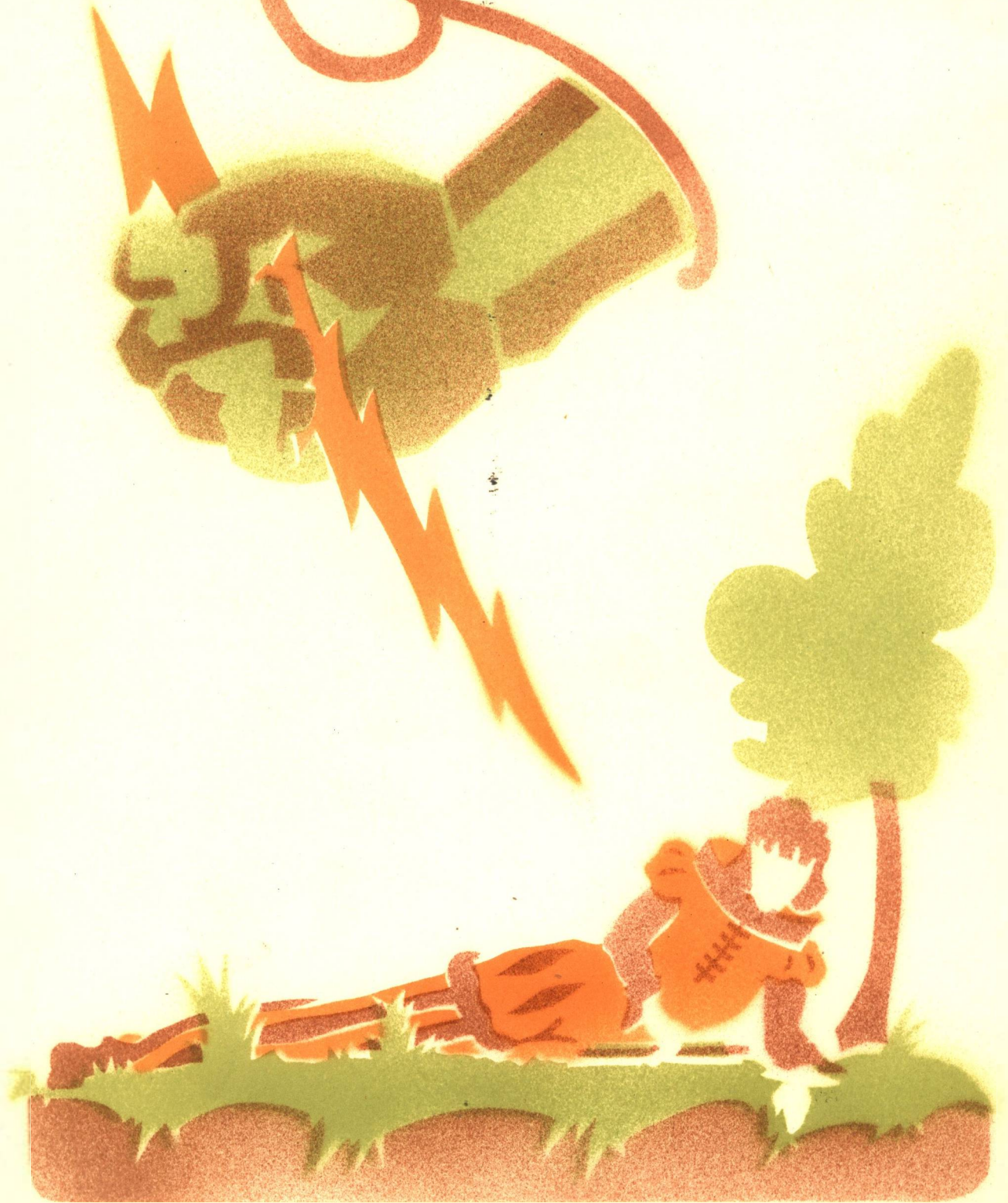


En Garde



EN GARDE!

A FAPA PUBLICATION

WHOLE NUMBER VI.

Seductively served to Slandom's Select by Al and Abby Lu Ashley
of 86 Upton Avenue, Battle Creek, Michigan.

JUNE 1943

SLAN CENTER

INTRODUCTION

Sooner or later, after having corresponded with many fans, read their fanzines, and met a goodly number in person, one is impelled to wonder in just what way fans differ from the rest of humanity. That they do differ is unescapeable. Nor are we the first to speculate in print on this subject. Several have preceded us. In a half serious half joking way fans have been termed Slans. Now it is just possible that we might be---or at least the nearest existing equivalent. Art Widner has been examining the subject by way of statistical analysis. While his researches are far from complete, there are already indications that we may differ physically from the norm of the human race. We shall approach the problem from another angle.

It has been our fortune to have been in close contact with the public for most of our working life. Our present job as a hacker is no exception. With the knowledge thus obtained, we have made repeated comparisons between fans, individually and as a whole, and the common run of people. Several things stand out vividly.

Intellectually, fans far exceed the ordinary person. There is no egotism or wishful thinking involved in reaching that decision. It is simply a matter of observed fact. For instance, among about forty cab drivers we found only two who showed more than the usual run of intelligence. We subsequently discovered that both avidly read science fiction, and they were the only ones of the group who did. Still, intellectually, they hadn't quite reached the level of the fan. Nor were they fans, or likely to become such. One is led to the conclusion that a mere fondness for S-F does not make the true fan. But we digress slightly.

Despite the handicap of having been educated under our present lamentable system, the real fan is mentally wide-awake. He is readily able to accept new concepts, and his mental tastes far exceed those found in the ordinary person of comparable age. The ordinary person seldom or never reasons in other than a very elementary way. To him, thinking is something to be avoided if possible. The fan welcomes the opportunity for original thought. The fan has a mind above the average, and glories in exercising it.

In the above paragraphs we have indulged in a little speculation, and little more. The scientific approach is lacking. But we are satisfied in a little more than tentative fashion, that fans are SLANS. They have no tendrils of which we are aware, and telepathy still remains only an interesting possibility. Their physical differences may be nothing of importance. It is even too soon to

know whether their intellectual superiority is heritable. But for all practical purposes at present, they are SLANS.

SLAN SHACK

Having settled to our own satisfaction that fans possess a mental superiority, and finding people of that sort much more congenial to have around, we set about devising a means to make such a thing possible. Slan Shack was the result. Perhaps you have heard of it. It does not exist yet, but may any month now.

To elucidate, we plan to buy a seven to nine room house, and rent rooms to fans only. Thus we will gradually gather together under one roof a group of Slans. A good-sized room, perhaps in the basement, will be set aside for publishing activities. In a limited way, we will have a sort of perpetual convention. No fan who has attended a convention has failed to notice the stimulating effect of mingling with a bunch of other fans. True, there is much foolishness connected with a convention; even with fandom in general. But there is also a very satisfying exchange of ideas which, in the end, overshadows all else. Anyway, just think about the possibilities of the close association of a group of fans over an indefinite period of time. Wouldn't you rather like to try it? ;

SLAN CENTER

When Niel DeJack and Dalvan Coger were here at our place just before Niel went in the army, a discussion of Slan Shack came up. One thing led to another. Finally, we rather timidly advanced an idea we had been toying with in our own mind for some time.

Why not buy a square city block, build it up, and inhabit it only with Slans?

Stated thus baldly, the idea is rather startling, and one is inclined to classify it with the most unreal of fantasy. Yet it is possible of accomplishment!

Suppose a group of fans decide they like the idea, have faith in their ability to make it a reality, and are willing to back up that faith to the tune of several hundred dollars. The idea was conceived here in Battle Creek. There is plenty of work here, and even during the depression there was less unemployment than in most towns around it. Without going more than two miles from the heart of the city, an excellent location for the project could be found. In fact, there are a great number of reasons for selecting Battle Creek for the site of the Center, but we won't go into all of them at this time. Let's just suppose it will be located here.

The first thing the fans would do would be to come here, rent a room or apartment, and start working at whatever job they found most suitable. Having become established, they would next select a lawyer and an architect. A corporation would be formed, and each would hold stock to the extent of his investment. A suitable square block could probably be purchased for from three to five thousand dollars. Then an ultra modern group of homes, apartments, housing units, or whatever you wish to call them, would be built around the block. In the center, formed by the square, (in the collective back-

yards, if you will) a large communal building would be constructed. This would serve as a meeting hall, library, publishing headquarters, central heating plant, and even an electric plant. If desirable, there could even be a small machine and woodworking shop for those who enjoy such hobbies. While each unit of the project would be distinct, the complete group of structures would be designed to form a pleasing architectural whole.

The Corporation would own the whole thing. Each fan would pay a certain amount for his living quarters just as if he were paying rent. In return he would receive additional stock. When his total stock equaled the valuation of his dwelling unit, he would be in the same position as though he owned it. His payments would then drop to some minimum amount to cover upkeep and utilities, and would continue thus for as long as he wished to remain. In the same way a fan determined to remain single could enjoy the results of, in effect, owning his own home, yet it could be merely a two or three room apartment, or even a single room.

A Board of Directors, elected yearly, would handle the affairs of the Corporation. A general meeting of Stockholders would be held as often as proved necessary. New Stockholders would be admitted only after a vote of approval showing a sufficient majority. Some sort of Grocery and General Store could be set up by the Corporation, and some Stockholder selected to manage it and to be paid by the Corporation. In fact, other commercial ventures could be tried and might prove useful in keeping all Stockholders employed at all times. But the first mentioned would be especially advisable in that it could supply the group plus the adjacent neighborhood.

For the purposes of introducing this idea, we need not go into all the desirable features of a cooperative venture. Similar ventures have been successfully tried before. Sweden has especially demonstrated the advantages of this method. The mass buying power alone is no insignificant item. The pooling of Slan intelligence should produce amazing results. And the whole thing is simply a matter of applying an already successfully demonstrated principle to our own peculiar needs.

Financially the plan is feasible. After the war startling new building materials and concepts will be forthcoming, and intense competition will bring prices away down. Ten to twenty fans with three to five hundred dollars each could swing the thing easily. The whole block of structures would not have to be attempted all at once. What buildings proved necessary could be put up first, then more could follow later. But the longer one dwells on the advantages of handling the thing through a corporation the more possible it all appears.

Would you enjoy the advantages of owning your own home?
 Would you like to have fellow fans for your neighbors?
 Would you like to live just a little cheaper than the rest of the population by availing yourself of the power of mass buying?
 Have you ever declared a wish that there was a convention every week, and that you could attend?

If you have, the thing to do is start pulling for Slan Center.

Slan Center must necessarily wait until the war is over. But now is the time to discuss it and start making plans. Now, while incomes are large, is the time to start accumulating the money to put it across. Our presentation of the idea here is sketchy in the extreme. Many details we have already considered, but not set forth here. Many, many more will occur as the idea is thought about and discussed. Some fifteen Slans have already discussed the plan with us and all have declared themselves strongly in favor of it. All have been willing to risk the necessary money to make Slan Center a reality. Now what are the reactions of the rest of you?

We invite you to point out any flaws you can find in the plan, and we want you to suggest any additional good features that occur to you, as well as any improvements you think of. We want to know how many of you would sincerely join an effort of this kind. Of course there are a great number of reasons why certain ones of you could not see your way clear to take part in this particular project. But if the reaction is generally favorable, the moral backing of fandom will help a lot. Who knows, perhaps after Slan Center has been proven a success, other such groups will spring up around the country.

In union there is undoubted strength. The day may come when fans are a group to be reckoned with.

We brought up this idea at the "Midgicon" on our recent trip to Chicago. There was quite a bit of discussion. But fan humor is irrepressible. What soon happened to our idea shouldn't happen to a dog. It got twisted into the most humorous brainstorm of the year. We all had an excruciating lot of fun out of it, yet when the laughing finally subsided, the sincere desire to try the project remained.

So laugh about it all you wish. Poke as much fun at it as you can. But don't fail to think about it and discuss it. And please write to us, and give your reactions to the idea.

Dhuyhuwishyhuknhuwhughughu'sscrhuballerhuaretrhulytrhuthuandbowunthu?

FANS MUST BE NUTS

Just before leaving for Chicago on our recent trip to that burg, we wrote to Walt Liebscher telling our time of arrival and other pertinent data. He immediately telegraphed the following message:

WILL MEET STATION. WAIT TUCK WILL BE THERE I DROOL.
ROOSTER.

Abby Lu answered the phone when Western Union called. The girl said, "I have a telegram here for you. Maybe you can make something out of it. I certainly can't."

Her voice assumed a plaintive and slightly incredulous tone.

"It says, 'I drool'," she went on, "and it's signed 'Rooster'!"

Then she read the whole telegram. Abby Lu assured her that it was perfectly understandable, and thanked her. Wistfully, and with what almost sounded like a touch of hurt in her voice, the girl concluded the conversation.

"I'm glad somebody does." Then in muttered undertone, "Drool!"

". . . . with jaundiced eye"

FANTASY AMATEUR: 'Tis Spring, no less! One more to go!

MADMAN OF MARS: This epic would make an excellent radio serial. It is far better than most of those broadcast at present---though that isn't saying much---and the ending of book I is typical.

ZIZZLE-POP: We're not convinced. In The American Weekly for the week of May 23, one Brian O'Brien has a write-up of the mystery that gives what is probably the correct explanation. It involves a "moocher ship" and a lot of general skull-duggery. The whole mystery apparently grew out of certain conditions of that time with which shippers had to contend. The article is well worth looking up and reading if you are at all interested.

SARDONYX: "Night Of Brahma" rather good. "Impressions" easily the best thing in the issue. Got a kick out of explanation of why Milty likes the sound of Lt. Rothman. But really, who could blame him? The reaction to that article on dreams has been far greater than we expected, and very gratifying. Personally, we have never noticed any inclination to lose interest in reality due to increased interest in dreams. It strikes us that controlled dreams could be made a means to relieve the pressure of inhibitions and suppressed desires thus leaving the waking mind in far better shape to appreciate and make the most of reality. We haven't got around yet to trying to send our dream consciousness probing the future, ala Dunne, but have considered it and may try one of these nights. However, it may turn out that the thread of consciousness anchoring our dream mind will not stretch clear into the future. Nevertheless we shall see what can be done.

FAN TODS: Whether or not you quite achieved the effect you'd hoped for, you did an excellent job on the cover. Chauvenet's article on Chess very interesting. We too have always viewed the game as a struggle, and nothing else. We prefer to play it "freehand", carefully avoiding the cut-and-dried solutions. We want to approach the game with an open attitude and solve each situation by ourself as we come to it. No other way satisfies. Mental exercise and the thrill of conquest are all we get or seek from the game of Chess. "This is the FAPA --": ah! We have another top-notch review dept. to look forward to. This one ranks right up with the best of them. The profundity of your math on page nine stirs us profoundly. Yesterday's Ten Thousand Years simply must be included in every issue.

THE STEFAN: Can anyone offer any details on the construction of a disintegrating ray? He's still there!

FLIGHT UNKNOWN: We offer no suggestions as to how Beldon, Darlan, O'Connor, et al, can escape their predicament. We hold that having got in the soup by themselves, they should be left to simmer.

THE NUCLEUS: Our suppressed desire: To watch Trudy put out an issue of Nucleus. Paul Spencer's article has something to say and says it rather well. Although it is quite possible that Fandom could survive minus the Prozines, we should not feel called upon to spurn them. Science fiction and fantasy provide a symbol, a rallying-point for those peculiar minds that make up Fandom. As the

Prozines are the chief present source of this type of fiction, they are to be encouraged and supported by Fandom.

FIFTY'S MAG: Your reaction to the efforts of the "fine-upstanding-young-man" at the mission was quite the most hilarious thing we've come across in years. Whole issue very interesting. Hope your present effort to acquire a didy-pin doesn't mean another suspension of the mag.

HORIZONS: For some reason we find nothing special calling upon us for comment in this issue, although the whole thing was very interesting. Wish we could help you with your headache trouble. We either go to sleep or take aspirin. But such a stubborn case as yours seems to be is beyond our experience. Your request for no humorous comments in response to your plea restrains us from further words on the subject. We just couldn't resist much longer.

WUDGY TALES: Another first issue, and a sparkling one. We were thoroughly delighted with this fanzine, and shall look expectantly for it in every mailing.

PHANNY: Enjoyed "La Musica, La Poetica, y Las Artas Otras". Sorry your experiment with dreams after reading our article turned out so disastrous. Personally, we find the result just the opposite---the most certain way of circumventing any inclination toward insomnia. It is fairly well known that letting one's thoughts flit from one thing to another tends to delay sleep. On the other hand, concentrating induces sleep. It is our invariable habit, when finding it necessary to get asleep in a hurry, to concentrate on visualizing some mental picture, giving it all the detailed natural movement possible. In such a case we make no effort to keep the conscious control, wherefore sleep comes fast. There will be dreams developing from the mental picture, but we retain no memory (conscious) of them other than the very first part, unless, of course, we partially awaken once or more times during the course of the dream. Probably one of the greatest causes of insomnia is the inclination to worry about being troubled with it. Once one has thoroughly learned the mental trick of attaining sleep, that worry becomes nonexistent, as does insomnia. When one does not feel particularly sleepy, or doesn't really need sleep right at that time, achieving it by means of that mental image becomes more difficult, but can still be done. In such a case the mental image is often destroyed by some extraneous sound, or by a slight relaxation of the concentrative effort. Then one must, undaunted, start rebuilding the image. It might even take several attempts, but persistence will win out. The degree of detail and movement given the image will vary with the capability of the individual. But one must always strive to increase that degree. Success in attaining sleep is in direct ratio to the amount of effort put forth. However, as one becomes aware of the approach of sleep, one should slowly swing the mental effort from detail to movement. The moving image is normal to the dream-sleep state, while detail is not to any great extent. Keep trying, DeoBee, and good luck to you.

INSPIRATION: An exceptionally enjoyable issue. "The Gremlins" was good, although we're not convinced yet that they are doomed. Doubtless some of the publicity has been bad, but out of it all a very satisfactory legend may still materialize. Especially liked "Discourse On Superman". Your conclusions are convincing, but you must admit the comics are making the people increasingly S-F conscious.

A SUPPLEMENT TO IMAG-INDEX: We always welcome and appreciate this sort of thing. Any sort of reference work holds a high place in our library and our esteem.

WALT'S WRAMBLINGS: This mag is an invaluable guide for the purchaser of fantasy books. In fact, we have it on good authority that Walt himself refers to it just before making the rounds of the book stores so that he may know what he should look for. "Manu"-- so that's why fans all drool!

COLLECTED VERSE: Dream Girl was far, far the best thing in the collection. It and the last one are the ones we shall place with our assortment of poems we wish to keep and reread from time to time. Love's End is good, but we got something altogether different out of it than what you intended. To us, your heart accepted the girl, but not unreservedly. Unknowing, she was at first content. But discovering the incompleteness of your acceptance, she naturally became dissatisfied. Sensing her dissatisfaction, you searched your heart and found you could never accept her more fully. In fact, examination of this partial acceptance proved even it to be a frail structure. Whereupon you destroyed it as unfit to survive. This interpretation probably came about because we read the twelfth line, "And (that) I will build no more." The last poem "Realization" is such a beautiful and apt comparison.

SUSTAINING PROGRAM: Remarks on Mailing are entertaining as always. "Maudit" is a French word for "damned". Got a kick out of Dan McPhail's naming troubles. Also Kornbluth's crack anent you and James Buchanan. Boskone Diary made us feel terrible---terrible because we had to miss so much fun. The stick-men were just about the best yet. Never let a Mailing pass without an issue of Sus-Pro.

EN GARDE: This issue started a new cover series. We could have continued the old series indefinitely, but feared the fans would tire of it. How do you like the new, and how many of you grasp the full significance of what is portrayed on the covers of this series? Incidentally, the covers of this series are all different portrayals of the same idea.

YHOS: Answers to various responses to article on war are well done. Personally, we deplore war. We do not feel that it is particularly necessary, and wish the human race would hurry up and outgrow it. We want no part of it ourself. But, . . . we are a firm believer in the idea of Natural Selection. More even than we deplore war, we deplore the tendency to interfere with the working of natural selection. oh hell, it would take a couple pages to follow out that thought. Pardon us for leaving it incomplete. We will write an article on it instead of trying to squeeze it in here. Regarding Etaoin Shrdlu, we pronounced it eh-TAY-o-in shurd-loo until we thought about it, then we hit on all sorts of weird pronunciations. We dragged in French, German, and Spanish, but only succeeded in confusing ourself, so we'll stick to our instinctive first guess. Reviews swell. Your comments on dream article very interesting. Looks like we may have to write another article on the subject. Boskone Report piled on top of Speer's practically did us in with envy.

THE FIGHTING FAN: We loved that cover. Contents thoroughly enjoyable. Hope you are wrong about there being only the one issue of

this mag to appear.

MOONSHINE: Your "hecto gremlins" sure played the devil with your mag. It was only through the exercise of certain little-known and generally shunned arts that we were able to read it at all. Essay on Death seems inspired by a feeling foreign to us. The thought of death, either in the abstract or as a personal matter, sends not a single chill cavorting the length of our vertebral course. However, one statement in the article stands out---"Dead human beings are not the best of company." How true! Their conversation is dull, and their general outlook is inclined to be morbid. They lack the animation and joi de vivre that make for a successful social gathering. As intimate companions-----they smell.

BANSHEE: Nearly all interesting. Agree with Marlow's article. Paul Spencer on music of "Things To Come" especially acceptable because that was one of our favorite pics. Reviews fine considering their brevity. We'll be looking for Caliban.

DREAM DUST: The poetry is OK, but doesn't particularly appeal to us. Nothing about either the words and phrases or the subjects seems to stand out sufficiently to arouse our interest.

JINX: Tucker's article best in issue. It deals ably with one of the fan editor's greatest and most touchy problems. "End" was much enjoyed. The recent information that Jinx is to be continued was very happily received.

MATTERS OF OPINION: Yuh can't give us no sock 'cause we never eat mush. Really enjoyed "Fanationalism". Sermon excellent. You seem to have clearly pointed the way for fandom to actually become more mature. The psychology of your suggested method for fan-promoted reforms is sound and would bear serious consideration. As for fans being odd merely as a gesture, it always sounded to us like whistling in the dark. Issue as a whole provocative of much thought.

"Booksarevr-r-r-r-ien-n-nds"theyboomed"booksarevr-r-r-riends"theybo

BARBARIAN INVASION

Many years ago, shortly after we graduated from High School, we held to the idea that our present civilization and progress would go on indefinitely. True, former civilizations had all fallen, but in every case an invasion of barbarians had brought about their demise. But, we exulted, today no barbarous, ignorant horde longer existed.

As the years passed, the error of our conclusions became ever more apparent. We overlooked one point---that barbarian invasion need not come sweeping upon us from some backward and little-known portion of the globe. The menace dwells in our very midst. The barbarian army that may some day shatter our proud civilization and return us to a life of ignorance and near-savagery lives and labors beside us virtually unrecognized.

Indications of this menace are on every hand. A recent one is contained in an AP dispatch under a San Francisco dateline. A Federal Court upheld a labor union's contention that painting with spray guns would cut down available work for its members. They had refused to use them on a Federal Housing Project.

What a beautiful example of scientific progress! Nor is this example unique. You can all probably recall similar examples that have appeared during the last few years. The mentality of this group of barbarians is unable to cope easily with the problem of adapting to the labor-saving devices offered by modern science. Their ignorance and limited outlook cause them to spurn such advances and seek a return to a level of savagery where they can feel at home. A single individual advocating such ideas would simply be considered a harmless moron. But we are not dealing with an individual. They have banded together into LABOR UNIONS. They are coming to represent such power that even the Federal Government bows to their absurd notions.

"Labor unions have a right to refuse to use labor-saving mechanical devices", says Federal District Judge A. F. St. Sure.

Now suppose you and I wish to construct an apartment building. The housing situation is acute. Time is of the essence. We can allow but one week for the excavating. But, the labor unions disapprove use of a steam-shovel. Doesn't leave enough work for enough men. Too advanced. Well, we must either employ so many men that they get in each other's way and make the cost prohibitive, or else let them take a month to the job, and to hell with the people with no place to live. Down with labor-saving devices! Back to the simple life of our near-simian ancestors.

Throw away your records and record-players, fans. Think of the musicians you are putting out of work. Smash your typewriters and duplicators. Scribes, too, must eat. Let's destroy all the printing presses and make our books by hand. Of course, there wouldn't be so many books made then, but after all, then one wouldn't have to learn to read. And think how much easier people could be controlled and exploited if they never learned to read and write.

Down with labor-saving devices! DARK AGES, HERE WE COME!!!!!!!

Ignoranceisblisshowhappyweshallbeignoranceisblisshowhappyweshallbe!

As Fandom is becoming aware, Claude Degler of Indiana is rather badly afflicted with the malady known as "itchy feet". According to a fairly recent report, his wanderings finally led him to the fair state of Florida.

Now many, many people have gone to Florida, and after a very prosaic visit, returned home. But a fan must be original. Claude promptly got himself lost in the Everglades. Not satisfied with that, he contrived to meet up with a man-eating, fire-breathing aligator('scuse please. Two l's.)). But with truly atavistic resourcefulness he climbed a tree thus foiling his foe, thwarting this reptilian monster, cheating it of its coveted meal, and insuring himself many more miles of roaming about our fair country.

The report failed to state how he became unlost. Presumably, some roving Seminole discovered him, or perhaps, come night, he plotted a course by the stars. All hail, Claude Degler.

Upfandownalligatorupfandownalligatorupfandownalligatorupfandownalli

THE MIDGICON

Early on the morning of Easter Monday, the Ashleys and the Perrys hove themselves from their downy beds, hiced a hasty breakfast, and hied themselves to the depot. The train for Chicago was due to arrive. Chicago has lots of bookstores, and they had saved a little money. Wherefore, they had resolved, the twain should meet.

Dalvan Coger had planned to go along if possible. We had waited all the week before for word from him, but neither word nor Dalvan made their appearance. We had finally given him up. So we entered the station and there sat Dalvan, looking cool and calm in good old Sam McGee fashion. The ensuing flurry of chatter disclosed the fact that he had been way up in the northern part of the state the day before. He wired his mother to meet him at the station in Jackson with some money and a clean shirt. When his train pulled in there, she handed the stuff through the window to him and he came on to Battle Creek, got off, and waited for us.

The trip was uneventful. We indulged in the usual pastimes of reading, playing games, sleeping, and annoying the other passengers. Then came Chi. We bobbed to our feet, bounced off the train, and bounded up the stairs to the waiting room. Walt Liebscher, Frank Robinson, and possibly Bob Tucker were to be there to meet us. We looked in vain. Just as we were ready to fare forth alone and get lost, Walt appeared out of nowhere. He said Frank was downstairs waiting for us. Somebody went after him, and then we set out for the Bus Depot to find Tucker. He wasn't there, so we waited and ate another breakfast. When he appeared it turned out that, unknown to any of us, he too had been at the station watching for us to arrive.

We tramped from one bookstore to another. We spent the whole day at it. We spent a hell of a lot of money at it. When we had all the books we could carry, we simply left them all at the store we happened to be in, with instructions to ship them to Battle Creek. Then we started in all over again. Books can sure get awfully heavy. How glad we were that Dalvan was along. He usually brought up the rear of the procession---and most of the books. He also answers to the name of Dobbin now. At noon we entered a corner restaurant. It was full. We waited about half an hour. Walt, Abby Lu, and Earl and Helen Parry finally got a table. The rest of us still waited. We managed to fend off complete starvation by foraging a little food from the other diners when they weren't looking. Finally we got a table too. After a suitable interval a waitress deigned to notice us. Being strangers, we hollered at Walt to find out what those at his table had ordered, then followed suit. The whole meal was about the equivalent of a good ham sandwich. Everything had some weird foreign name and we are forced to the conclusion that some people have the dangdest tastes.

Fairly late in the evening we decided it was time to seek a hotel. We found one, and Frank left us there to depart for his home in the South Side. We got three double rooms. Somehow the clerk got confused and only charged us for singles. We kept quiet about it, being strangers and not wanting to show our ignorance. Walt had to leave too, as he had to be in Joliet to work the next morning. We all collected in our room to discuss this and that. Slan Center came up and was pounced upon eagerly. (Error. Frank and Walt didn't leave until later) The financial schemes and architectural designs to be

found in the fan-imagination are positively amazing.

About nine the next morning that insomniac, Earl Perry, came banging on our doors and telling us that a new day had arrived, wherefore we should arise. We were prompted to argue the matter, but eventually gave in.

After breakfast we set out for the museum. Frank was supposed to meet us there. A bevy of beautiful high school gals appeared a block or two ahead of us. Tucker, Dalvan and I unconsciously hastened our steps, leaving Abby Lu and Helen some distance behind. Now and again remorse would assail us, but the lure ahead kept making us forget the ladies behind. We arrived at the museum and had quite a wait for them to catch up. Frank wasn't there. We tried to reach him by phone off and on all afternoon, but to no avail.

Several times while going through the museum, Helen and Abby Lu strayed off, but we had little trouble finding them. The Hall Of Man has an understandable feminine appeal. It contains some remarkable statues.

When it came time to leave we headed for the entrance. Reaching it we discovered Abby Lu was missing. She was not in the Hall Of Man this time. In fact nobody could remember seeing her for the past half hour. Arranging to meet again in ten minutes, we set out in different directions to find her. We really covered the place in that ten minutes. Tucker finally found her down in Egypt among the mummies. We gathered at the entrance again, and just as we were about to leave, spied Frank preparing to pay his admittance fee. The gestures we made trying to tell him to save his money must have convinced the attendants that we should be under the care of another type of attendants.

Frank had mayhem in his eye. While we had been enjoying the Field Museum, he had been through the Museum of Science and Industry in the South Side three times looking for us. After that he had looked all over most of the rest of Chicago. Poor Frank. Tucker offered him a free copy of LeZ to mollify him, but had to raise it to a year subscription before peace was restored. As we started down the steps my hat blew off. So did Earl's. We set out after them, dodging in and out among the columns at the head of the steps. The two hats were very playful, but finally remembered the saying about birds of a feather and decided to get chummy. Earl and I, each intent on his respective hat, naturally collided. This seemed to cause much merriment among the rest of the gang.

We headed back for the hotel, stopping enroute to purchase a cheap suitcase in which to carry what books hadn't been shipped. Earl and Helen had to get back to Battle Creek, but Abby Lu and I finally decided to stay over another day and run on down to Joliet with Tucker and Frank to spend another evening with Walt. Dalvan was undecided for a time, but eventually decided to accompany us. We packed our stuff and headed for the elevator. How we all managed to get on it is a mystery. When it stopped on the main floor we swarmed out. Dalvan tripped, went into a beautiful swandive, then executed a grand finale by skidding seventeen feet across the lobby on his chin. There was a great deal of applause and he had to take a number of bows but modestly refused an encore. The suitcase he had been carrying soared off on a flight of its own, but was caught

by an alert bell-hop. This was unfortunate as it is customary in the city of Chicago to pay ransom to a bell-hop for the return of your luggage.

We checked out without further incident and set out to see the Perrys to their train. Right in the middle of LaSalle street on an el cross-over the handle of that cheap suitcase decided to give up. As it only contained a couple hundred pounds of books, it was obvious we had been cheated. But we swallowed our indignation and with true fan resourcefulness attempted to devise a substitute handle. Everybody gathered around in a huddle and offered suggestions. Several strangers even joined in the spirit of the occasion. One helpful soul thought we should harness a number of the ubiquitous pigeons to the load and let them carry it. Tucker grabbed at a length of wire strung within reach, but discovered it was already occupied carrying a sizeable load of current. A cop in the street below began to get worried about what was going on. Doubtless he had visions of saboteurs planting bombs to blow up elevated trains.

Bits of rusty wire and odds and ends of rope and string were finally twisted into a handle of sorts. On reaching the station we wrapped a couple religious tracts around the string and thereafter managed very well. The Perrys left. Then we left on a bus for Joliet where Walt met us.

Walt's mamma had a swell spaghetti dinner for us. While we were doing justice to it, sirens started screaming. "Ha!" we thought, "A jail break!" It was suggested that we have fun by all going out and dashing frenziedly up and down back alleys and across lots. This would serve to confuse the cops and make the chase more interesting. But, alas, just as we started out we discovered it was only an air-raid practice alert.

We spent the evening in Walt's room listening to his records, envying his originals and his books, gagging on some of his unpublished manuscripts, and other fan sport. Then we found a hotel and adjourned to there. Abby Lu was sleepy. Presently she slept. The rest of us gathered in Tucker and Dalvan's room and had a bull session. Conversation drifted around to things psychopathic and Walt, Tucker and I went all out for the discussion. Dalvan enjoyed it all but didn't say much. But Frank . . . ah! For him the gentle veil was stripped from life to reveal it in all its shuddering reality. Slowly his eyes grew glassy and a dazed expression spread over his face. It is doubtful that Frank can ever again be shocked.

The next day we headed for home. And for the next few weeks we lovingly fondled our booty. Ah, books!

Didyoueverseeasadrobotwithgearsrollingdownhischeeks&clangingonhislap?

It was in the LaSalle Street Station. The girl stepped up to the magazine stand and hurriedly glanced over the display. Uncertainly she fingered a copy of some detective story magazine. Frank Robinson, who had been watching her, very casually picked up a copy of the current UNKNOWN WORLDS and handed it to her. "Try this!" was all he said. She considered the two mags for the barest moment. She was in an obvious hurry to catch her train. Then she put down the detective and departed with UNK. Was another fan made by that quiet gesture of Frank's? One wonders. And how many fans are that alert? Are you?

((Bowling to a certain wide-spread superstition we skip this floor, leaving only an air-space. Anyhow, the tenants on this floor are all rather "unknownish" creatures, and no material by any of them has been submitted recently.))

ANNOUNCEMENT

AL ASHLEY, after a year of conscientious, faithful, hard-working service in the capacity of OFFICIAL EDITOR of the FAPA, announces his candidacy for the office of PRESIDENT of the FAPA.

- AL ASHLEY stands on his record of past performance.
(Note his fearlessness in ignoring the frailty of his perch)
- AL ASHLEY stands for an ever BIGGER and BETTER FAPA.
(Sort of a scaled-down expanding-universe complex)
- AL ASHLEY stands for a fapazine by every member in every Mailing.
(See! Even his illusions have a certain grandeur.)
- AL ASHLEY believes in the Slanish qualities of the FAPA member.
(Observe his psychological subtlety.)
- AL ASHLEY recognizes and pledges his aid to the underdog and the unfortunate.
(Does your hecto-mag stink? Al will praise it. Is your mimeoing a mess? Al will ignore it. Are your articles shallow? Al will read deep meaning into them.)
- AL ASHLEY pledges a FAIR and SQUARE administration in keeping with the best democratic ideals.
(Honest Al, they calls him.)
- AL ASHLEY pledges a bulging Treasury without additional taxation.
(A financial wizzard, no less.)
- AL ASHLEY feels that the Laureate Awards could be expanded to good advantage, and pledges his efforts to that end.
(More "Merit Badges" --- more ego satisfaction!)
- AL ASHLEY pledges his aid in providing a FAPA Emblem that is satisfactory to the membership, and actually useable by all members, artistically inclined or not.
(Can there be any end to the man's genius?)
- AL ASHLEY stands for pensions for all FAPA members attaining the age of one hundred and ten.
(Even security he offers you!)

AL ASHLEY makes no pretensions. He is simply one of you. Should you chance to be illiterate, you will find that he considers you no different from anyone else. "Just mark your "x" in the opposite my name", he would say, "and mail your ballot promptly."

VOTE FOR AL ASHLEY FOR PRESIDENT

(Committee for Political
Advancement of Al Ashley)

