

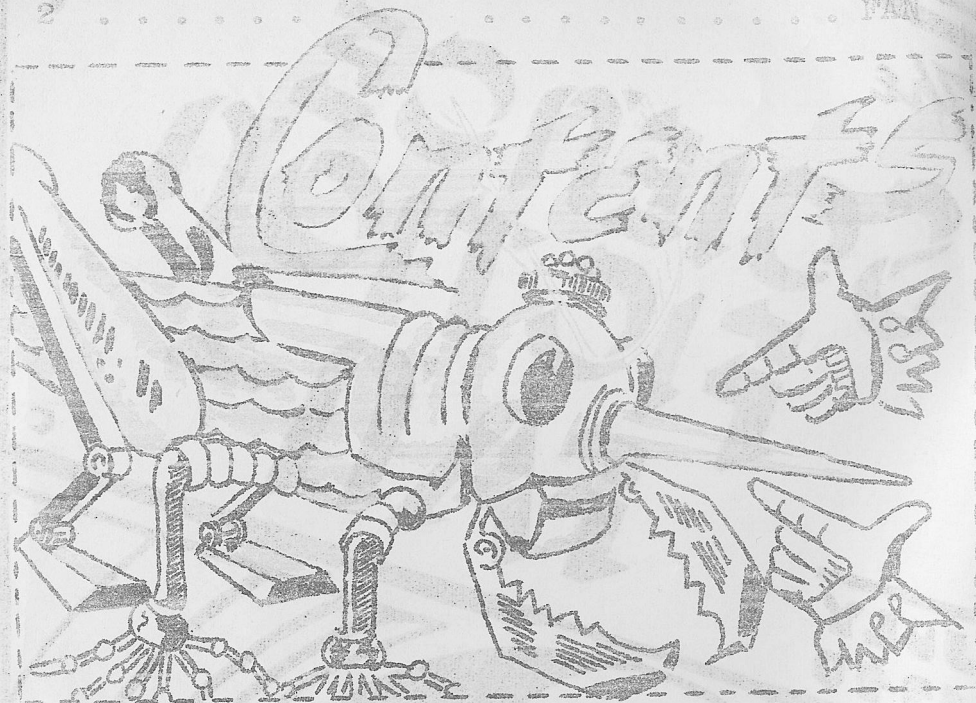
48

# *The* **SCIENCE FICTION FALL**

**JULY  
1940**



**FOURTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**



JULY 1940

Volume 4, No. 12, 1940

Whole Number 48

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Cover drawing by James M. Rogers  
Cover engraving by Roy V. Hunt

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3214 Champa Street, Denver, Colorado.

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One year subscriptions only \$1.00 in cash,  
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We appreciate the advertisements of our distinguished, professional contemporaries. Their magazines are readable, entertaining and thought provoking. They add to the pleasure and dignity of Science Fiction, one of the World's progressive movements. On the occasion of our Fourth Anniversary we salute them and wish them many years of continued success.

(The advertisements appear in the order in which they were received).

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GREETINGS To  
 "THE SCIENCE FICTION FAN"  
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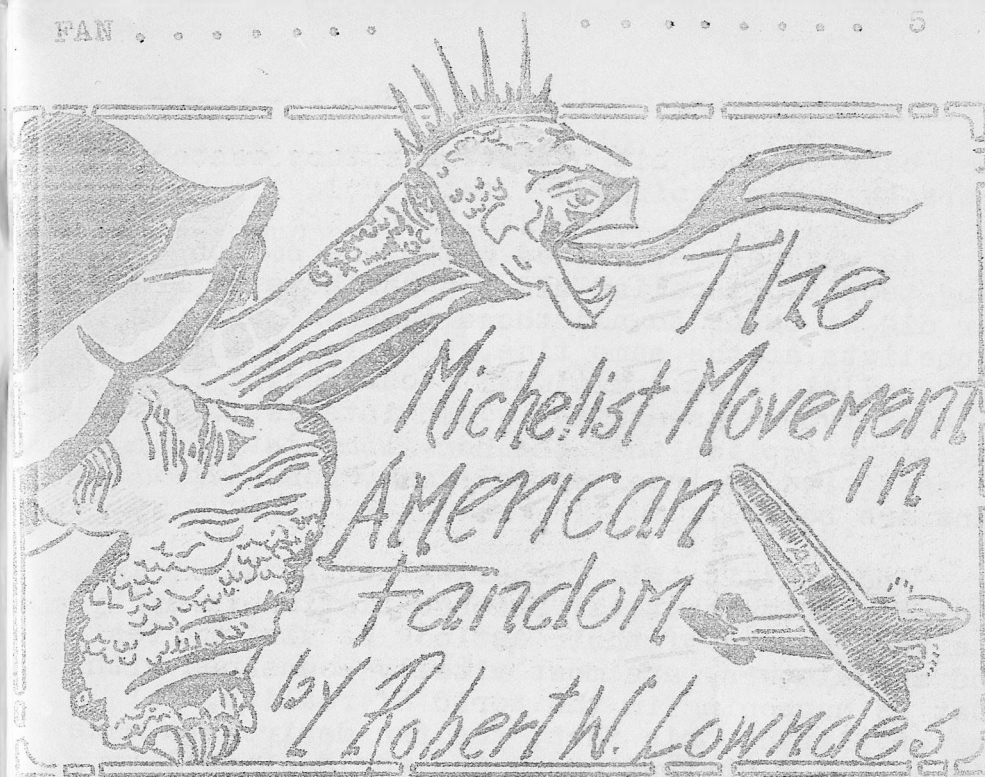
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"Michelism is not a party or a club. It is a state of mind at which many have arrived and more will arrive". - - Wollheim.

The story of the Michelist movement is the story of an attitude. As with all attitudes it began as a vague, evanescent thing, flickering, and at times, seemingly dying to an ember. But at length it attained real consciousness and grew from a suspicion to a realization. With realization the Michelist movement in American fandom began in earnest.

But the story of the Michelist movement in American fandom must properly begin with the first suspicions, continue with the flickering and move through doubts and blunders until it has at length become a steady flame. It is not the story of a group from the very first fully conscious and sure of themselves; it is the story of a small section of fandom who knew they wanted something, who knew they had a goal. Through constant striving



they came to know bit by bit what they wanted and where they were going.

As with all attitudes which are common to many people, Michelism did not strike every fan, nor did it occur to all those fans who are now Michelists at the same time. The fan who is also a Michelist is an individual possessed of a particular type of sensitivity and intellect. It is not to be implied that the non-Michelism can not be sensitive or intellectual: many non-Michelism fans are both.

And what is this Michelism attitude? It is the conviction that (1) Science-fiction fans, by the very nature of their outlook as visionaries and speculators, are most vitally concerned with what is happening in the world of reality, (2) That realizing this fact, the fan desires to make his or her contribution in the world of reality toward human progress and against reaction, (3) That while the range of progressive action is almost limitless, and freedom of the individual conscience is the rule, no fan can possibly be a Michelism who in any way approves or condones any credo, philosophy, or government, which takes an anti-scientific position. That which attacks science also attacks science-fiction.

The present outline, being the first of its kind, will be rather incomplete and doubtlessly inaccurate on many points. The author welcomes criticism of a constructive nature and trusts that with all its faults, this work will have given the reader a clearer picture of the Michelism movement in American fandom than he or she had before the reading.

So long as the Gernsback theory of the purpose of science-fiction fitted the needs of

fandom, thus long did it remain the accepted theory. It must be remembered that from the very first science-fiction and science-fiction fandom was supposedly imbued with a purpose, one outlined by the editor of the original science-fiction magazine. Not all readers, or all fans entirely agreed with this theory that science-fiction existed for the purpose of educating pleasantly via sugar-coated scientific propaganda: science-fiction, and that the purpose of fandom was to make scientists and technicians out of its most advanced members. But those who dissented were in a distinct minority and, as a rule, they would quietly leave fandom and never return. Others would leave in a hail of invective and vituperation levelled at science-fiction and fandom but without exception, they bolted rather than make a united effort to change fandom.

Concurrently, the quality of science-fiction was high enough so that those who were not interested in a purpose other than the pleasure of reading the magazines and seeing their letters in the readers' columns were quite satisfied.

Outside of science-fiction magazines, world conditions, and the situation in our own country, suddenly took a change. Instead of the new golden era which politicians, scientists, and professionals of all natures, with the exceptions of a few who were looked upon as crackpot alarmists were predicting, a new era of which the science-fictionists secretly believed themselves the vanguard, there ensued a period of crisis and ruin unbelievable.

Overnight, science-fictionists found themselves shifted from the offensive to the defensive. From an escape into realities to come, science-fiction became merely an escape. Still, the fans



hoped for justification: soon some prominent science-fiction fans would fulfill their destiny and become scientists. They would be scientists after the dreams of the fan, not hidebound to the past, but free, visionary, fearless scientists who would discover some new power, who would make science-fiction dreams come true and usher in the new golden era for the world.

Thus fans waited and hoped for the day of their justification. If today they were sneered at for reading science-fiction, for "wasting" their time with fan activities, their day would soon come. Soon a newly-acclaimed scientist would profess his great debt to science-fiction, to the escape literature which was really escape into reality. Oddly enough, few fans dreamed of themselves in this position: it was usually "some fan turned scientist".

Slowly passed the years and a few fans became writers, artists, etc. But where were the scientists? And where was the new golden age? Outside the science-fiction magazines was despair, poverty, and in Europe a new dark age. But at last it was discovered that a few ex-science-fiction fans had more or less made the grade. True, they had not made epochal discoveries, BUT IT WAS FELT THAT WITH BETTER TIMES... But here was the hour of triumph: science-fiction fans had become scientists. Fandom looked forward to its hour of justification. What resulted was an unexpected as it was devastating: instead of declaiming their great debt to science-fiction, instead of lauding it as a source of inspiration, without exception they denounced it as an adde-pated waste of time.

In practice the Gernsback theory proved a miserable failure.

At the same time, the quality of science-fiction in magazines was going steadily down. Magazines combined, suspended, or decreased frequency of publication. Fan activities rose from letter-writing to fan-magazine publishing and organizing into local or national clubs.

For awhile, the purpose of keeping science-fiction going, of striving to make the professional magazines improve themselves, of organizing clubs served a purpose for stf. And in the most influential organization outside of the magazine-sponsored Science Fiction League, the Gernsback theory was still accepted insofar as the setup of the ISA was concerned. In early 1937, a highly successful convention was held in New York City. Here antagonisms between various fan groups and individuals were liquidated and to all intents and purposes fandom was on a definite upsurge with the ISA bearing the torch.

The resignation of its President proved how weak the ISA actually was and how false the Gernsback theory, even where it seemed most strong. Whether wisely or no, the ISA was dissolved and fandom again found itself drifting in a sea of uncertainties. Thus arose the necessity for a new theory of the purpose of science-fiction. And with the necessity came the search. It was not a deliberate and conscious thing for at no particular time did a group of fans get together and state: it is time we became wise to the falseness of the Gernsback theory: from this moment onward we are Michelists. Not until after the events were the purposes sought and outlined.

Those most active in the Michelist movement in American fandom have been Donald A. Wollheim, Robert W. Lowndes, John B. Michel, Frederick Pohl, Jack Robinson, Cyril Kornbluth, and Jack Gillespie. Associated to a certain extent with them have been

Forrest J. Ackerman, Myrtle R. Douglas (Morajo), Milton A. Rothman, Richard Wilson, Jr.; Leslie Perri, and Glen F. Wiggins.

Those most active in the struggle against Michelism have been William S. Sykora, Sam Moskowitz, James V. Taurasi, Jack Speer. Associated with them at times have been John V. Baltadonis, J. Chapman Fiske, Fred Shroyer, T. Bruce Yerke, and Daniel McPhail.

On the eve of the Michelist revolution the status of the dramatis personae was briefly as follows:-

Donald A. Wollheim was well known to fandom and had already made friends and enemies galore. A veteran fan, a collector, an indefatigable correspondent, a writer for nearly every fan magazine in existence, he was known for his work in the SFL and ISA, for his fight against Wonder Stories, for magazines of his own editing such as The Phantagraph and, in the lighter vein, for his part in the Staple War and in ChuGhuism.

An extremely sensitive and intelligent person especially vulnerable to vulgar attack because of his personal appearance, he built up around himself an armour of biting wit and keen invective. His attacks upon persons or ideas, whether serious or in jest, were brilliant and merciless. So sharp was the sword of Wollheim, that, in the resulting bitternesses, his real generosity and good humour was often overlooked. Undoubtedly he had, at times, made un-necessary enemies, plunged into needless personalities. On the other hand, the vast preponderance of friends over enemies, and admirers over detractors, and the general correctness of his line, despite occasional errors, have all tended to keep him the "top" science fiction fan.

John B. Michel was known through a large correspondence, through having won a prize in Wonder Stories Quarterly's plot-contests and an honorable mention in a cover contest, for his role in various organizations, particularly the SFL and the ISA along with Wollheim and Sykora, and for his letters to editors and work on the "International Observer".

Ill health has kept Michel from playing a much larger role in the Michelist movement, while an impediment in speech prevents him from the most direct means of adequate expression. His articles are hot-blooded and caustic. He furnished the spark which galvanized potentialities into actualities.

Frederik Pohl was well known in the ISA and SFL for activities therein, for letters to editors for "Kind of Fan", for legendary dissipations, and for his editorship of the International Observer after Michel resigned.

Cynical, and capable, inclined to opportunism Pohl has been an asset to Michelism. His individuality, personal charm, and air of savior faire has often been the honey which accomplished more than the vinegar of sheer intellectual appeal.

Robert W. Lowndes was little known, save for a few poems in the Phantagraph, for occasional letters to editors, for items in the Brooklyn Reporter in regard to his chapter of the SFL, and for opposing Wollheim in the Staple War.

A most contradictory nature and a stubborn disregard for setbacks has made Lowndes prominent in the Michelist movement. He has been referred to as the most "liberal" of the Michelists by their opponents.

William S. Sykora had temporarily retired from fandom at this time, retired in a halo of invective and vituperation against science fiction and sf fans, but was well remembered for his work in the SFL and ISA, both constructive and destructive.

A most capable person, Sykora's innate inability to trust others, his admitted reluctance to look ahead into new directions, and his self-centered ambitions to push himself forward regardless of what promises were broken or friendships betrayed, has led him into the very type of activities he at one time so valiantly opposed. Like the legendary fanatic, Sykora has continually redoubled his efforts after having forgotten his aim.

Shortly before the outbreak of the Michelist revolution in October 1937, Wollheim wrote Lowndes mentioning that Michel had written a Communistic speech for presentation at the Convention in Philadelphia, Lowndes raised his eyebrows and promptly forgot about the matter, not being particularly interested.

When the Philadelphia convention met, there was but one big thing hanging before fandom: the World-Science Fiction Convention of 1939. No large organization (in the USA) existed; no single fanmag monopolized the field, no professional magazines offered adequate opportunity for discussion. Thrilling Wonder Stories printed letters of praise and a few knocks without comment, Amazing Stories published letters of no later vintage than three months before the date of the current issue and Astounding Stories was interested only in Science Discussions, a revival, to some extent, of Gernsbackism.

Michel's speech "Mutation or Death" was a cutting analysis of the general worthlessness of science-fiction and fandom at the present time. Many speeches before had been made, or vitriolic letters written saying in main the same things. But previously, these had always been the signal for the speaker or writer to depart from the field for good. Michel's speech not only exposed the situation but offered a remedy, pointed to what might be called for a "mutation" in science-fiction and science-fiction fandom.

As an afterthought, Wollheim added a resolution to the speech, calling for the support of the meeting. It called upon the meeting to place itself on record as opposing all forces leading toward barbarism and approving the march onward toward a more perfect, sane, scientific world. Both the speech and the resolution caught the audience unaware and a fierce controversy followed.

The resolution calling for fans to recognize realities outside of fandom and to place themselves on record as in favour of human progress via science and opposing barbarism and war and all forces leading thereto was the first stroke in the Michelist revolution. It provoked hot debate and met not only intellectual but personal opposition. When a vote was called, out of the 20 who answered, 12 voted nay. But the revolt had started.

Directly after this convention, the Lowndes-Wollheim correspondence flared into activity while the question of the resolution (the wording of which Lowndes opposed) was thrashed out and the question of Communism raised. While not violently anti-Communist, Lowndes was under the usual misimpressions on the subject and was anti-



political and anarchistic in viewpoint. It was finally generally agreed that Lowndes would study into the matter for an indefinite length of time before coming to a decision, inasmuch as far as, on the question of the new revolt, there was little disagreement. Thus the Triumvirate became a Quadrumvirate.

Despite the objections of John B. Michel, the new attitude was called Michelism, and the new movement known as the Michelist movement. Lowndes raised desultory objections over naming it after a person but felt that the name was not of sufficient importance to allow internal dissension so subsided.

Wollheim was flooding the fan magazines with articles about the revolution in fandom (although it was not termed as such until 1939) and in an article in "Novae Terrae" advocated support of the principles of the Communist International. Few fans realized that Wollheim, here, was not speaking for the Michelists as a whole, but was merely expressing his own opinion, albeit this opinion was shared by several other Michelists. Moreover, the leading fans in the movement did not realize that they were perhaps the only fans ready at that time to support anything that smacked of Communism, that to advance the issue of Communism (intellectually) as a logical outgrowth of the Michelist attitude was to create a false issue, to frighten away many fans who might have been on the verge of joining the movement openly. And it further served to give the more unscrupulous opponents of the Michelists an invaluable weapon.

Another mistake was the Wollheim-Moskowitz feud which helped only solidify the opposition. Although Wollheim was obviously in the right, the

feud was un-necessary, and it served an example of the Michelists failure, at that time, correctly to analyze the situation. The Science Fiction Fan carried it on for a time, then wearying, Editor Wiggins closed the doors for further discussion on the subject. In the first issue of "The Vagrant" Lowndes clarified the entire matter which had become almost incredibly obscure, but this, too, was undesirable.

THE CPASF (Committee for the Political Advancement of Science Fiction) was never fully understood by its own members until after it had been running for some time. Enemies and neutrals therefore, can hardly be blamed for getting false impressions. It was clearly not a Michelist organization as its membership was not all-Michelist nor were its aims directed principally at fandom. It was no more nor less than its title implied. It aimed to inject a greater measure of political consciousness into science-fiction by arousing the editors to print more sociological science-fiction stories, by getting them to feature sociological articles, by arousing sociological discussion in reader's columns. It also hoped to get the editors to take a firm stand against reactionary influences, to reject such stories as preached anti-scientific theories under the guise of science-fiction. It hoped to work with other fans toward these same ends. In that way, it would be serving Michelism indirectly inasmuch as by taking action in this matter fans would soon realize a new attitude toward science-fiction and fandom. Its aim was plainly not to make Michelists members of the Communist Party or Young Communist League.

This, however, did not prevent anti-Michelists from very promptly naming it the "Communist Party's Agitators in Scienti-fandom".

A few of the opposition really believed this was the case.

The first direct action was taken in regard to Editor Campbell of Astounding Stories. Letters were written and personal visits made. Editor Campbell expressed his liking for sociological stories but also stressed that worthwhile examples of these in science-fiction were rare. He did run a novel entitled "3000 Years" which was to a large extent a sociological novel. However this story appeared to many Michelists to be actually a concealed attack upon science and progress through presenting a warped viewpoint. Michelists therefor attacked the story, attempted to rally fans around them in protest. There was little or no response. Few fans saw anything wrong with the story and those who did were content to say they merely did not like it.

The "3000 Years" argument, while not a Michelist success, was a valuable experience. It taught the Michelists that they must go forward slowly, one step at a time, and not expect wonders of fandom. It taught them that to try to force (indirectly) a Michelist attitude upon any fan who was not ready for that attitude was to make an unnecessary opponent. The "3000 Years" argument also did bring out a number of sociological discussions among fans, notably Rothman and Speer.

In the FAPA the Michelists made the error of attempting to use straight Communist propaganda. Many fans might not have objected to examining this but all felt that it had no place in the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. This mistake was somewhat offset by debates of a sociological nature centering around a particular science-fiction story or incident as with the case of "3000 Years".

At around this time, Jack Speer was an object of mass-attack for his defense of fascism and soon became a chief among the oppositionists. It was not until later that the Michelists realized that the main trouble with Speer was that he did not know what he was talking about half the time and was quibbling around legal technicalities the other half. As a result, the members of the Michelist movement gave Speer no quarter. While it is true that Speer was not given quite a fair deal, as a result of this misunderstanding, it must also be noted that he himself made little or no attempt to clarify the situation but merely went on one jolly spree of red-baiting after another. His campaign in misrepresenting Michelism found some success in that it was welcomed by those who were looking around for things to throw at the Michelists, but otherwise it had no great effect. Speer, finding he was getting nowhere on a large scale, proceeded to redouble his efforts.

The first assumptions of the Michelists, however, regarding Speer were incorrect. He is not, nor ever was, a fascist. He is what is known as the "fascist-unconscious" in that he considers himself a socialist, defends some aspects of fascism without accepting the fascist line in toto, and has little or no realization of what fascism actually is. He makes a fetish out of definitions and will quibble endlessly over the turn of a phrase sacrificing the content for the lettering of a given situation. Personally amiable, talented, and above the norm in intelligence, he has little judgment of character and cannot seem to bring himself around to more than formal admission that an opponent might be sincere.

Shortly after the founding of the CPASF it was decided to issue a fan mag devoted to the new attitude. The Science Fiction Advance was the

result. It appeared twice then suspended, long intervals elapsing between issues. The Advance, despite its many faults, mainly those of balance, being nearly all theory and little of interest to the fan-in-progress, was enthusiastically received in many quarters where indifference at best was expected.

Out on the West Coast the subject of Michelism was recurring with interest. The Esperantists, as a rule, were in favour of it, and it was the subject of much discussion there. Here was given the much-neglected proof that Michelism was not necessarily Communism nor even Socialism (although the Michelist could be either) for the Esperantists were Michelists in as full a sense of the word as the New Yorkers in Wollheim's circle. Ackerman and Worrojo defended the new attitude and others accepted it without becoming excited.

In the LASFL organ, Imagination, a debate between Fred Shroyer and Wollheim, with others chiming in, in the "Voice" ran for several issues until it was decided to ban Michelist discussion. Even then it continued in the "Voice". A few fans showed their correct understanding of the Michelist attitude by stating their approval of any belief or attitude which would work, in whatever small a way, for a better world. The opposition, led by Shroyer, sneered, jeered, and distorted.

It must be remembered that a number of fans opposed the movement because of personal opposition to Wollheim or because of dislike or misunderstanding of the term "Michelism". Lowndes, upon several occasions, attempted without success to change the name of the attitude. However the

magazine in which the first article on this subject was scheduled never appeared (except for a few private copies). By the time the second article appeared it was felt that it was too late to change the name.

Meanwhile, an unexpected victory had been achieved. While other fanmags were gradually shutting down, the Science Fiction Fan opened its pages to Michelist articles. Wiggins himself favoured the attitude, and Lowndes, Michel and Wollheim had a number of items on the subject therein.

The main thing to note, however, in the general debate, is that, with a few notable exceptions (such as Kaletsky in the Advance) the opposition flatly refused to discuss the subject at all. They quibbled, evaded, distorted, vilified, and resorted to outright lies, but would not meet the subject intellectually or try to offer constructive criticism, criticism which the revolution needed. As a result, the Michelists often lost their tempers and became unnecessarily sharp in their replies.

The Newark convention of 1938, however, was the first to show openly, and on a large scale, the cowardice of some of the opposition. Here the sponsors, William S. Sykora (who had returned to fandom early in the year) and Sam Moskowitz imposed flat censorship on any and all speeches which might be Michelistic in nature. Knowing they could not answer the Michelists, they determined to suppress them.

The Convention's main purpose was to set in motion the machinery for the World Convention of 1939. Disregarding the Committee which has already been set up for that purpose, Sykora maneuvered to select a new committee, one which



(he thought) would be subservient to him. During this convention gag-rule and dictatorship was the order of the day. David A. Kyle joined the Michelists in opposing Sykora, but the double-cross was put over nonetheless. Sykora had his own committee. (One which, however, he never consulted.)

At this convention was commenced the organization known as "New Fandom". Being run by Sykora, Moskowitz, and Taurasi after the well-known methods of Adolf Hitler, it could well be called "new". All opponents were rigidly excluded from membership, no fans not in with Sykora were permitted to have any part in the makeup of the convention, and those who did not like the way the dictators were running things had no redress save to leave the proceedings. Thus Sykora gave fandom a deadly insult and a disgrace: the actions of the convention committee supported the theory that the only way to have a World Convention in 1939 was for fandom to permit Sykora, Moskowitz, and Taurasi to strangle democratic procedure and to use all the tactics of the Nazi Bund short of physical violence toward those who did not agree.

The editors of the professional science-fiction magazines made an effort to assist fair play, but after a few desultory attempts at unity they retired to their tents and allowed the storm troopers to strut their stuff unopposed. They might have brought Sykora's black shirts to their knees by utterly refusing to have anything to do with the convention unless full democratic procedure were followed in its preparation, by threatening to expose Sykora, but this they did not do. It is very probable that they saw the matter only as a personal issue between Wollheim and Sykora and, while regretting it, did not consider it wise to interfere. Undoubtedly they

did not realize to what depths Sykora would finally go.

Meanwhile a situation was developing in the FAPA. At that time Wollheim was President, McPhail Vice-President, Baltadonis Secretary-Treasurer, and Pohl Official Editor. In view of the attitude which many of the opposition had shown it was feared that if the Philadelphia members (along with Speer) were to obtain office they would impose censorship upon material which they felt should not go into the mailings. Conceding that the Michelists had put a number of items in the mailing not belonging there, censorship was unthinkable. Another mistake made at this time was in taking Jack Speer at his word and assuming he was a fascist. In such a case then he would have upheld censorship. However as was later discovered Speer is as strict parliamentarian who would not condone the slightest infraction of the constitution good, bad, or indifferent.

Not realizing these two facts, Wollheim saw but one course open and took it. Coming upon evidence pointing to deliberate sabotage by members of the FAPA in non-FAPA magazines (actually these things were not written with any intent to injure the organization despite their slanderous nature) and receiving a vulgar attack upon his appearance via postcard from the incumbent Secretary-Treasurer, Wollheim sent out an open letter with the ballots detailing the situation as he saw it.

We cannot tell how the results might have been otherwise, but it seems certain that the opposition candidates might have made a better showing. As it was Michel had a large majority for President, Lowndes a slight plurality for

Vice-President, Speer and Wilson being tied but three votes behind; Taurasi was virtually undisputed as Secretary-Treasurer (running as he did on both tickets) and Wollheim had a majority for the post of Official Editor.

Some of the resulting bitterness might have been cleared up had the defeated candidates requested an official investigation of the charges against them for the purpose of clearing their names at least. In a letter to Lowndes, Baltadon is stated (a few days after the results were known) that such a request would be made, but the request never came. Having no knowledge that the charges were anything but correct no action of any kind was taken by the Vice-President.

The opposition contented itself with drawing up a petition of reprimand and protest directed at Wollheim and circulating it around the membership.

Late in August 1938, Lowndes left Colchester for New York where he hoped to obtain work. The next two months were one of increasing depression for the Quadravirate as it became increasingly apparent that nothing could be found. This depression, along with the general gloom at the international situation, had much to do with the activities on the part of the four for that period.

IN the GNYSL another situation was developing. Sykora was a prominent member there and he devoted much of his activity in an attempt to keep Wollheim and the Michelists in general from joining, charging all sorts of fantastic and false plans on their part. The Michelists had been

desirous of joining inasmuch as they did not wish to exclude themselves in ivory towers from non-Michelist fans and further wished to come to a friendly understanding with the non-Michelists on the matter of personal feuds and other items. Sykora managed to keep them off for awhile, but the membership of the GNYSL showed what they thought of Sykora by voting their admittance.

Sykora then set out to destroy the GNYSL just as he had destroyed other clubs (The ISA, the ILSF etc.) which were not as he personally desired them.

The first crisis came and passed without an explosion. The issue was that of sending a delegate to the Youth Congress which the Michelists favored. A resolution was introduced to that effect, providing further that the GNYSL contribute to the delegate's expenses. The Director, James V. Taurasi stubbornly refused to consider the matter or to allow discussion on it. The issue became one of democratic procedure and impeachment charges were brought against Taurasi. However, at the next meeting, they were dropped due to lack of mass support.

Later, however, a real issue developed. Sykora had failed to attend a number of meetings, as well as failing to pay dues and was therefore liable to expulsion. The matter was brought up; a motion to expel Sykora was made.

Taurasi positively refused to consider the motion for discussion or for vote. It was a stupid way of defending a member who might possibly be getting an unfair break. In the discussion which followed this refusal Taurasi admitted that he did not own the club but outrightly refused to consider such a motion under any circumstances.

The issue again became one of democratic procedure.

At this meeting, Claire Beck was present and had been elected to honorary membership. Inasmuch as he was not acquainted with the personal issues involved he was made judge and after hearing the case declared it to be a clear case of attempted dictatorship and stifling of democratic procedure. Taurasi was therefore impeached as chairman and, despite the objections of those present, resigned from the GNYSFL.

Sykora had evidently been waiting for this moment, for he immediately sent Taurasi to Thrilling Wonder Stories and convinced the SFL heads that the Michelists were entirely to blame for all trouble in the GNYSFL. As a result, the GNYSFL was summarily dissolved and a ruling made in reference to New York City that no SFL chapter could exist. Both Wollheim and Sykora were members thereof.

Thus reaction gained a victory.

Early in October, the Futurian Society of New York, an organization along Michelist lines which had been in mind for some time, was born. Originally named the Futurian Science Literary Society, the name was changed later to Futurian Society of New York. The original executive committee consisted of Donald A. Wollheim, Robert W. Lowndes, John B. Michel, Frederik Pohl, and Rudolph Castown.

While the Queens SFL was formed on the line of the old GNYSFL with Sykora, Moskowitz, and Taurasi entirely in charge, and was going along under Sykora's customary anti-democratic measures, the Futurian Society offered a club where full and free discussion on any subject

was permitted and encouraged at all times. No important conferences were held as had been tentatively planned, but the organization continued without an official organ, professional backing, and despite the boos of the blackshirts.

However, the general personal psychological situation among the Quadrumvirate was one of deep gloom. Lack of cooperation from friends, the indifference of so-called liberals, the almost unanimous refusal of fans as a whole to meet the issue squarely, and the docile manner in which they permitted fanatics like Sykora to insult their intelligence with fascist methods all made the four wonder if it was all worth the trouble.

They finally decided, (Pohl and Michel had to all intents and purposes become inactive) to withdraw from the main fray and let the opposition have the field and the Convention to themselves in whatever way they wanted it. It would be a good test to see if anyone else would carry forward the Michelist torch. They would resign their FAPA offices and confine their activities to the Futurians and to such items of fantasy as they felt like putting in shape for the FAPA mailings. It was a nice idea.

It was in fact an excellent idea. They were thus relieved of the responsibility of keeping up correspondence or making any reply to their enemies. But the four found out they just couldn't do it. Wollheim had written Wiggins of his intention to get out and leave the field to Moskowitz. Wiggins replied asking Wollheim to stay, saying he had decided to drop Moskowitz from the pages of the Fan anyway. Had the Michelists been in higher spirits they might have protested outright exclusion of Moskowitz or any other from the Fan, demanding that Wiggins go no farther than his editorial prerogative



of rejecting individual manuscripts. As it was, this mistake on the part of a fellow Michelist was permitted to bring its bitter fruit.

Lowndes then started a weekly fanmag. Intended merely as an organ of fantasy and whimsy, Le Vombiteur soon became a semi-Michelist sheet dipping into straight Michelist and even Communist propaganda. Gradually, because, despite things unliked, it was a different, unorthodox, and free magazine for anyone's point of view, it gained headway and built up a fairly large circle of readers and subscribers. But it was the end of Lowndes' "retirement".

In addition to "LeVombiteur" Lowndes also resumed publication on the "Vagrant". The second issue was devoted partly to an explanation of why he resigned the Vice-Presidency of the FAPA (in addition to personal reasons) and contained items in response to Rothman (an associate Michelist) and his "Debater".

However, another situation was developing in the FAPA. The opposition, apparently taking the retirement of the quadrumvirate as an admission of weakness and final defeat determined to seize the opportunity and make the most of it. Daniel McPhail, sensing the general desire in the FAPA for unity, harmony, and improvement, came out with what he called the "National Progressive" party on a 9-point program. This program was, in the main, a good one, although it had a few very bad features. It assumed that everyone who did not take something very akin to a "loyalty oath" to the present U.S. Government was an enemy of democracy or words to that effect. It tried to impose censorship in regard to discussions on religion. (Although no discussion of religion had

yet been held in the FAPA). It further wanted to put the FAPA in direct competition to other amateur press groups.

Despite these flaws, the Michelists believed the general idea of a non-partisan progressive circle in the FAPA to be a good one, and applied for membership. In the second issue of the "vagrant" Lowndes pointed out the weaknesses and stated the willingness of those Michelists who were also Communists to work with the progressive and make personal sacrifices for the sake of the FAPA in general.

Evidently this was the last thing McPhail desired for he immediately proceed to make a frenzied attack upon Communism, Socialism, and radicalism of any nature and made the most mawkish and sickening defense of religion (although religion had never been attacked in the FAPA) thus violating grossly his own national progressive platform. The NP party, according to one plank in its program, was supposed to be aloof from FAPA politics but it promptly endorsed candidates for the forthcoming election with the most sickening slogans and waved the stars and stripes as it ranted about "isms".

The Michelists naturally demanded that the NP carry out its own pledges and that it respect their overtures of friendship.

The "honest" and "American" candidate put forward by McPhail's "Progressives" was none other than James V. Taurasi, who had twice been impeached for Hitler-like methods.

And another example was soon to come up. Olon F. Wiggins had written letters to Editors Palmer, Campbell, etc., protesting what appeared

to be professional sponsorship of the convention. A badly distorted version of this letter to Campbell appeared in Taurasi's "Fantasy News" followed by the type of remarks one would expect to hear from hypocritical pro-fascist "100% Americans". Whether or not Campbell himself was responsible for this (as Wiggins believed) is not known. Concomitant with this was the distortion of a letter from Wollheim questioning Sykora on the motion picture "Metropolis" which was to be shown at the convention. Sykora had stated previously that efforts were being made to obtain the picture from Nazi owners. And around this time, the FSNY had made sincere efforts to come to a friendly understanding with the Queens SFL for the sake of the convention. A proposal was made to the Queens SFL but "honest" and "American" James V. Taurasi refused to allow the membership to hear of the proposition and proceeded to insult the representative of the Futurians.

In April, Pohl launched forth with the Futurian Federation of the World. It was an all fan organization made to offset the exclusive policies of New Fandom. Unfortunately, the Futurians, at that time, were not able to give their full support and cooperation to such a venture, commendable as it was. Outside of writing of it in terms of approval Lowndes and Wollheim were able to do nothing.

The Federation elicited some response, surprisingly from fans in the New Fandom orbit, then after a single issue of the "Futurian Review" the Federation went into suspended animation.

In the FAPA, Taurasi proceeded to defeat himself. In the March 1939 mailing was included

three proposed amendments to the constitution upon which President Wiggins had called an immediate vote. All ballots were to be in the hands of Secretary-Treasurer Taurasi by April 3rd.

The amendments proposed (1) the definition of the term "active member" (2) that only active members should be permitted to renew their membership (3) that only active members should receive ballots in elections and that the Secretary-Treasurer would receive from the Official Editor a list of those members qualifying as "active" before ballots were sent out.

Taurasi made no effort to inform the membership of the FAPA as to the results of the vote on these amendments. He not only sent out ballot indiscriminately to all members but entirely ignored President Wiggins' appointment of Wollheim as Custodian of Ballots. He did make an effort to obtain a list from Robert A. Madle then acting as Official Editor.

Wollheim brought charges of illegality and the election was suspended while an investigation was held. Due to personal affairs, Vice-President Marconette was unable to hold an investigation himself and appointed Lowndes and Pohl as investigators.

The investigation proved beyond shadow of doubt that the ballots sent out were illegal but also proved that whatever sins Rothman and Madle had committed were of omission under circumstances in which they could not be blamed. the culprit was "honest" and "American" James V. Taurasi.

On July 2, 1939, before the convention, a group of fans met at an automat to discuss things in general. Present were Wollheim, Lowndes,

Kornbluth, Gillespie, David A. Kyle, Mark Reinsberg, Jack Robinson, and others. On his own initiative Kyle, remembering what had occurred at the Newark Convention, printed a short pamphlet describing Sykora's activities in the past and warning the reader that a similar deal might be attempted at the present convention.

Later in the day, William S. Sykora held a party at Caravan Hall. All stf fans, writers, and editors, were invited. All stf fans, writers, and editors were admitted except Donald A. Wollheim, John B. Michel, Robert W. Lowndes, Frederik Pohl, Cyril Kornbluth, and Jack Gillespie.

These six were refused admittance, were threatened with physical violence and arrest if they did not leave the premises. The booklets they had prepared for distribution at the convention were stolen from them.

Sykora called this party a convention. A World Science Fiction Convention in fact. However no fans, authors, and editors residing outside the United States were present. And instead of the 1000 which New Fandom boasted of entertaining, there were no more than 150 in attendance the first day, less than 100 the second day, and less than 50 at the New Fandom banquet.

At this "convention" in preparation of which Sykora had personally spent over \$250 there was no discussion of any nature permitted. No one was called upon to speak publicly except such people as Sykora thought he could trust not to expose him. To his credit, Editor Campbell tried to get Sykora to admit the six fans exiled, or at the very least to call for a vote on the question, but Sykora positively refused stating that he would call the convention off rather than admit Wollheim, Lowndes, Michel, Pohl, Kornbluth and Gillespie. Thus they were not admitted.

To the credit of Sam Moskowitz, it must be said that he tried to get Sykora to allow the six to enter on their pledges not to start trouble. He was promptly overruled by Sykora and Taurasi who did not dare face the six at a public meeting.

At the "convention" a number of fans (Leslie Perri, Dale Hart, David A. Kyle, Walter Sullivan) and others did their best to break down Sykora's dictatorship but without success. Kyle managed to slip in a statement that the six should be admitted at the end of his speech and the suggestion was greeted with prolonged applause. Leslie Perri called for a vote, but Sykora stated that no motions would be considered. Morajo and Ackerman did what they could, but Sykora cared for the opinions and wishes of no one except himself.

Thus again William S. Sykora greeted fandom with an exhibition of cowardice and fascist technique, with a deadly insult.

On Tuesday, July 4th, 1939, the Futurians held a special meeting for the out-of-town fans. Everyone was invited; everyone was encouraged to speak on any subject; everyone present was permitted to vote on any motion broached. At this meeting was discussed the future of science-fiction organizations, the recent convention (a vote of disapproval was passed with but one dissenting vote from a person who felt stronger words should have been used), the prospects of future conventions, the situation in the FAPA, and the general subject of Michelism.

It was, in fact the first Michelist conference, for, after questions had been answered from the floor (Wollheim, Lowndes, Michel, Pohl, and the chairman, Cyril Kornbluth were appointed as an answering committee) it was determined that all present shared the Michelist attitude.



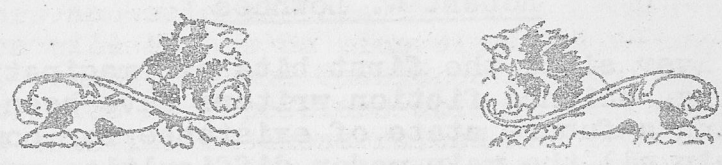
At this meeting arose for a final decision a question which had long been troubling many fans. The question of the name "Michelism". Despite the claims on one side that "a rose by any other name is just as sweet" and that no change would lay ourselves open to vulgar attacks of all nature, it was felt that this attitude was so much bigger than any given person that to name it after a person was to dilute and distort it (no slur upon Michel). Kenneth Sterling, John B. Michel, Milton A. Rothman, Forrest J. Ackerman and others indicated their agreement with this. At the first vote the motion was defeated. Frederik Pohl later called for reconsideration and, a vote being passed the matter was again discussed and again put to a vote. This time, it was passed unanimously.

David A. Kyle brought up the subject of the Association for Democracy in Science-Fiction. A temporary committee had been named when the informal gathering met at the automat prior to going around to Caraven Hall. Should the Association continue, or, now that the convention was over, dissolve? It was decided that so long as William S. Sykora and his associates remained in the science-fiction field, an association for democracy in science-fiction was a necessity. Kyle was authorized to select a committee.


Michel was named head of a committee to find a suitable name for this Michelist attitude.

The meeting of July 4th, 1939 was the culmination of nearly two years of Michelist endeavor. It was a triumph for the Michelist concept of science-fiction. It was a triumph for the Michelist concept as applied to science-fiction fandom.


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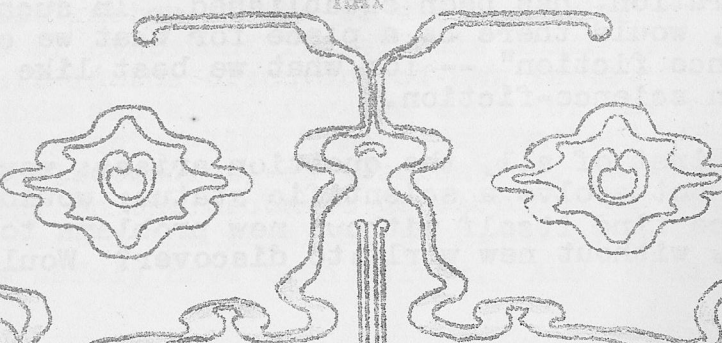
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FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION

By  
Robert V. Lowndes

Ever since the first bits of imaginative writing, science fiction writers have been depicting a future state of existence for homo sap wherein all the main major difficulties surrounding the animal existence of the race were solved. That is, in these "utopias" as they were called, the basic problems that face every living being-- food, clothing, health, procreation, etc., had been taken care of so that no person had to devote the majority of his time and energy to the solving of these problems. As to the nature of these solutions -- the form of these utopias -- therein so many writers had so many "states" but all seemed to agree upon the net complex of these states -- they took care of all the animal problems and left man free to grapple with human problems.

Let us suppose, for the sake of this article, that some such mode of living has come about. Homo sap has succeeded in arranging his economic existence cooperatively in such a way that only a minimum of effort on the part of every individual is necessary for maintaining the production and distribution of all materials that he requires for a well-balanced life -- that, further, the widest amount of individual freedom, correlated with the maximum of social cooperation, has been established. In such a world, would there be a place for what we call "science fiction" -- for what we best like to see in science-fiction.

First of all, the question arises: would there not evolve a scientific status; would not science find itself without new problems to solve, without new worlds to discover? Would not

science grow stagnant and slowly wither away? I think not. From the earliest times, philosophers and scientists alike have agreed that there will always be plus-ultra, more beyond. And, surely, it has developed so far that, no matter how many problems science solved, the very solution of these raised new problems, opened up hitherto undiscovered fields of research, speculation and inquiry. In every field of scientific endeavor of which I have heard, experts therein have confessed that the more they pried into it, the more they realized how much they did not know about it, how little was known in relation to what there was to find out about it.

But then, you may ask, will this not kill science-fiction in another way? Since there will be no end of opportunity for all, will not the future people prefer to grapple with the facts and scorn the "escapist" speculation of science fiction? I think the answer to that is, again No. Why? Because scientific methods are restrictive and slow. In order to conduct scientific inquiry, one must spend much time in mastering basic facts, groundwork, then slowly, carefully, and precisely begin to investigate new possibilities. But these new fields must be close to the groundwork -- one must take but one step at a time, and not even that step until repeated experimenting, checking and rechecking has evolved that "close agreement of a series of investigation of the same phenomenon" on the part of competent individuals which alone can result in the discovery of new facts. Scientific methods are slow, far too slow for the facile and lightning-like human imagination. The scientist cannot, as a scientist, waste his energy on the probable development of humans on Mars until the physical problems of getting to Mars safely have been solved. And, even under

the most ideal of environments for research that problem will take all his time for an indefinite interval - perhaps generations.

But the science-fictionist is not thusly bound. He does not have constantly to check and recheck experiments until any process is foolproof. He can evolve a principle on the basis of fact, assume it sound, extrapolate, and fly around the cosmos. As new "facts" knock his theories into cocked hats, he can repeat the process on the basis of these new facts. Whether or not there actually will be a close relation between stf and science in the future -- a case of the imaginative stf writer leading scientific progress in a sense, is questionable. But the impetus to extrapolate and play around with possibilities and probabilities, not bound down to the rigid "prediction of the most probable" which is the basis of scientific prophecy, will remain.

Again, we cannot assume that everyone will be a scientist. The "work" that the society requires for its maintenance will be done by the most scientific methods, but it is not likely that the majority of the people in the future will choose their social "work" as the field for their own individual aims and projects. Thus they will be interested in imaginative fiction, particularly because the new society will be based upon scientific methods and because they will learn from childhood to accept science as their servant and think in terms of the new world.

But it will not be, even at its wildest, the type of stf to which we are accustomed. There will be no villians, dictators, conquerors (military) from Mars or other planets, invaders, etc. In the new social order, based upon an abundance of materials that humans need, upon social co-op-

eration there will be no place for "villians" who try to express themselves at the expense of the world or of other nations, people, worlds, or groups. Human relations will be much more free -- even though personal problems will probably remain. But these problems will be met scientifically, socially, rather than haphazardly on the basis of superstition or neurosis. And since the society in which homo sap lives will be sane, writers will not picture the beings of other planets as insane. Unless, of course, they depict them as in a state of development distinctly inferior to that of homo sap -- in a state such as homo sap is in now. But then, again, the approach will be different. The humans will not go out conquering, destroying, or exploiting. They will intervene, if at all, for the sole purpose of assisting the other world peoples to establish their own "utopias".

There will still be adventure, worlds of it, in the stf of the future. Men and women will be depicted in alien surroundings, trying to maintain their equilibrium and solve the vital problems in new environments. There will be hero tales and hero worship. Only it will be a different kind of "heroes" than those in stf today. They will not be the puppets one sees in the current pulps; writers of the future, should they come into contact with the stf of today, will, I fear be sorely puzzled. Not only will they find the "science" as laughable as the illustrations to Wells' original "When the Sleeper Wakes" look today, but they will find the characters incomprehensible - far more so than we find the characters in the sagas of the olden times today.

Yes, there will be science fiction in the future -- and the opinion of this fan is that it will be worth any fan's trouble to live through the present times to see it.



## FANFARADE

By Donald A. Wollheim

All fandom is looking forward to the Second National Science Fiction Convention to be held in Chicago Labor Day. It is expected to be the first democratically conducted affair of its kind. Sponsors are the Illini Fantasy Fictioneers, headed by Bo Tucker and Mark Reinsberg, the latter the originator. Reinsberg proposed the idea to various persons at the New York Convention last year, though it was not brought up on the floor due to the fact that affairs of science-fiction fan interest were not on the agenda. It was first discussed publicly at the Futurian Society meeting of July 4th and that organization was the first to vote its approval. Since then plans for the affair have been forging ahead nicely despite a whispering campaign against it conducted by the dictators of New Fandom. Recently this friction was brought out into the open by an open statement addressed directly to Sam Moskowitz and Will Sykora by the I.F.F. published in the Fantasy Fictioneer, their official organ.

Does anyone know the present whereabouts of George Gallet, Maurice Hanson, and James Rathbone, all of whom are fans with the warring forces in France (or maybe once Belgium). Likewise what has happened to Heinrich Haussler, the LASFS tame Nazi, since the war began? . . . The full story of the projected new British Science Fiction magazine NEW WORLDS which was to have been edited by Ted Carnell is given in a four page statement with the latest VOICE OF THE IMAGINATION. Cause of its folding is given as dissension among the sponsoring publishing partnership. Other rumors, not accredited by Carnell, speak of fraud and dishonesty . . .

TERROR TALES AND HORROR STORIES of sexy-sadist fame have been shorn of their worst features due to pressure from the post office and now feature weird fiction of a gory and fierce variety. No girl torture allowed though, that's the new policy. Likewise as a result, SINISTER STORIES, STARTLING MYSTERY, UNCANNY TALES, and MYSTERY TALES are all defunct . . . Membership of the Science Fictioneers now approaching 300, membership in the Futurian League past 75. For information about the latter, write the General Secretary, Futurians, 2574 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y.

Visitors to New York City include Robert Heinlein, Edward E. Smith, and Stanton A. Coblentz. Visitors to New York during the next few months are expected to include Walter Sullivan, C.A. Moore, Virginia Kidd, Louis R. Chauvenet, and Mary G. Byers. . . The June issue of THE PHANTAGRAPH, oldest fan magazine in existence, features a poem by A. Merrir and H. P. Lovecraft's biography of Ibid. . . Charles D. Hornig, now on the West Coast, is advertising as a scienc-fiction expert in writers' magazines. He is not an agent however. Agenting away successfully is Doc Lowndes, worth looking into if you're trying to get a start as a writer . . . The WRITERS DIGEST reports complaints received against the publishers of SCIENCE FICTION and FUTURE FICTION charging difficulties in obtaining payment. Investigation reveals there is considerable truth to the complaints but that payment can be had without recourse to law. But the stories from authors indicate that Hornig is back at a game fairly close to that he played for Gernsback years ago. No wonder he went West!



From as far back as I can remember our house was constantly cluttered up with a motley gathering of what to my childish mind seemed to be funny looking individuals. They called themselves artists, musicians, editors, actors, orators, both religious and political, numismatists, orinthologists, and retired heroes from all branches of service, including even a Colonel from Timbuctoo. But alas! I do not remember a bona-fide Science Fiction Fan.

Therefore, when I had the opportunity to read about these idealistic creatures, in the "Role of Science Fiction" so skillfully written by Jack Robins, I considered that my life was now complete, and I could pay my last installment on the cemetery lot for the end of civilization must be near.

If I were permitted to steep myself in the fumes of distilled Wormwood I might be able to stumble upon what supernatural yen is responsible for Fan-Phobia, but without the effects of this

barbaric herb I must merely ruminate in any further attempt to analyze this urge for a sixth dimension outlet.

I first heartily agree with Jack that fan phobia leads to an attempt on the part of twillighters to express their pent-up emotions in a Fan Mag where the fear of ignominious defeat is not as severe a shock to their sympathetic nerve as a cold professional statement slip marked "REJECTED".

I also agree that after a Fan has actually seen a brain child reprinted his pencil becomes more facile, extending next to flippancy and finally winding up positively rabid.

Jack stopped at this point, - might it not be possible in the futurian world to delve deeper into the souls of fans and bring out those hidden desires and ambitions - Let's all try and see what happens, the effort certainly couldn't bring forth a worse primordial chaos than our present state of affairs.

\* \* \* \* \*

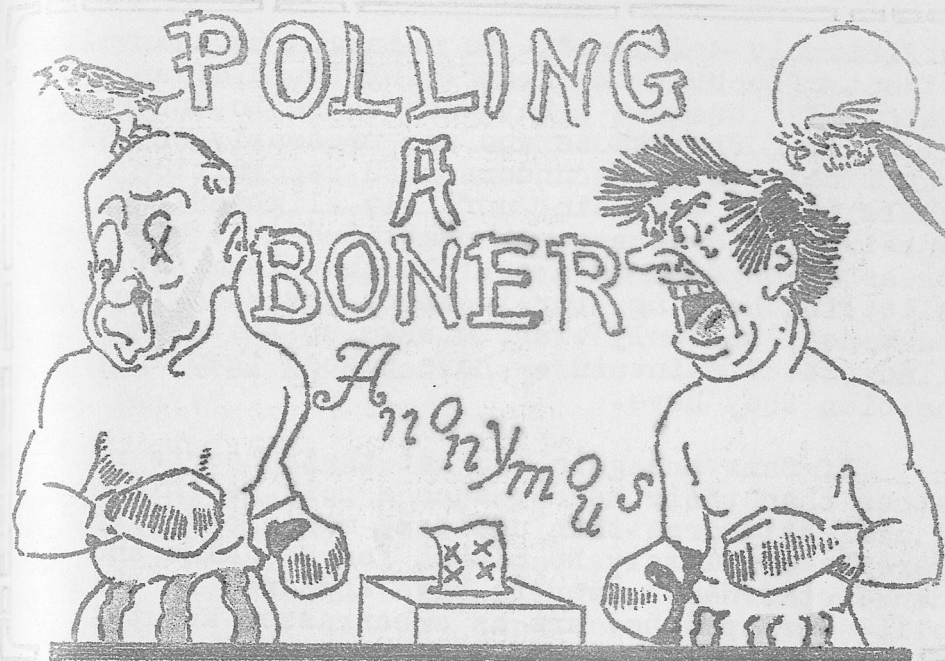
### A WONDERFUL THING

Enthusiasm is the dynamics of personality. Without it all abilities you may have lie dormant. You may possess the soundest judgment, knowledge, and good reasoning faculties, but no one will know it until you discover how to put your heart into thought and action.

FANTASTIC NOVELS For September will feature THE PEOPLE OF THE GOLDEN ATOM by Ray Cummings - cover and illustrations by Frank R. Paul. Followed by THROUGH THE DRAGON GLASS by A. Merritt. Full page illustration by Virgil Finlay. This issue will be on sale July 10th.

Stories scheduled for the next issue of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES are such stories as: THE FACE IN THE ABYSS, FUNGUS ISLE. Followed shortly after by THE SNAKE MOTHER, sequel TO THE FACE IN THE ABYSS, and other Merritt stories in accordance with readers' demands. These stories will all be complete. THE PEOPLE OF THE GOLDEN ATOM has been constantly asked for by the readers who found THE GIRL IN THE GOLDEN ATOM a wonderful story.

Paid Advertisement



Art Widmer is now conducting a poll to determine the ten top fans. According to first published results, two inhabitants of "Shangri-La" and three members of the Strangers Club, are included. A percentage of 50% gentlemen.

I contend that only Ackerman, definitely, and Swisher, possibly, have any place in that five; that the first results must be mainly made up of Massachusetts and California club votes; and that if Chauvenet and Hodgkins long remain in the list, the poll is proved worthless. Worse than worthless, misleading. I, for one, would flatly refuse to deem it worthy of recognition, FOR IT WOULD not be representative; and I expect to convince you of the same feeling.

There are now about three things I would like to say at once: The poll-fault (no pun intended) is not Widmer's; who am I, I am a name to be found in any list of famous fans that contains twenty names; and I am writing this anonymously (and altering clues to my identity only



sufficiently - I hope! - to maintain my anonymity without affecting the underlying truth of any statements) because I have no desire to incur any ill-feeling from those who are presently enjoying what I believe to be underserved recognition (while others are being unfairly slighted), who conceivably could resent my attitude. I wish to stress throughout this article that I am not belittling Hamling, for instance, or Hodgkins or Chauvenet, but only wish to wake up those who blindly -- I maintain -- have placed them in the position they have.

If fans are going to let their hearts rule rather than their heads, such a poll as this one is useless; worse than useless, misinformative. There is absolutely NO EXCUSE for Hodgkins and Chauvenet's names ever to have appeared in this poll. Perhaps they are as embarrassed about it as anybody. But because they have a big club out there in Los Angeles, where R.J.L. was Director two or three times, all the members boost the local favorite. When more returns are in from L.A., - unless this appears in time to make them stop and think, which I am hoping--, I look to see Yerke, Morojo, Freehafer, and even possibly this Walt Daugherty, making a show on the list. With twenty-five or thirty votes out there, they could do it. Unless these are counteracted by a similar large (emotional) vote from the Queens, for Moskowitz, Taurasi, Sykora, Racic, and Van Houten. For Moskowitz and "Javity" there is justification, just as for the "J" and Morojo. But if the Futurians (biased) are going to poll hard (pun intended!) for Robins and Kornbluth, let us say, for 9th or 10th place; and L.A. is hot for Hodgkins and Yerke getting in there; and the New Fandom group determined that Mario and "Says" should show; and we already see how the Mass. Movement has pushed Chauvenet, Widner, and "Checker" in; why - what the hell! guys, what the hell!

There are a dozen fans who obviously stand head and shoulders above the two or three objectionables on the list at the present. Not even mentioned have been REINSBERG, WOLLHEIM, MARCONETTE, ROTMAN, BALPADONIS, TRAIN, CARNELL, MOROJO, LOUNDES, HART, KUSLAN, SPEER! I may still be forgetting a few, for the moment; but, my God! can any of you illustrate how Louis or Russ, or L. Lawrence surpass these in activity, popularity, importance--any of the accomplishments that one takes into consideration when selecting a top fan???

There is another important aspect from an entirely different angle, which I will dwell on but briefly, as my space is limited, but it is this: Do not fail to vote for a fan because of personal dislike! Because a fan has been linked with communism (and you don't care for communism), or one is an advocate of Esperanto (and you dislike any language but English), or accusations of dictatorial tactics have been levelled at another, or a fourth simplifies his spelling to a degree that you find irritating; do not, out of dislike, be blinded to the fact that this fellow was a founder of the fanmag ten years ago that you can't get a copy of now for love or money; that this one's letters are to be found in the back issue pro's that you are buying now at premium prices and reading for the first time; that this one has been a stager of conventions; this, active as reader, writer, editor, publisher, and collector, for ages, etc.

Anybody who regards this article as sour grapes on my part because I have, in racing parley not "placed or showed" in the poll to date, is badly mistaken. You've got another think coming, thank you! If such is the case, the whole point of this article has been lost on you. Quit acting like a human being and exercise some of

that giant BRAIN you boast about having as a science-fiction fan, consider carefully and vote intelligently! If it's too late now, then NEXT TIME.

Addenda: Art Widner, Jr.'s Address: Box 122, Bryantville, Mass. Vote for ten top sfans in order of preference ( a poor word). He would also like your --- Ah! now preference is okay --- as to five best cover artists and your five favorite interior. Professional illustrators, that is. And in the event you haven't yet got in on his original poll, list your ten favorite sf-weird fantasy authors, living or dead, in order.

\*\*\*\*\*

Here is the Fourth Anniversary issue of the Science Fiction Fan.

We, Editors and Readers, are proud of the "Fan". We believe the quality of our magazine has been high, and has proved of general interest. We are less interested in gossip, rumors, scandal, and are more interested in serious studies of Science Fiction -- even though they may occasionally be written in humorous or fiction form. Worthwhile articles are always welcome and will find a place in our pages as space permits.

We are not going to crow too loudly about achievements, but we do ask you to think to yourselves, "What other fan magazine has consistently offered such an array of literary and artistic talent?" Due to circumstances beyond our control the "Fan" was delayed considerably during the past year. It is now up to date and, if fortune holds, will continue up to date. As an old, established, valuable magazine, we herewith offer ourselves and our readers a bouquet:~ "THE FAN LEADS THE FIELD".



HARRY WARNER JR.

The past year has seen a lot of changes in fandom -- not so much in its personnel as in its scope, size, and philosophy. To me, the most significant of these changes, and the one to be discussed here, is the evolution of statewide groups.

Very few fans, I'm sure will deny that there is a very definite and necessary place for the Science Fiction League and the Science-Fictioneers. They are needed. One would be enough, but since we have two, the extra one isn't doing any great amount of harm--rather does it do good, by stirring up competition, even though that competition is somewhat too vigorous.

These two organizations serve to bind, somewhat, the entire country together. There is too much dissension and rivalry, both within them and between them. And yet I firmly believe that it's better to have large organizations like these with

the dissension, than no organizations and less dissension. Too, I believe most fans will agree that the formation of the Science Fiction League marked a real turning point in fandom, regardless of whether it was for the most part good or bad. It marked the first recognition of the fan world by the professional magazines. Granted, then, that large organizations such as these serve a purpose.

Such organizations aim at one thing --besides getting members--and that is the formation of local chapters. There is just one flaw in this plan: there aren't enough real fans in the smaller cities of the country to organize stable chapters. So that Chapters of the clubs may be formed in several hundred cities, potentially; but there's a lot of country and a lot of fans left completely out in the cold by this--simply because they live in isolated sections of the country, where there are not enough fans nearby to form a real fantasy chapter with regular meetings. This is absolutely unavoidable: It just happens this way. And the worst part of it is that the SFL and SF-neers have no means of keeping these more isolated fans intensely interested in activities.

So there we have the two poles, contained in one; the huge organization embracing all the U.S.; and within itself chapters whose boundaries are in terms of two and three miles. This is the way it's been for a long while; up until recently, no one has taken a middle course.

But now it's begun. Almost simultaneously, or in periods of only two or three weeks, several new clubs sprang up. They involve states only, or sections of states. The first such, technically, I suppose, might be called Dale Hart's Tri-City chapter of the SFL; the first real one was the

Paine Science Fiction Association. Then came numerous others, until now there are about a half dozen in operation or ready to begin operation very soon, and plans for at least three more are being formulated.

These state-wide clubs are the middle course, and possibly the best course, in fan organization. With the fan world in its present chaotic state, there is no nation-wide organization that can count on the co-operation of everyone. The big city chapters appeal to a few in those cities, but aren't of much interest to fans living too far away to attend meetings. In the nation-wide clubs, there's not enough contact among members to keep interest at its height; in the local chapters fans see too much of one another and start feuding. A state-wide organization avoids practically all of these evils; the personnel is fairly small--never over 25, up to now. The members live fairly close to one another, and can visit back and forth in large or small numbers a convention of them can be held within the state without the difficulties of a nation-wide one whenever the members wish one. They're closely-knit, and yet not so close that feuding starts within. Up to now, at least; let us hope this Utopia of things continues.

And I believe the most important development in fandom the next year or so will be in these groups. In certain states, organizations like this may never come to pass, simply because there are no fans in certain states, apparently. But that difficulty is easily obviated: merely include a backward state in the scope of each organization. For instance, there has never, to my knowledge been an even semi-prominent fan in Delaware. So, if I were to organize a Maryland fantasy society, as I hope some day to do, Dela-



ware will be included in it; if any fans pop up there, they'll have an organization to belong to, and if enough turn up, they can break off and form a society of their own.

Perhaps in the future, not too far future, barring the catastrophe of our entry into Europe's struggle, we shall have a network of these fan clubs over the nation. Not embracing every state perhaps; in some states like California, more than one even. Then their heads might form into a kind of Congress of fans, precisely as in our own Government. Questions which arise--really important ones, such as where the next Convention shall be held, and so forth--can be decided with the whole fan nation getting a chance to speak. Perhaps even, if everyone co-operates, a professional magazine, edited by fans, will be started. The possibilities seem to be endless.

So, if this happens, please don't forget that I told you so.

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"EIN" ET AL

A picture of Albert Einstein in a paper the other day reminded us of a passage in the comparatively recent book, Mr. Beanish. The author has one of his characters saying that if Einstein got a hair cut, and was introduced as Mr. Jones, and then mounted a platform and delivered a lecture on relativity, everybody would think he was whacky. And do you remember the limerick written by that prolific fellow "Anon"?

There's a curious family named Stein,  
There's Eph and there's Gert and there's Ein  
Eph's statues are junk  
Gert's verses are punk  
And no one can understand Ein.



The fourteenth floater for the week drifted ashore this morning, a woman this time -- same marks and sapped of all blood as usual. The Captain of Harbor police was addressing a grim faced gathering of Homicide Squad Detectives and FBI agents. Continuing, the chief added - "For the benefit of those present who are not acquainted with either the CLINIC FOR PREVENTION OF CRIME or with its representative the Professor, I would like to have it understood that I personally have requested the aid of the clinic in attempting to solve what appears to be the most heinous wholesale slaughter of human beings within the history of my Department. The Professor is developing a mechanical secret, which, when perfected, will revolutionize the entire method of crime detection and I hope that you all will lay aside any professional jealousies and cooperate with him to the fullest extent.

Mr. Jones of the F.B.I. will now give you Gentlemen a brief resumé of case #402.

Reading from a large folder Mr. Jones informed us that the F.B.I. had classified case #402 THE UNKNOWN VAMPIRE because of the fact that twenty-five persons had been found drained of all blood through a jagged puncture of the jugular artery. All victims had been dumped into the ocean nude, with faces and finger prints burned with acid beyond recognition. Efforts to trace teeth dentures, and scars of victims had been made; while bodies were retained on display at the morgue, but not one to date had been identified.

Upon conclusion of Mr. Jones' summation, the meeting adjourned, each man leaving with an expression of stern realization that this grisly case required immediate action. The Professor also realized the final test for the Clinic's new invention had arrived, therefore, a course of extreme precaution was imperative not only for his own personal safety, but also for that of his partner Indra, who was at this moment waiting in a car below.

As soon as traffic within city limits had been left behind the Professor murmured abstractly - "Blood! Blood! Indra think of all uses and applications for blood - speed in this case is imperative - right this minute, literally hundreds of people are in peril". "Ah, Sahib!" whispered Indra, "the mystic powers of 5000 years will concentrate on the matter of others' blood, so that the machine of the great one may come once again to the rescue of Civilization. Indra the inventor is, remember --- the second son of the son of a great Hindu Mystic, whose life you saved in India. Since then has not the Sahib worked night and day to perfect a mechanical brain to combat this so very evil force in the world.

The remainder of the trip from downtown New York to the gates of a cottage in Greenwich, Conn.

was completed within forty minutes of absolute silence, other than the high whine of a two hundred horse power motor perfectly attuned. Driving directly to an old barn in the rear of a colonial cottage, a reinforced steel door silently opened by an electric eye, revealed a ramp leading to the Clinic's acoustically insulated sub-cellar Laboratory. Switching off the motor Indra and the Professor hurried to their soundproof chamber below. In the center of the room stood a six foot diameter dial, similar in appearance to a carnival wheel of chance. On the face of the dial ten thousand words were inscribed above small lights, while thousands of copper wires were coiled and grounded behind the board. A few feet to the right of the indicator, a two armed THOUGHT DETECTOR was balanced upon hundreds of delicate platinum hair springs.

Quivering with anticipation Indra feverishly adjusted a set of pitch blend insulated headphones controlling the dial; while the professor synchronized the thought detector with a mercury float compass.

At a given signal Indra, threw a high tension switch releasing 23,000 volts. The machine rocked slightly, emitting a low hissing sound as of a snake about to strike, then a soft purring vibration seemed to flow gently throughout the entire chamber. A light on the dial board flashed the word BLOOD. Simultaneously the thought detector began a slow revolving motion, seeming to wobble and stagger at times, as if it had almost grasped a thought wave, had been forced to rove on for further magnetic knowledge.

For three hours Indra and the Professor sat transfixed at their posts, while word after word flashed on and off the dial without response from the thought detector. Then suddenly a sharp hiss-

ing crack broke the silence and every wire in the chamber seemed to tremble. A red flasher dialed the two words BLOOD VICTIM. Long pantograph arms began to move on a full sized map of the city, encircling an area in Central Park. Following the needle with bated breath the two scientists, watched the arm move slowly south, fearing every moment that their contact might be broken, but luck and genius once again proved to be the deciding factor at a time of crisis. The needle on the map stopped at a street in Greenwich Village, steadying itself for a moment, it finally settled down like a great mastiff watching over the body of his master.

With lightning speed Indra removed his head phones and threw the switch, while the professor connected a small portable unit to an adjacent supercharger. Whirling the dial to the words BLOOD VICTIM he released a full charge of current impressing those words on a sensitized disc suspended from platinum springs within the cabinet.

Arming themselves with paralysis guns and the "Junior Detector" Indra and the professor rushed upstairs to their car, jamming the siren and accelerator wide open, they sped back towards Greenwich Village, where a solution might -----

Hurtling along the Merritt Parkway at a terrific speed, Indra and the Professor soon reached the outskirts of the city. Just in case the intuition of the detector might be leading them into serious danger where a raid would prove necessary, the Professor decided to call Headquarters on their short wave transmitter to request additional assistance. The meeting place to be Pell and Mott Streets, in the Bowery.

When the car pulled to the curb at the appointed spot, the F.B.I. Chief himself was pacing up and down anxiously awaiting their

arrival. Indra immediately handed the chief a map of lower Manhattan, marked with a red cross near the Fourteenth St. Station. This was the area, which the needle of the MASTER THOUGHT DETECTOR had pointed to, with its accusing mechanical finger.

Leaving instructions with the Chief to blanket this block, and wait for further developments, Indra then turned right at the next traffic signal and drove slowly uptown. Meanwhile the Professor was making all necessary connections to the Junior Detector. Wires were run from the Radio Aerial to the unit, a cable was attached to a heavy duty battery charged by a special generator driven directly from the driving shaft. A drag chain was then released to complete the ground.

When all adjustment had been completed and the unit properly attuned, the Professor turned on the locator dial. The needle idled lazily back and forth - no action - hissed Indra - have we lost the trail - or is the victim dead. Cutting their speed to eight miles per hour, Indra turned left off 3rd Avenue and cruised slowly down 14th Street.

Halfway between 3rd and 6th Avenues the indicator needle suddenly pulled over to a maximum position, and simultaneously a magnetic direction finder on top of the detector pointed to a small Chemical Manufacturing plant diagonally across the street.

At a prearranged signal, the Chief accompanied by five men appeared seemingly from nowhere; Indra and the Professor loading their paralysis guns with fresh uranium clips, switched off their motor and jumped to the sidewalk ready for action.



After a brief consultation between the Chief and the Professor, Indra hurried off with ten of the F.B.I. men to cover the rear of the building; while the Professor remained with the Chief and the balance of his men, who were to enter a front entrance marked Office.

In the reception hall a good looking girl with a foreign accent greeted The Chief, but when advised that F.B.I. agents had authority to search the premises, she dashed with lightning speed to her switchboard and pushed numerous buzzers. Instantly bells clanged and doors banged throughout the building warning of impending danger. The Professor immediately pulled his ray gun, and froze the operator in her tracks. He then gave the word to spread out and batter down all doors if necessary.

Indra's force in the rear, hearing the commotion within broke through a shipping room door and opened fire with sub-machine guns. After a brief struggle, with minor casualties being inflicted by both sides; all prisoners were rounded up. A systematic search of the building was then started, and even the old grisled veterans turned pale at the horrors which unfolded themselves before their eyes.

In a large sub-cellar refrigerator, rows of glass carboys were found, each filled with a deep red fluid, marked aniline dye, but a quick analysis by the Professor revealed beyond doubt that the contents was in reality HUMAN BLOOD.

On the floor above, in sound proof padded cells, scores of kidnapped derelicts, men, women and children were held prisoners. Having been

lured from slums and park benches to their death under the guise of offering employment. Each was awaiting their turn to be sapped of their life's blood, and then to have their empty cadavers dumped into a refuse barge off the battery during the night.

Correspondence in the vault, gave conclusive evidence that the blood of these victims was being shipped weekly by submarine to Europe for transfusions to wounded soldiers.

Of the twenty-five prisoners taken into custody, many had been paralyzed by the ray guns, while in the actual pursuit of their hideous duties, so it was unnecessary to furnish further evidence of their guilt.

In order to prevent the spreading of war hysteria and terror among the people, by exposing this gruesome case; all defendants were tried by a special tribunal, and speedily sentenced to death in a lethal chamber.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Man's inhumanity to Man,  
Takes countless thousands morn" -  
Some obscure Science-Fiction fan  
May lighten this dark bourne.

A flicker here, - a glimmer there -  
Way to full radiance grow;  
Oppressions load which millions bear,  
Gives way to those who know.

\* \* \* \* \*

GOING BACKWARDS IN ORDER TO GO FORWARDBy  
D. H.

"We have spent millions of dollars during the past ten years to gain an "immortal lock" on the pocket books of the American Public. Certainly you don't expect us to give up this advantage now - without a right to the end - Do you?"

The above is a quotation from an executive of a large American industry and exemplifies - just what we are up against. As long as we know, however, there is an ace in the hole, our problem becomes very simple - our old hand goes into the discard, we accept our losses good naturedly and start a "New Deal".

The ultimate end of all discussion is "yes" or "no" so why let us chew the rag about it any longer. Yes, we have been cheated, gyped and made suckers of. No, we cannot shoot the cheaters as of old, or expect our new government to retrieve all losses for us. In fact the most we can expect is protection from further raids on our accumulated savings and the clearing away process of all obstructions to future progress.

When land, water, beast and bird were "free" human beings could exist very comfortably, and by "getting together" could have a "lot of fun". Young folks danced and mated, old folks chattered and looked on. Money was not a habit, and man was judged by his courage and skill, while women depended upon nature's gift plus their ability to make homes attractive. Now, however, that land, water and the air we breathe are taxed to the limit, human beings must

racketeer to pay a racketeer who lives as a racketeer on the taxes we pay. This we call civilization and have spent billions of dollars to arrive at this higher form of culture.

"Land grants" will doubtless be the ultimate solution, "for the people in need", "by people of wealth" through a peoples' Government. The greatest capitalistic form of Government in the history of the world has proven itself utterly incapable to cope with even the primitive requisites of a barbaric civilization.

The incentive in human nature to go forward can never be quelled and the shackles of our present civilization will be broken despite the attempts of combines to reap their harvest. "A cow in every back yard will settle all militia strikes". Values will never be stabilized, as they depend upon the whims of the human brain. We will soon go back to our natural resources, freeing them from private ownership in order to go forward with their uses to civilization instead of profits to selected individuals.

These reforms that seem to stupendous to us now will automatically take their place as public opinion rises to each individual case, and goes to the polls to vote away more objectionable issues similar to "prohibition" -- Public utility profiteering, industrial monopoly and racketeering will fade just as fast as bootlegging has, when 42 million people start to elect and vote for candidates who pledge themselves against these institutions.

Meanwhile we all must go back to the land, where water, food and shelter will keep us alive until we can move forward together and push these monsters that have muscled into our happiness, off the raft.

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