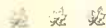


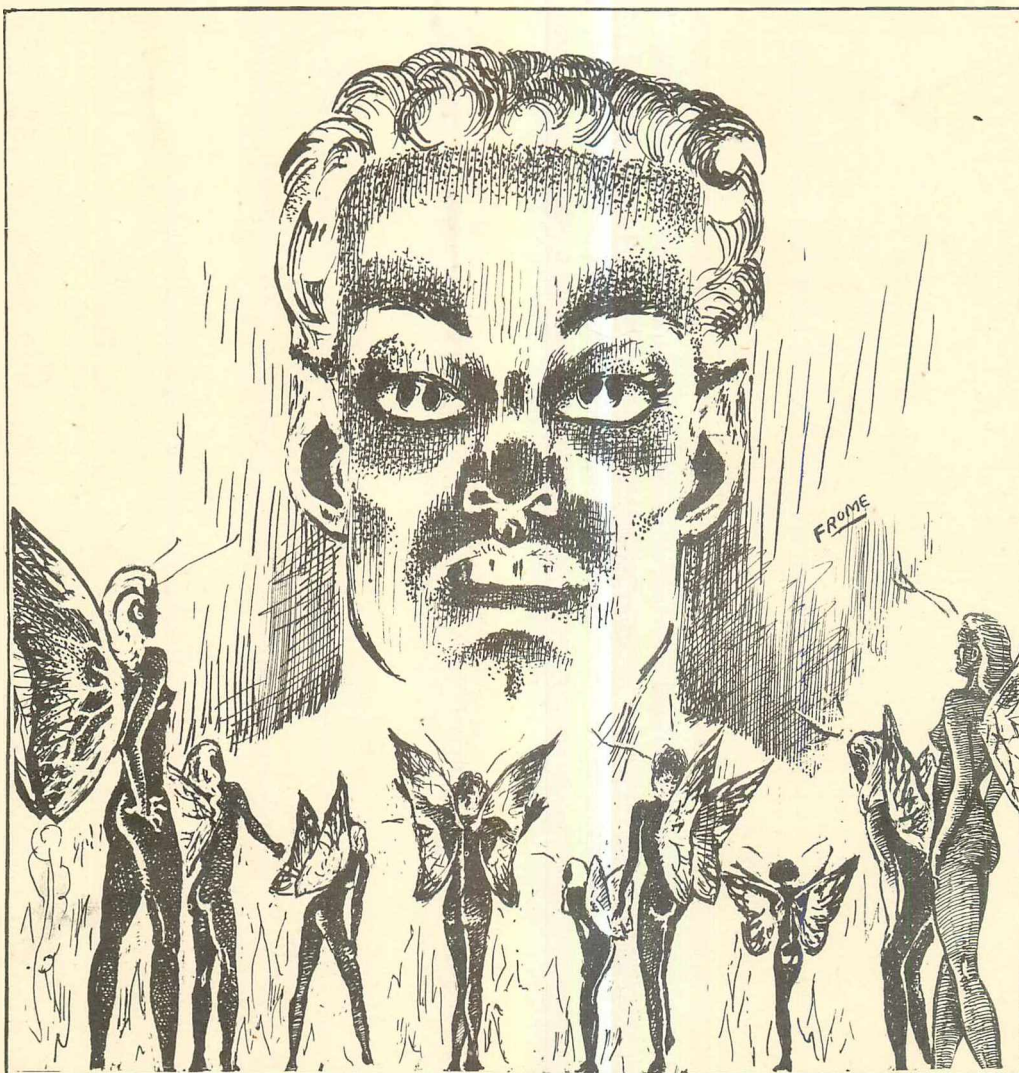
CANADIAN FANDOM

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Next issue out in September

Someday, fans, the time will come when I shall be able to get an issue out on schedule. However, the way things are going at present, I'm afraid I won't be able to set a definite date for any future issues. I'll try to get them out on an approximate bi-monthly basis, but in all probability will be forced to skip an odd issue owing to exams and schoolwork in general.

Next issue will appear in September and will feature "Bester Smith's Accident", a five thousand worder by Leslie A. Crutch. The usual features and columns by Crutch and Hurter will also be around, as well as the conclusion of "The Return of Pete", and "Fan Me With a Newspaper", an article by Mrs Jessie E. Walker.

On page 27 of this issue we have a new column, CONVERSELY, by a young lady, Dorothy E. Dud. Miss Dud asked that her

column appear under the penname "Ded", but for a while I thought this name rather insipid. So I asked a friend about the matter and after reading the column, he said: "Of course she should be Ded. It will be better for everyone if Dorothy E. Dud is dead". After looking at the matter from his view-point, I had to agree with him.

You will notice that the regular series of ratings is discontinued. It would be rather useless to continue it when so few fans send ratings. Thus, it is no more.

Well fans, I'm sorry this is short, but I have no inspiration, or desire to continue. At the time this is being written, it looks doubtful if the last two pages are going to be run off. So if they don't appear, you'll know we couldn't do 'em. Sorry, and so long for now

Beak

* * * * *



THE MOTHER

Page 3

by John Hollis Mason

There had been no hesitation in the Mother when she first saw the beings from a crag overlooking the ruins of the dwelling place. There was no hesitation in her now as she came padding down the trail that led to the dwelling center, the pulsing life-throb of the Child beating within her.

The dwelling center had been large. She could tell that because the ruins stretched away on all sides nearly to the limit of her superlative vision, and where there was no rubble the ground presented a blackened and contorted appearance that no natural cataclysm could have produced.

The Mother's progress was rapid, and as she advanced, the ruins hemming her in on all sides, she caught occasional glimpses of the beings through sudden vistas of ruptured stone.

They were bulbous in heavy pressure suits and the total effect was not unlike a smaller, more squat version of her own race's space shells. But within the suits, apparently, were bipeds who stood erect on two columnar limbs, and from the top parts of whose torsos branched, on each side, another member. These seemed to be for a similar purpose as the Mother's six prehensile fore-limbs, and she wondered briefly how any race so handicapped could have attained the degree of civilization necessary to develop interstellar flight.

Abruptly, the Mother emerged from behind a tumbled wall, and there they were.

The nearest was fifty feet away as she started forward, the other two further back up what had once been a street, but it was not from the former that the strange disturbance of the air issued.

The Mother's delicate senses directed her attention to the wildly gesticulating figure up the street, correctly deducing that he was communicating her presence to the being nearest her. But the vibrations she received were barely within the limit of her awareness, and meant nothing.

"Look out, Cort! There's one of

those damned things coming at you.fire when I say — fire."

It was close. It was terribly close, even after the sudden horrible shock of having to throw all her energy reserves into a strong, protective screen as she whirled, catlike, and bounded for cover. The dreadful beams followed her to the tumbled wall and even as she flashed into its protection, the temporary screen blew up under the incredible violence of that onslaught.

Then she was safe and there was only the thundering rhythm of her six lower limbs as she hurtled in headlong flight from this place and the terrible danger it represented — that, and a wild unrestrained flame coursing through body and mind, a pounding sensation not associated with the violence of exertion yet curiously similar. The Mother had never experienced such utterly alien strangeness in all her long life and her pounding limbs almost stopped in the confusion that gripped her.

The nearby crash of falling ruins as the bipeds razed the district through which she'd just passed routed the gathering indecision, and closing her mind to all but immediacies, the Mother raced towards the dense bulk of the woods and safety.

It was the last one. And to Sanders, as he stood there before the banked wall of screens that made this compartment the brain of the ship, the thought was one of great relief.

But if their job was nearly finished, those below seemed determined that this last lap would not soon be forgotten. They'd developed something good in suicide squads and these came hurtling up at the looming bulk of the huge ship almost before those inside realized what was happening.

They almost made it, too, for they were skyrocketing upwards at a terrific speed. Then a sharp voice suddenly cut through the tableau in the control room and the silence was shattered irretrievably. The fast clack-clack-clack of keys followed hard on the incisive ex-

clamation and Sanders recognized — almost in surprise — the tones of Hallison, the defense chief, as he rapped out a repetition of his command:

"Up screens! S-s-nap-it-up, there! Cort, get your .55s on them — fast!"

A thin man moved quickly to a giant key-board, punched a machine-gun tattoo on the controls as he brought his deadly .55s into alignment, shot probable trajectory co-ordinates into the machine and was given a definite course position, allowing for the time interval of calculation and the bringing of the batteries to bear.

Even then they mightn't have made it if it hadn't been for Hallison's screens. For before Cort's descending fingers could trip the firing keys, the ship rocked like a boat rammed by a mammoth whale. Everyone in the control cell felt the thundering repercussions as the counter-energies lashed at one another — and the rending atomic blow-up as the first ship was repulsed.

Then Cort's fingers hit. Again the ship reeled. The second suicide ship had been so close when the .55s caught her that the recoil of the terrible radiations from their own weapons rocked them worse than the explosion of the first vessel.

After that it was routine stuff. Sanders watched with conflicting emotions as the rest of the suicide squadron was annihilated. It was like a beam from a giant's flashlight sweeping at light-speed over the sky, puffing out the puny little moths of ships as they flashed upwards.

He heard a voice giving instructions for the systematic levelling of the city and with a dull disgust he realized that it was his own.

Finally it was finished and there was a moment when all stood together, surveying the miles of rubble below where so few minutes before had stood the living monument of a high culture.

Hallison said with grudging admiration: "They seemed to catch on towards the end, didn't they? Not bad for a decadent civilization."

"They weren't decadent," said Sanders. "Not consciously, anyway. They just hadn't had to fight for so long that, even with their tremendous natural capacity for energy assimilation, they didn't know how to use it against us offensively. They only knew defense and

it was lucky for us we had those new Gorn .55s. That's all that could have penetrated those wonderful screens of theirs.

Cort, the thin artillery man, cut in: "Those screens were amazing. If we ever reach that stage, we won't need to bother with ungainly things like this—" He waved his arms expressively to indicate the huge interstellar ship.

There was silence as each gazed below, wrapped in his own thoughts. Then—

"I still say that a race which hasn't any means of combatting enemies is decadent," said Hallison.

Sanders was vaguely impatient. "We all saw the other planets as we came in. Lifeless. Nothing. And it's the same here. What rivals they once had have long since perished and the interval between those times and now is possibly millions of years.

"They were decadent according to our standards — yes. But how can you apply our standards to a race which didn't live a life governed by the law of battle, as we do? They'd gone beyond that.

They were an old civilization — too old and cynical for their own good, perhaps, for otherwise they would have rallied sooner and the result might have been very different. But remember, gentlemen, they were old while we were still scratching ourselves in caves. Somehow I don't like that thought. It's as if we've murdered a parent —"

He let it trail off and Hallison interrupted before he could resume. "But what of the Empire? What of the pressing need for colonies that has sent thousands of expeditions like ours off on similar missions, and is sending more all the time? Are we to put the degenerate half-life of an alien civilization before our own absolute necessities?"

An ironic amusement dawned in Sanders' eyes. "Yes, the insatiable maw of the Empire must be fed, mustn't it? They start something through a propaganda campaign to divert attention from the growing unrest at home — it takes — the wheels start to roll — and then suddenly it's going so fast they have to back it up.

"So out we go on a colossal cosmic crusade. The military men like yourself, Hallison, who jump at the chance of long-awaited action, the majority — poor fools taken in by propaganda. And a few men like myself who remember what

happened when something similar took place in pre-history, tens of thousands of years ago. Ever hear of the French Revolution, Hallison?"

The military man shook his head, impatient at reference to a dead subject like ancient history. He was out of his depth in academic discussions. "Never heard of it and I don't want to. You could be removed from the Expedition Command for that speech, Sanders!" His voice cracked like a whip.

The two men faced one another in silent battle for a moment, then Sanders replied:

"I probably could. And you could replace me, couldn't you Hallison?" He smiled faintly, as if the threat and its prospect had power only to amuse him, finished:

"And in the meantime, the tide of Empire rushes onward, trampling all within its path"

The Mother nearly lost her footing on the steep path. She jerked spasmodically as if some invisible force had reached inside her and withdrawn some intrinsic part of her being.

For agonizing moments, she hovered on the brink of the abyss, then the stalemate was broken and she'd regained the comparative safety of the narrow trail.

The Mother was puzzled. What had happened in that moment when the terrible inner rending sensation made flame-tides course unabated through body and mind like a mad rushing stream in spate? What the removal? What the utterly alien sensation that followed it?

It would take time. There'd been too many things without parallel in her experience to permit the glorious instrument that was her mind to find the explanation so soon.

The only thing to do was put it aside for the moment. Give her subconscious mind a chance to get at it.

With a dull shock, the Mother suddenly realized the full power of this strange experience. It had shaken her so completely out of normality as to —

Forget the child. For whole long moments the mind that had had only thoughts of the child had actually been side-tracked! The wonder of it grew by the minute.

She must have suspected, then. For the Mother was, above all things — log-

ical. But she didn't admit the thought consciously. She would deal with such considerations afterwards. Only the Child was important now.

And when that which was inevitable had taken place and the Child had become a warm, glowing ebb and flow within her, the Mother turned back towards the dwelling centers.

She wouldn't consider the thought that was thrusting itself at her. She demanded confirmation before she could accept such a fantastic answer. Proof—

She got it.

Two days later, the Mother entered an outlying dwelling place in the hinterlands of the planet. It had never been big as cities went in her world because the majority of her race preferred to dwell in the great centers where gathered four-fifths of the population. Only the lower intelligence types with atavistic tendencies would live in such a place.

She entered — death. An area of blackened and scorched ruins. There was no slightest sign of life. She hadn't expected any. The job was done too thoroughly for that. They hadn't intended that anyone should escape.

The Mother's fantastic hypothesis became cold fact. That queer internal rending sensation as of withdrawal had been the breaking of her rapport with the race as it died. There was nobody left. She didn't need further confirmation to know that, but for some unaccountable reason she wasn't thoroughly sure till she'd seen the ruins of the main centers, her own.

She'd gone back, of course. They would listen to her. She was the Mother. She would negotiate amnesty for herself and the child.

They followed for several hundred yards, spraying their small Gorn portables after her. But it was too late. She moved like a whirlwind and even the sound of crashing escape was dying away over the barely obtrusive hissing of the portables.

"Shut 'em off," grunted Sanders over the suit phone. "She's gone now. No use wasting our power. We're going to need it soon." The Commander's eyes suddenly saw into a future that wasn't pleasant.

It had been different when they were in the ship, with the titanic in-

torstellar voyager between them and the others. The difference of powerful screens, weapons against whose onslaughts nothing they had could stand, and the gigantic machine that had brought them over the gulfs of interstellar space at greater than light-speed.

This time they'd met one on its own ground. And if he hadn't spotted it when he did — Sanders glanced at his companions.

They were looking at him. Cort slate gray, even through his heavy helmet plate, at the slim margin of his escape. Hallison puzzled.

It was the latter who broke the silence. His voice rang with metallic weirdness over the suit phone.

"But why did it take such a risk? Surely it knew we were responsible for all this." Sanders knew Hallison's eyes were indicating the ruins.

"It knew we were responsible," said Sanders. "But I think it was too self-confident, like the rest of its race. It thought we'd make an exception in this case. And if we didn't finish it, the only reason is because of some instinct underlying all that false veneer with which the race has coated itself for so long. Something too deeply rooted to be destroyed by any attitude of mind they might have developed over a few eons...."

"The creature's fully aware of the danger now; it won't be deceiving itself again. We've missed our chance and I'm afraid we won't get another."

In the depths of the forest, the Mother waited. Waited and watched as the solar rays grew dimmer and the wooded aisles took on the indeterminate dimensions of dusk. And the pulsing life-throb inside her was an almost audible thing in the silence of the forest.

The near-death result of her rash venture was too close, too mind-shakingly personal to allow her to retain that curious blindspot in her mind from whose shelter she'd considered parleying with the invaders. Abruptly, the picture had snapped into a focus that was unpleasantly realistic and the Mother was shocked to the very core of her being by the startling realization that all her gigantic energies had nearly failed her.

The Mother's thoughts whirled in a tight, egoistic band for whole precious minutes like a space ship unable to gain

the velocity of escape, chained immovably by the heavier gravitational attraction of the planet to a narrow orbit, neither falling nor escaping, and forced to spin there impotently.

Then she jolted herself out of selfish considerations and — instantly — the ship was free!

Deep within her, while the surface part of her mind was divided over trivialities, the Mother was thinking furiously. Now, as she snapped out of it, the real issues crystallized, and she saw what must be done.

The Mother made a decision and the life-throb within her was a warm personal thing as she slipped through the darkness.

Nothing moved in the ruins. For the two who stood alertly ready to catch the slightest change there was neither sight nor sound of alien presence. And as time wore on, their attention waned and they became dependent on the filtered sound accumulators in their helmets. It was no use trying to see through the pitch of this planet's night anyway.

And with soundless steps, the Mother drew closer to the two invaders and the precious prize they were protecting.

A million centuries of life that had known no sleep from birth to death lay in the buried roots of the Mother's being — a time in which her race had adapted its visual organs to an alternating night and day existence, and as the Mother crept through the blackened ruins, the darkness was as natural to her as the day itself.

Reaching the end of a concealment that had once been a great educational building, the Mother peered across a small, cleared space at the bulbous figures of the invaders.

But it was upon the object behind them that the Mother's scrutiny came to rest. The thing was a neutral color, its shape roughly cylindrical, with blunt tapered ends and about twice the length of the Mother as she were stretched out flat on the ground. There was a section of each end that would swing open instantaneously at the Mother's touch, and close behind her. And it was but the work of a moment to motivate the vessel. She felt a flaring sense of neary victory.

Then her attention came back to the enemy, to the small boxes attached to

their belts — replicas of the weapons that had so nearly defeated her in the first encounter — and the wild exultation became a hard, calculating band of thought.

At last the Mother made her decision and slipping into the open, she started across the intervening space. She gambled on the chance that the eyes of the invaders would be unable to pierce the blackness, that it would camouflage her advance for her if she moved slowly till within striking distance. The Mother was a good gambler.

She nearly made it. She'd covered more than half the distance between her and the guards when blind chance intervened with that queer disturbance of the atmosphere she knew for the communication of the invader.

The Mother moved. She sprinted forward with all the power of her six mighty lower limbs, and not a moment too soon. The crackling horror of that alien energy exploded behind her, rolling the atmosphere like a mad sea.

A small corner of the Mother's mind briefly registered the retinal impression of two bulbous figures off to the right — the source of that sudden attack. So intent had she been on her purpose that she hadn't noticed the relief squad's approach.

But if she escaped the initial attack, the Mother was not to be so fortunate now that the guards in front of her were aware of her nearness. They fired point-blank and she barely had time to throw up an emergency screen before the first radiations struck. The force field around her flashed dangerously as the counter energies met and a ghostly wisp of the deadly radiations that slipped through made the Mother shudder momentarily.

Now the screen quivered anew as the relief guards got the flying figure in their sights. For a long, horrible moment the Mother thought the flimsy emergency screen would go down, leaving her in the midst of that rending holocaust of radiation.

Then her furious speed had carried her beyond the range of the beams from the right and she flashed past the two guards between her and the space shell, bowling them over like nine pins and sending the radiations from their still-discharging weapons up into the night like searchlights.

The Mother was still thirty feet

from her objective when the world exploded and a beam of insensate fury threw her to the ground.

For long moments she fought a losing battle with the heavy radiations from the space ship. She threw every erg of power that she dared into the screen, but it only bulged outward farther as a new onslaught of hard radiations hit it.

This, then, was it. The Mother realized with sudden, horrible finality that death was facing her, the final point in her incredibly long life-span. She was dropping down.....down.....into a bottomless pit of blackness.....

And the Child stirred within her. A small thing, yet suddenly the Mother experienced again that alien sensation of something flaming through body and brain, a something that took the volition out of her, reached deep down into reserves that were hardly sufficient for body and life — and threw them into the screen!

The stalemate was broken. The beam from the space ship disappeared and with an audible flashing of relief, the Mother's monstrously distended screen sank back to normal. The burning sensation within her was commingled with a high exultation. She'd won.

But she was not safe yet. She must gain the interior of the space shell before the aliens brought their heavies to bear upon it.

The Mother covered the remaining distance to the ship and activated the forward hatch. Then for a timeless interval she lay inside the space shell, inert, powerless to move, when somehow she must raise a screen around the ship. Any instant the aliens would unloose their bombardment against it and the flimsy shell was not built to stand the incredible lashing of their radiations.

For the second time within minutes, defeat stared her in the face.

And for the second time in minutes, a warm glow of — something — crept into her body from that precious little being within her and again the Child had saved the day.

Where she got the energy the Mother never knew. She should have been depleted by now; the atomic explosion produced by drained cells should have scattered her to the winds. But once more some hidden portion of her being yielded power.

Power to raise a screen around the ship. Power that exerted a stress on the fabric of the interplanetary envelope and

hurled the ship high into the air. It was like being caught in the path of a gigantic, rebounding elastic band.

Through the long moments, as the Mother increased her stress on the atmospheric blanket and accelerated the space shell to attain the velocity of escape, she felt the violent tremors as the screen shivered under the hard onslaughts from below and with each increase of energy output for acceleration, she was compelled to reinforce the strength of the screen.

Normally, the power expenditure necessary to attain the escape velocity was negligible. In her present condition, it was a problem of major proportions. It seemed that she had to heave the reluctant shell upwards by main force, fight every foot of the way. The fact that to the invaders her world was a heavy one was brought home to the Mother in a new light.

The beam from the ship below was becoming more insistent by the minute. At first they'd had considerable difficulty keeping the swiftly moving projectile in their sights. Now the drain from her protective screen was a steady flow. A few more minutes of this —

And then she was through! The Mother's hypersensitive perceptions could detect the difference instantly as the shell left the last of the planet's atmosphere and flashed outwards.

It was the matter of a moment to set her course, make the necessary adjustments in the ship's line of flight.

And two billion miles away a planet was racing to complete the rendezvous the Mother now layed the co-ordinates to effect. A planet that in the far reaches of pre-history had spawned the Mother's race. She found it curious to think that after a million years the last member of a race was returning to its place of birth. Curious — and fitting.

She knew that there would be places of concealment for herself and the Child. Here the Child could be born in safety. For the planet had been rejuvenated several hundred thousand years before and was now a fair world of forests, rivers and rich, heavy atmosphere. Almost as if it'd had some inkling of what was to come.

The ship hurtled on and on and the Mother prepared herself for the long seige that was about to begin.

When the flying blur of the Mother's

figure passed beyond their range, and disappeared in the direction of the space shell, Sanders and Hallison raced back towards the ship, barking orders over the suit phones to those within. The two guards were unhurt and would follow as soon as they were able to force the considerable bulk of their suit-body mass into an upright position.

But for the moment all that mattered was that the alien ship be destroyed and the commander and Hallison were the keys to the expedition's fighting power; they must be on the ship to direct operations against the alien. Such a tricky job could not be entrusted to junior officers. They couldn't risk any mistakes this time.

For agonizingly long moments the two pounded across the open space that separated them from the ship, utilizing every ounce of strength to raise and lower their legs against the heavy gravitational pull of this planet. Then they were in the air-lock.

The ship recoiled under the recoil as the heavies started in.

Another moment and they were in the control cell; Sanders still grotesque in pressure suit, eyes rivited on the banked screens as he observed the results of the bombardment; Hallison tearing madly at his gloves as he took over the weapon key-board from his assistant and poised long fingers over the firing studs.

The screen in front of Sanders was a magnified picture of the immediate area inclosing the alien space vessel. Everything was as clear as daylight in the wonderful infra red radiations and the Commander had just been in time to see the end of the Mother's magnificent battle with the .55s and the closing of the alien ship's air-lock as she passed within.

As the moments passed and nothing happened, Sanders whirled on Hallison, demanding:

"What's the hold-up, man. You're giving the creature valuable seconds!"

Hallison struggled with the jammed keys and a stream of white-hot profanity seared the air as he gave a detailed, if obscene, description of his gunnery officer's ancestry, face wan.

The lucid details broke off in mid-syllable. The keys had depressed infinitely beneath Hallison's probing fingertips. Everybody turned back towards the screens — and froze. The alien ship

was hurtling upwards.

Hallison didn't waste time on expletives. His lips moved rapidly as his lightning-like perceptions made allowances for the ascending vessel's trajectory, and his finger-tips beat out a staccato rhythm on the key board.

It was inevitable that the first few shots should miss and Hallison only rammed home his first hit when the alien had got about five miles up.

Every eye in the room was on the image in the screens as it rocked in the holocaust; rocked, righted and flashed onwards. The alien's screen was adequate. They'd known it from the first, really, but there was just that chance—

"Prepare to up ship," ordered Sanders, taking his place before the master control-board. Many things must be done before the huge interstellar ship could give chase.

It took them longer than she'd expected. And her two hours had already become three before the ship burst out of the air envelope.

She'd needed that margin. It wasn't enough, but already the unadulterated rays of space were pouring power into her drained cells. And she was gradually able to increase the rate of acceleration, while maintaining a tight screen about the ship that precluded the possibility of being taken by surprise.

But it wasn't fast enough. The big interstellar ship of the aliens could match any speed she was capable of attaining in her weakened condition and she had the additional problem of keeping the screen up. She dared not relax it for a moment.

Hour by hour, the gap between the two ships decreased and hour by hour the Mother kept her razor-sharp perceptions directed towards the other. She must have warning when the onslaught began.

And she got it. Approximately ten hours after leaving the planet's atmosphere, it came. A sudden devastating blast, tearing across space towards her, narrowing the distance between pursuer and pursued in the twinkling of an eye.

The Mother was just in time. She threw up a tight screen and at the very moment it came into being the holocaust struck. There was a sharp flashing as the ravaging flood hit and the shell rocked dangerously.

Again and again, like a hungry

beast, the hard radiations hit the screen, and each time were repulsed. For hours the fight continued, sporadic and devastating, draining tremendous quantities of power away into the void, coming again and again like seething foam that attacks a shore and is driven back into the sea, only to attack again and again and again.

The Mother went through an eternity of squandering her carefully hoarded power. It seemed as if there was no limit to her capacity and yet, with each outflow, she could feel that deadly overpowering weariness creeping into her.....dulling her perceptions....slowing her reactions till it was impossible to distinguish reality from the terrible phantasms that assailed her mind.....

Finally, the ferocity of the attacks waned. During one of the lulls, the Mother accelerated with mad disregard of her meager reserves, hurling her shell beyond the reach of the enemy. Then she threw down the screen and basked in the flow of power that seeped in from space.

The aliens overhauled her and it was only the constant alertness of her superb perceptions that gave her time to get the screen up before the onslaught hit.

Thus it went. The Mother would alternately accelerate beyond range, glide on momentum alone and throwing down the impediment of the screen, accumulate the freely-flowing energy of space, only throwing up her screen again as the aliens once more drew within range.

A second eternity passed and for the Mother, life became space, the relentless battering of the aliens, the mad accelerations.....and the insufficient quantities of energy she absorbed before she was forced to raise the screen. Each time she accelerated, it was more difficult to find the energy, and each time she lowered the screen, she accumulated less.

And then it was no longer difficult. A wonderful sense of relief came to the Mother as the ship glided effortlessly and she found she could relax. Relax —

The Mother jolted out of it with the abruptness of a dreamer rudely awakened. The treacherous state into which she'd been drifting gave way to wide awake alertness.

The planet.

It was almost below her now, its

vast spinning shape a globe of clouded mystery as it pulled at the tiny space shell.

The Mother had no time for thought of victory. It was too close a thing and even thought required energy that screen and space shell must have. She started to decelerate.

But she was coming down too fast. The deceleration should have started hours before the planet raced to intercept its rendezvous with the Mother's vessel. She couldn't exert enough counter-stress on the shreds of upper atmosphere that already whipped past.

The Mother felt very tired, very old, and death was a near terrible presence.

Sanders was cramped and stiff from long hours of unmoving observation, but he didn't feel it. His mind was temporarily dissociated from his body and there was only room in his consciousness for a burning awareness of the battle that was raging before him.

For the hundredth time, the little craft had pulled out of range and they were straining in pursuit, hoping that this time they'd catch it before the creature got its screen up.

They almost did. But even as the radiations were ravaging out across the intervening space, the familiar faint blue aura flickered into being around the vessel and the beams were repulsed.

They knew the alien would accelerate beyond their range as it had done countless times before. It was only a matter of minutes now. But the minutes passed and were replaced by others and still the alien ship didn't begin to draw away from them.

Sanders tensed forward eagerly. He had nothing to go on but that strange, age-old feeling of intuition that goes beyond facts, but he couldn't suppress the rising tide of fierce exultation that shattered the dams of logic and reason and swept like a raging flood through his bloodstream.

They were all feeling it. A new quality had transfigured all within the room, from junior officer to Hallison. They knew. The end was in sight.

Then suddenly the floor inclined at a sharp angle and everybody was thrown in a heap. For mad moments, chaos ruled. Finally Sanders managed to regain the master control panel and the untended screens flashed into life.

The corner of a huge, spinning sphere bulged out of the screen, and Sanders cursed briefly. That they should have so jeopardized the Expedition, could only wring an impotent curse from him.

The long battle began to regain mastery of their mad descent.

The Mother felt it. Her superb faculties detected the change in the headlong speed of her pursuers and she realized with a queer shock that they, also, must have been taken unawares by the planet's powerful gravitational field.

It could be a trick. Razor-sharp, her mind considered the very definite possibility that they were feigning loss of control. And when she lowered her screen -- !

The Mother directed her attention below. She was plummeting towards the spinning ball at meteoric speed. As it was, she couldn't throw enough energy into the deceleration to make any inroads on her terrific momentum:....

It was a terrible chance, but she took it. Down went her screens and, with all the strength that remained, she threw everything into the counter-acceleration.

Minutes passed and still the whirling planet hurtled up at her. Then, gradually, the incredible pace began to lessen. The Mother pumped the precious power from she knew not where ever downwards, producing an almost intolerable stress on the atmosphere.

Ever so slowly the space shell lost velocity. But now the Mother was feeling the efforts of her mighty sacrifice. Again that strange torpor was stealing through her, 'til the ground became a misty unreality.

And once more the Mother threw off the encroaching weariness, forcing her perceptions downward till the misty veil that had hung between her eyes and the ground disappeared. From within her, the pulsing life-throb sent a message of hope and her mind cleared.

The space shell emerged abruptly from a low-hanging cloud bank and below stretched a magnificent forest that lost itself in the haze of distance.

She levelled out and momentum carried the space shell along parallel to the ground. If she could only find a landing-place where the ship wouldn't be entirely demolished at the moment of im-

pact — she found it.

Several miles above, the Mother's senses detected the sporadic, jerky deceleration of the aliens. Their present course should bring them down over a section of country only minutes flying time away. She must hurry.

The space shell slanted downwards towards the clearing on a long curving path. The ship had slowed to just under a hundred miles an hour when it hit and, true to the Mother's expectations, it split open at the middle, hurling her clear.

She took the fall well, her body a tight ball that rolled over and over till it came to rest. Then, in the fashion of her race, she instantly gave birth to the child.

The Mother watched through tired eyes as the Child, an extension of her own furious impulse for survival, raced away into the forest.

As she watched, she could almost feel the potency of her thoughts acting through the Child's brain, forcing its body onward at headlong speed. And she knew that the tight band of thoughts that was superimposed upon the brain of the Child was a virtual replica of her experience and associations, a ghostly mentor to influence and guide the actions of the inexperienced Child till it was capable of doing so by itself. When that day arrived, the superimposed thought-pattern of the Mother would release its hold upon the Child's brain automatically and he would be — mature. But until then every moment, every day, the Mother would be inside the Child's mind, guiding him from the great field of her experience.

It was as if some ineradicable instinct of survival from the early days of the race had impelled the Mother to send the Child on ahead of her as she recovered her strength, but now she knew she must follow.

In bare seconds the aliens would be on the scene, bombarding everything in the district with their heavies. She must overhaul that fast-fleeing little figure that was racing away from the danger area.

Then it came. That queer disturbed quality of the air that could mean only one thing. The Mother struggled to rise and — she couldn't move.

splendid physical machine that she was, the Mother had driven herself to the extreme limit of her powers. If she

drained her last energy in movement now, she would literally explode in the rending holocaust of atomic blow-up. In that last moment before the alien ship came into view over the trees and swooped towards the clearing, the Mother suddenly realized the meaning of that strange sensation she'd felt each time death was near.

She had felt — an emotional opposition! For when she realized they would have killed her unhesitatingly, the Mother had experienced blind fury. The last of that racial decadence slaughtered from her mind like a false mask, because in killing her —

They would kill the Child.

All self-deceptions vanished in that moment and suddenly she stood revealed — proud of those who hadn't known how to fight; yet had stood, and fought, and died. Proud of the race that had spawned her. Proud that, at the last, she was their representative; that she was — The Mother.

And as the huge alien ship swooped over the clearing and the Child raced away through the forest, she knew what she must do. Victory was a high flame within her as she hurtled upwards.

Miles away, the Child was thrown savagely to the ground by the shock of the explosion, and some of the vitality went out of the tight band of superimposed thoughts within his brain.

The next moment, however, he was fleeing onwards again. He dare not stop. For he was possible — the Mother's ruse might not have destroyed the aliens and he couldn't risk being overtaken.

Soon the trees started to thin and the Child emerged from the last of the forest. Before him, covered with dense foliage and well camouflaged from the air was an opening to a massive cave.

The knowledge within his mind told him that this was the entrance to a vast net-work of tunnels that had, at an inconceivably remote time, been used as a planet-wide, sub-surface transportation system. The place was a veritable maze and he would never be discovered once he gained its lower levels.

Safety was within the Child's grasp as he entered the abandoned net-work of tunnels and he knew that this would be the birth-place of a new and greater race when the time came for him, with the means maturity provided, to become — The Mother.

- (Finis) -

LIGHT FLASHES

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by Leslie A. Croutch

This edition of Light Flashes is being written on July 20, so if CANFAN is way late, blame it on me. Taylor told me I was the bottle-neck in the line of progress and that I was holding things up. However, it couldn't be helped. As I type this, composing directly out of my head, no wisecracks please, I can hear outside my window, which is open, the pitter-patter of the raindrops on the leaves of the spreading maple there. Remember the tree in "Tim's Tree"? Nope, that isn't the one - it resides in front of the house. Looking back, you realize we had a pretty nice winter and spring. The winter, especially, was far nicer than last year. In fact, some old-timers claim this has been the mildest winter on record, while they also claim, backed I believe, to some extent by the weather bureau, that last winter was also the severest on record. So you see not only the Americans can claim to doing things in the biggest or the most extreme way. We also go to extremes in Canada. Or anyway, around Parry Sound. Which reminds me of a fish story: My family owns a farm outside of Powasson, which is sort of North East of Parry Sound. On this farm is the swellest little lake for Mudcat, Catfish, or whatever you wish to call them. They are those beautiful little fish with long horns and spikey fins. Anyway, every now and then the kids 'round about there go picnicking on the shores of this little lake. They never take any food, or anything, outside of maybe a knife and fork and a tin plate. Oh yes, also a can of nice, big, fresh, juicy worms. Once at this lake, they man the punts and row out to some favoured hole among the Lily pads which dot the surface almost without end. Into this hole between the pads they drop the baited line. Soon the Mudcat start to bite. You draw one out and drop your line and draw another and — well, an expert at the game can flip his line out as soon as he feels a bite and before the fish can swallow the bait. If you do it smartly enough, the surprised fish hangs on for an instant, then opens his mouth, and drops right off your line into the boat. You save your bait — In fact, one fellow once caught over a hun-

dred fish with the same worm, and when he returned home he put the worm, still alive and healthy, back in the box of earth where it lived. I am told he used that same worm for over two years and it lived to die at a ripe old age! But I digress! ((You said it! This is still a stf mag, I think.)) Usually two such expert fishermen go out in the boat, and in about an hour they have drawn in so many fish and so fast that the friction of the hook and line has heated the waters of the lake. Soon the water is hot enough and the fish are cooked to a turn when they come out and all you have to do is clean and eat them! I know this sounds unbelievable, but its Ghod's own truth, so help me Foo foo. One fisherman was lost there a year ago. At least they think it was his skeleton they discovered on the beach. We know there is the Grand-daddy of all Mudcat in that lake, for we have seen him. We also know several times he has almost pulled some careless fisherman in. Is it too far from the realms of truth to suggest he pulled this fellow in.....well you do find the beach littered with fish skeletons after a picnic you know.....

After thus managing to fill up some space I shall get on to the little fan news I know. Honestly, gang, things are slow up here. There just doesn't seem to be anything doing outside of a choice few. Ron Conium has dropped so completely out of sight he is apparently out of touch of even the Toronto gang. John Mason, so the story goes, is conceivably recovering from an attack of the dread disease, matrimonitus. Matrimonitus is some terrible, especially if the victim has been a sufferer of the other dread ailment, misogynistitus. John is, or was, or may still be, a misogynist. To him the fair and mysterious wearer of silken underthings just did not exist. However, I am informed by sources remote from Canada, but reliable nonetheless, that friend John was introduced by a fair conspirator to a certain blonde babe and that the terrible virus took to such a degree that John almost succumbed to the perils of passion. 'Tis said "by informant reliable that John contemplated matrimony. Contemplated — past

tense, please, for the latest word is that John's magnificent constitution threw off the deadly germ and he is again safe. Now, instead of keeping one girl unhappy, he can keep a whole lot of them in the same state.

Albert Betts is out of town due to enlistment in the merchant marine. Last word was a letter from him written on board his ship, the name of which is pronounced, 'according to BBetts, as "Skare-a-ass." He has been across the ocean, and to Glasgow, where, he tells me, he finds the blackout is a wonderful aid to nature where the young ladies are concerned. ((With that face, yes.))

Tom Hanley and Jack Sloan are heard from again with their usual intermittent communications. Hanley is supposed to be making mucho simoleons somewhere but that is all I know. Harold Wakefield is sore as hell at MacKenzie King because, it seems, he had to dispose of certain of his precious books in order to pay the balance due on his 1943 income tax. Fred Hurter, after a long silence, came through with a breezy letter, written on paper which bore the letterhead THE RED LIGHT INN and which had scattered around the borders such pithy statements as THE HOUSE DETECTIVE ALWAYS KNOCKS TWICE. A BLONDE IN EVERY ROOM, and so forth. Out in Vancouver fandom is sloppy. Child has withdrawn his fair name from fandom. The Pecks no longer peck about. Frome won't write. Strange people.

The Canadian edition of SUPER SCIENCE will apparently continue. Latest edition has a cover from FFM, and stories mixed from FFM and U.S. SUPER SCIENCE. Ought to be even more of a curiosity now. WEIRD TALES is still going strong and bids fair to outlast all the other Canadian attempts. The firm that published the Canadian SCIENCE FICTION recently brought out a pocketbook called BRIGANDS OF THE MOON. They have it as being written by John Campbell. Tut tut! Copies may be obtained from Les Croutch, Box 121, Parry Sound, Ontario.

Fanzine publishing in the states appears to be quickening instead of otherwise. Recently I have received several very good publications, and copies of first attempts that were excellent. The best of those received for

some time is Al Ashley's NOVA. I certainly recommend this for technical brilliance of production, quality of writing, size, and beauty of illustrations. He has a photoscope machine, which photographically transfers any drawing to a specially prepared stencil. This does away with the old stylus method of tracing. From here you duplicate in the regular fashion. The art work in NOVA is so close to professional printing that some couldn't be discerned from press work, in my opinion. For a copy, write Al Ashley, 25 Poplar, Battle Creek, Michigan. Send 10¢.

It looks like the furor created by the Cosmic Circle is starting to die down. Degler is supposed to have withdrawn from the CC, but one Rogers is still very much in existence. Fandom's ire seems to be turning against the man who looks like a good scapegoat, Ray Palmer of AMAZING. Seems the style is to curse him and his publications. Like a flock of sheep following the bellwether. Incidentally, here is the question of the month: WHAT WELL-KNOWN SCIENCE FICTION AND WEIRD AUTHOR, AND ALSO SOMETHING OF A FAN, ONCE SHOWED A PHOTOGRAPH OF SHEEP OVER THE BROW OF A HILL AND ON THE BACK OF THE PICTURE HAD THE INSCRIPTION: "SCIENCE FICTION FANS"? Personally, I don't see why fandom as a whole is so against Palmer and his two publications. I admit much of his stuff is bad, but other magazines publish material just as lousy. CAPTAIN FUTURE, for one, was, in my opinion, worse than AMAZING and Co. Yet fandom didn't ostracize it the way it did Rap's pair. No magazine exists that is ALL bad, or ALL good. It is no wonder Rap has recently turned against fandom the way he has. Any man who was called the names and run down the way he was for years would soon get sore and start throwing things back. Fandom, in my opinion, is pretty much to blame for what has happened, more so than Palmer is.

Ever try to write a column of decent wordage when you have no news to report? If you ever have to, you'll probably end up with something like this one. Before someone throws me out, then, I'll say "Hasty Banana", which is Judy Canovese, and shove off.

COOKIN' WIT' GAS

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ALBERT A. BETTS So! My doubting friend, you didn't think I'd make it to Croutch's? How wrong you were. Yes, I met Parry Sound's gift to fandom. Skipping all the details and starting at the time when I approached Les's front door.

I knocked and it was answered by The Kindly Old Gent in person(s). I immediately recognized him from pictures I had seen at Conium's and on VOM. He has a couple of snaps of me, but did he show the same courtesy of recognition? No, he didn't. It happened like this. After the door had opened:

"You're Les Croutch," I beamingly asserted.

"Yes?" he answered, half questioningly.

"Well, do you know who I am?" At this he peered more closely through his second pair of eyes. Not satisfied, he took them off and wiped the lenses. Putting them back on he gave me the once over again. Then, making with the big smile he says:

"Jack Sloan! Well, how are you, when did you get in, where are you staying?????? Disappointed and disgusted I stopped this flow of well-meant welcome and told him who I was. Apologizing for the mistaken identity, he bade me enter and we went up to his room where we got acquainted and talked about this and that till about 11:45, when I left him to get some sleep. The following morning he came to my room and took me home with him, where I met his family and had a couple of fine home-cooked meals. He showed me his collection of mags and books and records. We listened to his phonograph for quite awhile. He has all sorts of records, from Danse Macabre and Night on Bald Mountain to jazz and jitterbug tunes and George Formby ditties and recorded sound tracks from all Disney pictures and the Wizard of Oz, and even square dance and cowboy tunes, for which he has a weakness. Between records and gabbing I got rid of over five bucks worth of my balance in Let's Swap books, picking out a lot of fanzines and a few pros. I had a great time while I was there and was sorry to leave.

FRANK ROBINSON Cover: as nice a bunch of fans as I've seen. That is, of course, excluding the members of the Midwest Fantasy Fan Federation. Maybe sometime I'll meet some of you. (Los Angeles in ????)

Light Flashes: Croutch seems to have a grudge against Campbell and Astounding. I rather agree with Mason that JWC does the best he can with what he has to work with. And Astounding is still the best sf mag on the stands — and one of the biggest (if not the biggest) sellers. The unfortunate part is, the authors who weren't drafted, are valuable men in industries vital to the war — and haven't time to devote to writing science fiction. Ollie Saari, for instance, is an important technician in the Buick plant in Flint Michigan. Dr E. E. Smith is technical director of a huge plant in Indiana. There was a time when the good doctor thought he might have a little spare time to devote to the chronicling of the adventures of one Kimball Kinnison, but, alas, such was not to be. Smith had worked one job down to the point where he had a little spare time to write, when he was promoted to TD of the entire plant — and left with no spare time whatsoever. (His list of promotions is interesting — chemist to chemical engineer to assistant chief chemist to chief chemist to technical director.) This was especially disappointing to those of us who have been around when he dropped hints of the fourth — and last — of the Lensman stories. This story is, incidentally, the one that EES wanted to write ten years ago — when he wrote Spacehounds of the IPC. Spacehounds and the 3 Lensman stories so far written have served merely as introductions to this last story. I believe the characters in the 4th epic are the most interesting to yet appear in science fiction — and they're not on the order of Nadreck or the Arisians. From what I've heard, parts of the story will surpass Merritt at his best.

Schnarje's articlette: I am getting very tired of different fans informing me (via fanzines) that I am something

definitely out of the ordinary purely because I read and like science fiction. I resent implications that I am crazy, mad, or a slant. Such asinine statements serve only to cast reflections on the writer. Schmarje's statements, as: "Imagination is fine — but then again, are we mad?" hit a new low in asininity. Come, come, Harry. Speak for yourself.

RAY A. KARDEN I liked the cover, though God knows why. ((Sir! Because my picture was on it, naturally)) ((Egotistical, ain't I)) ((Oh no, it's merely that modesty is not one of my many virtues)) Fan pictures are almost always interesting, especially to a more or less isolated fan. Your format is neat and far more professional than most fanzines.... I hope you continue with it....

The only really bad stuff in this issue are the two articles. They didn't say anything, and they said it so perfunctorily and with such a condensed attitude that they are senseless.....so cut this kind out after this, or send them back for rewriting, uh?

All of the stories were distinguished by their obvious rank of belonging to "fan-fiction"....not that this is bad, but they certainly weren't attempting to be professional. Saari's "After-Life" was probably the best of them; in order were after this (and the five stories were the top things in the issue): "Correspondence Piece"; "Jest of the Dim God"; "The Story of Trees", although this last baffled me exceedingly; ((It baffled the author too. He came to me with the manuscript, and said, "What the hell have I got here?" I didn't know.)) "Little Drops of Water"; This latter was strange in that it offered a ready-made plot that could probably be sold to a pro if written up at all well, but Gibson chose to put it in this form. Suggested plot: Man lands on desert; is captured by Martians; is taken to village where he is imprisoned, together, if possible, with a heroine; they escape; later scene shows rich magnate with pretty wife handling lemonade balls, etc. Owell, it's my way of looking at it.....

Your editorial page is nice and informative, but Craouthch's ((?!?!)) is infuriating with his movie info, as I've read it all before in FAN-SLANTS....

JIKE I must congratulate you on the lack of so many typogerrors. And on the quality of fiction in this issue. I, for one, should like to see more art work and more fiction. Hurter ranks quite high for a fan columnist. And please, no more articles like the ones by Nanek and Schmarje. Nanek can do much, much better on verse, and as for Harry, well.....he goes around in circles, although his last paragraph brings out a point - i.e. fandom tending toward education and culture.

For therein, rather than in any hope of organization, lies fandom's great potentiality. I still maintain that fandom, even if it might gain in numbers, could never move with sufficient unity to work as any sort of crusading press - ure group. Fandom's only hope lies in the process of picking out, refining, and development of certain individuals within the group. It is to be hoped that these individuals will add some small bit to the world's culture and advancement. Some fans may continue to rave about strength in unity, but fandom can have no strength. Its value lies in the individuality of some of its more promising members — a few artists and writers of note; a few technicians; a few social workers; and perhaps, out of all these, perhaps one or more real leaders in some field.

KYM TEMBY It's stupendous! It's colossal!! It's terrific!!! - In fact, it's good. What am I talking about? Why, "Canadian Fandom" of course, the first ((sixth)) ish of which I received with trembling hands today. Gadzooks! - what class, eh? Almost a dream copy, but not quite — not quite because of three photos on the front cover which rather tend to spoil the atmosphere - perhaps you can guess which they are! I must say they are good, though; ones taken after I left the establishment, aren't they? To me the higher ideals of Fan-Fiction are epitomized in the study of Ron Conium on the cover whereas Scientific Fan Fiction's wackiness and sense of humour could only come from devil-browed Fred who smiles so cheerfully just below. Al Macrae looks his usual cheery self, and — jumping gobs of goon-you-know-what! — is that you in the lower-left hand corner? I do believe you're

sporting a new jacket; pretty dapper, pretty dapper! Glad to see you and the old schnozzle again.

.....your "Beak Broadcasts" is very typical of you! There you go again, apologizing and rubbing your be--, nose in the earth for no reason at all. I think you carry enough prestige to cut that sort of thing out ((Kaff, kaff)) (but I know you won't).

Peter Young's contribution, "Jest of the Dim God" is okay. Perhaps the old adjectives are laid on a bit thick, but I know that this seems to be the case with most stf writers - they just miss the polish of the professional. His story is unusual although I had the misfortune to guess the ending some little time before getting there. I don't know whether to attribute this to my superior brain-power (ahem!) or to Young's giving it away earlier on; what say you?

Next comes Crutch's "Light Flashes" which are interesting and topical. Although they are not bad they are not the kind of stuff which makes for outstanding writing, which means that they don't have the scope of, say, Fred's "Stuff & Such" — a very interesting feature. I like the way he picks on some obscure subject and makes something extremely interesting out of it. He has a real knack for that sort of thing.

Now where was I? - I left off writing this yesterday and am trying to carry on from where I stopped.

Oh, yes — next on the list comes "Little Drops of Water", which I haven't read yet. Hang on for a moment while I proceed to peruse it.....
.....Heh! heh! heh! Very amusing. It's a clever short story and is a good example of the kind of matter I like to see printed in fanmags. The idea is quite clever and it produced some good chuckles from me. What's more, Gibson doesn't overdo his literary style.

Stammering staples!!! If it isn't our old friend, Dangt-o-o-ng Mor-r-r-ell in the next story! It was a great surprise to see him again and you may be sure I was heartbroken to learn of his death. Can you persuade Saari to bring Danton back in a tale of reincarnation or sump'n? I liked his tale partially for sentimental reasons and entirely for the improvement he's made in his writing.

I've already commented on the Wack's effort. His article on religion and Christmas is very interesting. Ask him

if he got it out of the Encyclopedia Britannica! When he goes on with stuff about dextro and levo forms and stereo-isomerism he leaves me way behind, doesn't he you? It appears that he knows what he's talking about if his problem stumped the McGill professors.

Al. Macrae's contribution? Well, it's just typical of him. I always used to wonder how A.I.'s brain worked and I still haven't found out. His "Story of Trees" - well, frankly I don't quite get it, but I always was slow at comprehending such tales

FRANKLIN LEE BALDWIN CanFan #6 a supreme k.o. Cover very ok and enlightening. Mason in best pose. But where was fan Wakefield? ((Where was he? Grrrrr! The excuse he gave for not sending a photo was that he had sent his last to YOU, and lost the negative)) Caliber of material best I've seen in Canadian mags to date. Hope you can continue to shoot that kind of stuff to us subscribers. "Jest of the Dim God" one of the best fan yarns I've seen around in some moons — quite a pay-off ending. The darn thing kept cropping up in my mind several days after reading it & I'd have a chuckle for myself.

SHIRLEY PUM PECK The cover cleared up a lot of queer ideas. I had about what people look like. You all seem to be human and usual-looking after all. Strange.

I wish you would thank J. Hollis Mason for his comments on "The Unclean" for me. I believe in constructive criticism and had never had any idea before what a reader's reaction to my stories was. I'm glad he didn't "praise with faint damns."

FRANCIS T. LANEY The cover was swell, but would have been better for me had it had a picture, an actual photograph, of that well-nigh mythical being, The Wakefield. I understand that so little of this creature's body is matter, as we understand the word, that it fails to make any impression on a photographic plate. However, this difficulty could perhaps be obviated with a spraygun, such as the dauntless professors used on the Dunwich Horror; or else one might dangle choice weird books in front of the thing and gradually lead it into a
(Continued on page 17)

GOOD THINGS FROM STRANGE CABINETS

Page 17

Have you ever wondered what movie started the present run of fantastic and science-fictional motion pictures. I have often, and so finally becoming tired of idle and useless speculation, I delved long and arduously into ancient and musty files of motion picture periodicals and this is what I discovered.

In the magazine, "Motion Picture Classic", (now long defunct) I came across a review of a foreign film, made in Germany, that, I believe, was the first serious attempt ever to portray the unworldly and psychological in celluloid. However, as the cover, contents page, and other pages of the issue are missing and nothing I can read in the remainder of the magazine can date this review, I can only make vague and unscientific guesses as to what year this film was produced. 1919 or 1920, perhaps. ((Former is correct.))

The review from "Motion Picture Classic" follows, complete — word for word as printed:

"Which brings us to "The Cabinet of Dr Caligari", actually the most unusual thing in the celluloid year — or indeed of all the screen years put together. Here is the cubistic or the expressionistic, as you will, applied to the film. For instance, you recognize a house, but with its trapezoidal walls, triangular doors and bizarre floor patterns, it is a structure as never existed in reality.

So, too, with the weird alleys and shadowy streets, the fantastic roofs and

the crazily inclined buildings. All this may or may not mean anything in direct fashion, but the settings form an inseparable part — an aid — to the story, which is as gorgeous a thriller as the most exacting lover of the sensational could desire.

It is a tale of madness and murder, of a queer old wizard, Dr Caligari, and of his somnambulistic victim, Cesare, who by night, seeks vengeance upon those who have been unhappy enough to interest or annoy the hypnotist. The whole thing turns out to be the disordered fancy of a madman.

Out of the morbid maze stands Weiner Krauss' absolutely uncanny performance of "Dr Caligari"; you will feel exactly as if you had been whiling away an hour or so in an asylum. If you like a shocker, we recommend this. Anyway, you should see it. For the first time you will see a film in which the background is not inert. "Dr Caligari" gives dimensions and meaning to space, actually making it a part of the story.

I know for a fact that this film pre-dates the famed "Metropolis", which was also a German film, as I had the pleasure of seeing the latter when very young. However, I am not certain whether this pre-dates "The Lost World", the A. Conan Doyle story which was produced as a motion picture. Perhaps some of you readers can give additional information; perhaps a certain Californian would know. How about it?

COOKIN' WIT' GAS

(Continued from page 16)

soft quagmire, where the impression of its body might be photographed even although the body itself could not.

THE

RETURN OF PETE

By

LESLIE

A

CROUTCH

Page 18

Pete's manly chest swelled with pride every time he looked at that freshly-painted sign over his magnificent store. In letters a foot high it said: "PETE THE VAMPIRE. HI—GRADE LIQUORS AND WINES." And in smaller letters underneath: "Successor to Slim Rubbernutz, deceased."

This day the sun rode high in the cloudless heavens and everything drooped with the heat. Down the board sidewalk walked slowly the town's only practitioner, Dr Acula. He halted before Pete and wiped his brow with a resplendant handkerchief made from babyskin.

"C'mon in and have a snort," offered Pete, knowing if he did he'd hear all the latest gossip

They entered the welcome coolness of Pete's Blood Emporium and Soda Fountain. (Radios, sardines and nymphs as a sideline-specials every Saturday evening: two-bits apiece.) "Shoo!" screamed Pete at the shadowy figure behind the shining chrome-plated counter. A sleepy-eyed ghoul turned from the faucet and grinned saucily. "Say, boss, why doncha get some better stuff in here? This is watered!"

Pete roared. "My stuff is never watered," and heaved a bottle of Jergens at him. The ghoul quickly exited through a door at the rear. "Those pesky critters," sighed the proprietor. "Just because they made me a good suggestion once they figure they have the run of the place."

Dr Acula straddled a stool and leaned heavily on the counter. Bright red fluid squished icily into a tall glass, followed by fizz-water. Acula sipped it appreciatively.

"This heat is enough to make a decent man sweat water," he said. Pete grimaced. Acula was always putting on airs, terming himself a man instead of

what he really was. But he was a good surgeon, especially on vein cases. It was understood he had studied in Vienna, or somewhere around that part of the continent once.

"What's new?" Pete asked, leaning confidentially on the counter.

"Oh, nothing much. Gool's wife just had another."

"Naw! G'wan!"

"'S'truth!"

"Egad. You'd think she'd know when to quit. How many is that anyway? Six—no—seven—"

"Eight, Pete, eight. The oldest girl is out East. Making quite a name for herself, I understand."

"Eight? Well, well, whaddys know! What's she doin'?"

"Got a job working for Gool. Tours the cemeteries out there lining up likely prospects."

"Y'don't say? I suppose she was in the thick of that mess in New York recently when the trains got mixed up and some of Gool's stuff went there by mistake?"

"No, I think she was in Washington at the time."

"Washington? You'd think she'd stay away from that madhouse. Why, one of my agents wrote me recently that they were intending to draft fathers."

Dr Acula threw up his hands in horror. "No! That'll be awfull It'll hit Poor Gool terrible - shh - here he comes now."

Gordon Gool was one of the town's most prosperous businessmen. He, Pete, and some others were all that kept Tombstone on the map. Gool wasn't the paunchy sort pictured by writers, but a slim elegantly dressed fellow with an air of refinement about him.

"Hi, boys," he greeted them. "What's new?"

"Pete says they are talking about

Grafting fathers," whispered Acula in a strained voice.

Gool was horrified. "No! That would be terrible. That's hit me as hard as prohibition did Pete here. Why why they can't do this to me."

"Maybe they won't," suggested Pete dubiously.

"Just think," wailed Gool. "No more babies. Why my business will go on the rocks. Where'll I get the stuff to can? Our children will die like flies."

"Nothing much we could do," said Pete. "We'd just have to find a substitute."

"Substitute?" cried Gool. "Fine thing for you to say. And easy too. You aren't married. You're just a old bachelor...."

"I ain't so old," defended Pete.

"Only 801," supplemented Acula, reaching surreptitiously for a bottle he had spied behind the counter.

The door burst open and an urchin, burdened with papers, came in. "Evenin' paper, gents? All the latest noos."

"No noos like good noos," quipped Acula who by this time was somewhat gay. Pete glared. "They'll hang you with that noos some day if you keep on pulling that." He proffered a coin, took the paper, spread it out on the counter.

"What's in the old Ghoul's Gazette this week?" asked Gool, looking over the other's shoulder.

"Whaddaya mean? Week —"

"Ok, Ok, just a figure of speech."

"You better keepsh away fromsh the figuresh....." began Acula, then went to sleep with his head on the counter.

"Gad, lookit this!" Pete pointed to a headline. "About time, I think." The headline read: "LAWYER DEPLORES LIBELOUS WRITINGS OF AUTHORS". Pete read on:

I. Skinnem, Tombstone's rising young lawyer, today said that the libelous actions of certain Other World Authors in describing the citizens of Gehenna as beasts, evil monstrosities, in league with the devil,

and so on, as deplorable and decidedly lacking in etiquette and any semblance of intelligence.

"It's true, too!" cried Gool. Look at me; look at things they write about me. That my family raids graveyards and eats the bodies found therein. Why, I never ate an Other Worlder yet, and I don't know of any of my family who has done so. Or any of my relatives either."

Pete nodded gloomily in assent. "Look what they said about poor old Doc here. There was one guy a long time back, called himself Stoker, if I remember rightly, who wrote about him and some mouldy old castle. Said Doc hypnotised people and sucked the blood from them!"

"No! Why, Doc wouldn't do that. That — that's unsanitary!"

"Recently some guy who calls himself a fan, whatever that is, suggested in some picture or other that Doc used a straw instead of sucking the blood."

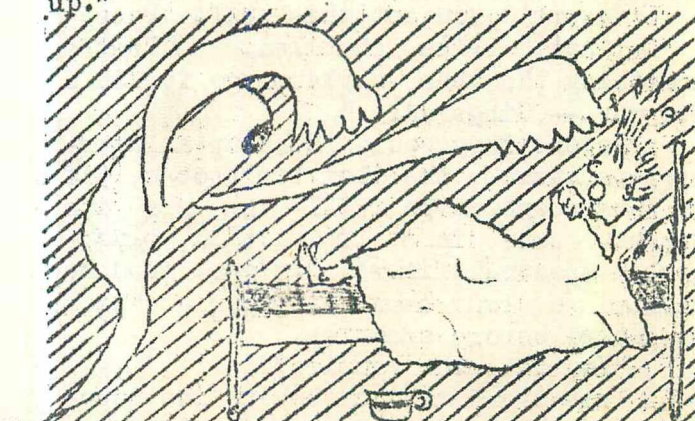
"A straw!"

The good doctor, stirred by repeated references to 'Doc', lifted his head. "I never use a straw," he said. "Unsanitary. Why in Europe there was an epidemic of the hoof and mouth disease by using straws. You gotta take it with a little pump, then boil it to kill the germs."

Pete and Gordon nodded vigorous assent. Pete knew all about such things. Didn't he make a living out of supplying his fellow vampires with pasteurized blood, guaranteed sterile and safe for man or baby?

"Couldn't something be done about that sort of stuff?" asked Gordon Gool, pointing to the paper.

"We might scare them," suggested Dr Acula. "A few scares might wake them up."



"Heck," snorted Pete the Vampire. "Scare them guys? Shucks, they've thought up so many boogies you'd never



Gordon Gool

scare them with the real thing. They'd laugh in your face and call you a sorry old man."

"I'm not so old!" Dracula straightened up.

"Gosh, no," said Gordon. "He's not so old, only a thousand years or so."

"1001," bowed Acula. "I come from one of the oldest families in Europe. Why, I believe we might be related in some way or other."

Pete stared. "Huh? You and me related? G'wan, don't gimme that guff."

"It is true. I understand a distant relation of mine came over on the Mayflower."

"Who was the girl?" asked Gordon, ears perking up.

"Not girl, you dope. Ship. The Mayflower was a ship," snorted Pete. "Ain't you got no education at all?"

"I knew a girl named May Flower at one time," reminisced Gordon. "Dancer in Hell's Tavern up the coast near Boola Boola."

((Pete's answer deleted for reasons best known to the editor.))

"Gentlemen, Gentlemen," placated Acula, pushing in between them. "Let us forget the ship and the dancer. They are of no importance. We can do nothing about this libel of the Other Worlders, so why should we lose any sleep over it?"

Pete shrugged and moved around behind the counter. Shaking up a bottle, he poured drinks all around. He sat the bottle on the counter near the door, not noticing the lead ghoul sticking its head in and watching the proceedings with great interest.

They quaffed their drinks and smacked their lips with great satisfaction.

"Where'd you get this stuff, Pete?"

"That?" Pete chuckled. "That's something the Other Worlders go for in a big way — Ginger Ale."

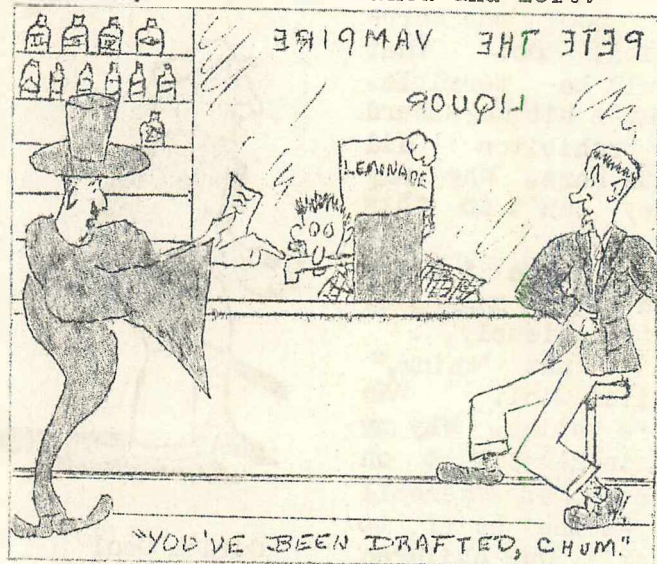
Before they could think up an appropriate answer, the door burst open, (if it bursts once more it'll be off its hinges.) and in stalked a tall, black-garbed spectral figure. In one hand he carried a long sheet of paper at which he looked before speaking.

"You Pete the Vampire?"

Pete tried to duck behind the counter but caught his chin on the lemonade faucet. The stranger caught this and addressed his following remarks direct:

"You're to report straight to Colonel Beel Zebub in one hour. You've been

drafted, chum!" He turned and left.



"I've been drafted," wailed Pete. "I don't want to go. I got business here. I ain't gonna fight for them Other Worlders."

"You ain't!" The stranger stuck his head inside the door. "You're going to Hell on a secret mission!"

Pete sighed and reached for his hat. "I'll be seein' you guys — I hope," he said as he left the store.

Colonel Beel Zebub was an immense individual with a ferocious beard and mustache. He scowled at Pete and roared:

"You Pete the Vampire?"

"Click-click-click," answered Pete's teeth.

"I've got a mission for you in Mephistolea. They got some Japs down there and they're trying to peddle some bum booze. Old Nick is sure riled to hell and gone. You gotta go down there and find out what's what."

Pete woke up and his teeth stopped chattering. "Japs peddling booze in Mephistolea? But who'd buy it?"

"Lots of people down there. Thousands of people. They found a whole passel of their blinkin' ancestors and they was all thirsty as the devil after being roasted a few thousand years."

Pete snapped into a semblance of a salute, tripping himself as he did so. Picking himself up, he tried again, this time with a bit more success; he didn't fall down.

Colonel Beel Zebub stood up, crooked his fingers and then snapped them. With the snap a billow of flame came up around Pete, and he felt himself falling, falling, falling.....

- (To Be Concluded) -

The

by
John Hollis Mason

MASTER'S MASTERPIECE

page 21

"The Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath," published for the first time in Arkham House's collection of Lovecraftiana, "Beyond the Wall of Sleep," certainly merits the description: the master's masterpiece. For it rises head and shoulders over all his other stories.

It has always seemed to me that Lovecraft's writing falls into two definite divisions. The first includes those stories of dreamlike fantasy that showed the influence Dunsany had on him. Stories like: "The Cats of Ulthar," "The Quest of Iranon," "Polaris," and others.

The second division included stories of more mundane locale like "The Rats in the Walls," in which was first evidenced that morbid power that was later to flow so magnificently. But in these stories he deserted the earlier, more ethereal fantasies almost entirely.

It seems a distinct possibility to me, therefore, that "Kadath" constituted for Lovecraft the end of the old and the beginning of the new, for while pre-eminent fantasy, the tale has a queer admixture of that horror which was later to occupy his entire attention. Also, it was written in 1927, just about the time that I estimate he entered his second phase.

Francis Laney has written in ACOLYTE that "Kadath" gave him the disconnected impression of a dream. He goes on to state that the story was not clear & that he had to re-read it several times before he could make anything of it.

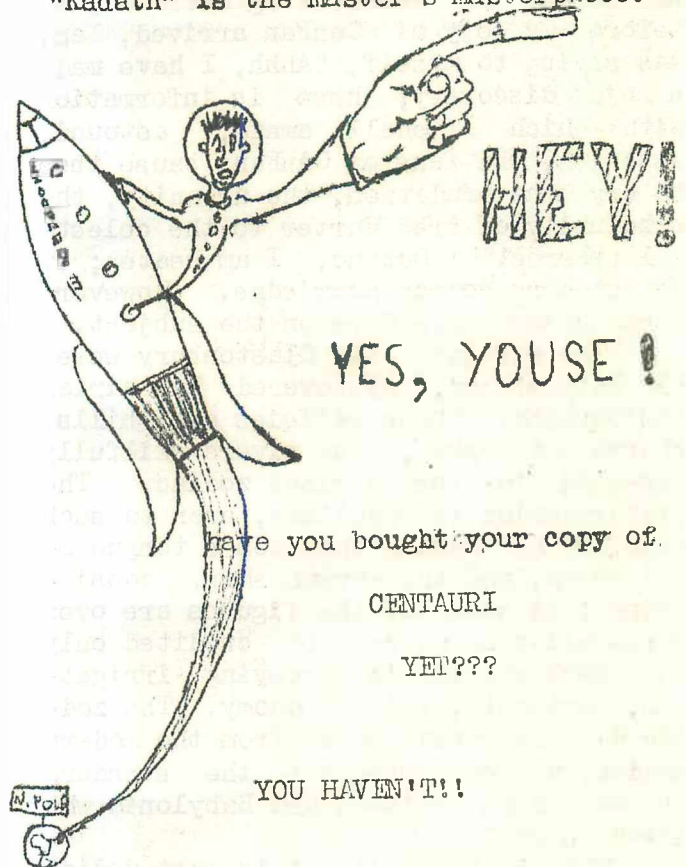
While the title would seem to bear Laney out, I didn't find any of the disconnected qualities he mentions. On the contrary, I have rarely run across such a superb combination of plotting and writing.

The story of "Kadath" is as old as humanity — the story of a man searching for what has variously been called "soul", "beauty," and "happiness." And the dreamworld through which Randolph Carter's search takes him in the first half of the novel is positively without parallel in literature. Lovecraft has done something here that few men have ever done — created something absolutely original.

The first portion of the second half is not quite up to the standard of that which went before, and it seemed to me that it could have been profitably deleted, but from the time Carter & the Ghouls begin their flight to the citadel of the Old Ones, until that tremendous ending, the story reaches full stature.

"The Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath" is something I will never forget --- one of those few great reading experiences of a lifetime. Had Lovecraft never written another word, "Kadath" would have insured his place in the front rank of the greatest fantasy writers.

"Kadath" is the master's masterpiece.



Well then, by all means, hurry up and do so. Third issue topnotch, featuring material by Fran Laney, Keith Buchanan, Thomas R. Daniels, Harry Warner, the editor, and others. Lithoed cover by Clyne, and lots of mimeod interiors by Anderson. A really worthwhile mag for 10¢ from Andy Anderson, 515 Ocean Ave., Pismo Beach, California, U. S. A.

STUFF & SUCH

Page 22

by
Fred Hurter jr.

Ah, Stuff & Such again, and here I am typing it out the usual two or three weeks after the Beak has sent frantic notice that it must be mailed to him at once. Will it reach the mighty presses of CanFan in time? Dare CanFan go to press without Stuff & Such? What was that I heard someone yell? A heckler, eh? Well, enough of this. Let us wade through this installment of rags and bones of information perversely propped with prejudices and priceless prognostications. Awk!

It was with some amazement that I noted a short bit on Arthur's table in the November issue of CanFan. Pluto seems to have beaten me to the punch. I ran across an interesting article just before my copy of CanFan arrived, and was saying to myself, "Ahhh, I have made a major discovery; here is information with which I shall amaze, astound, astonish, the fans of CanFan; cause them to cry the erudition, the urbanity, the concinnity of Fred Hurter to the celestial spheres!" But no, I am beaten; it is but mere common knowledge. However, here is some more dope on the subject.

The effigies at Glastonbury were, as Pluto stated, discovered by aerial photography. These effigies are hills, shaped and worked, and rivers skilfully diverted to form a giant zodiac. The picturization is excellent, even to such details as making the lion's tongue of red earth, and the workmanship, considering that some of the figures are over three miles long, can be credited only to a race skilled in surveying, irrigation, earthwork, and astronomy. The zodiac differs considerably from the modern zodiac, and corresponds to the standard one of Sargon of Accad and Babylonia who lived in 2600 B. C.

Who, then, built this vast zodiac in England over 4000 years ago; built it with great skill, and on the plan of the Sumerians of the Sargonic period in distant Babylonia? Certainly not the painted savages in England at that time, in spite of the fact that the Welsh bards called it the first "Mighty Labour of the Isle of Britain," and it has not the slightest connection with the builders

of the crude monolithic structures at Avebury and Stonehenge. Who, then?

Welsh legends say the builders were the Cymry, who came "from the East in the Ages of Ages" bringing the knowledge of the stars. They tell of a certain Hu the Mighty, or Hu Gardarn, who "originally conducted the nation of the Cymry into the Isle of Britain", and that "they came from the Summer Country over the hazy sea." Beginning to suspect?? Yup, that's right; the Cymry are the Sumerians who came all the way from Babylonia to colonize Britain. And it wasn't any small colonization, either, as Caer Sidi, the name given to the zodiac of Glastonbury by the Welsh, was no overnight project, and moreover, Welsh legend also states, "There was no tribute paid to any but the race of the Cymry because they first possessed the Isle of Britain." In addition, Dr Waddel says, "We discover that the Cymry of Wales derive their name from Sumer. This latter was a term occasionally used by the early ruling race of Babylonia," and that the Sumerians engaged in "mining and colonizing, occupation of the British Isles by several immigrations from the Sargonic period of about 2700 B. C. onwards." The name of the county Somerset is also derived from Sumer.

Well then, so the damn Sumerians whom we wasted our valuable time reading about built that Zodiac. So what? What has all this nonsense to do with the Arthurian legends about which this so-called column is supposed to be talking.

Nothing, except that several thousand years later the zodiac became known as the "Round Table"; that the "Isle of Avalon" forms one of the figures of the Zodiac; that the Cauldron of Inspiration (later known as Holy Grail) was taken by Arthur from Caer Sidi; that it is the situation of the mysterious Kingdom of Logres. Further connections???

To quote K. E. Maltwood; "In tracing the quest of the knights of the Round Table between the famous Avalon Isle, King Arthur's Castle of Camelot, and Wales, it was found that Sir Lancelot and the other knights quested rough-

ly in a circle over the same ground, (the zodiac, Caer Sidi) encountering a lion, giants, and a fiery dragon. Years of puzzling over the mystery as to what they were really questing, obviously not a Christian Grail, revealed that the Cary River in its windings drew the outline of a lion, the two Dundon Hills formed a giant, and so on. Thus, here were knights hunting "Nature Gods" but they themselves were the Christian re-incarnations of the gods they quested, or perhaps astrologers might say they were born under those stars, Sir Lancelot showing all the characteristics of the Lion; King Arthur of the Sun God, Hercules; Sir Gawain of the Ram, etc.

This, then, explained "the wonders of Great Britain," and "the great adventures of the Kingdom of Logres" for here we have a dual myth of earth and sky — the star constellations laid out on the earth, and the knights impersonating the stars above them. A magnificent conception!"

News item clipped from a Montreal newspaper; "A pair of hands ((poker?)) were found today in a garbage can. The Montreal Police state they are those of a young woman, and that they had been cut off after her death. ((Well, I always said that game could lead to mighty disastrous consequences.)) Investigations are being continued." Ghoulis place, Montreal!

While on the subject of Montreal here are some other odd facts about the city. You are obliged to pay a tax for the water in the radiator of your automobile, even though you may use anti-freeze all year round. But here's the rub. My friend was forced to pay a two dollar tax on the water in the radiator of his motorcycle — and it happens to be aircooled. You have to be better than a magician to avoid the Montreal city taxes; being just a magician is not enough. Magicians, necromancers, practitioners of the occult sciences, must pay a ten dollar yearly tax if they wish to remain in business.

Funnier still is a certain newspaper published in Montreal. The Herald to be precise, and of course I always am precise. This paper is famed for its "agony columns." Sample extract.

CANADIAN deserted by wife seeks sympathy from young female. No gold diggers.

YOUNG man wishes to contact athletic girl interested in wrestling and physical development. Correspond and exchange snaps.

TORONTO salesman in Montreal Thursday likes to meet attractive girl friend. Domestic servant or young widow preferred. Al replies confidential.

(er humph;;this reminds me of a good ((????)) joke.....)

YOUNG man would like to meet someone willing to lend him \$25.00.

(So would I.)

A ROVING bachelor 35, desires attractive girl companion for shows, picnics, matrimony, etc.

(What does the guy mean with "etc"?)

On the whole, however, Montreal is quite an interesting place. I have located the most amazing spots. Come down and see me some time and I'll show you around.

One source of trouble with Time Travel stories, or even just stories of the future and past, has been with the horribly set-up calendar we are using at present. At a recent meeting of the Royal Canadian Astronomical Society that I attended, a lecture was given on a proposed New World calendar. In this calendar, the year is divided into four equal quarters of 91 days each, the one extra day being used as a world holiday. It is placed between Saturday, December 30th, and Sunday, January 1st, and is simply called Dec. W. This would make a nice long week-end just at the right time. Each of the quarters is divided into three months of 31, 30, 30, days. This calendar has many excellent advantages. Every month always begins on the same day; Jan 1st would always be on Sunday; the calendar is fixed, never changes; if you buy a calendar ((Or an Esquire ditto.)) under this system, you would never have to change it. ((Anything but that!)) More over, from the business viewpoint, it is excellent also since every month would have exactly 26 working days. If Science Fiction authors used this system, they wouldn't have to worry as to whether Jan. 23, 2036, fell on a Sun, Mon, Tues, etc. Some cranks are always bound to find out the author made a mistake.

I noted an article in a recent Can-Fan, "Concerning Specific Time" by a certain misguided young man by the name

of Roscoe E. Wright. In this case he happens to be Wrong. (Gad, these horrible puns. I just can't help myself.) ((Neither could your mother.)) Not only has this perverse gentleman dared to write an article on Time without first reading MY article on Time (which appeared in the first issue of Censored, available for 10¢ at the abode of FHjr, — subtle plug, isn't it.), but he must drag in by its petrified ears the hoary "Law of Causation". This law has bin blasted, bullied, and buried, (Note beautiful illiteration!) by physicists years ago. Under exactly the same circumstances, and exactly the same causes, you don't always get exactly the same results. All our so-called basic laws of the universe are based on statistical averages: there is always a chance factor. To use an old example; if you put a kettle on the fire, the chances are excellent that the heat will be transferred from the fire to the kettle, but since the laws of thermodynamics are subject to statistical averages, there is always a chance that the kettle will give up heat to the fire, and the tea will freeze, and you will have iced tea. An observable example of this disunity of the universe is the disintegration of radium. But why should I rattle on. I refer one and all to the first chapter of "The Mysterious Universe", by Sir James Jeans.

And what am I arguing about anyway? I proved in MY article on Time, ((your articles are never on time, Fred. Look how late this here one is.)) that time travel is impossible. And that is that. Anybody wanna argue. Does anyone wish to combat my vitriolic pen, or should I say, "inky typewriter"?

Our Chem. Prof. had an excellent suggestion the other day. There is a certain foul-smelling chemical, about the foulest, I think, by the name of Butyl Mercaptan. It smells somewhat like skunk raised to the nth power plus a dash of garlic. It is non-poisonous, but a few drops in a room causes a rapid general exodus. The prof's suggestion was that a few tons be dropped on Berlin. It would take weeks for the smell to dissipate, and no one could bear to remain in the city; it would smell as if thirty million skunks were at work on

overtime. Moreover, no gas mask could keep out the smell, and since it is non-poisonous, no one would be hurt, but the city would be completely out of action. Some say, though, that this would not work, as certain sections of the population are probably immune to that type of odour.

Which reminds me of a joke, as the speaker at a stag banquet said. There were two skunks who lived together. One was called In, and the other Out. One day, after In and Out had come In, Out decided to go out. In went out also, a few minutes later. In was the first to return; he came staggering home from the wine cellars. A little later Out approached their home. Now how did Out know that In was already at home??.....
.....Instinct.

I don't know how many of you dear readers read Life, but I'm sure a good many of you (all of three people without a doubt) noticed the excellent photo-paintings of Saturn & Company, as seen from each of the various satellites. They're about the best pictureizations of other planets that I have seen to date. The artist who did them apparently also reads stf. Space-suited figures can be seen in several.

While browsing through a book on the vertebrates, I came across the following pome. It is based on the well-known fact that some of the dinosaurs grew to such a monstrous size that they had to develop a secondary brain in their hindquarters, in order to control their huge bodies. Here it is:

Behold the mighty dinosaur,
Famous in prehistoric lore,
Not only for his power and strength,
But for his intellectual length.
You will observe by these remains
The creature had two sets of brains —
One in his head, (the usual place)
The other in his spinal base.
Thus he could reason a priori
As well as a posteriori.
No problem bothered him a bit,
He made both head and tail of it.

So wise was he, so wise and solemn,
Each thought filled just a spinal
column.
If one brain found the pressure strong

It passed a few ideas along.
 If something slipped his forward
 mind,
 'Twas rescued by the one behind.
 And if in error he was caught,
 He had a saving afterthought.
 As he thought twice before he spoke
 He had no judgement to revoke.
 Thus he could think without
 congestion
 Upon both sides of every question.
 Oh gaze upon this model beast,
 Defunct ten million years at least.

Have been reading quite a bit lately on primitive surgery. I was quite amazed to discover that the caveman performed brain operations, using only primitive flint instruments. The operation was performed to relieve pressure on the brain caused no doubt by a bop on the bean while trying to walk off with someone else's wife. The skull was bared and a hole carved through it with sharp flint slivers; the cut-out piece was then lifted, and allowed to slowly settle back into place, and the wound bandaged. Many skulls have been found, which show complete reknitting of the bone. The operations appear to have been about 90% successful, which is about as good a percentage as doctors with modern equipment can hope to obtain.

No doubt you have all read or seen articles re the post-war future; how the air will be filled with flying-wings, helicopters, et al. I was out last week to the Cartierville plant of the Canadian Car & Foundry with my father to have a look at a wooden mock-up of a flying-wing that CC & F are building, not for after the war, but immediately, for a South American airline. They are a modified and enlarged version of the basic Burnelli plane that was built in England round about 1934. Don't be surprised if you see them being used by Canadian airlines after the war.

Damn, just when I think I'm going to get this column finished, Joe and the boys arrive for a nice rowdy game of poker. Ah, such is life! What'll it be Joe? Stud? Baseball?

Gad, what a poker game that was!! The boys came up armed with bottles of beer and tons of cigarettes. We started off by arguing about the stakes. ((Make

mine rare.)) Joe wanted to play for five-ten-and a quarter for chips; Art insisted on keeping them at two-five-and ten. (Didn't want them too high) ((I like mine fairly fresh myself)) Then Joe, poor misguided fellow, drew the bones from his pocket, and before we knew it we were shooting craps. And what a crap game; it started out at a quarter or 50¢ a roll. Soon the game progressed to one dollar bills, then two, fives, and on up to tens. For a while, what with a succession of snake-eyes, box-cars, and Little Joes that I couldn't make, I was eight bucks in the hole, but then the Norns decided to come to my aid and I ended up three to the good. The same misguided Joe lost twenty-eight. Art was up fifteen, and Sid ten. A nice, quiet, friendly, cut-throat game. So we hopped into Joe's car and headed for the Cafe Ste Michel, a cabaret in the Mont-real Harlem. Art footed the bills with his ill-gotten bills. We finally ended up at a steak-house on St Henri in the wee hours of the morning. What an evening!

I had today off so I went to the Redpath Library to try to get more information on the Cymry. I practically turned the place inside out. The head librarian got so interested in my quest that she left the desk for two hours to help me find the books. I finally ended up by getting out of the place with three times the allowed quota of books, and five times the allowed time limit on them. Glancing over them, the "Phoenician Origin of Britons and Scots" by Waddel, and "The Mysteries of Britain" and "Myths and Legends of Babylonia and Assyria" by Lewis Spence, appear to be about the best. May use some of the dope in future (?) columns.

I noted in Mephisto (not in hell) some comments re my article on the origins of religions. In the article I did not give a synopsis of the case of atheism, I merely gave a synopsis of straight anthropological discoveries which would seem to prove that religion is an evolutionary process of which Christianity is a phase, and that being evolutionary, we may expect more advanced religions in the future. Moreover, the article was merely an introduction; I intended in subsequent articles to give the facts on which the theory is

based, and let ye fans form your own conclusions. Beak wants me to continue the series in CanFan. Should I? Ok, ok, No more sarcastic comments please.

I'm running some experiments on hydroponics this summer. ((Dn't they object?)) If I have time, (which I probably won't) I may make up some extra quantities of Hurter's special Super-Doooper Grow-Your-Own-Weeds-In-Water Formula for interested fans.. I'd like to see how it works in different parts of the country. The stuff's so good you can also use it as an anti-freeze mixture, or as a paint remover. No kiddin'!!

What else was I going to say. Oh yes; I was going to make some comment on the German pilotless rocket bombs, which are not rocket bombs, and on a letter by Willy Ley to a friend of mine, Mr Morgan, re Morgan's theory as to the causes of branches in spiral nebulae, which appeared in a recent issue of The Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. I met Morgan out at the Ville-Marie Observatory, where I hang out on Saturday nights. (when not on a binge) ((I guess they don't see much of you then, Freddie!)) But more of that later. I can hear the fans getting bored.

Oh yeah, before I chop this off, how many of you saw the Canadian Press release of an interview I had on science-fiction? Heheh, surprised, eh? But then, the Press is pretty gullible.

FHjr.

For those who missed Fred's interview, it is reprinted below. This write-up appeared in the Windsor Daily Star. It starts off with the headline

SCREWBALL LITERATURE CARRIES ON

Fiction Is Stranger Than Truth, Say
Amateurs Who Do "Chillers"

MONTREAL, April 19 — The adage that truth is stranger than fiction has been turned about-face for many an imaginative young Canadian since September 23, 1942. That was the date when Fred Hurter, a student of St Andrew's College, Aurora, Ont., drew up the first constitution of the Canadian Amateur Fantasy Press, an organization to unite and promote amateur science-fiction magazines in Canada.

Now a student of chemical engineering at McGill University here, 21 year old Hurter looks back on two years of organized literary havoc with the admission that "No one seems to know exactly how it all started."

The fantasy press in Canada, he explains, was the offshoot of similar organizations in the United States. There, pulp magazine fans, bored with tales of rocket ships and lunar monsters, branched out on their own as far back as 1928 with a series of amateur publications which soon became more fantastic than the original model.

From there, says Hurter, "Fan organizations have come and gone since the First Fan heard from the Second Fan," culminating with the organization of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association in 1937 and the National Fantasy Fan Federation in 1941.

Those two American leagues now unite amateur science-fiction publications in the United States from Brooklyn to Los Angeles.

Fans in Great Britain, Australia and Canada took up the cause of fantasy until today some 3,000 ((?!!)) fans write monthly bulletins of nightmare and nonsense, promoting everything from Esperanto to surrealism — with stories of chemistry, planetary invasions and pin-up girls thrown in for good measure.

Canadians caught the bug in 1938 when Leslie Crutch of Parry Sound, Ont, came out with the first issue of "Light" — as weird as the best of them. Hurter, a member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation and contributor to many American amateur science magazines, followed through with "Censored", in 1941. Hurter was publisher, editor and business manager. Beak Taylor, another St Andrew's student, hit the masthead as office boy.

By 1943 Taylor had graduated to publisher of his own magazine, "Eight Ball", which grew into Canadian Fandom, the most thriving member of the Canadian Fantasy Press today. Another 1943 beginner was Alan Child of Vancouver, publisher of a monthly chiller called "Mephisto."

"Fan Magazines have fallen down a lot since the war," says Hurter. "Enlistments, paper shortages and war work account for a lot of lost enthusiasm, but most publications are carrying on —

just as screwy as ever.

Britain's contribution to amateur science-fiction is the "Futurian War Digest," published in Chapeltown, Leeds, on paper contributed by American fans. The Futurian specializes in delirious

covers but its contents are mildly devoted to news of former amateur writers now in the services.

Hurter explains the fancy for the imaginative and screwball literature as a form of relaxation for most fans.

#

CONVERSELY

by Ded

I feel that I must once more restate the facts regarding fans, acti-fans, semi-acti-fans, etc, etc. Please remember that I know what I am talking about. I have been in fandom for over two months so I should know.

Get this straight. All living people are fans as they all admire something or somebody to some extent! The fact of the matter is that the words "man" and "fan" are interchangeable. A fan, however, in the science-fiction or fantasy field who does something exceptional is an acti-fan. If you have read every issue of CAPTAIN FUTURE thoroughly, you are hereby rewarded for your trying task by being given the title of "acti-fan".

I mentioned some time ago that those in the armed forces are servi-fans. This title may lead to confusion as everyone is in the service of something or somebody. Thus we are all servi-fans. The only correct way for a person to show what kind of fan he is, is for him to place before "fan" a word denoting in a clever way his employment.

The average person, however, does not know that he is even a fan let alone some particular class of fan. The

waiter at the local soda-fountain doesn't know that he is a jerki-fan. Your garbage collector hasn't the vaguest suspicion that he is a scavi-fan. This is indeed a deplorable state of affairs. But it can be remedied. How? Merely by telling all those with whom you come in contact what you think they are. For instance, the next time you write to your congressman, you should begin your letter — "Dear Sir: You are a politi-fan." If he is at all human he will be endlessly grateful for this information. Now, having settled this matter once and for all I shall get on with other things.

In the Proptilegematic Museum in Washington there is an astounding book. The name of the museum indicates the fact that there are many unusual things there, but this book is utterly flabbergasting. It is not an unusual size; its cover is an ordinary Morocco binding; but it has no pages! You can imagine the joy that entered my heart when I saw this book. I spent hours with it. The name of the genius who published this book is not known unfortunately.

Conversely, I should have known that I couldn't go on like this forever.

* * * * *

VALLEY OF THE STYX

Low barren hills of cold volcanic stone.
Desolation sad as old loves half-forgotten
The ugly, sluggish stream of bracken death,
The jagged peaks ashimmer in the sun.
Dull colors, brittle-dun, metallic hued
And burning in the awful shadeless heat.

Nanek

AD INFINITUM

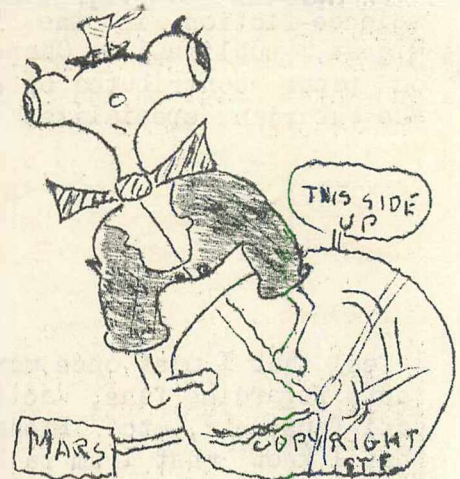
ONE of the latest. This promising new fanzine shows signs of really developing into something. First issue features material by Bill James, Bob Tucker, Ron Clyne, James R. Gray, Ray Karden, Hugh Nudnick, Joe Kennedy, and others. Obtainable for 10¢, or 4 for 30¢ from Al Weinstein, 568 Audubon Ave; N.Y. 33, NY.

SCIENCE-FICTION

A heart to heart discussion by Holden Blackwell.



Ah, one hardly knows where to begin; Science-Fiction! The very name strikes horror into my mind! In the first place, the name is extremely contradictory - Science is fact, and fiction, well it can be almost anything. I have often wondered what the poor scientist felt like when he saw his noble profession connected with bug-eyed monsters roaming about on distant planets which are invariably MARS!



Probably the worst zines is the something in the unadulterated reader who and take it having done so enjoyment by in Stf. mags, good on the



by-product of the so-called Science Fiction magazine poor benighted soul who thinks that he is gaining way of science from his indulgent reading of this trash. On the other hand we have the can take any amount of it for its face value and use it for his making fun of it which are very whole, as most reading.

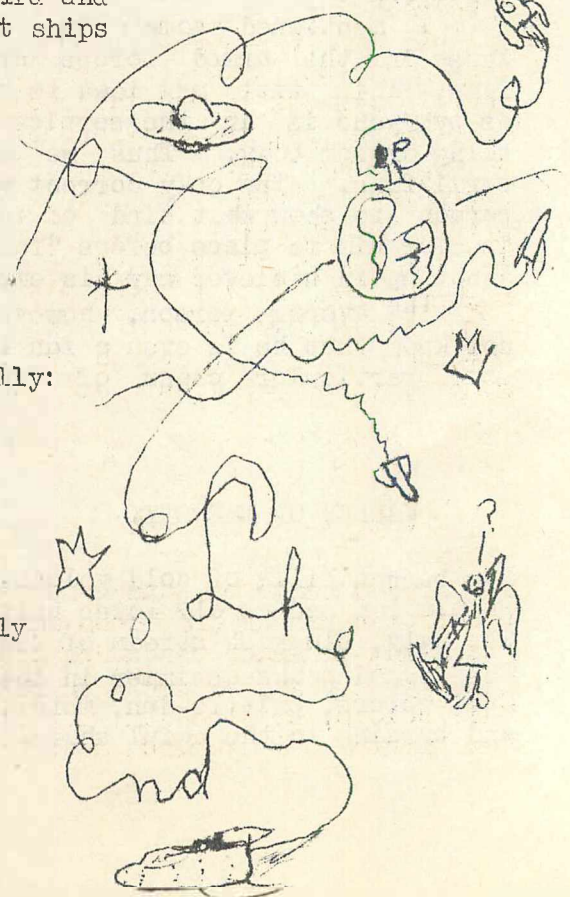


In between these two classes we have any number of suckers, who, for various reasons will pay a dime for a lot of cheap paper, and, mind you, will even pay up to a quarter to clutter up their minds with weird and horrifying bunk about the wonderful roaring rocket ships that soar to the planets.

As far as I can see, Science-Fiction fans, on the most part are just a bunch of drips looking for a cheap thrill; notice I said looking, and involving the name science just to give their silly enterprise a somewhat professional aspect.



((Incidentally: the opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the editor's unless signed by him.))



Below are just a few of the thousands of fantasy books and magazines I have for sale and trade. If there are any gaps in your collection, send me your want list and I will quote prices on them. I am always in the market for buying and swapping material pertaining to fantasy. Everything is in generally good condition and sent post-paid. (Inside U.S. only. To Canadians, Britishers and Aussies, postage is extra.)

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MICROCOSMOS — latest fanzine out — features material by Derleth, Honig, Richardson, Krueger, Held and many others. Coming up in issue #3 will be an 8,000 word novelette by Krueger; special foreign articles from fans on the other side; the Burroughs articles continue by Richardson, and many other features. Mimeographed bi-monthly with litho covers. Subscription rates: 3 for 25¢, from Held. Limited Number. No gratis. Back numbers of 1 and 2 can be had at 10¢ each.

Send all orders, inquiries, etc, to:

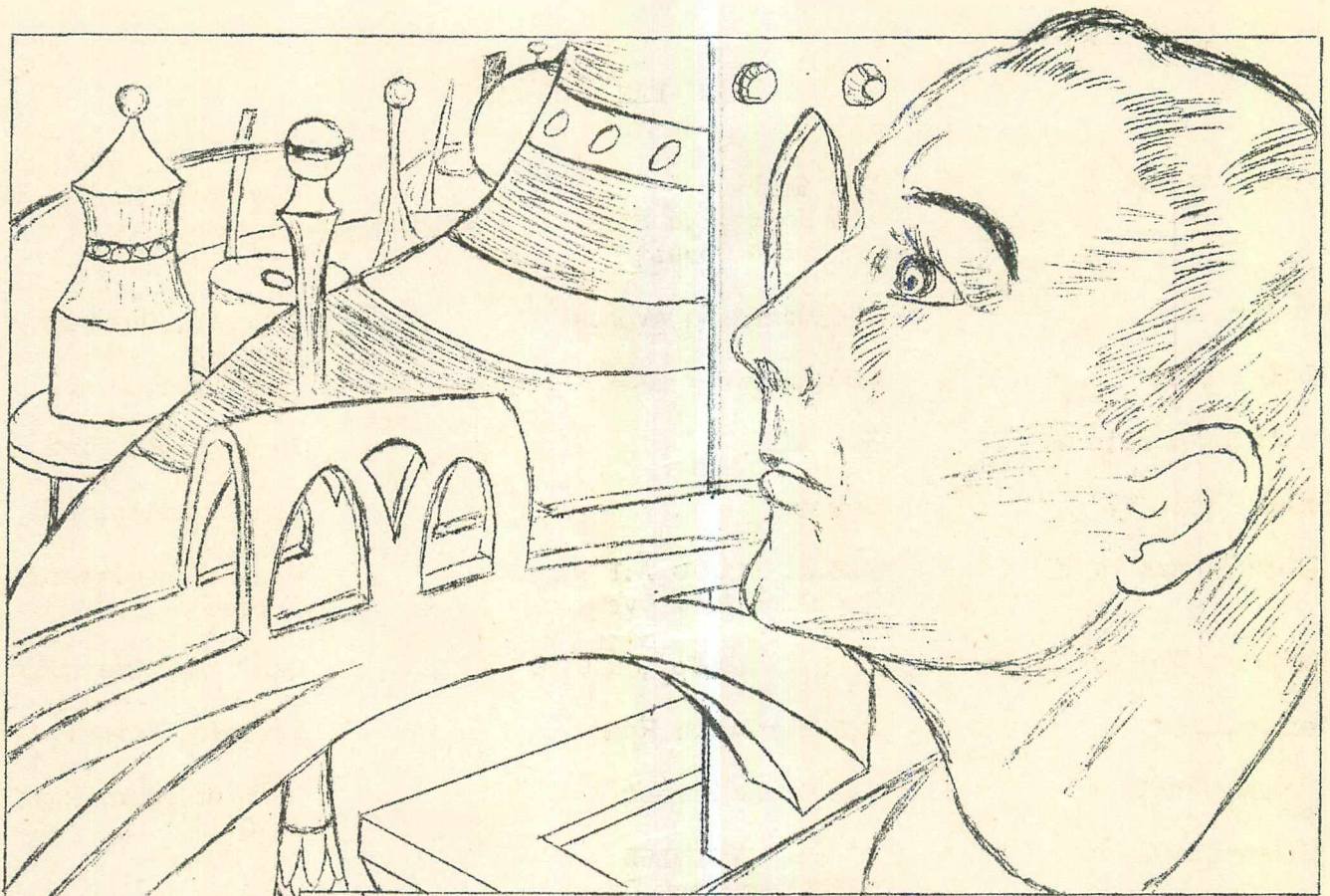
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The addresses of the following are unknown, or withheld: J. Grant Donelly, John Guislin, John Hollis Mason.

Canadian Fans are requested to notify me if their names have been left off this list. All fans are invited to use these addresses for a sample copy of that fan-zine you are about to publish.



WHAT TIME HATH WROUGHT

Anon

I glimpsed the glory of a realm of old,
Where stood the jade and jasper minarets,
Tipped by the sunset's random brush of gold
With Sol's last lingering token as he sets.
Of Zorog, dire necropolis of doom,
Not a pennant flutters on the breeze;
Palace, dooryard, court, and counting-room,
Throne-room, shrine and altar, mart, all these
Lie 'neath a pall of dry dust, undisturbed.
'Tis aeons since the foot of man hath trod
These halls. Great stone faces, unperturbed,
Impassive, on a bed of common sod,
Stare stonily on streets of polished stone,
Weed-riv'n, where in an earlier, happier day
Commerce throve. All in confusion thrown,
Mansion, hut, surrender to Decay.
What Armageddon wrought this great downfall?
'Twas Time, most inexorable of all.

