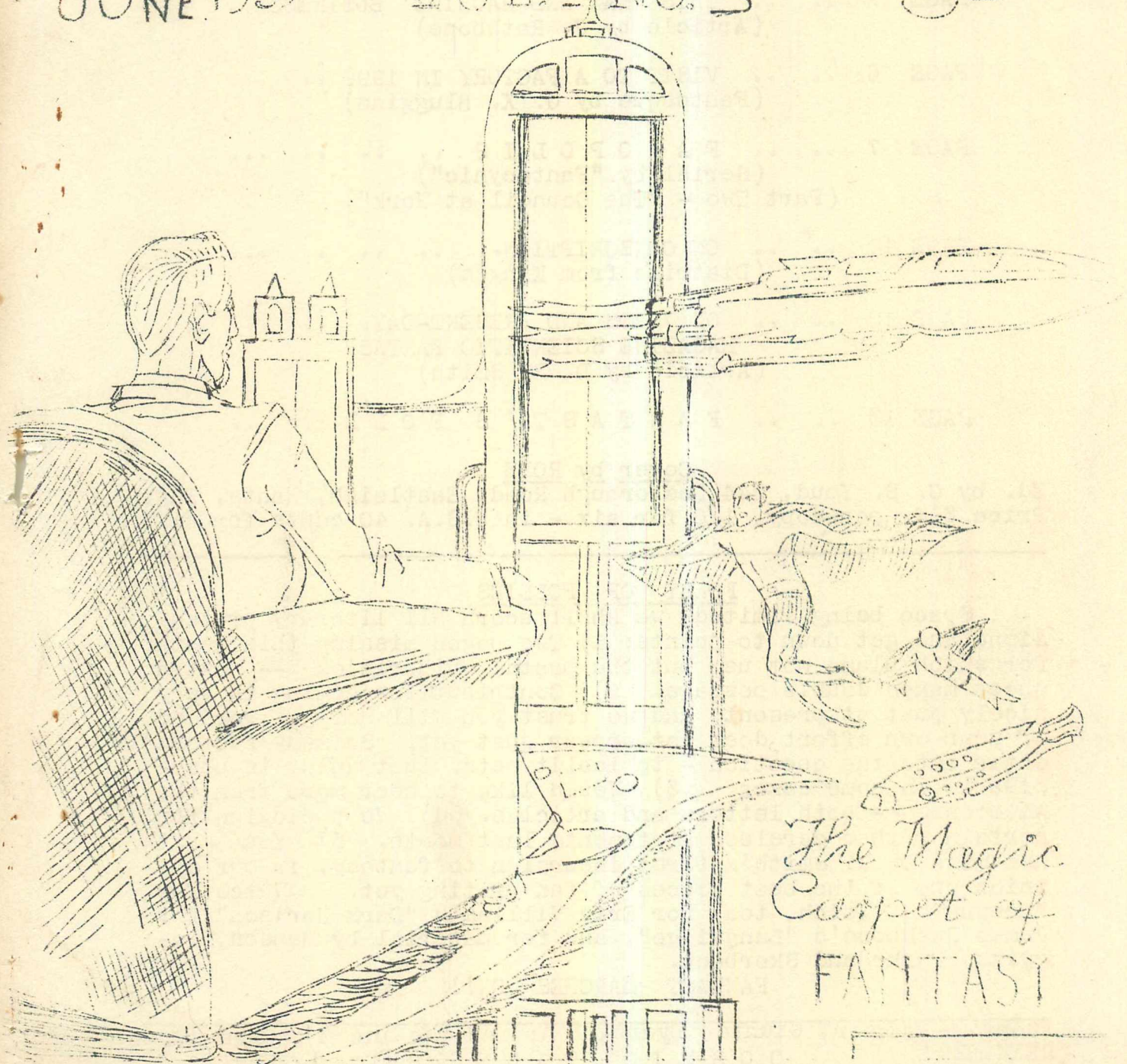


The FANTAST

JUNE 1939

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The Magic
Carpet of
FANTASY

Devoted to the furtherance of amateur fantasy.

SMITH BATHBONE 'FANTASYNIC' MAINE

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Cover by ROBB

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FOLLY OF FOLLIES

Space being limited, we shall scorn all literary pretensions and get down to points: 1) Two pages missing this month for which blame not us but the postal authorities --- extra sheet makes double postage. 2) Contributions coming in very nicely just at present and we trust you will not get worried if your own effort does not appear just yet. So many factors enter into the question - topicality etc. that delay is unavoidable in some cases. 3) Would like to hear more from the Americans --- both letters and articles. 4) We apologise for certain rather careless statements last month. 5) You must not miss D. R. Smith's first incursion to fantasy, in our opinion one of the best pieces of fan writing yet. Watch for "Oceana". Watch, too, for Eric William's "Dark Horizon", for James Rathbone's "Langwidge", and for material by Hanson, Bluggins, Burke and Skerbeck.

FANTAST MARCHES ON!!

(Cont) - Warner, Glantz, Byers, Bahr and the incomparable SM. REMEMBER! C O S M I C T A L E S! From L. Kuslan, AT LEAST 30 PAGES The Best in Fan Fiction! 170 Washington Av, FOR ONLY 15 CENTS West Haven, Conn., The August issue will be at least 30 large size pages, containing stories, articles and poems by outstanding professionals & fans of both America and England. A few of the many to be represented are Keller, Speer, Taurasi, Burke, Miske,

"THE INTROVERT"

It may have been all a dream - Conrad had no means of knowing - but the fact remained that his experiences of the night were vivid to the point of reality. The light had been the causative factor; of that he was convinced; the silvery speck of light reflected from the metal bed-post. It had attracted him - fascinated him - until, drowsy and calm, he had lapsed into a blissful half-sleep; the relaxation of hypnosis.

And then came the awareness of something stirring within himself; the vague shiftings of an entity which had for ages lain in moveless sleep; the realisation of an alter ego which welled up into his conscious mind and dulled his faculties until nothing existed but the light and the strange spiritual force.

Deeper and deeper into the dark morass of the unconscious mind he sank, vaguely aware of a subtle transformation in his being. The newly awakened power merged into himself, and a radiant effulgence - an ecstatic intuition - suffused his body.

Then in some manner, he was walking along a black, narrow tunnel, attired in robes of pure white, and keenly aware of purpose in his mission. The walls of the passage were stretched with pulsating, crimson veins; and interlaced with sensitive, white cords.

He knew -- he knew exactly where he was, and the nature of his mission; but the sensation was far too transcendent to be expressed in mere mortal words. He dwelt in glorious awareness; and spiritually he was exploring and probing the recesses of his own brain, like the mystic Yogi of the Orient. How or why he could not say; but he knew, quite definitely, that he was within his own brain, traversing one of the many intricate tunnels there in. The blood vessels throbbed on either side of him and the silken nerves spread in all directions like gigantic gossamer.

Gradually he was aware that the tunnel was growing larger, and he hurried on in eager anticipation. The darkness grew brighter; and the light came not from his own radiant aura, but from the walls of the tunnel ahead. Diffused, and infinitely mellow, the glow illumined the passage; revealing in greater contrast the incredible matrix of sentient fibre about him.

Conrad stopped, astounded.

Before him yawned a vast cavern; dome-shaped and brilliantly lit; but more amazing still were the parallel rows of desks which covered the floor; and the ultra-modern telephones, typewriters and filing cabinets which littered the desks. The typists he noticed but vaguely -- they seemed to be indefinite shadows rather than concrete beings. Everywhere was the bustle of activity and systematic toil.

His gaze wandered above the workers to the great signs which hung suspended above certain sectors of the chamber. The vivid scarlet lettering caught his eye, and he read them uncomprehendingly. "Vision", announced one in large, red capitals;

another "Taste"; and yet another "Hearing". And many more too, out of range of sight.

A fiercely glowing web of fire in the semi-distance attracted his attention, and he saw it was a neon sign. "Control Centre" spelt the panel; its flickering light dwarfing the other red notices in comparison.

Conrad pushed his way forward; again guided by some superior intuition; passing busy typists and clerks, and feeling extremely small in the enormity of the cavern. Nobody heeded him; and eventually he arrived at the centre of the hall - beneath the hissing neon - and found himself facing a man and a desk.

The desk was a work of art in itself, and he regarded it in wonder. Black as ebony and of great size it supported a massive bank of card-indices and eight snub telephones. Behind the desk sat a dark, grim-faced man, who glanced up at Conrad in slight annoyance.

But the expression of distaste was fleeting. Recognition swiftly replaced it, and the dark man stood up and bowed.

"My apologies, Master", he murmured humbly. "Had I known of your visit, a better welcome would have been prepared".

"All this is strange to me", said Conrad. "Who are you? Where is this place? How did I come to be like this?" He waved his hand vaguely at his shimmering body.

The other regarded him curiously.

"Master, you are out of touch with the reality of things, it seems. You have slept - so long...." He shrugged his shoulders. "But what does it matter? You are still the Master; the Spirit which inhabits this body. I am the soul; your humble servant". He lowered his eyes ashamedly, and went on -- "I regret to have to confess that of late I have entirely forgotten your existence, Master. The business of living obsessed my mind with the materialism of the body. I even began to doubt your reality....."

Conrad interrupted him. "I begin to understand things better", he said. "There is a divine intuition at work within me, and facts fit into place without effort. I am the Spirit; you are the Soul; and this" -- he indicated the chamber with its myriad workers -- "is the mind that governs my body. But tell me - these desks, people, phones, and things of substance; why have they not been discovered by the surgeons who dissect brains?"

The Soul smiled. "Such things are of subjective reality", he replied. "They are real - very real unto yourself but to others they are non-existent. They are the stuff of the mind -- a substance which nobody but yourself can perceive -- but none the less real for all that!"

A telephone bell jangled harshly on the desk. "Pardon me", murmured the Soul, lifting the receiver. Faintly Conrad heard a voice in the diaphragm - "Heart Sector calling. Valvular sluggishness. Adrenalin needed."

"Right!", replied the Soul, picking up another phone.

He dialed a number, and spoke.

"Hullo? Renal Sector? The Controller speaks. Accelerate the action of the adrenalin gland by 17% at once!"

He put down the phone. "Day and night this goes on - different parts of the body calling for attention. I am ever busy answering these calls, and adjusting the faults. That is my job, and if I were to fail, your body would die."

Conrad nodded. "Is there any need for so many - people?", he asked, glancing round the hall.

"Every need! All these clerks are engaged in receiving and filing impressions for future reference. That is how the mind remembers. Whenever a sense is received via the Sense Sectors" - he pointed to the red-painted signs - "it is passed to the Record Department, where it is compared with previous similar sensations for identification purposes. This requires an elaborate cross-indexed filing system. The checked sensation is then passed to the Reaction Department, which controls the body's reactions to that particular sensation; and it is finally returned to the Record Department for filing."

Once more the phone-bell rang, and the Soul snatched it up. "Hearing Sector!", announced a squeaky voice. "Continual noise, identified as rattling window, interfering with repose. Assist please."

The Soul replaced the phone. "Only the more important cases are referred to me", he explained. "The minor troubles are dealt with automatically in the various sectors."

Then, as before, he dialed a number. "Hullo? Respiration Sector?", he said. "Controller speaking. Reduce rate of breathing by 24%."

"And how will that prevent the window from rattling?", Conrad asked.

"It won't", replied the other. "But it will reduce the amount of oxygen absorbed by the blood, and so retard the metabolism of the body, thus inducing sounder sleep. The rattling window will no longer annoy, for the ear will be deaf to its clamour."

The sensation of strain had been gradually increasing ever since Conrad had entered the cavern; and now it swamped his body in an overpowering wave of ennui; as though the effort of maintaining his being in a solid, material state were too much for his unpractised powers.

The Soul, the chamber, and the innumerable desks spun dizzily before him - whirled into a ghastly vortex of light and colour. He cried in anguish; felt the numbing fingers of insensibility clutch at his reason. The lights surrounded him; became brighter and more harshly exotic; flared into a vast multi-hued flame that flickered madly.....and, abruptly, vanished.

For countless aeons the light had been there, indefinite

and ever vague in the utter darkness of space. Moveless it remained, and in the blackness of the void it was the only thing which existed. Utter silence veiled the sinister ebony of velvet night; yet, as the fleeting centuries swept by, a faint, throbbing pulse rippled throughout the far-flung depths of the universe, and rumbled in sullen thunder.

The light grew brighter.

A voice spoke in eternity - a distant and remote voice - that murmured,

"Conrad."

The light quivered viciously. And in the blinding moment of realisation Conrad became aware of existence.

The light shone in his eyes - persistently. He perceived that the outer darkness was paling, as though an extra-cosmic radiance were transmuting its blackness into a soft, grey effulgence. The darkness swirled, and settled into a mosaic of shapes and shadows that were strangely familiar.....

"Conrad", repeated the voice, now nearer.

BY

CHARLES ERIC MAINE .

THIS 'MAN AND MACHINE' BUSINESS

"The cold and soulless mechanism lurched towards our hero, steel arms moved to pin him against the wall. 'I have no use for man in the world any longer. I shall rule', it grated. And so -- the triumph of the Machines....." Yet, truly, it is time someone exploded this myth before it really gets some poor fellow into trouble. And the people who really started it all and who are far more to blame than the countless misguided S.F. authors who monthly use this theme ought to be preserved forever in the science museum as specimens of the worst sort of things we had to put up with in the twentieth century. Now, I've nothing against journalists when they stick to telling how Mussolini eats asparagus secretly and how Hitler was rude to their second cousin's aunt's sister, but when they are near twiddling their thumbs, an order seems to come from the Gods - 'Down with the Machines' - and thenceforth they earn numerous extra spondulicks tearing (metaphorically) machines to bits, and placing (literally) nothing back.

Suppose we examine the usual argument (if there is any), and see what we can do about it.

They say, "The Machines nowadays are putting men out of work by their efficiency and cheapness and inexpensiveness of general upkeep....." Then they sob, "Oh, the old days when we made things by hand and the blackbird trilled on the bough and grandmother sat in her old cottage by the fireside, never dreaming of patent washing machines and the latest film at the cinema. Oh," they cry, "for the good old days when men were men and Scotch half a crown the bottle. Where is civilisation going", they exhort, "what does all this blind progress mean....? If all the machines

were placed end to end..." etc.

Discerning readers will see that repudiating this argument is not, to use a colloquialism, "going to be all jam". For verily, brave reader, I say unto you - machines have displaced men to some extent, Progress does seem blind, and, somehow, our dependence on the machine is more than a little uncomfortable. To those who have not been awed by a glimpse of the engine-room of an ocean liner I either bend the knee to a son of the future or sniff the nose gently three times to an ignorant lump of foolishness. And to those who have been so awed I say, "There's your new world, all packed up in a steel box with thousands of horse-power driving it - fellows - you're in a new age and realise it, be darned glad!" And my journalist friend shudders.....

If I were a statistician I would soak you all in figures, and hang you out to dry on an Einsteinian world-line. But as I am a plain S. F. fan like yourselves and have a tough problem, I won't use that method. Let's see what common sense can do:

It is noticeable that machines are eliminating specialisation in the factory and workshop. Once, a skilled hand operator only knew about the little bit of speedy work he had to do. The job wasn't much fun then, and the lower wages didn't improve matters. Now, a machine operator knows all the cogs and wheels of his pet baby - he has to watch them go round and round day by day. His spare time can be occupied by hobbies or just plain lazing, and -- one thing to notice -- he has spare time. Usually, the hand operator had to ~~work~~ overtime during rush hours with sleepy eyes and rapidly tiring fingers..../like mine at the moment-ED/ Then in factories, such as Ford's, for instance, where mass production means that one fellow has to add on a wheel or a mud-guard or two, and pass it on to his neighbour - the worker doesn't need to stick to the same job day in and day out; he can get himself transferred to a different part of the shop -- modern factories give the promising men the best of chances..... So, I think, on the whole, the 'good old days' sentiment is proved just another myth. 'Course, you intellectual fellows will sniff, "You're telling me", and pass on to that simple problem of geodesics you were doing at the moment.....

It has been definitely proved that as fast as men are sacked because of the displacing power of the machines, so do new industries lap them up like so much milk. But if the milk is watery even the cat will reject it, so inefficient workers are automatically cast 'on the dole' to learn efficiency. Get that, readers? And oh, I can hear you squeal exultantly, "But I knew a Man Who....." Of course, because we are just learning how things work.

As a matter of fact, I very much doubt whether we really are in the Machine Age. Are we not seeing the first streaks of Dawn? After all, the arts and sciences that have sprung up to create present-day conditions are all more or less of recent origin. "Surrealism", "Technics", "robots", etc., are all words invented during this century -- words symbolising the new forms of value used today. And world movements don't happen as a result

of a few years of scattered idealisms and cranky notions. So my answer to Mr. Journalist is, "The new age is in its infancy and it is bound to bring up some mistakes with it - mistakes are all part of experience - so, Mr. Journalist - you wait and see."

BY

JAMES RATHBONE.

VISIT TO A FACTORY IN THE YEAR 1999

I stood before the gates, a microcosm beneath their eighteen-foot frown. It was night and the row of spikes that protected the top of the wall were visibly shivering in the reflected light from furnaces beyond. I knocked with my knuckle upon the oak planking, but the tooting of whistles and the clanking sizzles of trains, the roar and crackle of furnaces and a pounding that reached my ears as a tremble contemptuously swept the feeble taps away. I hesitated, then pushed open the little sub-door; I stepped into the rail-littered space that constituted the factory grounds.

Away to the right a row of four orange squares marked the furnaces. From one of them arced a sparkling stream of pure white. I could see it strike a runaway, explode in a shower of drops, then vanish into channels laid in the earth. Metal was worked here; that much could be hazarded, but what the finished product would be, only this vast building filled with spinning machinery could show.

I pushed open a door in the concrete wall of one of the buildings and entered what can only be truthfully described as 'bedlam'. Standing in an almost complete semi-circle about the door was a vast steel framework filled with evil-teethed cogs, cams, rollers, chains, wires, rods, revolving parts, sliding parts, twirling parts, all clicking or slithering or whining about their respective duties. Vaguely amongst this confusion could be seen pieces of unfashioned metal, falling and being caught up by whirling knives of blue steel. Shavings fell in a cloud through pipes, through rollers, under stamping parts, and so on out into the further reaches of this gargantuan robot.

Through the narrow passage that gave access to the room proper there was a vista of further mechanisms. I slipped past a pair of eccentrically-centred fly-wheels that sprayed a fine film of oil across the opening, then wandered, like a microbe lost in the interior of a wrist-watch, amongst the workings of this factory. I passed two sweating men feeding a rod of iron into the maw of a black piece of machinery that now and again shook with a colossal shuddering. The men gripping the iron bar screwed up their eyes tight and thrust the metal further into the hole. Another convulsion and another thrust. And when that piece was gone, without pause, another. At the back of that prodigious, trembling hulk of iron, the remains of the bar were tumbling forth onto a moving track of leather. They were rising and being dropped into the top of the first machine I had encountered, so I sau-

entered in the other direction. I passed a number of rather unexciting machines that simply clucked or lay idle, perhaps a score of humming dynamos, then arrived upon a scene of intense industry.

Here was another assembly of wheels great and small, trip hammers and cog wheels upon spindles that pierced the maze to its heart. Levers stood in great banks and pistons moved slowly out of rivet-studded chambers. Peering between the spokes of two revolving wheels, I had an almost stroboscopic view of a mysterious activity proceeding at high speed in the shadowy viscera of this man-made mind. A huge wheel revolved at short intervals beneath a steady pounding of a multitude of hammer-like rods; another multitude of curved fingers swept in and out in mathematical rhythm with the hammers. Always amongst this frenzy of industry there was a suggestion of whirling spray -- a sparkling like the glitter of powdered diamonds flashing here and there in streams amongst the shafts and beams. Throughout this dizzy concourse of machinery was a great clicking of ratchet wheels all turning as if connected one with the other, although to some there was no visible contact. A million dials flickered in the interstices between the plates and the girders of the machine and a billion cogs meshed and unmeshed.

I watched and wondered until my mind jerked in sympathy with the uproar of clicking, then I stumbled to where a group of men were stirring nameless objects in huge tin-lined vats. I touched one of the men on the arm and pointed to the great machine where it hunched its stygian bulk. "What is that doing?" I asked. He looked at it very deliberately, considered his answer, and said: "Putting the tops on." I gripped the edge of the vat and stared in bewilderment into the green, slimy depths. The question that stirred in my hectic brain grew louder and wilder. My eyes dilated with its insistent call. "What in heaven's name do you make here?" I croaked to the man. He turned his lumpy, red face to me, scratched his nose slowly, thought long before answering and said: "I dunno." He looked mournfully into his vat for a time, then added - "Nobody knows". And as a star winked through a sky-light far, far above, he bent once more to his task.

BY

GERALD K. BLUGGINS

" F A N O P O L I S "

Part Two - "The Council at Work"

Inside the gates of Fanopolis the Neophyte gazed with interest at the view that presented itself. They were, it seemed, on the ground level of the city, for overhead higher levels and curving bridges rambled about like some eccentric scenic railway. At either side, buildings towered up to lose themselves in the maze above, and, outlined against the white stone, he read glaring head-lines: "READ THE SCIENCE FICTION FAN!" -- "COSMIC TALES: The

Best in Fan Fiction" -- and, enterprisingly painted on a model of a space-ship --

"FAPA for Papa,
Mother and Child!"

His guide saw him glance at this last, and smiled. "A little optimistic, that," he remarked, "we are essentially a bachelor community. But we have wasted too much time already - I'd better call a car."

Quickly he stepped over to an automatic machine by the roadside and pressed a button. At once, it seemed, a tubular car slid up, and the door opened.

"Robot control", said the little man proudly as he ushered the Neophyte in. When I press this button on the panel in front of me the car will take us automatically to the Council Chambers." He pressed the button. Nothing happened. Once more he pressed, with the same result. With a sigh and a brief flurry of surges he let down a flap marked "Manual Control" and, gripping a handle, pressed another button.

As the car shot forward, he turned to the Neophyte in explanation. It's the Brain", he declared, "Every so often he goes crazy and won't do anything, or else does everything wrong. Either way we have to shut off power and work these confounded things ourselves. Such a pity, too, for the Brain is quite a nice fellow when he is all right - I often go up and have a chat with him. Broods rather a lot over Seabury Quinn, perhaps, but he doesn't like Fearn, and knows a lot of lovely adjectives for the Michelists."

"What sends him insane, then?" queried the Neophyte.

"Search me", his friend replied mournfully. "He says anyone would go nuts after living as long as he has in the company of science fiction fans, but I think it's the ice-cream that does it really."

"Ice-cream!"

"Yes. The Brain lives mostly, of course, on some synthetic muck, but Louis Lankus and Billy Stratford (Shakespeare -- Jack Speer -- wow! - F'c) sneak strawberry ice-cream into him in return for inside information on DAW. It works hell with his carbo-hydrates and gives him a terrific hang-over."

While this conversation had been in progress, the car had been advancing at no mean speed through Fanopolis. Soon it came into the more frequented streets and the Neophyte saw that side-walks and shops were thronged with people. Suddenly there was a hail from one of them, and the car slowed to a halt. Before the Neophyte knew what was happening a figure had jumped in and the car was off again.

"Allow me to introduce you", murmured his guide, one hand on the steering-handle. "This is Mr. Red Flannel, 'Service' proprietor and News-Hound-in-Chief. On my left a new-comer, Mr."

"Call me Ishmael Neophyte."

".....Mr. Ishmael Neophyte."

"Pleased to meet you", screamed Red in a concentrated

gabble. "Do you want to buy a Startling? We have some fine Science Fenders going cheap. Have you heard the latest yarn about RAP?"

The driver broke in. "Give him a chance, Red. He must be pretty dazed as it is."

The Neophyte flung him a look of thanks.

"By the way," he continued, "this is the third time in three months the Brain's given way. I was telling Ishy here that I think the ice-cream is at fault."

"Don't you believe it", shrieked Red. "He's never been the same since D.R.Black first came. Black's an engineer, you know," he went on more quietly, "and he was so certain that a Brain was impossible that he took a bag of tools up to the Tower one night and started to find out how and why it ticked; with the help of a couple of screw-drivers and a spanner. The Brain had to sic about five robots onto him and have him thrown out on his neck before he would stop, and it was bound to have a bad effect. 'Ho-ca-ah!'"

The car stopped for a second and he darted out and into the door of a palatial building, superscribed "SCIENCE FICTION SERVICE". "A very nice fellow", grinned the Neophyte's guide, "but he's never still a moment." He looked at his watch and the grin vanished. "Oh, blast!" he announced. "It was 5.30 when we got this car and my watch reads 8.30 now - someone must have let Hamilton loose with a time-warp again. Eddy's all right if he's well watched but when he gets playing around with his warps, no-one is safe. I remember the time he used a space-warp and shifted half a dozen Michelists to Berlin during a Hitler Thanksgiving. Lounies got them back just when the fun was going to start". He sighed.

The car jerked to a halt before a colonnaded dome, prettily surrounded by grass lawns and flower beds. They got out of the car and the little man led the way past two time-machines and a statue marked "Made in Auburn" to the becolumned porch. Pushing open a door he revealed a strange scene.

The interior was round, and tiers of seats sloped down from the sides to an apparently vacant central dais. In these seats were the dimly visible forms of who knows what blasphemous creations; some seemingly asleep, and others, from the hum of snoring, obviously so. The few awake were in the middle of a debate and, to judge by the abuse bandied, rather an important one.

Just then a saintly figure rose from behind the dais and quelled the clamour with an out-stretched hand. He then yawned four times and whispered in a bored sort of voice, "The vote will now be taken. Those in favour raise their hands." A pause. "Those against?" He counted rapidly. "The second reading of the bill to cut whiskey adverts from Astounding is passed, Ham-bell, Pimple and Bohl alone dissenting."

Pandemonium broke loose again and the patriarch smiled over the heads of the squabblers at the Neophyte. He beckoned, and the Neophyte walked towards him.

"ON CONSCRIPTION"

"No easy way shall bring us to our goal,
But iron sacrifice, of body, will and soul."

That, in case you do not recognise it, is from Kipling's famous "For all we have and are", written in late 1914. A poem which does not mince matters, which does not talk of a Holy Cause, or the Glory of War. It states in no unmeasured tone that every-one must be prepared to sacrifice everything. It draws a grim picture, with no light, except such as may be gleaned from the last two lines:

"That lives if Freedom fall?
Tho dies if England live?"

Neglect, unpreparedness, vacillation. These caused the Five Years War of 1914-18. Notably vacillation. Great Britain was the arbiter of Europe, had been since 1814. [?] Only when the arbiter could not make up its mind was there war.

The present government has lost us that position. It can be regained, but probably it will mean a war. War can only be averted by the moral domination of Europe by one power. As England and America are the only two powers in the world that can not be dominated, they must do the dominating. The Master's hand has slackened and war is near. Peace can only be gained by tightening that grasp.

Conscription is a gesture, a sacrifice. One whose moral implications far exceed its practical value. No greater value could have been obtained by trebling the number of conscripts, but the sacrifice would have been increased enormously.

Consider: six months with the colours. What does it mean? Simply a six months' holiday.

Within reason the term of service can be varied to suit the convenience of the individual. Therefore no harm can be caused by a student being called up just before an exam., or any similar case.

Will six months' discipline, drill, and button-cleaning hurt anyone? I doubt it. It will do most of them good. Some students, of whom I am one, are looking forward to it with pleasure. The others are mainly indifferent. Even the pacifists, the majority at any rate, do not object when it is pointed out that in six months there is not time to train a man and then send him to India or Africa to fight. So there is no fear of them being hurt.

Admittedly there are a few genuine pacifists, but very few. The majority are scared or think they will get more profit by staying at home. (Note one person in "The Fantast" who is prepared to fight like hell to prevent himself being made to fight)

Students are generally admitted to be the intelligentsia of youth, and their official attitude is as follows: 9 against -- 4 for.

This requires amplification. At King's the majority voted against conscription but - THOSE WHO VOTED FOR WERE THE CONSCRIPTS. Those who voted against were ladies. I understand

that this state is the usual one.

Six months to train a man! The minimum in which it can be done is four. In the Professional Army they take a year! So you see what will happen is that everyone will have an experience of obedience; everyone except Professional Officers will have experienced life as a private. So that in war, where the ratio of non-professional to professional is over 15 - 1 most officers will have experienced a private's life themselves. Any objections?

No one claims England is perfect, but it is the best in the world. There is hardly a thing England has that some other nation cannot better, but none has so much as England.

It may be lousy, punk-awful, corrupt, lazy, oppressed. But it is THE BEST IN THE WORLD.

And most of the rest of the most civilised countries of the world, New Zealand, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, all fall or stand with England.

It is worth fighting for. Read Kipling, you weaklings:-

"For all we have and are, for all our children's fate,
Stand up and take the war, the Hun is at the gate.

.....
Though all we have depart
The old commandments stand;
In courage keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand."

BY

AN

ANONYMOUS

MEDICAL

STUDENT.

EDITORIAL NOTE: The above reached us via Mr. Kay, whose letter you may find in "Folly" - if we can squeeze it in. There are too many answers to it that we magnanimously leave the gage to our readers who will doubtless make the most of it. May we just whisper that Kipling is more suitable to the "intelligentsia" of the Daily Mirror than readers of "Fantast". If you want poetry:

"The World's great age begins anew,
The Golden Years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn.
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

O cease! Must hate and death return,
Cease! Must men kill and die?
Cease! Drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy!
The world is weary of the past,
Oh might it die, or rest at last!"

You and your kind, Sir Student, are of the past, and with the past will vanish. As Kipling said in one of his few poems:

"Cities and thrones and powers
Stand in Time's eye
Almost as long as flowers,
Which daily die."

A World State will come, my good student, despite all reactionaries/

"ON WORDS AND PRESENT-DAY MAGAZINE SCIENTIFIC FANTASY"

It is axiomatic that the first essential of a writer of scientific fiction is an exceptionally vivid imagination, but this imagination is helpless unless the author can transfer his thoughts into words in such a way that those words will re-create in the mind of the reader the thoughts that inspired them. Words, as has often been said, are the tools of the writer, and he must know how to use them.

But words are crude tools for the writer of fantasy to work with because words are so essentially common-place. Most of them have been invented to describe some more-or-less ordinary article or action, and words that in themselves appeal to the imagination are limited. In fact the films and the sensational press have so woefully misused our stock of rich, flamboyant adjectives that they have become almost meaningless.

Some writers surmount this difficulty by digging out abstruse and half-obsolete words, with fatal results in the hands of the poorly skilled. The fair way out is to use common-place words skilfully, which is called style. Style consists of the meticulous selection of the right words to fit accurately and with the right rhythm the scene, action or emotion described. The facts are presented in the correct order and quantities, as in the case of a description of a scene in which various details are mentioned in the order and degree in which they would be perceived by the observing character. The dialogue is natural, interesting, and in character with the personalities of the speakers, and the tone of the writing is accurately pitched to suit the type of story.

The present policy of most science-fiction magazines appears to be that their readers do not want style. They may be right because a well-written story insists on the full attention of the reader and the activity of his brain. Magazine fiction of the type aimed at is a sort of soporific for the eyes, which might otherwise be unoccupied while eating or travelling or listening to the wireless. It must not make any demands on the mind, since this is otherwise engaged and must not be distracted, and so the style adopted is that of a ten-year old child describing the last film it saw.

At the moment editors are hampered by the lack of authors capable of writing down to this standard, and so even "Amazing" occasionally features a collection of words that approximates to a story. As they succeed in further atrophying their readers' literary senses they will have to be more careful not to publish any such irritations to the entirely passive minds of their patrons and may have to cease arranging the words in any order of meaning whatever.

Meanwhile there remains the problem of those of us who regard scientific romance as a pleasure in itself, and we must consider ourselves fortunate that there is still one magazine that tries to give us what we want. I hold no brief for the defence of Astounding; there are few of its stories that approach my ideal but at least most of them are sufficiently well told to merit the title of "fiction". The other magazines in the American field fill their pages with collections of words that cannot be said to tell stories at all. It is perfectly true to say that they are not worth the paper they are printed on and when one considers the quality of that paper the condemnation is the severest possible.

FANTAST'S FOLLY

Someone has said the moon would turn to pink soap when Smith liked a magazine. After reading the below we borrowed Turner's telescope - one more theory gone west!

"Now let us to the business of the day. For a start I must congratulate you on keeping your promise of improvement better than any editor, fan or otherwise, has ever done. The Fantast already has that polish that signifies quality and it is certainly easy to read, which is a fat sight more than I can say for Imagination. The even edge down the right side helps this considerably but I would not urge you to continue it if it is much trouble, because it is not an essential though a definite refinement.+++Now for the contents. The cover was better than last time. The architecture might have been a little less Grecian and more coherent, the anatomy of the statue in the foreground is rather strange and I do not see the need for mer-people. Merky work, we think. And the bathysphere might have been positioned better.+++is this Osmond Robb any relation of the Miss Olive Robb who had that delightful duel with E.E.Smith over his use of slang? He shows a suspicious quality of writing in his essay, though I question the sense and grammar of "we can scarcely conceive of them". In fact the descriptive part of the essay was rather too flowery and not coherent in atmosphere. I should say that the hunt after imposing words had caused a loss to the rhythm of the prose. The first part seems to me to be disjointed. I don't think the comparison of the point of view of the fan with that of the man in the street on this subject is sufficiently clear cut to unify the essay, and hence it does not make any point that will remain in the memory for long.+++ "How to Write Weird Poetry" is rather disappointing. "Chestnut Corner", except that the jokes never were much good anyway. More could have been made of it by concentrating on the "weird" aspect for the field is not so well trodden.+++The cartoon...well, I suppose it filled up space.+++ "Conversation Piece" is an admirable piece of common-sense, and in close agreement with my own sentiments, very close agreement. I might, had I thought of it, have written it myself though had I done so I should not have used the word "characterisation" which I do not like. I will give this 10 because of its logic though it is my prideful feeling that most of the points have been raised in the works of DRSmith. My guess at Garret Soffer

is Youd, followed by Hanson.+++My opinion of Don J. Cameron took a nose-dive after his "Answers". Very much the conventional fan-magazine humour. Give him 5 because I smiled at the first reading. That is the trouble with estimating the quality of such efforts, they just don't stand the examination. They should be read once only, and that rapidly.+++I cannot rate "Dreamer 4" very high for all its competence because I steady the Buffs. Yes I do. Or perhaps I don't. Who are "they" anyway? I will give you 8, but at the same time I think that even weird sonnets ought to say what they mean so that the reader does not have to solve a problem in logic. Thought you enjoyed problems in logic?+++Poem of my own:-

I dare not say it out aloud
But think perhaps they call you Youd,
You may tell me this is rude,
For probably your name is Youd.

Another:-

'Twould take a lot to make a man
Refer to him as Ackerman;
But wouldn't an even slacker man
Forbear to call him Ackerman?

(Both pronunciations are used in this part of the world)

We'd like to murmur to the crowd -
Our name is definitely Youd.
And though we're not a great word-tracker-man,
We'll bet a warp the guy's called Ackerman.

Let's hear from you, Forrest!

"Fanopolis" is very promising indeed. It looks like being a worthy successor to "Alicia in Blunderland" which fascinated me in the brief glimpse I had of it. Full marks with no reservations this time, and more of the same.+++The appreciation will be a pain in the neck to some people. Hooray!+++The editorial was suitably stately, informative and artistically concluded. I like the idea of an ample reader's department, too, with its neatly inserted editorial remarks. Burke's letter was as good as any and better than most. Naturally the comment on "DRS worship" is intensely gratifying, and whenever I think of it a smile of extreme pleasure wreaths my countenance. When I actually reread the words the smile becomes a laugh and the laugh a veritable guffaw... The memory of this will cheer my declining years and as I crouch over the fire in the winter of life I shall mumble "DRS worship" and quiver with senile mirth. Oh you Burke!+++Equally amusing was William's letter and your comments thereon, and apart from my own appearance as the coffin among the wedding presents, the letters were all refreshing and entertaining. I will give this department another whole-hearted 10 and hope that you and your correspondents will keep up the good work.+++To sum up then, you are certainly setting a hot pace with the "Fantast" and it bids fair to be the best amateur magazine in the country. That is more, as far as my knowledge goes, you can extend the qualification to cover the world."

D. R. Smith 13 Church Road, Hartshill, Nuneaton, Warwks.+

As one artist to another, Harry Turner has plenty to say:

"Despite my comments anent the Communist bloke's shirt-front and Saturn, the first cover did capture the spirit of fantasy. But

the second....! The draughtsmanship was poor and the picture lacked coherency. It was not so much that Robb had tried to include too much in the drawing, but that he had badly grouped the main portions, resulting in the whole being overbalanced by the left-hand side. It would have been greatly improved to my mind if the bathysphere had been placed in the top right-hand corner to balance the mass of the statue, and the fish dropped into the bottom corner to balance the mermaids etc. As it is, all the interest is cramped in the left side.+++The statue seems all out of proportion. If I make so bold, I should like to draw Robb's attention to a piece of advice he passed on to yours truly in TOW a little while ago. Namely, that "human figures are at present, so far as he is concerned, best left alone". At least for public entertainment -- but in private I advise him to practise damned hard, preferably at life classes, as I myself have been doing these last few months. Incidentally, I should appreciate his comments on the figures in one of the drawings for The Venus Adventure in the forthcoming TOW No.7.++++Meanwhile, I hope Robb will not be offended if I offer some constructive criticism. Firstly, there is a fundamental principle in figure drawing which, judging from the statue, he appears to have overlooked. That is, when a person is stood upright a line across the shoulders is parallel to one drawn across the hips. If one hip is lowered, then the protruding hip and thigh of the leg take the weight of the body, whilst the shoulders tilt at a reverse angle to the hips for the preservation of balance. In his picture these lines are parallel whereas actually they should converge.+++The articles were reasonably readable/Note: Mr. Turner gave the entire mag. a rating of 72%. How much over 100% makes us good?/ although no thinks that Smith carried his hero-worship too far when he compared Forgetfulness with Last and First Men to the latter's detriment. Fanopolis starts off well and looks as though it will continue so -- heaven forbid that it's just a stray fragment. Several of Cameron's Answers to Correspondents were a little too obvious and personal for my liking. If the chap has to be insulting in order to be so screamingly funny then I think the mag is better without him. /Rather a storm about this - less in future of that kind but I fear you will soon see "Fandom Debunked" - an early acceptance - which is entirely without fear or favour!7

H. Turner

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First non-Briton tu koment was F J Acker(Aker?)man. We tri our best tu reproduce the speling but fer nonstoparagrafing wastes tu much spas and we kant giv th typ of wich 4sj is an advogueate!

Without a word of warning---Fantast!+++Welcome to the growing group of your British brethern!+++Not a bad beginning. Best in initial number was the cynicomical "How to be Famous". Best, that is, I thot. Now that it is too late, it is painfully evident that BURKE was without a peer, had a brilliant career ahead as an articleer. (Should I suddenly die, I shall not be remembered as a poet; I know it.) Is there no cure for potassium cyanide in the stomach? Ah, well; I wonder if you would oblige me?---I should like to secure one of those rare unpublisht Burke-works, which oafish editors refused to print while He lived. I know it will insure a fan-nominal

sale of my new fanmag which, patterning after such successful titles as LOOK, LIFE, LAMP & PIPE (the latter 2, should U not be familiar with them, being American slang synonyms for "look").... my mag, as I started to say before this sentence got so involved U lost the sense (if any) of it, will be called FANS - SEE THAT!+++ Tres astra for "Astra"'s parody. Tell me, Stars, old sun (some pun tho it should be in the plural?)--would you call a Hamilton narrative a "hackciting story"?+++Dave McIlwain: I did indeed enjoy your fairyarn & should suggest U embellish it a bit & submit to UNKNOWN. Seriously.+++Robb, re Education, is right.+++I look forward to The Introvert.+++I have been wondering what on earth those objects are on either side of the column, "Fantast's Folly". To me they appear to be a picture of 2 pachyderms' posteriors!?

4SJ Ackerman

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Only other American to comment at all extensively on No.1 was the editor of that steadily improving fanmag -- COSMIC TALES:

After reading The Fantast thru thoroly, I was very much pleased. You have a very nice appearing magazine, and the material is of exceptionally hi calibre.+++The cover is definitely as good as the average fan cover. I don't care too much for the paper employd in the cover and the two pages following. Clarke's poem wasn't so bad. I've read much better tho. And, I've read much worse.... "The Parson and the Fairy" really staggered me. That's how good it was! Dave has a story there that's something. I don't believe I've read a story recently that was anywhere as well written as this one. If Dave would increase the length somewhat, I'll bet he could sell it to Unknown. Try it! Johnny's article was okaydokay. Johnny told me you were a poet, and "Dreamer 3" proves it. Probably this is trite but Youdo.../This sounds like a very funny pun but we'll be ionised if we can see it/ Miss Hawkin's story was passable, but rather hackneyed. Talking about that, "Astra"'s poem was very good. Have I your permission to reprint it in Cosmic Tales? I would really like to have it for "Dippy Poetics". Keep up Fantacynic's reviews. I enjoy him very, very much. In your answer to Frank Skerbeck's letter you say that fandom can be proud of 3 things and the first one is humor. You're dead right there. I don't know ONE fan who lacks a sense of humor. If I did I'd shoot him dead. He wouldn't even be fit to torture by making him read Amazing. Altogether this first issue was definitely worthwhile, and the next one should be a wow!

For FooFoo is our Saviour!

L. Kuslan

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16 pages only this time from Sprigg's best friend, Eric Hopkins. Maybe our Anniversary Issue (wattanope!) will consist of just one, long letter from Yorick!

Robb's "Mars and Venus" is interesting enough but I doubt the accuracy of some of his theory. I doubt, for instance, if the average man thinks of Mars as the god of war, and even less of Venus as a snooty chunk of shapely masonry. I should think only two types of person are interested in the latter. (i) The female who does or does not win an audition which may or may not gain her a job as a cabaret girl by parading up and down a stage with a few other spineless, backless and brainless gals in the hope that one turn of

the tape measure round her will not go twice round a lamp-post but exactly once around Venus de Milo+++The other interested party is the small boy who pauses, awestricken, before the armless statue, and is warned by his mater, "There, Cecil, that's what happened to a little girl who bit her fingernails!" /"Punch" - 1903/+++If Submerged Meaning is any criterion of poetry, your's must be masterly. I read it three times before I saw through it (Shakespeare only twice). /Well, if Bernard Shaw can get away with it....!/+++I had the same trouble as Johnny, and played tag on my fingers with the sticky tape for quite five minutes until I finally deposited it alongside last year's chewing gum under the table-top. I can just imagine J.F. as a 'conshie'. /Better than being a "millie" anyway/ I don't blame him, though. It's pleasant to think that every youth due for conscription is according to the heaviest odds the son of a murderer. I read in a scripture lessons text book the other day /easy on the heart failures - Eric has to print the stuff!/t h a t men fighting in war are not murderers and therefore cannot be bro't to book for their deeds! What depths of bilge doth Religion dredge! I suppose there's something holy in running a few inches of steel through a man's guts. I like it when people say that learning to handle a rifle would help me in a war. Help me to kill an extra couple of the enemy before they kill me is what they mean.+++My heart bleeds for brother Eric C. What I think of him forming fours with the ruck. Why, dang me, Cuthbert, they cain't even write a story!+++I notice the B.I.S. are trying to transfer a few millions in gold to Germany. 'Co said Arty Clarke and Willy didn't have any money? /A filthy pun, and who's making the jokes here, anyway?/

Eric C. Hopkins 2c Stirling Road, E.13.

What-ho for General Cuthbert with his usual message of love!

Robb's "Mars and Venus" was interesting and it might be useful to those anxious to spread SF amongst the masses if we had more examinations of this kind into the normal man's reactions to words of SF import. /May we suggest a straight jacket is also useful?/ You might ask for reactions to the words "space-ship", "Atlantis", "space-warp" and "time-travelling". I bet there would be some mighty curious replies. /Bet not taken/+++Dave McIlwain's "How to Write Weird Poetry" was a yell, and yet I fully agree with every line. Call me a Philistine - or whatever the word is you use against people who say such-and-such a poem is rot -- but I get more kick out of Nat Schachner than Keats (guess that shook you some). /We're not surprised -- and if that didn't shake you, you've got a hide any green Martian might envy:/

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Up from the Mausoleum roars another General - nay, not Cuthbert!

"By gad, sir, the country's going to the dogs. A lot of lazy young scoundrels refusing to do their duty! Conscientious objectors? Not a bit of it, sir! The country's rotten with Bolshies and slackers.+++No, comrades, I am not affected by conscription and hence can take a "detached" view along with Colonel Blimp above - and the old geezers who sit on the Government benches and elsewhere. That's small consolation, though. In the event of war, we'll

all be singing "We're in the army now", and doubtless we'll get some of these damn fool ideas about lovin' our fellow men knocked out of us at the double-quick -- or maybe at the business end of a machine-gun!+++And now, out of the goodness of my heart, I offer a few helpful hints to Unconscientious Objectors (Unconshies being blokes, like myself, who have no very strong objections to other people getting bumped off but have one hell of a regard for their own hides). (1) Cough up £5,000,000 or so and the B.I.S. will build you a rocket guaranteed to take you at least as far as the moon. (2) If you can't manage that, prove that you served with the International Brigade. Our's is a gentlemen's army, our's is. No Bolshy need apply. (3) Easier, but, perhaps, not quite as effective: join the Communist Party and barricade yourself behind the words of Marx and Lenin. The Army won't touch you with the proverbial tarry pole -- though they might try the aforementioned business end of a machine-gun. (4) Join the I.R.A. and spend the next twenty years in quod. In England, champion of the small countries. Seriously, though, my objections are not so much to conscription as to the manner in which it was introduced. Chamberlain had small excuse for staying in office after the inevitable ghastly failure of "appeasement" and none at all for introducing conscription without a General Election on the issue. I may be wrong, but I think we'd still have got conscription. We British are fools of that kind. And at least the Government would have seemed a bit less dictatorial than it does at present.

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STULTITIA IN PARVO: Condescends Librarian H. Kay--"With regard to your "Dreamer". It was obviously thrown together according to the instructions contained in McIlwain's article. Unfortunately, however, two at least of your readers have had a literary education, and know the difference between profound thought and meaningless words. At the Convention you told me that you could express yourself most clearly in poetry/verse/ Heaven save me from your prose. Apart from mentioning that Mr. Kay considers Fearn a better stylist than Taine, we think comment here would be superfluous. We presume the other lucky fellow is the person with a penchant for Kipling? Michael Rosenblum: "You are going the right way with letters, another six pages or so and you'll just about have a decent proposition in. Just remembered you wanted everything marking out of 10. Sorry, but I'll send you a row of kisses, like my teachers used to do with me, to make up - xxxxx Bah!": Maurice Hanson: "The abundant objections to conscription would tend to confirm the fact that fans are predominantly Escapists."

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Thanks to all those who gave marks to features this month, and we hope they will keep it up. The results of the voting will be given next month..... Next month, too, we start a new feature --Composite Criticism. Astounding is the predominant magazine in the SF field so we want the following to send in a brief criticism of the story allocated to them in the next Astounding. 1 - Smith: 2 - Burke: 3 - Hopkins: 4 - Forster: 5 - Fantacynic: 6 - Williams: 7 - Robb: 8 - Rathbone. Numbers indicate position in magazine, not in Contents/Pg.

