo Margulies, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 10c a copy. "We use one short novelette of 8000 words, and shorts up to 6000. Lead novel only by assignment. Payment is 1/2c, on acceptance."

Rio Kid Western and Texas Rangers, 10 East 40th Street, New York City. Leo Margulies, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 10c a copy. "We use shorts up to 6000 words. Lead novel on assignment. Payment is 1/2c, on acceptance."

Thrilling Western, 10 East 40th Street, New York City. Leo Margulies, Editor. Issued bi-monthly; 10c a copy. "We use three novelettes in each issue—8000 to 10,000 words. Shorts up to 6000. Payment is 1/2c, on acceptance."

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Adam Publishing Company, Suite 403, 455 Spadina Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. M. R. Colby, Editor. *Title undecided*. Issued monthly; 15c a copy; \$1.50 a year. Weird fiction and fantasy type magazine. "We use everything from short short stories to novelettes running up to 15,000 words in the science and weird fiction field. At present our need is for *second-right* stories only. Can also use serials. Seventy-five thousand words is the maximum length desired for the latter. We are not concerned with the age of the story. Reports are in 5 to 10 days. Payment is by arrangement with author."

Daring Publishing Company, Suite 502, 28 Wellington Street, West, Toronto, Canada. *Title undecided*. Issued monthly; 15c a copy; \$1.50 a year. "We are in the market for factual crime stories for a factual detective magazine, the name of which has not yet been decided upon. When editor and name of publication have finally been approved will send details. In the meantime manuscripts will reach us at above address. We will be in the market for a large amount of second-right material including pictures. Material which has not appeared in Canada and for which we can purchase Canadian rights is needed. We do buy photographs. No poetry. Reports in 5 to 10 days. Payment is by arrangement with author."

Look, 511 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Vernon Pope, Editor. Issued every other Tuesday; 10c a copy; \$2.00 a year. "We use 1000 to 2000 words on general events. No fiction, and no poetry. We do buy photographs. Reports are in 1 to 2 weeks. Payment upon acceptance."

The Open Road for Boys, 729 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. Clayton H. Ernst, Editor. Issued monthly except January and August; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. "We particularly want air and sports stories of unusual interest to teen-age boys—in length from short shorts to approximately 4,000 words. We are over-stocked at the present time on articles. We rarely buy poetry or photographs. Payment is generally on publication."

Spot, 1501 Broadway, New York City. Frank Hall Fraysur, Editor. Issued monthly; 10c a copy; \$1.00 a year. Picture magazine. "We use picture features: Integrated sets of photographs of general interest. We also use articles of from 2,000 to 3,000 words either with illustrative pictures or which can be illustrated with pictures. Articles should be of a nature which lend themselves to a 50% text-50% picture treatment. It is suggested that writers or photographers query us on idea before proceeding. We do not use poetry, but do buy photographs. Reports are in one week. Payment is \$25.00 a page for picture features and up to \$100.00 for articles, on publication."

Stag, Daring Publishing Company, Suite 502, 28 Wellington Street, West., Toronto, Canada. M. R. Colby, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$3.00 a year. A magazine for men. "We favor material on the 'living scene' and throw our arms

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Syndicates and Trade Journals

Collegiate Digest, 323 Fawkes Bldg., Minneapolis, Minnesota. Norman Lea, Editor. Roto supplement for college papers. Issued weekly during school year. Distributed with college papers. "As ours is strictly a roto section we are not in the market for articles or fiction. We are interested only in photos which have a college angle. Adequate captions should accompany all pictures. No poetry. Payment is \$3.00 per picture upon publication."

American Business, 4660 Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Eugene Whitmore, Editor. Issued monthly; 35c a copy; \$3.00 a year. "We use articles on business management. No fiction and no poetry. We do buy photographs. Reports are in one week. Our rates vary according to arrangements with writers and payment is made on publication."

Commerce Magazine, 1 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois. Alan Sturdy, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$2.00 a year. "We use articles of 1,500 to 2,000 words of interest to a general business readership. We do buy photographs, but no poetry. Reports are in two weeks. Payment is 1c to 1½c a word on acceptance."

Newspaper Management, (Formerly Illinois Editor), 304 West Main Street, Mascoutah, Illinois. Arthur D. Jenkins, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$2.50 a year. For newspaper owners. "We use only material for 'front office' management; how to increase circulation, sell more ads, lower cost of management, etc. Must be sound, practical and from actual experience. No fiction. Reports are in 30 days, but do not submit any now. Payment is 1c on publication."

Southwestern Banking & Industry, 926 Liberty Bank Bldg., Dallas, Texas. Peter Molyneux, Editor. Issued monthly; 25c a copy; \$3.00 a year. "We use industrial articles of significance to the entire Southwest; 1,500 to 1,800 words in length; illustrated, one or two photographs to the article; data used must be from authentic sources. No fiction and no poetry. We buy very few photographs and pay \$1.00 each for them. Reports are within one month. Payment is 1c a word, on publication."

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