

THE FAIRY ST

VOL 1: NO 6.
SEPTEMBER 1939

" D R E A M L A N D "

You are the shadow land, in your domain
Lie dreams we've dreamed, and all the fear we've
known;

And joy, and happiness and thought of pain
--- When night is here we do not live alone.
In your dark landscapes walk all that we love,
And in your shadows lurk all that we fear,
For if in you our heaven is above,
Remember also that our Hell is near.

The morning mists are flowing down your slopes
Hiding that Hell, but under it we know
Are crawling things that deaden all our hopes,
On even us must that dark, dank mist flow?
O Real-World Morning come, and hide from view
The Shadow-Land, and all the thoughts it
brings

Until the night comes back, refreshed anew,
To lift the curtain from forgotten things.

by

Harold

Gottliffe.

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Advertisement Section:

A new fan, presenting the view-point of a new fan, free from feuds and internal trouble, the FANTASEER is the magazine for all fans. We try to balance it so as to contain everything - editorial, letter section, fanmag reviews, news, columns, artwork, poetry (?), articles and fiction. The 2nd and 3rd issues had covers by Giunta, the 4th by Lowndes. Imagine those two together! FANTASEER comes out promptly the first of each month and has 12 pages. Subscriptions are 5 cents per copy, 40 cents a year, I.M.O from Britishers. Send now to William H. Groveman, 18 Maryland Avenue, Hempstead, New York, U.S.A.

SLOGAN FOR SATISFIED SLAVES.

"All hands to the pumps and save Democracy!"

SLOGAN FOR DISSATISFIED SLAVES.

"The Reich expects that every Good Party Member this day will read his Völkischer Beobachter."

OR

- in other words -
Heil Civilisation!

NO VISITORS

The small white room was rather gloomy as they brought the boy in, but as the sun outside peered from a mass of clouds it became brighter. They laid him upon the small iron bed, and left him there with only a nurse in attendance. He was not seriously hurt; he had been thrown clear of the car before it had burst into flames. A broken arm, a few ribs fractured, and bruises were the extent of his injuries. Quietly the doctor and attendants closed the door behind them and the doctor whispered last minute instructions to the nurse.

"If he wakes, call me at once. There isn't any danger of internal injuries but have something ready to quiet him if he gets out of control."

The woman in white nodded and picked up a book lying on a nearby table. Seating herself upon the only chair in the room, she kept one eye on the still figure and the other on the story...

It seemed to Richard that he had been asleep for only a few minutes. But then what had happened became suddenly clear to him and he realised where he must be. Opening his eyes for a moment he saw the lady sitting in the chair, over by the window. The walls were plain and clean; there weren't many decorations to look at. He realised that this was a hospital, for this room was just like the one he'd been in a few months before when his tonsils had been removed. Now, though, he didn't know how long he would be here. He couldn't move one arm and they had his whole chest bandaged up. The sheets were pinned down so that he could scarcely move.

Richard didn't feel very well but he closed his eyes, not wishing to call the nurse and tell her he was awake. It didn't seem much use.

He wished his mother and father were here. But - maybe they were hurt just as he was. They'd been in the front of their open car and he in the rumble seat. The top had been up to keep the sun off and when they had rolled over - that was the last he remembered. He wondered how they had got out. Possibly they were hurt, too, worse than he was.

The boy opened his eyes once more, and was preparing to attract the nurse's attention when he became aware of two familiar figures standing beside the bed. They had come after all! Turning over on the other side, carefully keeping his bandaged arm out of the way, he said, "Are you all right?"

"Sure we are", his father answered reassuringly. Out of the corner of his eye Dick saw the nurse coming up to adjust the blanket but he paid no attention to her.

"But - aren't you hurt at all, Dad? I've got a broken arm I think, maybe more, and you were in the front seat. When the truck crashed into us I was afraid you'd have something awful happen to you - and Mother too."

"We're perfectly all right", his mother replied. She patted down the pillow and he took a grasp on her hand. The nurse still stood there; he wished she would go away and leave them alone.

"Was the car damaged much?" he asked. That truck had

been coming awfully fast. . .he didn't see how it was that his parents hadn't been hurt.

"It was pretty badly damaged", his father admitted.

"That means we'll have to get a new one?"

"Now don't worry yourself over that", his mother soothed.

"You see, we can't stay here long, and you mustn't get excited."

"But I want you to stay here with me - until I get out", Dick whispered. "I don't want you to go away now..."

"No", his father said a little sadly. "I'm afraid we'll have to go now. You see, you've been hurt - not badly, but any excitement mightn't be good for you."

"But when will you come again? Will you come back soon?"

The questions were left unanswered as the man and woman walked towards the door. Halfway there they paused for a moment and the woman whispered to the man. He nodded and she came back.. Leaning down, she kissed him once upon his cheek and whispered, "Dick, you mustn't be afraid whatever happens. We may not be able to see you for a long time but...sometime we will. Now be a good boy..."

And with that they were gone.

Dick closed his eyes once more and wanted to cry. But a sudden noise aroused him and, looking up, he saw the door opening and a man coming in - he looked like a doctor. Dick said feebly, - "Hello", and the man answered with a small smile, giving a surprised glance at the nurse who still stood by the bed.

"I thought you said he wasn't rational", he murmured in a barely audible voice.

"He wasn't until a moment ago, Doctor", the nurse replied. "He was tossing and seemed to be talking. I couldn't make out what he was saying, though."

"Better have a sedative ready then, Miss Hopkins," the man answered. "How do you feel now, son?"

"Pretty good," Dick responded, "only I'd like to see my father and mother again."

The doctor cleared his throat in embarrassment, and appeared to fumble for words. The nurse looked pale, Dick thought, as she stood there with some sort of tube, capped by a needle, in her hand.

"Now Richard," the doctor began, "you must be brave about this. You know you were in a wreck?"

The boy nodded.

"Well, you see...your father and mother were in front in the car when the crash came. The car rolled over a few times and you were thrown out. But the framework of the doors were bent, so that they couldn't get out - and the gasoline tank exploded. I... I'm afraid you'll never see them again, my boy..."

Dick stared for a moment, and his entire body became rigid. The nurse held the little tube in readiness but suddenly the reaction came. He went limp and began to sob quietly.

"I think he'll be all right", the doctor said to the nurse as he picked up his bag. "Try to keep him quiet. He may have hallucinations again later, but don't bother to call me if he does. Just give him the hypo and let him get some rest."

His head buried in his hands, Dick could still feel the

moist spot on his cheek, that had been his mother's kiss. Then he realised something that had been unconsciously in his mind. When his parents had gone out they had not opened the door. They had gone straight through.....

BY

KENNETH MACKEY

MONDAY MORNING OVER THE WORLD

by John B. Michel

awakened by carillon chimes
 (prescribed by science,
 a decibel to every cubic foot)
the humans plunged
to white corridors and conveyor belts,
enrobed and ate with smacking lips...
before the sunlight stunned their eyes,
the mass of humans defecated
 ...massly.

on balcony and steel-ruled court,
 chests and bodies heave and undulate,
 the larger breasts of women swell,
 nipples sucked hard by the morning breeze.
 sunlights glisten on sweaty muscle
 washed clean and flex in joy. O
 sing the ultraviolet's praise!

wide the ramparts swung and
 high
 uprose the city,
 awoke the dawn.

then into potent cars,
 across green meadows
 innocent of cows.
 a pleasure ride?

arrived from air routes
 and from endless chains,
 walking silently in clean, new clothes,
 assembled the operators,
 eyes to peer beyond the demarcation line
 and see
 the new and living
 and see
 an area of desolation found,
 a final remnant to be destroyed.

complacently in every hand
 is power, cupped and arrowed down,
 directed now to swift converge
 a helix of electron's weave,
 but stronger than a planet's pull.

the humans pushed
and outward buckled
a bored destruction
but with good intentions

...why not

obliterate the past,
thinking only of the sun-glint
in naked eyes?

giants in the sky hid the sun
in irreligious glee
and hovered, swaying at thin moorings,
while below
in flowing squares sprang up
new gardens and their hungry life,
constructed far away in earth-bound cells.

resting often the workers ate
and listened to the talk of many worlds,
thrashing willy
to be trapped and trained
in instruments the size of thumbs.

in Tibet a hand depressed. the metal
flamed, disgorged and stalked the giants,
seized up and set them on the mother earth,
yet other forces gave them heat and light
...unselfish gifts of the conquered world...
and unconcerned gave quiet birth
to blue prints fused in classic form.

the pylons lived.

IT'S A DEVIL

The two men who plodded over the moor towards the rocky hills might, from their ancient and tattered garments, have been tramps, but the rope slung from the shoulders of the first and the rucksack on the back of the second proclaimed their true status as rock-climbers. They plunged on steadily, looking up only at rare intervals, for it was necessary to place the feet carefully on the uneven water-sodden ground, watching out for the innumerable water-courses hidden by the long, coarse grass. They seemed tired and disgruntled, and spoke only to pass amazed comments on the continued remoteness of the crags they desired to reach.

.....

Far underground, in a place where no living man may ever visit, lies a colossal cavern whose murky gloom is relieved by the dim smoky light of hidden fires. The air is fiercely hot here and abominably dank, and a steady steamy rain falls incessantly from the gloom that shrouds the roof. Across the cavern stretches

an enormous drum about which is wrapped a huge rusty chain coming from regions above. At one side of the drum is a mighty worm-wheel in mesh with a worm fixed vertically on the axis of a vast capstan. To the bars of this are chained hordes of haggard men clad in sodden sweaters and ragged trousers and the wretched remnants of rubber pumps. The floor they stand on is paved with loose stones of all sizes up to small boulders, wickedly jagged or treacherously water-rounded.

They are there for all eternity. They are the mountaineers who lost their lives through carelessness, who caused the death of others through carelessness, who left sardine-tins and beer-bottles on the mountains, who built railways up the side of mountains or who fixed ropes and rope-ladders on difficult places so that tourists and other canaille could wander blasphemously over the sacred steepes.

They do not rest often or for long. Dangling in utter weariness on their chains they are roused by a monstrous voice from the Pit, a thick, rancid voice that strikes terror into the hearers. Under its lash they stir into desperate striving at the capstan bars. The colossal machine is horribly stiff and inert and the load to be moved is enormous. The loose stones scatter under their thrusting feet, wrenching tendons and bruising ankles and crushing toes and tearing with cruel fangs at torn and bloody feet. The chain begins to fold gratingly round the drum under enormous tension. "Faster!" roars the Voice, and the frenzied wretches toil madly, falling on the loose surface formed by the smaller stones, climbing in clumsy bruising haste over the big ones, sweating furiously in the heat and gasping hopelessly for breath in the thick, dank air. Small, jagged pieces of rock fall from the roof to bruise and cut them about the head, and occasionally a larger piece hurtles down to send the stones on which it falls hurtling against the knees and shins of the toiling damned.

.....

The rucksack bearer wiped his brow despairingly as he glanced up at the hills. "It's a devil!" he said bitterly. "Anyone would think there was someone at work somewhere pulling the hills back as fast as we can walk towards them."

BY

DRSMITH

CONVERSATION IN A SPACE-SHIP

by John F. Burke

The old man and the small boy sat in a comfortable cabin in the large space-ship that was swinging out on its regular journey to Mars. They looked rather nervously at one another, not knowing quite what to say.

"Amazing, the way we travel about these days, isn't it?" ventured the old man at last, "not like when I was a boy."

"That would be some time ago?" said the little boy, whose name was Victor.

"Two hundred years ago" said the old man thoughtfully. "I feel just a bit tired, too. The long-life serum they discovered at the end of the twentieth century was all right in a way,

but one gets awfully bored with living so long. I don't think I'll bother to have another injection when the time comes round - I'll just fade away".

"What were things like when you were a boy?" asked Victor, + "That would be about - between 1930 and 1940, wouldn't it?"

The old man nodded.

"I'm just an old fogey, I suppose" he said ruefully, "but I liked things a lot better than I do now. This World State idea, y'know - seems all very nice and logical, but it's dead - there's no patriotism and pride in one's country".

"What's that?" said Victor.

"Patriotism" said the old man with a proud shake of his head, "The glory in one's own country and people - the realisation that one belonged to the greatest race on the face of the earth".

"I've heard about people being divided up into different races" admitted Victor, "but it seems silly. All people are really the same, you know - what was the good of deluding yourself that your particular back-yard was better than anyone else's?"

"No good" said the old man, "but it was glorious. You can never know the thrill of seeing a picture of an army - the army of your own country - on the front page of a daily newspaper, with the announcement that they would defend you against any attacks made by an enemy".

"But why should the enemy attack at all? What good would it do them?"

"Oh, it helped to keep what they called the peace of the world. Every nation was always anxious to keep the peace, and they all found the best way to do it was to have a war every twenty years or so to end war. The newspapers were wonderful".

"But they were out of date when they printed the news" complained the small boy. "Nowadays we have newscasters on the spot, to show us just what is happening, at the time it's happening, and we're free to see what we want".

"Oh, we were free" the old man hastened to assure him, "they had what was known as the freedom of the Press - every newspaper was at liberty to twist the news to suit its own policy, and no-one would interfere."

"But what about the truth?" protested the small boy, "the people wouldn't know what was really happening."

"I should think not" said the old man indignantly, "if they had all the Governments of the world would have been overthrown by mobs immediately. God bless my soul - the idea of telling them the truth! Don't you realise that newspapers were just meant to convince the public that their country was the best, that -"

"We had all that before" the small boy reminded him, stifling a yawn with innate good manners and a small hand, "I still think it was all wrong. People ought to govern themselves, not have other men dictating to them."

"Oh, they did in my country" said the old man proudly, "the people had the choice of two candidates -- more, if the parties were numerous enough to put up more - and they could

vote for whichever one they preferred."

"But what if they didn't like the candidates at all?" asked the small boy.

"Then they needn't vote" said the old man, "Perfectly logical, isn't it? Ah me, those were the days."

"But didn't any of them look ahead?" pleaded Victor, "weren't there any who tried to visualise a world state, and men handling their disputes among themselves, without war and injustice?"

"There were a few" said the old man thoughtfully. "They called themselves science-fiction fans, and said they were in the world to stimulate public interest in scientific progress. They were awfully open-minded, and believed that science was as yet in its infancy. Rather strange, though - if ever somebody dared to say something that wasn't set out rigidly in a text book of the day, these open-minded people used to pounce on him, and dub him a subversive influence, and a menace to the world of science and science-fiction. They used to say that they were more advanced intellectually than the rest of the general public, but again it's funny - they were always squabbling over things like wire staples in magazines and other futilities. A curious lot, believe me."

Two men passed by in the corridor outside, and glanced in as they went.

"Curious pair" said one of them. "That old bird was a notorious criminal in his day - the bad old days, you know. Harry Kay, I think his name is - always trying to persuade people to go back to the bad old system."

BY

JOHN F. BURKE

HAVE YOU READ IT? NO I

With the editor's (and readers') permission I intend occasionally to review fantasy novels that are likely to appeal to those who are a little tired of space-ships, ray-guns, vampires, zombies and all the usual abacadabra of scientific and weird fiction. Such a story, I believe, is "Hosanna" by Bernard Newman, which for once justifies the appellation of "a story that is different".

The scene is Palestine during the reign of Tiberius. Rumours reach the mountain headquarters of the Zealots concerning the strange power over the masses of a new prophet, one Jesus, and they send Simon and Andrew, two of their number, to investigate whether he may be the long-awaited Messiah who is to free the Jews from alien rule. The two men fall under the spell of the prophet's personality and report that he is indeed the Messiah--only he must be weaned from his pacifistic idealism. At first, Jesus resists all the overtures of the Zealots, but finally, under almost irresistible pressure, he consents to organise rebellion against Rome.

Now his magnificent mentality is turned to military ends and under his leadership Jerusalem is taken and the Romans are driven from the land. With Jesus as king there follow three years of justice, peace and prosperity for the Jews, but at the end of

this time Tiberius withdraws his troops from the frontiers and personally leads the whole might of Rome against the new Jewish kingdom. Betrayed by a jealous ex-General, Jesus is forced to fall back with his army upon Jerusalem. Siege follows and the town is finally starved into submission. Angered at Jewish resistance, Tiberius orders the crucifixion of Jesus and every man taken under arms. The rest of the men are emasculated and their women given over to the soldiery so that this troublesome race may be exterminated. The epilogue tells how, in the Mohammedan world of today, Jesus is remembered only as a minor prophet which, of course, is a strictly logical conclusion.

This brief resumé does not begin to do justice to a magnificent story, whose chief charm lies in the unorthodox portrayal of various well-known Bible personalities. Jesus is, of course, the central figure, and Mr. Newman's picture of the spiritually minded idealist, forced against his better judgement to assume temporal power and military leadership, is both sympathetic and realistic. You sense the struggle in the mind of Jesus between his idealism and his sense of duty towards the people. As King, but still at heart the idealistic reformer, you watch his fight against the age-old prejudices of Jewish law and tradition. You see him as a philosopher, discussing with his captive, Pontius Pilate, the relative merits of the Pax Romana and the Jewish National State. And at the end you are made to realise his bitter despair. For he knows that he has taken the wrong course, that his kingdom should have been in the hearts of men for all time and not over the bodies of his fellow countrymen for a short period of his own existence.

I imagine the reactions to this story will be varied. To the strictly religious it may seem horrible blasphemy, to the more broadminded an excellent parable; but to me, an agnostic, it is merely a very human and wholly delightful fantasy of "it might have been".

BY

CHARLES ROWLANDS

"FANOPOLIS V" Meanderings.

"Where shall we take him?" enquired Lankus, who turned out to be a large, raw individual, with an air of a transmigrated cart-horse.

Barke looked thoughtful, a favourite habit of his since it threw his Gibraltar chin into splendid relief. Fantaspoet also endeavoured to look thoughtful, but succeeded only in appearing owlish. Macinpain didn't look at all, but concentrated on getting a car. Then one finally appeared he said, "We shall take him to see the V.B.I., of course."

Their faces lightened as they boarded the car but the Neophyte was still trying to work it out. "Who", he asked at length, "is the V.P.I.?"

"Not V.P.I." Macinpain corrected, "V.B.I. - or Very Busy Individual. It was a fan once, but it kept on getting busier and busier until now it does nothing at all. It's perfectly obvious."

Neophyte was not at all convinced of this but his brief experience of Fanopolis had shown him that the more questions one asked here, the more puzzling were the answers. In any case, Lankus and Barke kept him fully occupied with running commentaries on the streets and people.

The Neophyte was not very interested at first, or perhaps he had grown cautious of taking interest in things Fanopolitan. He was jerked out of his reserve, however, by seeing someone, in the middle of the street, throwing lengths of rope into the air, and wearing a worried expression withal. Fearing the worst he asked Macinpain the reason for this eccentric behaviour.

"That?" queried the latter vaguely. "That? Oh, that's Jimmy Angerbone -- he wants to be a magician, you know, and he's trying to learn the Indian Rope Trick. So far the only thing he's done is lasso the big finger of the Council Hall clock. When he felt the rope make contact with something he blissfully closed his eyes and tugged like fury. He still has the bump on his head.

That, by the way," he continued, pointing to a marble and onyx affair, "is the Convention Thing. We have a Convention every so often just to parade the new insults we've learned. The latest stunt, as illustrated by the Nitwitz, is to refuse admittance to everyone who does not agree with you. Barke held a Convention all by himself last Saturday..."

Barke drew the car to a halt, turned round, and placed a finger to his lips. "Hist!" he muttered, "disturb not the abode of the Very Busy Fan - we be on Gholy ground." Silently they all alighted and trooped through a door expertly camouflaged to look like a blank wall.

It was very dark within, but soon their eyes grew used to the dim radiance permeating the room, and the Neophyte made out a darker blotch at one end of the chamber. This, when approached, resolved itself into a barrier, composed of many massive tomes. On the back of one he read "Encyclopaedia Fanopolia--Vol 3".

Reverently Barke knocked twice on this wall, and was rewarded by a small, weak voice from somewhere inside. "Go away", it whispered peevishly, "I'm very busy."

"Our pardons for the interruption, your Gholiness," replied Barke subserviently, "would your Gholiness deign to tell us what you are doing?"

"I am going to begin studying music, meteorology, journalism, memory and murder - everything beginning with an 'm' in fact."

"But 'journalism' doesn't begin with an 'm'" broke in the Neophyte profanely.

"No, it ends with one. That's why."

"Why what?" heckled the Neophyte.

"Why there's no sense in poetry."

"But I don't see....." began the Neophyte again, until Lankus tapped him on the shoulder.

"Easy, brother. The V.B.I. always speaks in riddles - some say there's an answer to them, but five people have gone mad trying to figure them out already. It doesn't matter anyway. He's always "going to begin" something, but he never gets round to it."

There was a wild look in the Neophyte's eyes. "Let's get out of here, for God's sake", he said *brokely*. *Silently* they went to the door, leaving the V.B.I. in *undisturbed peace*.

The Neophyte looked very pale when they were again in the full light of day. Fantaspoet gazed at him apprehensively, as though expecting him to faint any moment, and Lankus produced a monstrous bottle of smelling salts.

"Take me somewhere peaceful" he whispered half-inaudibly, "I don't think I can stand this much longer."

Barke whispered "Sanctuary", and the other two nodded in understanding. Macinpain was already calling a car.

The Neophyte did not see much of the journey but when he again sat up there was no sign of buildings around them. Instead he saw a tumultuous sea of colour, flowers on flowers banked in rhythmic beauty. The car was at rest within a purple-carpeted canyon and overhead the cliffs arched, hung with crimson and gold glowering tendrils.

The engineers of this place must have been magicians, reflected the Neophyte, as he became aware of a lilting, rippling melody which seemed to emanate from the very flowers. At any rate, their sleepy heads were swaying in harmony with it. It was a wild, eldritch tune, strangely reminiscent of something by Wagner. It exulted tenderly over the reality of beauty and mourned sadly over its eternal defeat by evil things, it promised and yet, at the same time, confessed that the dream bubble must break.

"This is a very lovely place", he said softly.

Barke took him gently by the arm, and the party wandered on through the ravine of dream-lost fantasy. Then they turned a corner, and came out into a wide space.

It must have stretched for a mile or more, and the sight of tiny, multi-coloured suns, hanging motionless over it made the Neophyte realise that they were underground. They were standing at some elevation above the general level, on a circular lawn from which many tiny paths issued forth, to scurry down and lose themselves in the riot of flower and foliage that covered the plain.

As Barke led the way along one violettied path Fantaspoet tried to explain it.

"This spot is the best-loved of all in Fanopolis, for this is the place of if, the dreams of what might have been. It was builded in memory of the great ones who loved the dark fantasy and died unrecognised. It is dedicated to Lovecraft and Howard, Weinbaum and Daniells, Whitehead and Hatch -- all the dreamers who lost their way in an ugly world. Listen."

Somewhere, somehow, a voice was singing Tosca's Farewell to Summer.

"The swallows are making them ready to fly,
Wheeling out on a windy sky....."

Before them lay a long bed of white roses, and imbedded in it scarlet begonias carved the name - "HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT".

"It is time to return", said Barke.

BY of course FANTACYNIC
(We hope next month to conclude this serial)

SEPTEMBER SILLINESS

Despite the stress and strain of contemporary life, i such it may be called, THE FANTAST continues to appear. Readers will realise that the continuance of this appearance is a matter for them, and, should they regard it as in any way objectionable, we shall be pleased to acquiesce and cease publication. Contrariwise, a desire to see the magazine continue will encourage us in this tho' an excess of personal work may tend to make the aforesaid appearance somewhat irregular.

If you do want to see more of Fay, it will be helpful if you renew your subscription as soon as it expires. Look at the envelope in which the magazine arrived. If this bears, in the top left-hand corner, the word "LAST", you should renew at once. If the word is "FINAL", you have had an extra copy, to be deducted from your next subscription. Only one extra copy will be sent.

It is unwise to forecast even a month ahead, it would seem. Alas for the frailty of human nature - there is but one Smithology! The other was unavoidably crowded out and will appear next month. Perhaps, if Smith is not too busy building aeroplanes, there will be two next month. Another promise -- the article by Robb -- fails to appear for the strangest of reasons. We have mislaid the ms!

Ratings of the fourth FANTAST: 1- "Folly"--9.14. 2- "Fanopolis"--8.45. 3- Cover--8.33. 4- "A Chapter from the Necronomicon"--8.14. 5- Editorial--8.00. 6- "Oceana"--7.67. 7- "Dark Horizon"--6.91. 8- "No More We'll Sing"--6.82. 9- "The Author & the Idea"--6.73. 10- "Prelude for Murder"--6.45. 11- Review--5.83. 12- "Things Are Not What They Seem"--5.30. Total average--7.31 (as compared with 7.10 last month, and 6.63 the previous month),

For the third consecutive month "Fantast's Folly" takes first place in the voting, and for the third successive month also, "Fanopolis" is its closest challenger. A surprising development this time is the rise of the cover (Turner's first) to third place. No less than five features, in fact, achieved an average of 8/10 or better, which is very flattering. Sometimes we think our critics are over lenient in this rating. Only "Folly" would have gained more than 7 from us, although we would unhesitatingly award 10 to "Oceana"..... Which reminds us to administer a public rebuke to Messrs. Burke and McIlwain. But for the zealously of these two bandits "Oceana" would have averaged 9.28, or .14 more even than "Folly"! Burke and McIlwain each gave it 2/10, the lowest ratings of the month. One other curious misplacement. The majority gave Gottliffe's two poems a joint rating, but in most cases expressed a preference for "Prelude for Murder". But those few who did judge them separately tilted the scale in the opposite direction!

ERRATUM - page 12--line 17--for "glowering" read "flowering".

Wanted--an American column. Any averagely intelligent American fan who thinks he can provide fairly regular fan comment is earnestly invited to apply.

And finally we might as well be in the fashion and add yet another to the votes of censure passed on Moskowitz et al., for their ban on Michelists at the recent "World" SF Convention. Despite the apparently flippant introduction of this topic we are sincere enough.

(leigh in a black-out.
With which we retire and contemplate the beauty of East-/

DEPARTMENT?

Fans may have been more than a little surprised to see, in a recent issue of Satellite, a defence of palmistry by that sturdy iconoclast - DRSmith. On enquiry, he confessed that he had tossed up before writing between that and tea-leaf fortune-telling, which prompted me to enquire how he would have defended the latter. Evincing the following reply:-

"I think it would be possible to defend the tea-leaf method of fortune telling as easily, or almost as easily, as palmistry. The untouched tea-leaves in the bottom of a person's cup obviously owe their arrangement to the manner in which he has drained the cup, which in turn depends on the character of the man, the size of his mouth, and other variables. From his character and his position in life - which latter will also influence the disposition of the tea-leaves, as, for example, a person of the lower class will try to eat them, a person of my class will leave them well-placed for throwing in the fire, and a well-brought-up gentleman will leave them carelessly-placed ready for the slop basin - from these two influences his probable future is determined. The rules used in fortune telling by this means naturally give the fortune straight away, the process of inductive reasoning being incorporated in those rules so that the most unintelligent person can apply them.

I think this sort of thing would make a good game, one you+ might play in Fantast. You could nominate a series of ridiculous hypotheses, give each to some separate fan to defend as best he could, and let your readers vote on the winner. The Moon is made of green cheese - Clarke could do that one. Or you could challenge the readers to produce anything that your staff of experts could not 'prove' was correct."

We shall be glad to do both. We invite any reader to "prove" the following propositions -- (a) the Moon is composed of green cheese and less than two feet across, (b) the earth is flat, (easy!) and (c) Einstein does not exist. Alternatively we guarantee to prove any theory you can offer. Any takers? CSYoud

Our elephants, Daw and Mosko, are back. Observe the respective poses of bristling hostility!

++F A N T A S T S F A N T A S T L L Y++

Like a certain Austrian visionary, Smith is unique. Some people+ have thanked the divinities for both of these facts.

"Which introduces us to the happy subject of the latest "Fantast", whose production, I hope, will not have to be discontinued on account of the war? In view of the curtailment of other amusements, (unless you are an ardent follower of the news bulletins?) Only Zeesen, Moscow and Schenectady--the rest bore us it would seem more likely that we get two issues a month instead of only one. However, I will, in case the worst happens, criticise it with the care and detail it deserves.+++The cover was really fine, a very well executed portrayal of the idea of fantasy. It fills one with wild yearnings to rush off and read, or try to read, all the great

scientific fantasies at once. In giving ten to this I realise the limits of the marking system, it is, without disparaging anything else in the magazine, entirely in a class by itself. I wish I could write with the same inspiration that Turner draws! 10, and a bonus mark of another 10.+++ "The Last and Worst Men" was an amusing little burlesque written with a pleasingly restrained delicacy of touch that entirely pleased me without raising me to any wild pitch of enthusiasm. Perhaps it is because the fundamental jeers at hacks and the Ziff-Davis company are becoming as monotonously conventional as the actual works of the hacks themselves. Because of this--9.+++ Hopkin's reply to the Rathbone article is sufficiently accurate as to the facts, though I find the incessant references to "cog-wheels" rather a strain. I suppose it is all part of the deliberately journalistic style of the article. At least the article was as logical as Rathbone's was not.8.+++ Hanson's comments on the old Science Wonders were interesting, particularly as they help to determine the secret of the atmosphere that accompanies the stories of the early age of magazine science-fiction. It was the Gernsback sugar-coated science idea that did it, combined with the naivete that Hanson points out. I sometimes wonder if there is not something valuable in the Gernsback idea, well-used of course. At least it held the authors down to realism in part. The trick of infinite regress, as Hanson neatly terms it, was another good trick, though over-used. His article recalls happy memories...8.+++ The worst, or best, I can say about Rathbone's article is that it was more like the solidified gagging of Burke than the latter himself could have produced. There is the same timorous flirting with entirely colloquial forms of humour and the same feeling one is left with that one has heard it all so many times before. It would have been a far, far better thing had Rathbone concentrated on the American side of the subject, which is quite large enough to provide ample scope.5.+++ "Fanopolis" shows no signs of dwindling. The usual 10.+++ Apart from his title I was disappointed in Tucker's effort. I can see what his intentions are, but he could have made a better effort at fulfilling them5.+++ Skerbeck is yet another whose intentions are good but whose means of carrying them out could be better. His essay lacks any planned "build-up" of his subject, the last paragraph in particular being anti-climatical. There is none of the sense of "onwards and upwards" that surely must have been his intention.6.+++ The eulogistical references to my humble self in the editorial bring a blush to my damask cheek, but the references to the articles in stock for us fill my heart with yearning, and I shall be more annoyed than ever with That Man if his wretched war interferes with the production of Fantast. It was gratifying to notice that my essay "On Words" was properly appreciated by the mocking crowd. I cannot give such a valuable feature less than 8, though I notice you do not include ratings for the editorial in the summary. But, of course, the summary refers to the month in which you almost deprived us of the editorial, doesn't it?+++ "Folly" is becoming that portion of the magazine to which I turn first. It combines instruction and amusement in well-balanced quantities, and though the standard this month was lowered by an excessive portion of Smith's meanderings and an absence of some of the more lively contributors the American letters give an interesting new angle to

the debate. Lowndes' ideas of the ideal pacifist are peculiar, it seems to me that he is doing some false labelling himself. The ideal he describes is certainly not a believer in pacific methods of settling a dispute. Robb, in his enthusiasm, mixes up the fates of militiamen rather. They will hardly be both blown to pieces and sickened butchers. Others beside militiamen may be blown to pieces in this war, too, and if the reactions of the militia are anything like those of the soldiers in the last war, those who actually do any hand-to-hand slaying will not suffer from an undue sense of guilt in most cases. Man, as he points out later, is a bloody-minded animal.+++Rathbone's little poem is quite entertaining and fortunately does not call for any reply. He has apparently missed the point of my remarks altogether, but perhaps he will see the light from Hopkin's article.+++Of course, it would be blasphemy to award "Folly" less than full marks.....10." DRSMITH

And to fellow Smith, of course, a letter from his most fervent admirer--possibly excepting Bert Lewis!

"The cover is a thousand % improvement on the last, and I think I would give it full marks. There are minor points which could be improved, but considering the difficulties of drawing on wax, /all our artists have vellam to draw on!/? Harry has done an admirable piece of work. 'Tis strange how his FAY work excels by far his efforts for NT. The lettering was not so good as the small size of last month, though.+++"Machines, Men and Methods" by the other Eric C. was written in a very hearty manner, yet it suffers from the fault that it takes a helluva lot of room in which to say very little. The superficial facetiousness also mars it, I think, though without it the article would probably be dry as dust. If I were interested in the problem of machines I might conceivably give Eric C. 7 or 8 marks, but since I am indifferently disposed, then 5 is the number. /We're rather bored with it, too---shall we call it all off?/+++Searchlight Maurice's article was indeed interesting, and entertaining too. Original - so far as I'm concerned. Bravo, Maurice, (Bloated Militarist--or am I thinking of capitalist?). Yet because I found the ending slightly vague - or should I say subtle, I can only give our tame hired assassin 9.+++"Langwidge" was lightly amusing, but, to be quite honest, could have been a lot better. The humour seemed to be forced. Jimmy R. is better on serious stuff it would seem. Rating 6.+++"Fanopolis" was without a question superb. To my mind each instalment seems better than the preceding one, and I can't give FANTA his fair rating without lowering previous evolutions. This gets 10, of course.+++Tucker's ditty - feeble - 3.+++Skerbeck - blah! - with a grain of sanity somewhere in it. But I dislike the empty eulogy of mankind. 4½ for Mr. Skerbeck. /Easy on the fractions, please!/?+++Editorial - 8 (something interesting each month should be the sub-title).+++Fant. Folly - as per usual - 10. I second your enthusiastic wowing of Rita Carmelle's dynamic letter. DRSmith takes up too much room - you seem to be in love with that guy, or is it blackmail? /No - he bribes us!/?+++Rathbone's poem was good. DAVE McILWAIN

We haven't the heart to separate the Terrible Twins---

"Cover: This is really grand, although the space-ships and

whatnots are so faint that there seems to be rather a big gap between the man and the title. /Where in black-out did the celestial city disappear to, then?/ Expecting Fay to be an "arty" mag. as we did (see Eric Williams) the first three covers were bad let-downs, but this latest is up to the standard of the rest of the magazine. /You dignify the rest of the magazine.../ 9.+++ "Last and Worst Men". Not one of Dave's best by any means, but good stuff despite that. I think the idea was good enough to develop much further and much more humorously than he has done. 7.+++ "Machines, Men and Methods". The general standard of this issue is, as you say, below average, thus this article takes first place without being the work of a genius by any means. /But look who wrote it!/ In a rather mediocre number, Eric's cheerfulness is enervating /?/. Yes, definitely the best thing in the issue. 8.+++ Maurice is pleasant and says nothing in his usual charming way. I don't see this article is much of a contribution to the fan's literary world (not like that masterpiece of "The Religion of Science-Fiction"), but I think it deserves some commendation. 5.+++ "Langwidge". Very surprising for Rathbone, and I honestly don't think he's suited to this sort of thing at all. (It's not jealousy, so there). I also frown upon these mortals who make cracks about my nasty articles which I persist in regarding as quiet, honest, straight-forward expressions of opinion (sometimes). Why this reputation for bucking? /Why, we echo?/ My idealist's nature is offended. Someday I'll really write a nasty article, and we'll see what happens -- probably no-one will notice. /You'll revive Sally to publish it then-we've reformed!/ +++The latest instalment of "Panopolis" is down, I fear. Surely there are more opportunities for humour as yet unexplored? The cracks about Mike are really the best things in this episode. /Potent, too, he hasn't written since!/ Tell F'c to work in such things as Eric Williams going out with the money to buy a trumpet and buying a guitar instead when he found they'd sold the trumpet he was after (it's a fact!), /we'll be murdered for printing this!/ Les Johnson thinking up "ideas" for stories he knows will sell right away because they're works of genius but never having the time to write them, Bill Temple playing de Falla's "Fire Dance", a Bach Toccata and Fugue, and following up with the Andrews Sisters' "Hold Tight". +++ Pong ... 1.+++ I refuse to award marks for Skerbeck's piece, as I must confess I am bewildered. What's it all about? As a piece of philosophy it may have its points but the whole thing seems to stagger. +++The Editorial is good, as usual. Results of voting interesting, but isn't it possible to get results for the previous month? /We await American comment--only Harry Warner has obliged so far with marks; any others willing?/ +++Folly. Not quite so good. Someday maybe someone'll pass comments on the magazine instead of gnashing at conscription. /We try herewith a less general "Folly". Which do you prefer?/ Lowndes' comments on pacifism seem reasonable on the face, but reveal serious weaknesses. To say that a man is justified in fighting in a "just war" is all very well - but hasn't that always seemed the case? Propaganda or sheer hazy thinking will persuade a man he is fighting for justice, whatever side he may be on. +++Hear hear, Miss Carmelle! /Bah! Fifth Columnist!/ Michael's letter is good, but Smith's is undoubtedly best. He may have his faults (there's an opportunity for an editorial wise-crack.)

Just to be contrary we won't but he does at least give good, long opinions on each item, thus offering the chance for me to say "Quite so", or, more often, "The guy's crazy". Jim's poem is pleasant and smooth. Folly 8."

John F. Burke

We can't resist a little crisis news! The "other Eric C.", who recently achieved 34 pages, offers a few observations on A.R.P. -

"We have already had one air-raid. At almost 11.30 this morning sirens warbled, hooters blasted, police whistles blew and the community swore. We all stood around indoors like a lot of damn fools, with our nose-bags ready in case of gas, waiting for the entire German Air Force to deliver a devastating blow. After a quarter of an hour of this we went out into the road to look for the raiders. Another 15 minutes went by while we speculated with our neighbours on how many hundreds of bombers had been brought down, and one passer-by told us on strict authority that three had come down at Dover. Then the "All Clear" was blasted, hollered and rung and we eventually heard, via radio, that a solitary airplane had crossed the coast and we were warned as a precaution! I suppose it is as well to be cautious, but hell.....!"

Eric C. Hopkins

We wouldn't think of Robbing you of Osmond!

"The cover is excellent, alike in symbolism, arrangement and execution. The curve of the bold lettering is admirably carried out in the semi-circular formation of the dream-vessels which serve to frame the head of the seated figure; in this way the design acquires effective poise. One minor grouch; at the time when the great reptiles flourished, mankind was either non-existent or at a far lower stage of development than Turner's young fellow. But that's a detail and the cover gets a richly-deserved 9 out of 10+++ "The Last and Worst Men" was very funny if you know your Stapledon; a perfect take-off of the Maestro's unmistakable style. I give this 8½; it's about the best parody of its type that I've read.+++ "Machines, Men and Methods", inclined to be flippant in the wrong places, but closely-reasoned and on the whole well-written, bags 8. It is a perfect counterblast to Rathbone's enthusiastic defence of the Machine Age.+++ "Just Like a Science-Fiction Story!" aptly summarised my own reactions on a re-perusal of some ancient magazines. The yarns of those days were far more smug and more juvenile than some old readers prefer to think. Even then, of course, they rose above the standard of offal printed by the modern AMAZING - but they would have to be completely unreadable if that were not the case! For an interesting job of analysis - 9 out of 10 for Gunner Hanson. Tell him to illuminate other questions of interest to fans with his powerful search-light.+++ "Longwidge" reminded me of the curate's immortal egg - good in spots. And, like a certain little girl, when it was good it was very, very good and when it was bad it was horrid. Apart from this uneven texture it is to be praised for its originality and for the success of some of its wise-cracks. The main idea perhaps too slender for all the superstructure. Still - 7 out of 10. +++ "Fanopolis IV" mixed wit and slapstick with discrimination. Clever and funny; perhaps the best instalment yet. 8 out of 10.+++ "So This is England?". So This is Tucker - and I don't think much of him. He couldn't make up his mind, apparently, about the particular

brand of dialect employed by his remarkable traffic-cop; so he settled on a peculiar amalgam of stage-Cockney, stage-Irish and the American idea of cultured English. I grinned at the fog-permits; though; for cheek and ingenuity I award this one 6½. "My Task: The Task of Man" is one of those articles that take themselves a thought too seriously. I am in complete agreement with the sentiments expressed but could wish that Skerbeck's expression of them had been a trifle less priggish. We should leave windy platitudes to the statesmen who are their worthiest exponents and settle down ourselves to something more constructive. There was something inspiring about this piece, though, in spite of what I have said about it, and it gets 7 from "this feeble pen" (as Joe Skidmore might have put it).+++ "August 'Oliday", as usual, was everything an editorial should be, striking a nice balance between the sedate and the "peppy", and showing a greater command of English prose than is usually evident in either. Our Grosser Self overrules our modesty in publishing this Your fears, by the way, are unfounded; this issue of 'Fantast' bears comparison with any other, and as all to date have been excellent that is high praise. 10 for your own two-cents-worth - and 10 for 'Folly' which incorporated two interesting letters from editors of professional s-f magazines as well as its usual complement of varied fan material. Special praise to "Doc" Lowndes for a carefully thought-out contribution of permanent value; and a "Me-e-ow" to Rita Carmelle for being so cattish about the British Lion. Might I inform her, just so we can be pals all round, that the American eagle has always struck me as being more like a vulture in certain of its domestic habits. I suppose our angry but misguided American cousin is satisfied now that our tame lion has turned savage and gone "red in tooth and claw"; however that may be her feelings about the foreign policy of this country should not affect her opinion of its inhabitants, many of whom have been long opposed to that policy."

Osmond P. H. Robb

The item Taurasi could not do without. Doc is back again with a careful diagnosis:

"A multitude of congratulations on your latest issue. "Last and Worst Men" is superb; as smooth and subtle and biting a piece of satire as I have ever read. McIlwain has never impressed me in any way before, but now I must take off my hat to him and cheer lustily. GhuGhu grant that this is not merely a flash in the pan, but is really an indication that this baby has something there. There is something of the Voltairian touch in this opus, and here's one critic that loves his Voltaire..... Turner must also be toasted for another fine cover. It is really amazing the delicate artwork that can be done on a mimeograph when one is in the know and is imbued with the great genius of taking pains. "Fanopolis" is likewise excellent ... nor can I say that anything at all in this issue was really poor. Think there was one piece which did not impress me much, but which that was I forget. Your readers' column most interesting this time and thanx for including my effusion. Altho' I must protest at being called a dilettante; a dilettante is a poseur, an imitation aesthete, a gilded stalk of cabbage. Tut, tut, you didn't really mean that about me, did you? (Or did you? If so, then objection withdrawn: you may call me what you like.)+++I'd

like to add just a few more words of wisdom (?) /? to my outburst anent wars, just and unjust, if you don't mind. /We can take it if the Censor can/ A war may be both just and unjust at the same time. Thus, we see the war in China: certainly the Chinese are fighting a just war against the invaders. But the war Japan is making on China is unjust. In the first imperialist war (1914-18) both sides were equally guilty and both sides waged an equally unjust war. Still, those men who actually did die in defending their homes from the invaders and despoilers (from either side) /the war was never fought on German soil/ were certainly justified. The present war is unjust on both sides inasmuch as it is being fought for the same reasons as the last war, only sold to the public under different slogans. Those Polish soldiers and civilians who are making what little stand against the Nazis /AND Stalinites - don't forget your old friend Joseph/ that is being made are certainly fighting justly but, with these exceptions, one side is as bloody-handed and guilty as the other."

Robert W. Lowndes

In these days General Williams' protection is indeed important...

"Last and Worst Men" was a perfect take-off (may Olaf forgive me!) of Stapledon's complex histories. In fact the thing was so complex that I lost track of who was what somewhere on the second page and switched over to the last paragraph. No matter, I give 10 /This is terrific--you are Chamberlain's boon/ Eric Hopkin's first article, more letter than anything, was agreeably amusing and well-informed. Please get him to write some more for you. 8. Maurice (10029491) Hanson's rambling episode was welcome because we so very rarely see anything from the cynical yet withal gentle pen of this ex-master. /Whaddyamean -- "ex-master"? Faux-pas incredible!/? As he was no doubt obliging enough to write you that article to order, you might try to get another article from him on how the SFA and SF in general look to him now that he is a castaway in a sea of blood. I'll be fair and give him 7. Longwidge, please forgive me for saying so, was silly and should not have slipped into your pages. Mr. Rathbone in trying to be sardonic has forgotten to inject any reasonable advice into his article and consequently we have two pages of rather pointless palaver in order to tell us that Mr. Rathbone thinks there is a lack of good writing in SF. I would have appreciated a more straight-forward article on the subject. This installment of Panopolis slightly below par /how about this one?/. Tucker was similarly pointless and very disappointing after his epic poem about Mars. Frank Skerbeck deserves a medal for the sentiments in his essay, I give him 9. And so, my dear Sam, I will conclude these midnight remarks by whispering that you have about the most entertaining fan-mag on the market, and I sincerely hope you will not give it up. /And after all we have said to you, too! Such coals of fire would burn a hole in an asbestos air-raid shelter/ Williams Alas for the malignity of Fate, we had a most interesting letter from the one, the only, the animated suspender (we beg your pardon)--Gunner Maurice Hanson. Our reason for thus reproaching the gods is that, like a certain article by one Robb, (we hope you have another copy of it Osmond!) the aforesaid letter has vanished amid the splendid desolation of our files. Unhappy people who now shall never read this excellent letter! And unhappy us, who have to answer it!