Good Grain Grows

BY MICHAEL JOHNSON

And when it is good it is very, very good; and when it is bad it is horrid.

With the publication of the fall issue of Janus, the academic community is again reminded that there are, after all, only 1600 students at Rice University and that only a very few have any honest pretensions to the role of creative artist. The Rice literateurs responsible for the best of the new Janus are to be congratulated; those responsible for the worst are advised to return to their literary drawing boards.

The reader is treated to two stories by Torn Giesen. The first is a magnificent emotional portrait, reminding one of the South's greatest writer; and the second is a sort of "existential vignette," somewhat less well controlled but still showing Mr. Giesen's artistic finesse.

Teasing Fantasy Daniel Albright daringly walks the crumbling edge of the abyss as he creates a fantasy to tease our i/d-membranes. Mr. Albright's technique is remarkably polished for a sophomore. The significance of the language is well-stained, and the narrative constantly demands the reader's attention; but the system remains slightly incomprehensible.

Michael Gianuturo and Thomas Lockwood have both demonstrated their prowess in the writing of the short story. Mr. Gianuturo's"Janus" is a very warm and emotionally moving portrayal of two hearts weaving a very private web. The story reads easily, and the style and technique show the earmarks of talent well into bloom.

Arresting Photography The photographic art of Charles Schorra was extremely interesting. In each photograph one finds that distinctive quality of the creative spirit which causes one to pause and look carefully and with pleasure before passing on. Each photo has an indelible truth, the world stopped to check its flight.

The reader is also treated to a cornucopia of the varied vestiges of the poetic impulse. The poem by John Dunlap is reminiscent of Ezra Pound in its language and stylizations. It is unfortunate that the reader lacks sufficient information to fully decipher the recondite significance of parts of the poem.

Mechanical Poetry Puzzles The poetic word puzzles of Jeffrey Corbin were interesting, but seemed a mechanical approach to the form of literary art. (To save space for other literature, Janus might try putting these pieces of poems all on one page.)

The poem by Derald Glidden is an interesting play with language (which is at times haunting and mystic), but the poem seems structurally strained. Craig Eaton's poem is somewhat sentimental, but poignant in its final note.

And, of course, the reader is as usual asked to experience four pages of the poems of Robert Zelenka. The first poem is rather well-written.

Ron Green's poems show the earmark of the word puzzle, reflecting Mr. Green's cleverness but not his artistry. Leland McNeary's poems were at first clever, but in "To Forget the Dream" one sees more of the artist at work.

Haiku Too And in the poems of Geoffrey Bowman the Janus reader encounters the inevitable haiku.

As the fall of 1964 draws to a close, Janus has finally gathered its harvest. The reader is pleased with the quality of the grain purchased and is resolved to accept the chaff as part of the bargain.