

MAR. APRIL.

FANTASY SCIENCE DIGEST

10¢
VOL. I. NO. 3.



A STATE
AWAKENS
BY
JACK
SPEAR

Fantascience Digest

Vol I

March-April
1958

No. 5

A Comet Publication

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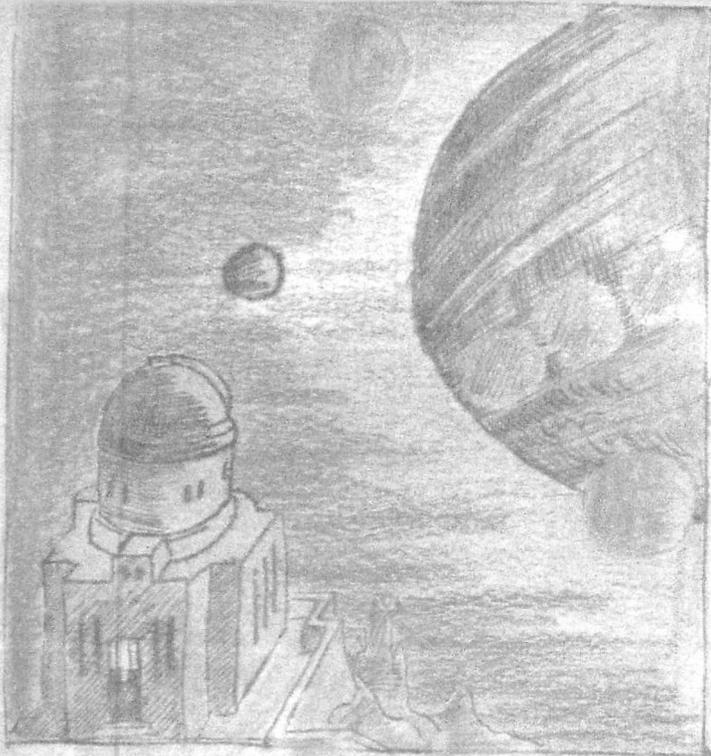
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 FANTASCIENCE DIGEST is published bi-monthly at
 373 E. Belgrade Street, Philadelphia, Pa. Price
 per issue; 10¢ or 50¢ for six issues. THE DIGEST
 is a COMET PUBLICATION

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 Interior drawings are by Agnew and Baltadonia





The preceding issue appears to have met with a rather large number of roses coupled with a goodly portion of brickbats. Those who did kick usually did so because of the change in size in the midst of a volume. One fan writer stated that I have plans for changing back to the small size. This is not true; according to my present plans, FD will appear in the large size for a long time to come.

My request for material met with favorable response. Among those who condescended to help little FD were Jack Speer, William S. Sykora, Richard Wilson, Sam Moskowitz and several others. Thanks, lads. Your help is appreciated, I assure you.

William S. Sykora's "STF News Flashes," which arrived too late for inclusion on the contents page, contains several items which are worthy of further discussion. First of all; the coming National Science Fiction Convention. All you fellows (and girls for that matter) who are in a position to attend, do so. It will certainly be worth your while. One of the primary purposes of this Convention will be to prepare for the coming World Convention. Everyone will be given a chance to speak and offer suggestions pertaining to this great affair. So why not come? Take my word for it; STF Conventions are certainly interesting. I should know, having attended the three pre-

vious affairs held in the US.

Mr. Sykora made mention of the International Scientific Association. Many of you have undoubtedly heard of this organization, probably some of you were members. Everyone will admit that it was without a doubt the greatest club for lovers of science fiction. Everything was running smoothly along until Mr. Sykora was compelled to resign the Presidency of the organization due to his attending college in the evening and working during the day. Now when this occurred, The New York fans held a meeting and decided that it would be useless to continue the organization, and dissolved it. All of the members of the ISA residing outside of New York had no vote in the disbanding of the organization, and therefore it was not legally dissolved. Now the above conditions no longer prevail. Sykora is now in a position whereby he can actively participate in the actual running of the organization, and there is no reason why it should not be re-organized. All fans interested in the advancement of science fiction should become members of the ISA. Watch this magazine for future developments.

There are a few errors on the cover due to the artist's unfamiliarity with the publication. For your information, the magazine is still known as Fantascience Digest. Our apologies to Mr. Jack Speer for the mistake in the spelling of his name.

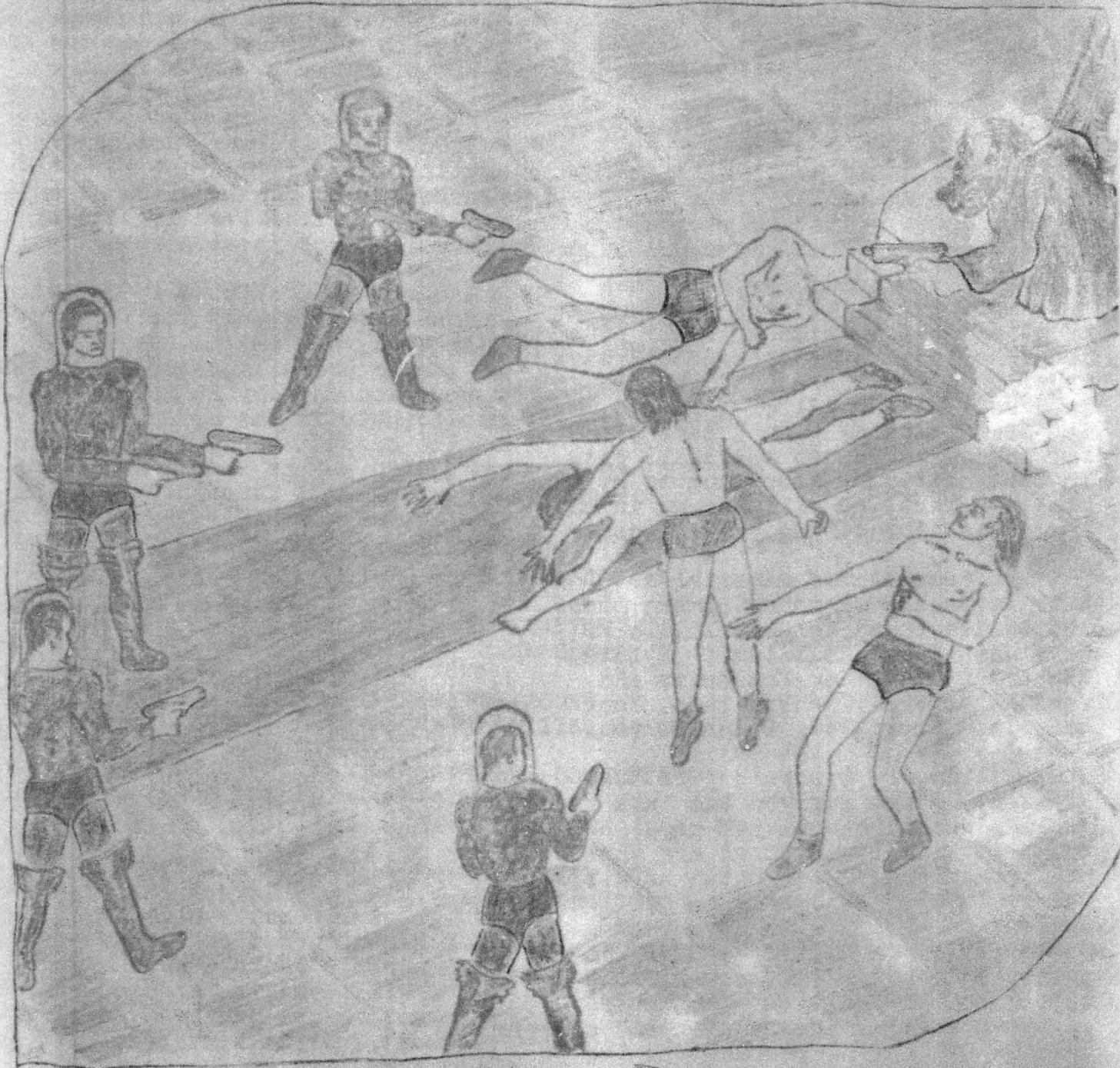
All of the Philadelphia fan magazines have merged to form a new and greater Comet Publications. The most recent Comet Publication is Jack Agnew's Fantaseer. The first issue will contain material by many interesting fan writers. An advertisement for The Fantaseer will be found elsewhere in the issue.

There is a probability that FD will be published monthly hereafter. But it is still too indefinite to state that it positively will be published monthly.

THE EDITOR

The Thousandth

Raid



by William Sykoran

Crash! Thud! With a sickening lurch and a whirlwind roll, the ship crashed through the vibro-glass roof. It landed in the midst of that vile, scheming, assemblage which chronically met in the huge auditorium of the Interplanetary League to concoct their horrid schemes for fleecing the innocents of the neo-universe. Four doors in the four sides of the ship fell away, a man appeared in each. Corong gun in hand, blazing lurid hell-fire into the cowering ranks of the I. L.

William Brain was the leader of these "Fighting Four," as they were called by the awe-inspired worshipful throng which inhabited the neo-universe. Chief of the Interstellar Association, Billy, the Brain, was known and loved by his associates as the intrep'd leader of a thousand expeditions against the insidious Inter-planetary League, whose rotten aristocratic government had all but ruined the super-scientific progress of the new era. Don Magong, Billy's right hand man, was a ruthless killer, son of the great Rongong Magong whose slogan song began, "Let us crush the evil serpent with our heel. 'Night is right, for Right makes Might," was Don's brave boast, which he never failed to put into telling effect in every clash with the evil machinations of that foul agglomeration known as the Interplanetary League. John the Silent, and Herb the Good, completed the Awful Foursome in which the Silent was the cold-blooded, impassionate destroyer of evil, while the Good's horrendous tortures served the Interstellar Association well by supplying information concerning the meetings- orgies of the base I. L.

"Give 'em Hell!" said Billy; and pushing an almost invisible catch on his Corong gun, the lurid flame changed, with a series of sobbing coughs, to a spitting green shower of incandescent sparks that spattered over the backs of the League's yellow dupes.

"Come on then," yelled Don, "Let's cook the yellow dupes." The lurid blue flame of his gun slashed jubilantly through the now thinning ranks of the League's followers, searching ever searching for the two vile leaders of the League.

The Silent one merely stood there, carefully playing his beam into every nook and cranny of his quarter of the auditorium, smiling every now and then, as some cowering form shrivelled and blackened under his beam's deadly glow.

Only Herb the Good, seemed to be really enjoying the spectacle, as he laughed horribly at every scream of the unfortunate ones that were caught in the way of his ray. His laugh rose from a chill bubbling giggle to a high pitched scream of complete merriment, the while he played his beam to and fro in rapturous ecstasy.

A creature with bat-like ears and a sharp pointed nose cowered behind the huge rostrum.

"O! Supreme Creator! Ruler of the Universe! They're here again!" he screamed shrilly to a formless monster sitting obscurely revealed in the gloom behind him. The monster's cloak of gleaming black metallic fibre billowed and heaved as it scuttled behind a huge screen cleverly concealed amidst the gorgeous hangings on the walls. A warning sound bubbled from the place where its lips might be, and the first creature hurriedly left the rostrum and joined his awful companion behind the protective areas.

Carl Horn and Jules Black, the oily leaders of the League, had again done that which the Association's Fighting Four had learned to despise, fear and dread. Leaving their debased followers defenceless, they sprang behind a secret reflecto-fract screen from behind which they begin to operate

the awful Grand Ray, concerning whose mode of operation and details of whose construction even the Good's exquisite entertainment was never able to elicit from the footling lips of his unwilling guests.

The Fighting Four were wearing prismofuse armor, the latest thing in portable fortresses. Roasted flesh and bone charcoal covered the floor and smeared the walls of the auditorium. A thousand hopelessly lost souls had again mercifully been released by the searing blast of the Gorong Guns. But Black and Horn had once more escaped behind their reflecto-fraot screen, the position of which was concealed with devilish cleverness, invariably changed as it was to a new place at each assembly of the hordes of the Lurid League. But the prismofuse armor was beginning to glow under the awful bombardment of the disrupted neutrons hurled at it by the terrific power of the mysterious Grand Ray. Slowly the conscious thoughts of the Fighting Four began to turn from the bloody carnage beneath their feet to the insidious warmth that seemed to be lulling them to eternal rest.

Why did they hesitate? Soon, the heat would increase to exothermic proportions according to the inscrutable Law of Direct Squares discovered by the warped genius of Hugh Grand so many years ago, and the reaction would double, quadruple and sexdecuple in effect until no power in the super-scientific neo-universe could alter the inexorable force of the tortured neutrons, after which nothing would remain of our doubtful heroes except a few pinches of impalpable grey ash.

But William Brain was not Chief of the Association for nothing. A thousand times before he had felt the unexpected comfortable glow of the Grand Ray. A thousand times before his hair-trigger nerves had splendidly responded to this most urgent of emergencies. A whispered word of warning into his radiant -wave communicator, and the four

Demons of Righteousness turned suddenly on their heels and leaped for the protection of their electro-gravo-wave star-ship. Four doors closed simultaneously, the ship leaped into the air, and in a second was gone.

Another raid of the Interstellar Association had failed. A thousand times had such an effort been made against horrid odds. A thousand times had the Association's four men demon army been repulsed.

But the thousand and first time? Would Carl Horn and Jules Black be captured. Would their diabolical cleverness fail them at last? Who can tell?

- OVER THE TELEFOO

by Jack Speer

O! Oklahoma Dan: Uh---what else are you putting out besides LOKI?

Fascist Speer: A four-page leaflet of selections from Tennyson.

D: Tennyson? 'S he a fan?

F: Alfred Lord Tennyson---he's dead---died long enough ago that I'm not infringing on his copyright.

D: Oh. Well. I didn't think he was a member of the FAPA.

-foo-

Southern Karloffernia, land of contrasts! Ah me! Thence come the heaviest fan mag and the lightest. There live the most optimistic fans and the most pessimistic. There snow still lies on the mountains while the frost trees bloom in the valley, producing delicious golden oranges, the size of Florida lemons.

.foo.

(For a few more words of wisdom from the pen of Fascist Speer, merely turn to page 10)

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The science-fiction fan field is a curious development. What with its countless little publications, endless parade of petty quarrels and lightning changes it forms a fertile field for the searching psychologist to analyze.

Everything moves fast in the field of science fiction. Perhaps not fast as far as days and months are concerned, but no two years pass successively and the find the scheme of action even remotely resembling its position in preceding years.

Probably the most unanalyzable things in the field of fantasy are the versatile amateur publications. Every page of every issue is radically different from the one preceding it. The magazines themselves are published at the whims and fancies of a group of perhaps over-enthusiastic fantasy fans. Yet it is significant to hear some fan of two years duration in the fan field say disgustedly, "It's all the same, it never changes, I'm getting fed up on the whole business." Quite strange for a fan to state all things that the field in which he is interested are all the same. In a sense the speaker is right, but still he doesn't actually know what to say in order to cover up his lack of interest.

He doesn't actually mean that the field is changeless when he says

all the same, rather, he is inferring that the whole situation is hopeless. He has tried unsuccessfully to keep up with the trend for say, about two years, and then finding the pace a bit too fast attempted to corner his activities to one niche and confine them there. That, fans, is our greatest danger. Hundreds of examples of that fact cast the designs of many cases on the unwritten pattern of fan philosophy.

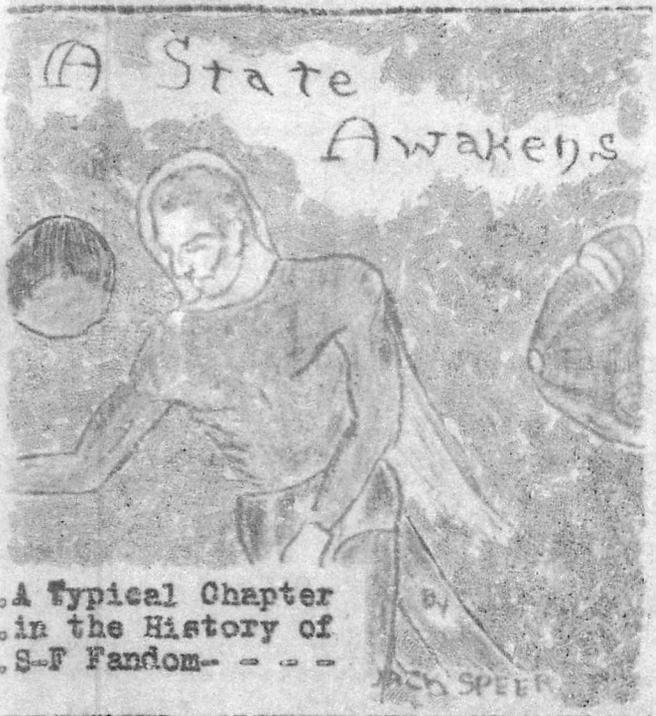
Take for example the advocates of the old Fantasy Magazine. They stayed with the magazine from its infant days, many of them having changed the roster of Cosmology for a berth on The Time Traveller and The Science Fiction Digest. They were a great bunch of fans. Probably they were among the most enthusiastic and worthwhile fans ever produced by science fiction. They found it comparatively simple to absorb such later accomplishments as Science Fiction, many of FM's supplement booklets, Marvel Tales, and what not. Then came the inception of Charles D. Hornig as managing editor of Wonder Stories. This provided the possibilities for a much wider group of fans. Starting in booklets, new fan magazines and new fan activities commenced to seep into the field. Publications of every size, shape, and description flooded the field. Some printed, most of them mimeographed, a number hektographed, and even a few carbon copied and hand-written. For a time the old guard (of fans, that is) strove heroically to absorb these new comers and to mold them into their viewpoint. Their success on this point was only partial and as the fan journals commenced to pop up all over, many of the older fans made, what they believed to be, a very wise decision. Since most of these new comers were quite weak and ineffectual as compared with magazines like Fantasy, Marvel etc., they would confine the hugest majority of their activities to the older members of the field and the newcomers shift for themselves, either to die a natural death thru negligence and their own incapacity, or to build themselves up to

the point where they might be accepted among all circles. This plan of action was perfectly all right at the beginning. The tried and true fans were still predominate. However, they reckoned without circumstance. Some died, others dropped out due to lack of interest, financial troubles and numerous other reasons. Here and there one of the earlier fan magazines faded out of existence; and so it went. Perfectly natural most might say. New fans would take the place of the old, and the thing would continue that way. But—although fans were willing to purchase and read magazines like Fantasy, they were not friendly toward the magazine. A constant jealousy knawed in their brains. The old timers, in their opinion, were virtual gods who held the key to all scientific secrets; who had the circumstances, initiative and intelligence to turn out something worthwhile, and the new fans were sadly lacking in many of these essentials. Eventually the entire struggle narrowed down to two sectors. Fantasy, backed by many famous fans, editors and authors of many years activities and understanding, against almost every other fan scientific group. Fantasy bucked them and noutlashed them all up to its very last issue. Indirectly the end of that fine magazine was brought about by a fan magazine published by newcomers that seriously threatened to rival if not surpass the leader. That magazine was the Science - Fantasy Correspondent. Sick of years of fan inconsistencies, Fantasy Magazine conceded the leadership to the new magazine and bowed out of the field in grand style. A fine illustration of the result of that plan of action is a house suddenly lifted and carried off by a cyclone, leaving its bewildered inhabitants to shift for themselves, penniless, in an entirely hostile world. This is the very same situation encountered by the old time fans who had confined their activities to but one sector of the fan field. They looked around, finally to find that for them there was

practically nothing to do but go out. On every side of them bristled strange, hostile, peculiar types of scientific activities, almost totally alien to what they had formerly experienced. It was a large group in which they could not find one familiar spot to congregate and carry on the activities they loved. A few attempted to string along with the new magazine, only to have their hopes rudely blasted by the sudden change to Amateur Correspondent. Others gazed at the activities about them, shuddered and retreated gracefully. Quite a number were offered friendly invitations to join various prominent groups, which merely offered them the comparison of what their former groups were compared to the newer ones. They scornfully declined the invitation. A few weak attempts to establish a new base of operations, and then the field belonged to the newcomers entirely. A typical example of narrowing your choice.

What to do? How can one prevent this thing? Admittedly, it is next to impossible to encompass the entire field individually, and truly, from many aspects, the situation stands well nigh hopeless. The chances of becoming utterly disgusted by the peculiar readings of numerous fans is predominant. If I knew the answer to the riddle, I might be wise indeed, but I have a suggestion. First of all, get in strongly, not necessarily bindingly, with one of the prominent group of fans. Next, branch out and establish yourself in entirely different groups. A good mixture for continued interest might be a base of New York, Pennsylvania fans, add a dash of Futile Press, throw in a slice of slaughtered English (only one man's opinion), and top it off with a bit of "cheerio", "pip-pip," and possibly just the slightest trace of 'down under' Wigginsiana or slaughterhouse beef, to complete the dish. You will then have activity of a different nature, one may die down, another intensify, and by all means, do not disregard

newcomers or members of the old guard breaking in again. Everything in moderation, you understand, and when you finally do drop out, you will know that it was not through your own disgust, the death of any particular organization, or the scheming efforts of an opposing brother, but rather because you have grown intellectually beyond the stage, and have advanced to greater things.



A Typical Chapter in the History of S-F Fandom - - -

In Oklahoma there are three unquestionable fans today, no more, no less. You know us all: James Rogers, SFFan Art Editor; Daniel McPhail, FAPA vice-president; and Jack Speer, IPG conductor. All of us are comparative newcomers in the field of fan activity.

In the spring of 1935, through out the length and breadth of our more or less glorious state, there was nary a real fan. True, there was a Muskogee SFL Chapter, and I was a member of the old TFG, but responded with Wollheim, and of course subscribed to Fantasy. But out of Oklahoma came no creative effort in the fan world.

You will pardon me, I hope, if I place myself on the center of the stage in this article. It is

drawn from my own experience, and is written the only way I can write it. When Shepherd suggested that I accept the Oklahoma directorship of the TFG, a thing I never did, I was moved to write Daniel McPhail, which I'd planned to do for some time. He had once lived in Comanche, a co-sf'er with Louis Clark, now of Washington. I found his address from a letter in The Reader Speaks and wrote him at Oklahoma City.

High school graduation over, he was glad to reenter s-f. After a bit of correspondence, during which we weighed plans for a joint TFG SFL in Oklahoma, and abandoned the idea, he proposed an Oklahoma Scientificational Association. I was skeptical and pessimistic, but he contacted the Muskogee group and personally called on Edgar A. Hirdler, a lower numbered SFL member, and with Paul Ishmael, a friend of Hirdler's, they formed the Oklahoma City Science Fiction League Chapter.

Things started humming. Hirdler made a brief sortie into the publishing field with the Oklahoma City Fantasy Fiction Fan, of which he made an original and two carbon copies and gave it up. But Dan was keen for a revival of his Science Fiction News, on which he'd worked as a hobby for years, making one or two copies of each issue, and he proposed this as the official organ of the OSA. He also listed a President's Bulletin, listing the members up to that time, which after, the OSA went the way of the TFG, while its official organ continued to thrive.

It started in December, '36, carbon-copied at first, Dan having to make three or four typings to fill his list, which he had to limit to Oklahoma and exchanges. The first issue carried a lengthy fictical filler, but thereafter he had plenty of articles and departments. And presently, due to his working in a newspaper plant, he was able to print the magazine.

The first printed issue, October 1936, was mailed to three hundred subscribers throughout this country and England. The response was not as good as McPhail expected, but he did all right.

A word about SFN's staff. Virgil Leonard, a non-fan friend of Dan's, and I were associate editors, and James Rogers of Muskogee became art editor. The magazine had a movie correspondent, none other than Ted Carnell for British news, a pictorial feature by McPhail and Rogers, comics review by yours truly, and other features.

Then one of those swift and sudden strokes of misfortune befell Oklahoma's Own Fan Magazine. Dan began work for an engraver, and while his new employer considered letting Dan issue a fine pictorial book to publicize his half-tone work, nothing came of it, and the News disappeared with the December 1936 issue. McPhail is one of the very few fan editors who have returned subscription money on unexpired lists. Meanwhile Hirdler moved to Stillwater to attend A&M, and Ishmael dropped out. The Muskogee group broke up, some of the boys going to OU at Norman.

Slowly, at about the time that all fandom was doing likewise we began to collect our wits and strike out in other lines of endeavor. Dan never gave up his subscribing to fan magazines, and I began to establish contact with the best of the fan world via the Collector. Rogers was as yet almost unheard of, but Dan had a few articles in magazines roundabout.

Last summer McPhail moved down here to Comanche for an indefinite stay and we began dreaming grand dreams of a revived OSA convention in Oklahoma City next year, a carload of fifth generation Americans at NY in '39, and OSA Pictorial annual next spring. Dan ran off a bunch of carboned War Drums just before he came to Comanche but he never got around to

distributing them to the OSA, tho a few did get out in private correspondence. But during long hours in the Magnolia station, gasoline-squirt McPhail blocked off thousands of dummies. Finally he obtained a mimeo and put out The Rocket for the FAPA, and is working on Pictorial Phantasy. I have a hekto on which I print the IPO ballots and some FAPA material. With Dollen's fadeaway, Rogers took over the art work for the FAN, and selections for other fan magazines.

In addition there are a number of luke-warmers. At my insistence, Hirdler is showing some signs of revived interest in fandom, which he believes has gone dogward, though he doesn't intend to come back until he has a complete collection of all four, on which he now has a good start. One Jones of Oklahoma City also shows promise. Then there are the Stewart brothers in Norman. And Mary Rogers, James M's sister, Austin Roquemore, Ponca City radio ham, Robert Feval—and others.

Wahoo! May our tribe increase!

OVER THE TELEPHONE—Cont. from pg. 8

I may be accused of Socratic attempts to simplify things further than they can be simplified, but I like to believe that the three stages of a fan's interest—pre-fandom, the first fandom, and the present, can be summarized in the three words, "Science," "Fiction," and "Fans."

NEXT ISSUE.

Don't fail to read "Waither Wollheim." Dick Wilson wrote it.

COMING!

A sequel to "The Thousandth Raid," by William S. Sykes.

Looking Around

by

Willis
Conover

Under the competent management of ingenious John W. Campbell, Jr., Astounding Science Fiction is back on the road to recovery. Several years ago F. Orlin Tremaine had the magazine facing in the right direction on the same road, but during 1937 Astounding began hitch-hiking -- if we may continue along this metaphorical vein. Now that Mr. Tremaine has been elevated to the position of Assistant Editor-in-Chief of all Street and Smith magazines, Mr. Campbell is building admirably upon Tremaine's excellent foundation. Various commendable revisions in Astounding's format have given it additional power and speed, and there can be little controversy over the reigning position of science-fiction's "mutant magazine."

Mort Weisinger has literally done wonders with Thrilling Wonder Stories, regardless of the text-book fiends' open scorn. He has converted thousands to newsstand fantasy; and, while TWS may not be the best bargain among the "big three" -- even considering its price -- it has more than a spark of originality, in its editorial brains as well as in its pages. What other editor managed to contact a really big name like Jeans or Eddington and paid (according to rumor) something like 10¢ a word for the privilege of printing those names under routine stuff? Weisinger has even been trailing the great H.G.

Wells for a story. And we'll bet he does grab up something of H.G.'s before long, too, with perhaps Claf Stapledon scheduled for an appearance later.

Thrilling Wonder is definitely a pulp. But it is a pulp that has other editors or their toes, and we may expect un-pulpish things from it. . . . Meanwhile old Amazing Stories, deteriorated to a mere collector's item, has been wheezing a-long in the dust stirred up by fleetster youngsters, and frequently tripping over the long, white beard of Dr. Sicans.

All this is simply a review of familiar events. Now we proceed to the more recent item concerning a Chicago firm's purchase of Amazing Stories' name, involving the return of all the manuscripts Teek had accepted but not yet published, the raising of payment rates to the standard cent-a-word level, and the lowering of subscription prices to 20¢ per single copy. Ziff-Davis Publishing Company plans to distribute the first of the new series early in April, has already engraved Amazing Stories' name on its editorial stationery, in company with the names of the concern's slick-paper periodicals, Popular Photography, Popular Aviation, and Radio News.

Fans will be overjoyed to learn that the new editor, following the current tradition among science fiction editors of being writers of fantasy as well, is the old-timer, Raymond A. Palmer.

Palmer, who last year sponsored the Weinbaum Memorial Volume venture, announces that the second (August) issue of the new Amazing will feature a pleasant surprise for fans of the late Stanley G. Weinbaum -- which includes nearly everyone. All the popular writers are said to be producing for the magazine; but the art staff, headed by Mr. Bollin, consists of unknowns who may yet prove to be very competent. The magazine hopes to be placed on a monthly basis very soon.

What lies ahead for Amazing stories under its new management? Only Nap knows, and even he may not be settled in his visions of her future. But, at any rate, the outlook of the entire fantasy field is far more promising than it has been for many a moon. It's still too early to dish out any more than the normal quota of enthusiasm, but a happy expectancy is certainly well in order.

The most active, most widely known, and most heartily disliked member of the fan clientele today is Donald M. Wollheim, whose articles on the more personal phases of fantasy fiction have been read by every patron of the amateur press. With a boldness that is jarring in its lack of consideration for the niceties of convention, Wollheim has attacked every visible weakness in the construction of the science fiction union. Totally uninfluenced by the public's wavering trend of thought, he has pounced upon flaw after flaw, followed each trail of imperfection to its core, and finally scorched it verbally with the famous Wollheim super-blast of accusation, invective, and sarcasm.

Not always verbally alone. Several years ago he led a dozen writers against the corrupt Gernsback organization, which had an unpleasant habit of refusing to pay for the material it accepted. The writers managed to obtain payment in part; Wollheim and two other fan-participating in the movement were expelled from the Science Fiction League, semi-commercial organization controlled by the Gernsback Wonder Stories, on necessarily vague and inaccurate charges; and eventually Gernsback went into inevitable bankruptcy and failed, selling Wonder Stories' title rights to the Thrilling Fiction Unit of Standard Magazines.

The Gernsback organization would have failed even had Wollheim and his associates not staged the notable rebellion, but certainly not so soon as it did; and those writers who did not collect their due would have lost it

completely if the indignant Wollheim had not banded them as a group unit and brought the case into a court of law.

Surely Donald Wollheim has his faults; and he is aware of them and quick to admit that he often exaggerates to the point of distortion, that he searches for trouble when none comes to him, and that he leaves superfluous praise for the most part to other critics. But he always takes the side that he sincerely believes to be right; and he has the courage of his own convictions, even if he does arouse much ill-feeling among certain divisions of fandom with the extremely frank exploitation of his beliefs.

But—unrecognized? unaccepted? In 1937 the fan group, acting thru the Oklahoma Institute of Private Opinion, elected him the world's leading fantasy enthusiast.

And even his enemies, if questioned directly, would admit that a fan world without Wollheim would be drab and sterile.

CAN YOU ANSWER THESE?

1. In which professional magazine did Elliot Dold have a complete novel published?
2. With what issue of the Science Fiction Digest was combination with the Time Traveller affected?
3. Name the first hektographed fan magazine.
4. The Thrill Book, the first fantasy magazine, was edited by_____?
5. How many different cover artists has Wonder Stories (including TWS) used covers by? Their names?
6. The first issue of Amazing Stories had a cover illustrating a story by what famous author?
7. "He Who Shrank" was written by_____?

(Answers next issue)

THE READER

COMMENTS

Letters from Our Readers

Dear Editor:

I wish to take up the flag in opposition to Mr. Van Houten in regards to his letter concerning atomic energy. Like Jack Speer, I shudder at the use of the word "never" by a science fiction fan. Despite the fact that it takes gobs of light to make any mass, the fact remains that if you turn an ounce of matter into light you are going to have an ounce of light.

The equation: $F = MV^2$ is something new to me, and taking into consideration possible typographical errors, it still doesn't look like anything I have ever seen before. The one best suited for the rocket is $mv = MV$, where m and v are the masses and velocities of the rocket and ejected fuel, respectively. This is the well known conservation of momentum equation, and by dividing both sides of the equation by t (time): $mv/t = MV/t$, you can read it: mass per unit time, times velocity equals mass times velocity per unit time (acceleration). So, by taking a one ton rocket and ejecting one ounce of stuff per second at the speed of light, the acceleration comes out to 3070 feet per second per second. A ten ton rocket would have 307 feet per sec.², which is 9.5 gravities, and heavy in any man's language. Don't forget the speed of light is in miles per second, and not feet.

So that matter, really a minor point, is squelched. Secondly, where does Van Houten get the utter crass egotism to blandly state that nothing will be fabricated to come within a hundred miles of the scene of atomic energy release? To think that after all the science in recent years people can still believe that science will advance no farther!

My personal opinion, due to a slight knowledge of what happens

when matter disintegrates and otherwise transforms, is that atomic energy will appear as cosmic or gamma rays. Or perhaps as an actual stream of electronic particles, if the atom is merely pulled apart, and not actually destroyed. This might be pure electricity, or maybe cathode rays. The problem is to convert whatever comes out of the disintegration of matter into usable energy. I have no doubt that sooner or later this will be done.

Milton A. Rothman
2113 Franklin St.
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Editor:

Why does R. Van Houten limit his ten ton rocket to only an ounce of fuel? Granting complete efficiency (which I admit is granting quite a bit, but after all, RVH granted it) if you'd shoot off a pound of light, a 100,000 pound (50 ton) rocket should be given a velocity of 1.86 mi/sec. which is quite considerable for a pound of propellant. And why couldn't a 50 ton rocket carry more than a pound of fuel?

R.D. Swisher
15 Ledyard Road
Winchester, Mass.

Dear Editor:

In general, it would seem that your F.D. is about on a par with most of the other amateur fan publications extant today with the hektographing a good deal better than most.

To go into matter more thoroughly: the story by Keller I did not read. I began it, but found -- as per usual, it was just so much more of his inconsequential drivel, that I gave it up as a bad job. Donald Wollheim's short short was rather well done and amusing. Frankly, tho, I thought it a bit out of place in a publication dealing with sci. and fantasy. Milton Rothman's article, while interesting, hardly proves his point. Doesn't it strike you as being a bit foolish to use a futile argument such as

"if" and "it might have been" to justify a premise for which there is virtually no proof? Nevertheless, I have no doubt but that Mr. Rothman can be a definite asset to you, if he can devote the necessary time and energy to the job. I well remember the long and interesting letters he wrote to the various sci. magazines. As for the other bit of fiction, "It's Just the Same" -- well, the less said about it, the better. Willie Conover's piece puzzled me. Being more or less unfamiliar with contemporary sci. and utterly unfamiliar with Weird Tales, it was, for the most part, incomprehensible to me. The bit about McClary interested me. I had recently heard he intends writing a sequel to "Rebirth"; but since there is no mention of it in Conover's article, I take it that there is no truth in the rumor. For myself, I hardly see where a sequel could be written, as "Rebirth" seemed so definitely ended. The Reader Comments are quite good; too bad you can't devote more space to them.

Milton Latzer
6417 S. California
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Editor:

I am only a poor small-town lad, more or less educated in a school dominated by the "practical" subjects, and knowing no more of physics than what I have picked up in school, and it seems that I should toss the atomic-power for space travel torch to someone else, after what the Prince of Kleptomania, Van Houten-T, has done to me.

I'll make one more effort, however. At least, I don't expect, as Raymond intimated, that the matter to be shot from the jets shall propel itself by its own expansion from atomic heat. I rather had the idea that a gas would propel the heavier stuff -- but I am a debater, not a physicist, and if someone starts pinning me down, I'm helpless.

I do think, though, that Van Houten is mighty parsimonious with the amount of power he allows

Surely, if he'll postulate unlocking an ounce of matter, he'll grant me more than that; the first ounce is the hardest, you know. The fear that liberation of the power will destroy everything within a radius of such-and-such is an old objection, but I doubt if it still holds, since some atoms have already been cracked, without dire results.

Prince Hugo's equation leaves me numb. As far as I know, a poundal is what happens when a typist doesn't know when to stop writing the word "pound."

Will T. O'Connor Sloane please take over?

On the rest of the magazine, I'm somewhat more at home. The cover is most unusual. The frontispiece shouldn't have been. "The Mother" was a little too Kellerish for me. No, I don't admire Keller. Seldom have. It helps, of course, to be able to say you have a story by him. "Is Science Fiction Juvenile" sounds too much like Them Was the Days. Was, thank too, not is. I thought we had stopped worrying about that with the last "Is Science Fiction in a Rut?" articles. The Old Fandom seems to be staging a mild comeback, though; witness the latest Moskowitziism. Rothman did throw a somewhat new light on the subject, though. Even the Great Wollheim didn't pan out so well this time. The substance of his piece has already been thoroughly covered by Mark Twain et al. "Spawn," at least, was good; the others weren't as wholly bad as I've painted them. Conover was good, too, though I hate to see him swinging weirdward. Thus far, it hasn't hurt his column, however; perhaps it won't.

Now I swing back to the editorial page. I see my history is scheduled for next issue; well and good. But I have several other things in the pan, so watch out for more of my stuff later on. The New format is better than the old. Does the Digest come under Comet Publications, and if not, why not? (Yes, ED has recently become a member of OP. ED.)

Jack Speer
Comanche, Oklahoma.

Dear Editor:

I received your second issue of F.D. and let me say that it's superb. The stories were swell. I liked Keller's "The Mother" very much, and that beautifully written "My Mission in Heaven" by Wollheim made me rollick in my chair. I was thrown into another laughing fit by "It's Just the Same," although I did suspect that Frank Johnson had fallen asleep. Milton Rothman's article, "Is Science Fiction Juvenile?" rates 3 1/2 stars. The poem "Spawn" was good, and by all means continue "Looking Around" with Willie Conover, Jr. Agnew's cover was okeh, but still can stand improvement. Agnew has an uncanny knack of being able to draw anything good except human figures. All in all, the issue was good, very good in fact.

John Giunta
1355 - 80 Street
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Editor:

Received the FD a few days ago and was shocked to see a Keller story in it. Is good fan material so scarce that you have to accept stuff from the professionals? It was fair as a story, Wollheim's bit far surpassing it, but a fan mag is no place for Dr. Keller, or any other of the regular writers. Autobiographies or interviews are okeh, although there is a lot of material better, but no stories! The illustration for it was good, the only good illustration in the entire magazine. The cover was almost too bad. Your policy of illustrating profusely is all right as long as you can get illustrations that are worth looking at, but it's very seldom that a fan artist can turn the trick. The Taurasi illustration looks like a Valentine! Phooey!

"It's Just the Same" could have been a good bit of whimsy, but it was horribly botched. The "valentine" gave me a bad impression from the start, and this might have colored my outlook on it, but it struck me as not up to any kind of par. That's one thing FD and SFCollector need, and that's good material in-

stead of gauding them up to look nice. Good commercialism, but it lowers the standard of readers (I'm not including here mere collectors). Fans who are not able to enjoy good critical or scientific or other material would be just the ones to whom FD would appeal, or any other hokied "picture book"; they would enjoy it for the same reason they would enjoy the New York News or Mirror. Bah! If the fan IQ weren't as low as it is, you would insult their intelligence! But for the type of mag that seems current now, your latest FD was excellent! Keep it up!!

Raymond Van Nouten
26 Jockey Street
Paterson, New Jersey

Dear Editor:

The second issue had arrived and been read from extremity to extremity. Comments: Much better hokied than the copy of the Fantasy Fiction Telegram, your original publication. Art work about on a par with that mag...I prefer this site... Keller's story rather good. It's the type of story that we all like but that stands absolutely no chance of professional acceptance any more... darn it to fiery hell!...Milt's article somewhat coincides with my own views...Nice going, getting that head pictorial of the current issues...I thought the drawing and general layout of the page containing "Spawn" to be quite effective... probably because of its simplicity. The poem was rather good, too... Conover's and Wollheim's contributions were neither exceptionally good nor below a fair average...

And as for my opinion of reader's columns in fan mags as expressed by that thing in Tasterast... forget it please. In fact, just disregard both of the articles that have appeared under my name in that magazine. The 2nd was written so long ago that I'd forgotten it, and the first I had neither seen nor heard of at all until I received my copy!

Ray A. Bquires
1745 Kenneth Road
Glendale, Calif.

S T F

NEWS FLASHES

by

William S. Sykora

Remember Metropolis? Why is it one of the most talked about stfilms? Why did H. G. Wells call it "The Silliest Film"? This stupendous stfilm will soon be shown by the newly organized "Scientifilmakers of New York," the latest thing in scientific cinema clubs. "Scientifilmakers" is an independent scientific cinema club, the most progressive and exclusive society for those sincerely interested in making and seeing scientific movies of the most fascinating kind. For information regarding the new club please communicate with William S. Sykora, Provisional Chairman, "Scientifilmakers of N.Y.," # 31-51 41st Street, Long Island City, N.Y.

A development that has created a furor in all progressive stf. circles is the proposed reorganization of the old International Scientific Association. This, the most active stf. club ever formed, was recently dissolved under obscure circumstances not known to the average stf. reader. The ISA Committee for Reorganization is attempting to solve the problem of the questionable legality of this dissolution. It is sparing no hardship or sacrifice to secure to the majority of its members, who are still in the dark, a fair and square deal for all. All former members of the ISA, and all sincere readers of stf. and fantasy literature desiring further information about this worthwhile club should communicate at once with "The ISA Committee for Reorganization" c/o the Editor of this publication.

Have you heard about the proposed 1939 World Science Fiction Convention? Have you discussed and questioned the feasibility of this tremendous project? If you have, then you are a true scientifiotion fan. And as a true-blue fan, you are entitled to a real test of this immense proceeding and permission to participate in it to the fullest extent possible.

For the purpose of testing the advisability of the World Convention, the First National Science Fiction Convention will be held in Newark, N.J. on Sunday, May 29th, 1938, the day before Memorial Day. This great convention is being sponsored by "Helios," "The Scientifilmakers of New York," and by the "ISA Committee for Reorganization." A statement recently issued by these sponsors runs as follows:

"Fellow fans - we promise you - we are going to shoot the works - and we mean ALL the works."

So - save your pennies - buy - cost everything except your favorite stf. magazines - tear away from your typewriter - drop everything - in short - COME - come to the First National Science Fiction Convention.

Complete details and full information may be had from Sam Moskowitz, Director, the First National Science Fiction Convention, 603 South 11th Street, Newark, N.J.

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SCIENCE-ADVENTURE STORIES; a quarterly publication containing the best in amateur fiction. Besides featuring excellent fan fiction, SAS contains fiction by Ralph Milne Farley, L.A. Eshbach, Eando Binder, Cliver E. Saari and various others. The first issue will be out within two weeks, containing 64 pages of fiction! This is one magazine you must purchase! 15¢ per copy, 60¢ a year. Address Comet Publications, c/o JVB.

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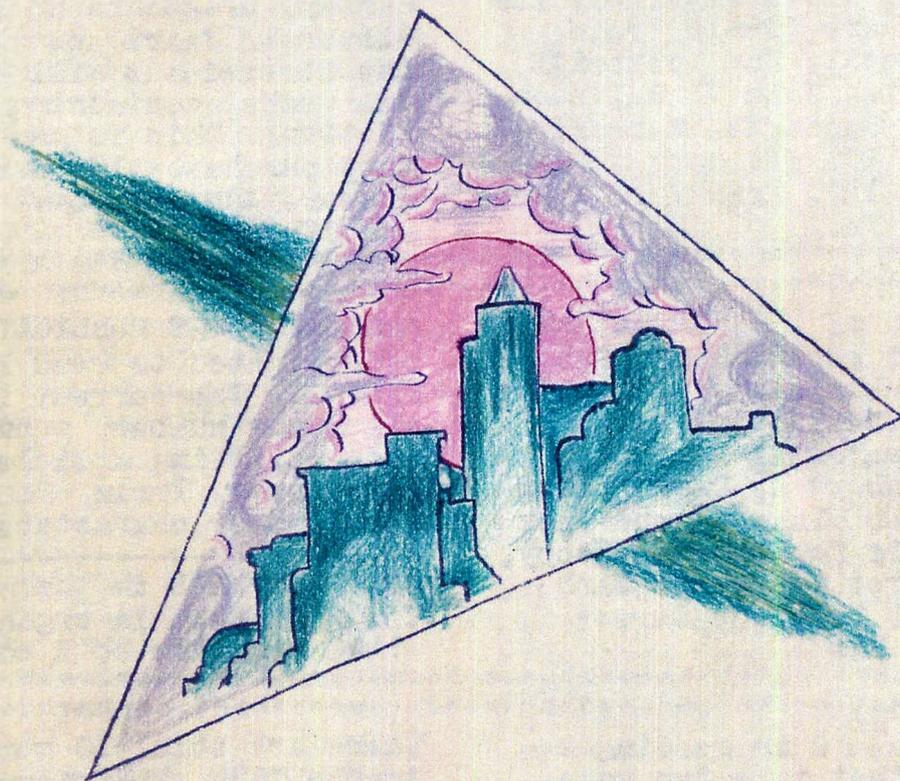
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If you have any fan magazines you wish to dispose of, contact John V. Baltadonis, stating price, condition and what you are interested in purchasing in the way of professional magazines. Write Box X, COMET PUBLICATIONS.

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