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THE FAPA CORRESPONDENT

Written by the correspondents of Harry Warner, Jr., and issued by that gentleman for the amusement of the various and sundry members of that venerable organization, the FAPA. Lo, and here she be, the first issue! Vol. 1 WINTER - 1939 No. 1

All credit for the idea of this magazine must go to two parties: Jack Speer and Forrest J Ackerman. FJA for "The Voice of the Imagi-Nation", which is made up of nothing but letters, just like this; and Speer for his section in "Sustaining Program" which features bits from his correspondence.

And, since I have felt for quite some time that in every fan's correspondence there are little gems that are otherwise forever lost to the world at large, I have decided to issue this magazine making use of some of those which come in to me. I hope that their writers--none of whom know their letters are going to be printed here--will trust my discretion in printing only what will be entertaining and not cause bad feeling, and feel free to continue writing me as before. For, I guarantee, I shall not print anything I should not. And thus, to the letters:

From Leslie A. Crouch, as a fitting starter, although it was written as an entirely irrelevant P. S. to a letter: "Why do wimmin write for about three letters then crawl away somewhere and die? Ain't there a blasked female who'll write like a male?"

From James S. Avery: "You probably remember my telling you about my kid brother a year or two ago? Well, he's still not a reader of science-fiction, and I'm still in as much of a quandry as ever. Why can't I persuade him to read science-fiction? He has absolutely no interest in it whatsoever, although he reads and has read all of my boyhood books, as well as all the Augusta Huell Seaman mystery stories which are so popular--but still not sfns. Now here's what I propose to do about it--sometime this coming winter I shall either submit or buy space for a half page article in which I shall state my case, and offer a cash prize for the best solution to my problem. That is, to the fan whose

suggestion actually is successful, will go the award. All ideas will be given a try for a reasonable period of time. How does that sound to you as a way to make him become a reader (if not a fan) of science-fiction? He has just turned 12. Many fans were readers at that age—you were if I remember correctly—and I came in not far after that when I was 13 in '35. So you see, the task isn't physically impossible; merely a problem in psychology."

From William Groveman: "That remark you made about you not having an FAPA membership card or constitution (It's a fact! HW) seems rather funny compared with me, as I have both and am not even a member. When I met Wollheim he gave me a copy of the constitution, or rather one of the original draft which has since been amended a few times; the first two issues of the FANTASY AMATEUR which should turn into collector's items; and he even gave me a membership card over which he marked VOID. So I am not even a member and have a lot of stuff you need.....While Wollheim may not be too popular now, he certainly is cordial to a few fan and is smart in being that way, because he is making possible friends for the future. I like him personally, but do not agree with his views, and the day I was up there he never mentioned the QSFL and only made one subtle crack at New Pandom. Wollheim is okay."

From C. S. Youd: "I very definitely like the '33 large-size Wonders, which had such unforgettable yarns as "The Forgotten Man of Space", "The Man Who Awoke", "The Revolt of the Scientists" (pre-inflation Schachner period), "The Men of the Dark Comet" (as I said before, one of Pegasus' own favourites), "Visitors from Mlok", "Men Without Sleep" (I still wonder what this gem really means at times) and - to cut short an interminable list - Kelly's "Moon Tragedy". Of course, the '32 Wonder period was really brilliant - the first five months, at least. It can never happen again - to have three serials like "The Time Stream", "The Final War", and "Brood of Helios" running consecutively. I, myself, started SF with remainder buying way back in '32. I was ten then and had devoured with avidity such tales as "Amaza, Planet of Peril", "Lost on Venus", etc., which appeared in the 2d. weeklies. Consequently to see Paulian and Weesolish covers in second-hand book--

shops filled me with a kind of ecstasy. My first buy was the April 32 Wonder, a good one to start with, and it was some five years or more before I realized sadly that "50th Century Revolt", "The Last Women" and the others were not epics, not even, in reality, tolerably good stories."

From L. Tason, a correspondent who has no interest in fantasy in the least, and who merely wrote the following at the end of a recent letter, but which I think somehow fitting anyway: "Well, I must close now, and wishing you all the best and hoping you get my letter (he lives in England. HW) and me your answer, that Hitler may forever be chopped into little pieces, roasted in the hottest place in Hell, put on a meat skewer and that his friend, that twelve stone of superfluous rubbish, cast aside by the dustman, which rejoices in the dish called Goebbles, may be put through a mangel, fed to a rattler, blown up, scraped together, and may die of heart-attack, gout, neuritis, gastric stomach, headache, scarlet pimples, plague, leprosy, plurosy, hipocracy, and finish up in the lowest depths of Hell without stopping."

From William H. Govean: "....Finally ended up in Flushing about noon and found Taurasi not home, but his sister named Minnie or something was in. She is also a fan and so I talked with her for about an hour or so and then left for Manhattan. I really felt bad about missing Jimmy. Anyway, I expect to be at the next meeting of the Queens chapter, SFZ. Taurasi must have a pile of fan mags at least 5 feet high, plus innumerable copies of Fantasy News and the FAFA bundles lying all over the room, his sister did show me his room. After leaving the Taurasi home I caught the sub for Manhattan and eventually ended up at the office of SCIENCE FICTION, where Harnig works. He was not in and the place was in an uproar. Paul was not there either. At any rate, the same firm that issues SF also issues a couple dozen other pulps and I was watching the art chief argue with one of the illustrators. He was saying that they were losing a thousand an issue because of poor covers and demanded that the pants on a legionnaire be white, the artist insisting on blue. Just then the phone rang and with a couple of damns and hells the art chief threw all in his hands at the

office boy and almost had a fit. I left then."

From Jack Chapman Miske, news which isn't news but which may be of interest anyway: "Prepare yourself, now, for a surprise. Crawford and I are coming back into the pre publishing game immediately! We're publishing a book, P. Schuyler Miller's "The Titan," most of which appeared in three parts in the old MT. However, it was never completed, and I believe only Miller, Crawford, and I have ever read the thing entirely. It's really a great novel, too. The plot is good, and unusual, but not great. It's the character development and description that make it a great yarn. It will probably be released yet this year, and will sell at the lowest possible price, \$1.00. We hope only to break even on it. And it's going to be a long, tough pull unless every fan editor, including you, cooperates with us. And it'll still be tough if they do. The point is this: we must reach every prospective buyer, the more times we do so the better. We are preparing about 1000 circulars (folders, rather) to be distributed, and the cost of that alone will probably be at least \$25.00, including postage.....Unless this book breaks even, Fantasy Publications is gone again, perhaps permanently this time. If it does succeed, "The Titan" will be only the first of a series of fantastic novels in book form.....We are willing, as the fans desire, to publish either new or reprint material."

From Ray Pauley: "Hope, Hart and Sullivan didn't drop in on their way down (homeward bound I suppose), don't imagine they could find my abode. It isn't designated on the map, you know. Anyway, it really doesn't make any difference as I've heard from reputable sources that fans invariably snore and will attack the ice-box without the slightest invitation. But seriously, for all who might happen to be in the vicinity of Charleston and would care to drop in, will find that Spring Hill lies only five miles west of there."

From Walter Sullivan, from a letter written immediately after he returned home from the Convention and visiting me: "Upon arriving here Wednesday evening I found your letter of June 30 awaiting me. In it you seem to be sobbing about the fact that you have not met any fans as yet. Well, you can't say that now. Like

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me, when something happens to you, it happens in a big way. You have not three active fans. I don't know if you consider it an honor or not though. If you think that you had trouble when we stayed at your place Sunday night, you don't know what trouble is. I had to put them up at my place for ten days. If you think that isn't something, try it some time. They used to drift in any time freezmine in the evening till three the next morning. When we left there was a pile of dirty dishes about two feet high that my father had to wash. In spite of everything I had a lot of fun."

From Richard Wilson, Jr.: "We had all intentions of stopping in on you on our way up from Washington, but we had only about \$1.50 with which to reach dear old Gotham, and simply couldn't afford to take any chances on going even ever so slightly out of our way. We were even forced to stop in Phila and borrow of lucre from John the Baltadonis. We reared over the Geo Washington bridge into Manhattan with about a dime left after we had paid the toll. And I'm still paying Wellheim the debts I incurred on the trip."

From C. S. Youd, again, speaking of the recent circulation squabble in Spaceways: "The circulation row is a very undignified squabble, and I'm surprised to see Campbell fall for RAP-Hamling beloney. Remember that other damn silly argument when Hornig tried to convince people that Wonder was giving more material than Astounding? The answer then was "it's the quality that matters" and that still holds true. Amazing Wonder Funnies (or whatever its name is) may have a greater circulation than Astounding but that is not a fact worth mentioning. For one thing, however, we must thank RAP - he is consistent. No fan can very well miss an issue of TWS, 'cos it might contain something worth reading but about Amazing we need have no such compunction - we know it is utterly lousy. And will people like Hamling please stop handing out stuff like "I don't know why fans dislike Amazing - RAP has shown himself sympathetic towards fans". Sympathy towards fans costs nothing and helps both circulation and friendship but just wait till those fans try improving the magazine!"

From William Voney, of Gorn in Australia: About

"Science Fiction in Australia". My fan mag, "Australian Fan News", did make its appearance, but has since fallen flat. Bert has sent you a copy. Vol Molesworth is soon to issue "Luna", a twelve-page hefted affair with contributions from Castellari, Russell, Lawson, "Ghoul", etc. Eric F. Russell has just completed the first issue of "Ultra" which has been copied through carbon. It contains articles, mostly, from Castellari, Edward Russell, "The Rambler", "Ghoul", Editor Eric, and I. A ~~the~~ front and back cover is featured. As for John Devern, he hasn't answered either the letters or the contributions which were mailed to him. I asked my Adelaide pen-pal to find out about John. But alas, my pen-pal hasn't answered any of my letters since I made that remark. The following conclusion has been reached: John Devern is, in truth, an alien from Mars! He was sent to find out if we Tellurials ever would threaten his home planet and with this object in view commenced reading sf. Being aghast at finding out about our starry ambitions, he started "Science Fiction Review" to see just if any Aussies would have the views of the U. S. fans. As we all rallied 'round, he realised the entire planet was filled with the mad object of conquering space, and, hence, Mars. He decided to return home, but, before he managed to slip away, he received a visitor who instantly recognised him as a Martian. (By Paul's back cover for "Fantastic Adventures"). John Devern (we have concluded) then killed my poor pen pal and to hide the dead body, buried it with all issues of "Amazing Stories" from June 1938 to date, and thus the "stink" was so terrible that the dead body will be able to decompose without anybody being any the wiser. Ingenious, isn't it?"

From James D. Tillman, Jr.: "Doings here at Madison. Enough material has been collected for L. Werewolf's first issue.....I hope it will be ready for issue soon, but I am not sure. The trouble lies with the printing. We are doing it in the school print shop, and trouble has arisen. Bryan Michalus was doing the printing, as he works here. Now Madison is run by a religious sect which believes in a vegetarian diet. A Sanitarium is operated in connection with the school, and the print shop prints the menus for the Sanitarium. Mike put hamburger on the menu, and is at present working on the

farm, if you get the idea. However, we expect to patch up a truce beforelong."

From Walter Sullivan: "Three boys from the University and I are going into business if we can find a market for our material. We are trying to sell rattle snakes. We will guarantee any size or number. It is getting cold here and the snakes are getting ready for winter. We have found an abandoned mine shaft in the mountains east of here where we can find them. Yesterday we took out three of them about four feet long, but had to leave the big one. The shaft is about four hundred feet long, three wide and five or six high, so they can't get away from us. Come to think of it, we can't get away from them either."

From Leslie A. Croutch: "I buy only Astounding and Amazing. I have both. Astounding gives me the intellectual literature Amazing doesn't. Amazing gives me the blood and thunder and weef Astounding doesn't. Each is so different to the other I find they act as an antidote. They make a balanced fare which I find most refreshing."

From Joseph Mitchel Boyer again: "I had to laugh at Dancy's reference to plagiarism. The idea for "Knowledge Is Existence" was mentioned by a research engineer friend of mine (for Detroit Edison). He never said anything about Russell, and while I knew the idea was not original, I thought it was amusing enough to write up. Then Dancy pipes off about "word for word" copy. Ye Gods, if he's right, then Russell and I must be the world's finest telepathists, either in the flesh or in the spirit." "I know I'm a pretty bad guy. I've even strangled babies with their mothers' garters, but plagiarism? No, not I." (How'd that "again" get in??)

And thus ends this first attempt of mine at a miniature Voice of the Imagi-Nation. I've tried to use only stuff that is likely to appeal to the more experienced fan, for it is mainly they who will be reading it through the FAPA. And I hope I've not gone too far in copying a few things--if so, I ask the letter writers' forgiveness. All I can say is: no one knew he was going to be quoted!

Would you like to see one of these next mailing? If so, say so. And I'll do my best to oblige. However, don't write anything to me with a conscious effort to seeing it printed here, for it won't do any good!