

# THE PHANTAGRAPH

10¢





the oldest fantasy fan mag

## THE PHANTAGRAPH

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## THE WILTED WHATNOT

by Richard Wilson

A grey-haired old lady was in the center of the main lobby of the Grand Central Terminal, chewing on a black cigar and scowling back at people. She looked up at the clock, which read 3.05 PM, consulted her wrist-watch, nodded grimly and opened the violin case she had in her pile of luggage which surrounded her in a five foot circle. From the violin case she took a Thompson submachine gun which she set up on a little home-made wooden tripod. She swung it around in an arc and said in a clear voice:

"I have decided, dear fellow citizens, that I, Amanda Peeglebury, am the only one in the world with even a modicum of sense and, therefore in order that our descendants will not share a like fate, I have decided to Kill Everyone."

Everyone looked up, startled as all hell. Some laughed. Some shook their heads and tapped them. Some crossed themselves. Some didn't pay any attention at all, being too busy consulting timetables to West Haven and Stamford. One man--the one with the red wart on his left ear--was deaf and wouldn't have cared anyhow: he was on his way out to commit suicide by jumping off the foot of East 42nd St., because his wife and three babies were starving because he'd been kicked off the WPA.

Amanda Peeglebury began shooting. People fell down, screaming; some didn't scream, but just bled all over the smooth floor of Grand Central. When a drum of bullets was emptied, the old lady reached into one of the bags that surrounded her and skillfully refilled it, shouting triumphantly the while.

Soon cops came running in, waving revolvers and looking wet. (It was midsummer.) Miss Peeglebury shot them down. "Cossacks!" she said and spat.

When they ran out of policemen they sent firemen, armed with steel axes and great lengths of iron pipe. Miss Peeglebury shot them full of holes.

Mayer LaGuardia rushed over in his private car, alarm screaming. Then he rushed away and took up a position in the Penn Station, keeping in contact with the scene by special telephone connection with a man on the mezzanine overlooking the Grand Central Lobby, who ducked out of his phone booth ~~everytime~~ every once in a while to peer nervously over the marble railing.

When they ran out of firemen, they sent the New York Yankees, armed with baseball bats and pop bottles. Miss Peeglebury was a Dodger fan.. She had a lot of fun. When the Dodgers arrived, howling, brandishing pieces of the bleachers from Ebbot's Field, Miss P swallowed her loyalty and went to work on them.

When it got dark, Miss Peeglebury manned her machine gun with one hand and ate a sandwich with the other. She had brought provisions for a month. Sandwiches, thermos bottles, fruit, fresh and dried, were to be found in abundance in her ring of baggage.

About midnight the Queens Science Fiction League climbed over the corpses in Vanderbilt Ave. and rushed in, with bombs. The old lady shot them.

Three weeks later, Miss Amanda Peoglobury was the only person left in the world. On the last day in August, she stalked determinedly over to the Penn Station and tied up the Mayor whom she deposited on an underground track and over whom she drove an electric locomotive.

"Well," she said, dusting her hands satisfied. "That's that."

-oOo-

MONTAGE by F. Stanislaus PROSODY

CHARLOTTE: I was dangling over the Battery with Billy Dimple; a knot of young fellows were upon the platform. As I passed them I faltered with one of the most bewitching false steps you ever saw, and then recover myself with such a pretty confusion, flirting my hoop to discover a jet black shoe and brilliant buckle. Gad! how my little heart thrilled to hear the confused raptures of--"Domme, Jack, what a delicate foot!" "Ha! General, what a well-turn'd--"

LETITIA: Fie! Fie! Charlotte, (stopping her mouth) I protest, you are quite a libertine.

CHARLOTTE: My Ged, w~~h~~man--who are you?

LETITIA: (She takes off her beard) I am Hawkshaw, the detective!

CURTAIN

POEM

by Hannon Bok

My kneeer do knock  
because of doc  
and John midshell  
driven me to hell  
and don wollhoim  
tolla me that i'm

am i?

Why be it that i must go forth  
to Borth  
on a horth?  
and up to climb?  
with a dime.

Some time

I find  
my mind  
is blind  
how unkind  
now

wow

pow

My ears do flop  
at chester's hop;  
and conbluths tales  
drive me to wales  
with yellow sails  
in belching gales  
eer slime

why?

I  
reply  
in rhyme  
or sumpin

thumpin

huh?

yeh

nuts.  
you sed it, bo.

## "ETERNITY BY THE STARS"

by Graham Conway

We recently happened to be reading an essay by the English political writer R.W. Postgate on the life of Louis Auguste Blanqui when we ran across an interesting and totally unexpected item. Blanqui was a revolutionary conspirator during the turbulent days between 1830 and 1880. He spent the greater part of this period in prison for attempting any number of putsches against the various French governments. He represented a type of socialist conspirator non-existent today. At the time when Blanqui was an old man in prison after the failure of the Paris Commune of 1871, he turned from mundane politics to super-mundane ideas. We quote from Mr. Postgate's work:-

"It was indeed the dream of an old man that he wrote in prison, his Eternity By The Stars. Like many others who have suffered, he turned his thoughts to the worlds outside this world, and gained some consolation from the insignificance of himself and the world about him. Writing a description and criticism of the theories of Laplace gave him especial pleasure, and his style is perhaps at its best in this work. He observed that two principles were agreed upon by astronomers of his day -- the first, the infinity of the universe; the second, the analysis of the materials of the universe by means of the spectrum. Now, the spectrum reveals but a limited number of primary elements -- in Blanqui's day, sixty-four. Since we are dealing with infinity, all possible combinations of these materials are repeated somewhere. An enormous number of these combinations could be made, but, after all, it would be a finite number. Therefore in infinity there are not merely ~~a~~ possible combinations, but infinite repetitions of them. And of these combinations the earth, with all its people, is one.



" Infinite repetitions of the earth. ~~But~~ On these earths 'whatever one could have been here, one is nowhere else.' Infinite duplication of all things and all men. There are worlds then, where the English have lost Waterloo and Trafalgar, where Bonaparte lost Marengo. Worlds, too, he might have added, where Blanqui slipped through the hands of his captors and came to Paris in March 1871.

"It was not merely an old man's dream, perhaps, this 'Astronomical Hypothesis.' Certainly it was something of a prose poem; and though we cannot say how seriously it was meant, we would be most unwise to imagine that we know the secret of the infinite universe. Anything may be true, even the reflections of Blanqui in the twilight of his life."

-----oOo-----  
CONTINUITY

There is in certain ancient things a trace  
Of some dim essence -- more than form or weight;  
A tenuous aether, indeterminate,  
Yet linked with all the laws of time and space.  
A faint, veiled sign of continuities  
That outward eyes can never quite descry;  
Of looked dimensions harbouring years gone by,  
And out of reach except for hidden keys.

It moves me most when slanting sunbeams glow  
On old farm buildings set against a hill,  
And paint with life the shapes which linger still  
From centuries less a dream than this we know.  
In that strange light I feel I am not far  
From the first mass whereto sides the ages are.

B O M B  
by Donald A. Wellhoim

The Doerfel Mountains are located at the very rim of the visible half of the moon. Sometimes they are out of sight, sometimes they swing back into view as the satellite wobbles in its path. They are high and gaunt, jagged huge peaks jutting up from the cold grey horizon against the black of the sky. And behind the Doerfels lies the blind spot of the Earth's heavens. Nobody has ever seen what lies beyond that range...

It was towards the Doerfels, oddly enough, that Terrestrial astronomers calculated the comet would go. At first, when it had been discovered out around the orbit of Jupiter and heading in towards the sun there was considerable uproar for it seemed as if its path would directly intersect that of Earth. For awhile astronomers talked excitedly and secretly amongst themselves, afraid of creating panic. Then their common sense asserted itself and they knew that panic was hardly likely--the world was as panicky as it could be--what with five continents all engaged in a titanic war and bombardment of cities and destruction of nations a regular occurrence. So the news got out and made page nine along with tail end of the daily casualty lists and nobody gave it a stir except a few fanatics who didn't matter anyway.

But it was after the comet had passed the orbit of Mars that the astronomers themselves were able to breath a bit easier. They had calculated, by some chicanery of international maneuvering with triangulations from three parts of the world at war, that the comet would not hit the earth at all but would come close to the moon. It would in fact graze the moon, and right about where the Doerfels were located.

This was more interesting the astronomers thought; it might be that part of the comet's tail would be lost and would remain to give the moon a tenuous atmosphere again for a brief while. Then they made a startling find--the comet was actually ablaze. It was a ball of fire, a blazing torch, a fragment of some exploded sun or nova star still burning. This didn't make the situation dangerous but it made it interesting since no such comet had ever been recorded before. Its fiery tail would probably burn the topmost peaks of the Lunar mountains as it passed.

Still there was no concern until another interesting and previously unrecorded phenomenon was noted. A new formation coming into sight just behind the Doerfels. At first they thought it was another peak that just hadn't been noticed before but after observation they realized that it was growing. It was a sort of peak, a long white cylindrical mass towering above the mountains and overshadowing them. A curious twisted appearance seemed to mark its surface. Its base was lost in the mystery behind the Doerfels on its unseen side. The strange formation extended a bit further, curved around a bit and projected distinctly from the side of the lunar sphere.

Then it was noticed that the end of the strange protruberance would be quite clearly in the path of the comet--that it was undoubtedly to be set ablaze by its passage.

It was not until the comet had almost arrived that an astronomer in Arizona suddenly realized that the strange mass had all the appearance of a giant cotton, powder-impregnated fuse and that it would be touched off by the blazing torch in the sky. But then there was nothing he could do about it so he stayed at his job and calculated ephemeræ chuckling quietly and quite madly to himself.

## QUARRY

by Robert W. Lowndes

the velvet veil of space is rent  
 and through the gaping cavity  
 an eye titanic gleams.  
 there is no flight  
 or weapon we can wield  
 that will obliterate the horror manifold.  
 in vain we flee, we plumb the nether depths  
 of myriad worlds; wherever we may go  
 it follows.

now slithering around the frayed hole's rim  
 colossal fingers reach;  
 groping fingers

groping fingers that eclipse nebulae

• groping fingers that blindly poke dead suns  
 into incandescence

groping fingers that clutch the wheeling  
 planets to weigh them in a titanic palm

so the giant roared in triumph and taking a  
 stone squeezed it until drops of water trickled  
 between his fingers and the little tailor took  
 a lump of cheese from his pocket and squeezed  
 until the whole mass of it oozed from between  
 his fingers and the giant trembled

but for us there is no succor,  
 and madly we leap from world to fleeing world,  
 and vainly we fire star clusters behind us,  
 and pantingly we crouch in the shadows of outerspace  
 waiting

while inexorably the breedingnagian fingernail  
 seeks its quarry.

