

OCT - NOV 1939
VOL. 1 - NO. 7

30

7



Into this Universe, and why not knowing,
Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.

- Omar Khayyam

TURNER

"THE BENEFACITOR"

In the board room of the General Manufacturing Company were assembled the brains of that young and enormous enterprise. The Managing Director was speaking, stating in grave, dignified tones the predicament the firm was facing.

"When we pause to consider the colossal size of the works we have so speedily brought into being we may well feel proud", he stated. "Our workshops are to be measured not in square yards, not in mere acres, but in square miles, yet there is not a square foot of that space wasted. No expense has been spared to install the best possible machine tools of all kinds, capable of dealing with every conceivable form of work in any material known, and all are arranged so that with the minimum of delay we can commence the production in mass of any article known to the engineering trade. Only one difficulty have we so far been unable to solve. We have not been able to discover or obtain anything to make."

There was a gloomy silence, broken by the Works Manager inquiring, "What happened to that Government contract for red-tape weaving machines?"

"Well, we had a little trouble with that. I placed the blue-prints in the hands of the production engineers, of whom we have no less than five hundred. They seem to have had a little difficulty in reading the drawings; I was told that some were under the impression it was a new form of machine-gun, while even less likely things were suggested. Finally four hundred and ninety-nine of them became involved in an argument as to whether it would be cheaper to buy one of the grub-screws from specialists or to make it ourselves, and the remaining one, acting with an officiousness most undesirable in a junior, made arrangements for the first batch to be started on. Unfortunately the system in the works is not quite perfect and the entire batch except for a few odd details was lost. Shortly afterwards our time-limit was exceeded and the contract was taken off us."

The Works Superintendent woke up at the cessation of the soothing tones of the Managing Director's voice.

"It's a most peculiar thing," he said sleepily, "but the works itself is fully occupied. I'm inclined to think there's some hornswoggling going on. A good many of the men are running about in cars of an unusual design; my office-boy, who knows the details of every car that has ever been made, declares that they are new to him. A good many of the men used to work in motor factories, and I wonder.... And only the other day I found our builders erecting a large shed that anywhere else I'd have taken to be an aeroplane hangar."

"We must find something to make," said the Managing Director, "otherwise they'll wear all the machines out."

"Why not suspend the men until we've some work for them?" suggested the Financial Secretary.

"Nonsense. Idle machines mean monetary loss in rates and depreciation," said the Director of Efficiency decisively.

"WE MUST FIND SOMETHING TO MAKE" boomed the Managing Director, thumping the table.

"Space-ships" said the Office Boy.

"What are space-ships good for?" asked the Chief Salesman.

"You could send one to the Moon and annex it for the British Empire." said the Office Boy.

"There's no money in Empire-building" commented the Financial Secretary.

"Yes there is. Look at Cecil Rhodes. He made a million a year out of it." retorted the Chief Draughtsman.

There was a hushed silence. "That's history. History is the bunk, Henry Ford said so." commented the Works Manager, but he was ignored. The Managing Director made his decision.

"We'll do it. Who makes these things at present, boy?"

"Nobody, but the British Interplanetary Society have designed one."

"Good, a society can always be rooked. We shall get these designs ~~xxxxxx~~ for next to nothing. I will get in touch with them."



A month later the President of the BIS had a conference with the Managing Director.

"We have examined these drawings very carefully." said the Managing Director, "and with quite minor adjustments it would appear to be perfectly feasible to manufacture this spaceship. But there is one great obstacle though. You must understand that these works are laid out for mass production, but you apparently expect us to do a one-off job. It can't be done."

"I'm sorry about that." said the President, disappointment manifest in his tones. "I had hoped.... But thank you very much. I suppose we must just wait on."

"Now don't be awkward over it" wheedled the Managing Director. "Just let us carry on."

"But I thought you said you couldn't make one?"

"Of course not. Not one. But surely, Mr. President, you can see your way to letting us get on with a reasonable number, five hundred I would suggest as the first batch."

BY

D R SMITH

"ONE DAY..." by J. P. Rathbone

This is the sorrow of the grass -
That the days should pass
And leave life fallow as a field -
So old, and full of stones
And fleshless bones.
No Nature labouring can yield
The smallest thistle for the ass.

This is the sorrow of the grass -
That the long, sweet Spring should pass
And leave the primroses to die
And dew-wet every rose's eye.....
Oh, leave to memory so sweet
The last, loved scent of violet!

dote is to wrap myself up in good, simple humanity, and so in future I stick to "Gone with the Wind" and "Citadel"s. I might even take up Wodehouse. The thing is to balance myself up again with some news of good old humanity and how it really lives. Still, the process takes some getting used to. These books seem pretty drab and mushy at first, but I guess that's just my unbalanced attitude. I'll get used to it in time.

4th Day: Boy oh boy! what a strain! Two temptations in one day. Saw Astounding on Smith's book stall -- marvellous space-scene cover by Schneeman -- my hand automatically dived into my pocket, but there it stayed. Then this evening I unexpectedly met Ken Chapman: "Had I seen the new Tales of Wonder? No! Here it was. I told him I was laying off S.F. for a time but he couldn't see why. I had to look at the mag. or insult the chap. Not bad. However, I'm not buying the thing or anything else for that matter. Curse S.F.

5th Day: Starting on my third best-seller. This normal run of fiction seems to me very limited; after all, there are only three classes of people: good, bad and indifferent, and you can't really make endless hashes of human situations and keep up the interest in each. I'm keeping it up, however, to the bitter end. One thing you must say about science-fiction is that it has an endless array of scenes and situations, limited only by the author's imagination. I don't see how people can go on reading this love and human drama stuff all their lives without getting absolutely fed up with hearing about their fellow beings. Maybe I'm different. Maybe I'm sort of disinterested - no, that's not the word, there's a more fitting one; perhaps I'll think of it later. Anyway, I'm giving pukka fiction a fair trial.

6th Day: Nearly a week! I wonder if I'm cured yet. I certainly feel it. I feel completely at a loose end; there is something missing from life, and of course that is S.F. I moon around at home, try to read the papers but only find them interesting if there happens to be a scientific article. The radio programmes leave me void. I'm desperate for S.F. This week has been the most barren I can remember; it has had a dull film of complete ennui over it. I'm pretty sure that I'd appreciate S.F. again if I read it now. I think to morrow I'll give it a trial.

7th Day: Repletion, but in a way, disappointment. The plots are there, but no style. Perhaps my self imposed duty of reading 'good' fiction has given me something - a sense of style - perhaps it has taken something away. I know that I read through my mags with a slight feeling of irritation. Just a little more style and my immersion into the stories would have been complete; as it was, I waded through them up to the neck with my eyes just clear enough to note the faults. I've still got that feeling of dissatisfaction with which I started this week. Curse it! I think I'll go and see "Deluge".

"NECRONOMOLOGY"
by Robert W. Lowndes.

Students of the dark lore will probably share my own dismay upon learning that an English translation of the dread "Al Azeef" otherwise known as the "Necronomicon" has recently been translated from the black letter Spanish edition into English and is now available in a limited, privately published edition. Upon the surface this information might well appear to be fraudulent, inasmuch as it is well known that the physical dangers of delving deeply into Azeef make such an experiment virtually impossible. The history of the Necronomicon is for the most part a story of the varied and gruesome catastrophes that have overtaken unwise and ill-advised browsing therein. But, what is not so generally known, the fact remains that with the proper protection and under certain exclusive and temporary conditions, the book can be perused in safety.

For several years now, (in our terrestrial mode of reckoning time) cosmic conditions have been such that these forces and entities of which Alhazred speaks and hints have been unable to make contact with the inhabitants of our particular dimension and universe. Bound as they are, even in their titanic powers, to rigid cosmic law, they are, under particular circumstances of time and space, rendered incapable of reaching us, either for the purpose of the experimenter or for their own design. Thus, the translation referred to above was accomplished in safety, and attempted intercourse, both on the part of amateurs and adepts, has borne no fruit, either such as was desired or otherwise.

I am amazed, however, that one as necessarily versed in the dark lore as the translator must perforce have been could have been ignorant of a most crucial fact, namely, that, while we were and still are in a period of isolation, this immunity will not last forever, nor can any degree of certainty be expected as to how long, by our measurements, it will extend.

What will happen when this false immunity expires? Once read, the formulae for the evocation of those entities and forces which abound in Azeef remain forever in the mind of the searcher, whether he is consciously aware of them or not. There can be no blotting out of what is once impressed upon the convulsions of the brain. As I mentioned above, under certain conditions, a degree of safety may be enjoyed, but this does not refer to the knowledge of the entire content of this book. Certain sections can be read by the uninitiate with no greater danger than such psychological demoralisation as must result; other sections may be perused so long as the reader takes care to protect himself. But, to date, no protection has been discovered for the dread knowledge which is contained in the book as a whole.

Writers of weird and sensationally-fantastic fiction have often chosen as their theme the dire results of unguarded reading into the Necronomicon. For the sake of their stories, these results have been swift and often almost instantaneous. Actually, this has seldom, if ever, occurred in life. Those beings & forces of malignancy described are not capable, except very rarely, of making anything like instantaneous contact with terrest-

rials. The answer is in the time ratio and variation. While virtually instantaneous on a cosmic scale, on our time-scale it is a matter of years, sometimes decades. Thus Alhazred was able to compile the vast amount of material he did before the entity described in an early chapter of the book contacted him, with the hideous result that has been recorded too often for me to repeat here.

Therefore I urge any of you, who may possibly get the opportunity, to refrain from purchasing the English edition of "Al Akhef". Or, at the very least, if you must own it do not read it, until you have received full instructions from an adept as to which passages may be perused in safety.

While not presuming to question the excellence of this writer's authority on the subject he has so well detailed, we cannot help feeling that a little elaboration is needed. Rash youths, seeing the reference to certain protections against the sad results occasioned by immature delving, might be prone to take these as a passport to successful reading. We strongly deprecate this. It may seem merely a temporary inconvenience to keep the entrails of a putrefying mongoose in your breast pocket while actually in the process of reading the Necronomicon, but when this necessity extends to the duration of your earthly existence it becomes tedious. And, contrary to general belief, your best friends will++ tell you. The advice contained in Dr. Lowndes' last paragraph should also be taken cum grano saltpetre. We lent our De Vermis to an adept three months ago, and only learned yesterday that he had sold it for 5/9d. cash. Our advice is to leave it all well alone. Read "Fantast" instead.

"HEART FAILURE"

by D. R. Smith

This storiette is offered as a direct contrast to the more simple weirdness of "No Visitors" last month. Smith himself remarks laconically, "You once said that you preferred your horror by suggestion, here it is." We should like you to read it carefully, and take especial note of the means of arriving at the climax.

He had been a strong, healthy man and it seemed queer that he should die suddenly so they held an inquest. At this his wife was the chief witness, and all that she could say was she heard him typing steadily in his study, that there was suddenly a loud crash which she found to be caused by the fall of a large picture whose cord had suddenly failed, and that she then found that her husband was dead, although he had been typing up to the instant of the crash. The doctor said that he had made a very thorough examination of the corpse, and his only suggestion was that the noise had so alarmed the man that his heart had literally stopped beating. He could not say why, except that the letter, if such it was, that the man was typing seemed to suggest a state of mental strain. His wife had testified that her husband had been out alone and had probably been to his club, which she understood was a very famous one though she could not remember the name, if he had told it her, which he might not have done, being a secretive man in some ways. The Coroner said it didn't matter; he had read the letter and it didn't seem to make sense to him,

and that his job was to find out the cause of death and nothing more. The jury, under his direction, gave a verdict of death by heart-failure, the cause of which was unknown, and the man was buried. But the doctor kept the fragment of letter in his records and often re-read it, though it never seemed to make any sense; but somehow he was glad that the writer had gone no further with his account. This was the fragment.

"I think there is no reason to believe that what he said was not true. The tale was fantastic of course -- that is often the case with the stories told by explorers and others who return from wandering in outlandish parts of the world -- but his manner of telling it was so intrinsically convincing that no-one could have listened without belief. He was too small a man to be very impressive in himself, especially as he had such a soft tone of voice, but those level light-blue eyes are a certain indication of great courage, and his record leaves no doubt that he is outstanding even in that calling where such great strain is thrown on courage and physique in the normal course of events. Knowing that splendid record of his there can be no doubt that he forced his way to where no man had ever been, and since he is certainly no cheap sensation-monger there is no reason to think that he told anything but the truth, uncanny though that truth appears. Certainly his method of telling the story did not tend towards the weird, he said where he had been and what he had seen there and heard there in the most straightforward sort of way, without hesitation or pausing for effect, without mention of what he thought during the more distressing moments, and without putting forward any theories which might account for what he saw either from the natural or supernatural stand-point.

I wonder if it was deliberate, that lack of interest. Perhaps he did not want to speculate for fear of the strange paths of knowledge to which those speculations might lead him, perhaps he realised that it was best that he keep the subject as much out of his mind as possible, perhaps he was trying to forget and we had been most unkind in our obstinate insistence that he should tell us the story. But I do not think that was so. I cannot think that he would ever be afraid of anything, for that which affected us so strongly in the mere telling he saw with his own eyes, and he had to make that extremely difficult return journey afterwards. I think that all the time he knew just what the exact meaning of it all was far better than we ever could, having only the facts at second hand, and I think he concealed that knowledge of his deliberately when he saw how strongly affected we were. Our emotion must have caused him some astonishment, he could not have realised before that what to him was merely an intensely interesting affair was to us who heard him describe it the most terrifying nightmare that could be set in words. Even now I have to fight to keep parts of it out of my mind, for I dread the return of that panic fear that seized me when the full import of what he was describing entered my mind. I must not think of it, such things cannot be, he must have been delirious with fatigue and nerve-strain. And such things are far away, they could not leave

that fastness of theirs, thousands of miles in a few hours at night, impossible and I must not think anything else and I must not be afraid for they feed on fear and if I'm not careful I shall get those nightmares again and I don't want to I don't want to be afraid of things that go bump in the night god what things things from the hollow maw

"L A D D E R S"
by Fantacynic.

"Yes" said the Politician reflectively, "there are certainly things under the sun which were never dreamt of in the philosophy of the ancient seekers after wisdom. Or, at any rate, if they did dream them, they took good care to keep quiet about it as I have done about many things."

The Financier could not restrain a sly smile here. We all knew some of the things the Politician had 'kept quiet' and appreciated his reasons. There is little question that this is a hard world, and if we can carve our portion therein it does not matter to any great extent what tools we use.

"As I was saying," the Politician resumed after sipping his wine, "there are some things which I have not told to anyone, and which I would not be felling now did I not know that both you and I are half-soaked." Disdaining a cry of protest from the Poet who insisted that he was completely soaked, pickled in fact, he went on, "There was one little incident that enlivened my time of apprenticeship."

"You all know that one of my early platforms was 'A Square Deal for the Working Man'. Possibly you remember also that to advertise my allegiance to the sweating proletariat I took a job as a house painter. That was what earned me my nickname, Adolf. Well, I found the work not uncongenial as work goes though I simply cannot understand the mentality of a man who will resign himself to such a position for life. At first there is a vicarious thrill in daubing the paint on, but gradually it grows monotonous, especially when, as my firm did, you have to specialise in green, and a bilious green at that.

Thus it was that one sunny April morning my interest in paint-splashing was waning greatly, the more so because of the spotless sky and an urban lark therein. I began to take an interest in the passers-by - we were painting the front of Begwoller's big department stores in Parchment Street - and dropped into conversation with one or two.

It was just then that a young chap, thirtyish with a clean, refined, very unproletarian air to him, happened along. For a moment he stopped and watched me, comfortably seated on the scaffold with my paint pot, and then, squaring his shoulders resolutely, he marched under the ladder and stopped a couple of yards away with a look of triumph on his face.

"So you're not superstitious," I called. He turned red and white in turn and then sidled up to me and whispered, "You aren't one of them, are you?"

I gagged a bit and then found my tongue. "Being un-acquainted with 'them', I find that question rather difficult to answer", I countered, "but I should think it very unlikely."

He was plainly reassured by my words and took a critical resume of my appearance. "No," he decided at last, "you are not one of them. For one thing you are going to fat and they are all ascetic and lean. Can you keep a secret?"

The last was a bit of a shock as you can guess, but my profession enabled me to answer in the affirmative with both the appearance and actuality of truth. My mysterious acquaintance then proceeded to draw close to my scaffold and unfolded a highly astonishing story.

It appeared that, having been obliged to leave school at eighteen owing to a temporary financial misfortune, he had finally gone up to the University at the age of twenty-seven. While there he made the acquaintance of a group of young men who professed to call themselves 'Superstites'. A more ridiculous name it is hard to conceive but something about it got hold of Widdowson --- as he revealed his name to be --- and he applied for membership.

Well, to cut a long story short, after a good deal of the usual initiation mumbo-jumbo they accepted him, and he became a bona-fide member of the Superstites. These people, he soon discovered, were madly in love with the Middle Ages and had decided that the easiest way to bring back those happy times was by inculcating a reverence for things supernatural in the minds of the British people. They never came to anything, but it wasn't for want of trying. They themselves really believed in the tripe they preached and had all sorts of silly fetiches like not wearing green, breaking mirrors or walking under ladders. Moreover, one of the initiation rites consisted of a most dreadful oath to respect all such superstitions.

Widdowson kept this up for a while, but after he had got his degree the thing began to get boring. So, after he left Oxford, he just dropped out of sight of the Superstites --- didn't answer their letters and invitations to covens &c. They didn't seem to mind for the letters soon stopped coming.

Now the funny part is this. Despite his whole-hearted contempt for the Superstites as such, Widdowson couldn't help feeling uneasy about some of the pledges he had made. It was silly, as he said to me, but there it was. He felt that an act of defiance towards the nether deities was indicated, which had caused him to parade under my ladder that morning.

We had quite a pleasant little chat before he looked at his wrist-watch and said he must be going. I said goodbye and got down to my work again.

It must have been some ten minutes later when I saw him again. He was there on the pavement, regarding the ladder with a melancholy air. "Hello - back again?" I cried.

"Yes", he remarked sadly.

"Tell, the spell didn't work with you," I exclaimed, "you seem to be quite all right."

For answer he turned and pointed down the street. "See

that disturbance down there?" he asked. I nodded. "There was an accident there five minutes ago -- probably you were too absorbed in your painting to notice it. A touring car knocked a man down and killed him."

Now I looked closely he did seem rather pale and bloodless. Spirit-like in fact; I could almost imagine I saw the pavement through him. A terrible suspicion began to form in my mind.

"And you -- you were the man?" I breathed fearfully.

After an interval of seconds which seemed like aeons he replied, and I nearly fell off the scaffold in suspense.

"No," he said mournfully, "but he owed me ten bob...."

DEPARTMENT??

Readers were so slow to enter into the spirit of the game that our projected department now has two question marks. Unless more support is forthcoming it will be absent from future issues. The "green cheese moon" proposition was the only one receiving anything in the nature of support, so we give the arguments hereunder. As he was specifically challenged, Arthur Clarke kicks off.

"That the moon is made of cheese -- even green cheese -- is not a fact that is open to serious doubt. Ever since Galileo turned his telescope upon it and first revealed its porous nature, the more far-sighted astronomers began to suspect the truth. Indeed, no-one who is acquainted with the subject can fail to see the striking resemblance between certain portions of the moon's surface and a close-up of a piece of cheese. There are the same mysterious holes, diving down below the surface to unknown depths. There are the same up-thrust crags, the same precipitous exteriors. And, no doubt, in the remoter depths equally strange creatures lurk. There is also evidence that the atmospheres are similar.+++I presume the figure of two feet given for the Moon's diameter is taken from one of the earlier astronomy books. The most recent measurements, made by Dr. Humdinger with the 200" telescope on Mount Arama, indicate a diameter of 1' 9.354" (Troy). This figure is believed to be accurate to .001" and is indeed a triumph of modern astronomical technique. The values given in the old astronomy books -- in some cases amounting to hundreds of miles (!!) -- are, of course, laughable and were caused by failure to allow for the magnifying effect of the earth's atmosphere, the warping of slide-rules in humid climates, and the deviation of light rays due to the curvature of space."

Osmond Robb offers somewhat similar arguments and concludes:-- "With regard to what it's doing up there in the first place, it could be an ambitious cheese advertisement left over from some previous civilisation -- the Atlanteans perhaps. As for the other two propositions, they're almost axiomatic if you belong to certain schools of thought."

Mr. Burke would ruin anything. As usual, unconstructive, he remarks--- "I defy you to prove a) that John Russell Fearn can write English without having to refer to a dictionary for words of more than one syllable and b) that Chamberlain is a man of his word." We greatly regret that we can prove the first proposition. If JRF

had to refer to a dictionary for every multi-syllabic word his output would obviously be much less than it is, even if a little better. We are not going to try to prove the second.

The other Eric C. (you know--Sprigg!) suggests----"I think the Moon is probably a drop of celestial milk spilled from the overflowing cup of the Milky Way which, spinning as is the manner of heavenly bodies, has spun itself to buttery consistency and, curdling again, now presents a cheesy appearance, rent and rifled by the maggots age has brought to it. It must be less than 2" across, of course, because it looks so and seeing is believing with Man the Materialist. We must not heed scientists for they are all impractical fools who are constantly discovering that what they believed last year is hopelessly wrong this; they are all fools, that is, except those who invent weapons of destruction and begin the day's work saying, "Now, this morning I'll discover something that will burn their eyes out!" They are foul fiends, sir!+++Now would you, or my fellow readers, care to accept a challenge from me? A certain eminent gentleman once declared to his friends that, given any false statement, he could prove by valid argument any conclusion asked of him. He was told to assume that $2 + 2 = 5$ and prove himself the Pope.....!" Continued on back page, but please try to solve it first.

We appeal to our readers to support as many British fan-magazines as they can in this trying period. Particularly does this apply to "The Satellite" which, deprived of SFA support, now has to find a new set of readers or go under. Send 1/6 now for a six-month sub. to J.F. Burke, 57 Beauclair Drive, Liverpool 15. Sally will provide an excellent complement to Fantast, offering light, anti-black-out fare as contrasted with our political and other delvings. Remember to send now!

"Macabre" is even more precariously placed, beginning its career in such a trying time. We aren't sure of the price, but if you send 1/- to J.P. Rathbone, 9 Parkhill, 24 Heriot Place, Edinburgh 3, you will get something -- and something good! Support Mack and watch it go places.....

"The Futurian" is carrying on under great difficulties and is even better than before in its new mimeod form. Try sending 3d. to J. Michael Rosenblum, 4 Grange Terrace, Chapeltown, Leeds 7, and see for yourself.

You want news? Ted Carnell is the premier news-hound in England & he is now publishing Postal Preview, giving the news as it breaks. This publication is invaluable if you want to keep in touch with events. Send 6d. for 8 issues to 17 Burwash Road, Plumstead, S.E.18 For more detailed news, send 6d. for 4 issues of E.V. Heald's "Science Fantasy Review", Britain's first bi-weekly. Address---21 Henley Avenue, Litherland, Liverpool 3.

Despite the pessimistic forebodings of our trans-Atlantic friends, British fan-editors have surmounted the various difficulties and counting Macabre's side-kick, Dawn Shadows, no less than SEVEN fan-mags are still carrying on. We think such perseverance deserves your support. To borrow a phrase from the jelly-bellied flag-waggers, Let's Keep The Old Flag Flying. (Doesn't that stir your bosoms?)

THE CREED OF A "TORY"by Phil Hetherington, B.Sc.(Manc.)

Perhaps I am afraid to face up to reality; my liking for fantasy rather bears this out, I suppose. But I don't like to criticise legislation or government action or policy until I have made myself familiar with the arguments on both sides. Normally a government is in a better position to consider what can be done than the opposition is, for the latter is not able to obtain the relevant information so readily. On the other hand I do not consider it to be in the national interest for one party so to dominate the legislature that it can force its laws through without criticism. I consider a strong opposition to be a necessity; but its opposition should be constructive.

Thus I cannot approve of a one party system such as exists in totalitarian states, including Russia. For these systems do not make any provision for criticism of their governmental measures; whether they are beneficial or not they are always passed unanimously.

I believe in complete freedom of action, thought, word and emotion in so far as that freedom does not interfere with the freedom of others. Legislation is necessary to control the relations between the freedoms of individuals. I believe in equal opportunity for all. But I also believe that the community has the right to require some individuals to relinquish their freedom of action in defence of the community's mode of existence or in performance of duties which will improve the conditions of the community. To ensure equality in this respect, a measure of compulsion may have to be applied.

I believe in the right of the individual to possess private property, although the inheritance of this should be limited. I consider that Estate Duty should be payable in property in certain cases. I would retain the Stock Exchange as it performs a useful function in raising capital for financing new discoveries and public works, but under proper legislative control. I believe that it is in the public interest that the small shopkeeper and farmer should continue in existence; but the distributive trades should be controlled by the community.

I believe that a course in Citizenship and Civics should be given in every educational institution; and that only those who reach a certain satisfactory standard in these should be allowed to vote. I would also add courses in comparative Religion and Anthropology. Those citizens who could not learn these subjects would be too easily swayed by propaganda to be allowed the right to influence the actions of the community.

I am a Royalist. The ceremonial head of the state ought to be above party politics; he ought not to be actuated by any desire for power. He ought to receive a special education to fit him for his duties. Only a hereditary monarch can satisfy these requirements. I am an imperialist; because the British Empire is an example of a community of free states, acting as, or which ought to act as, trustees for those communities not yet able to rule themselves. The Empire is! And whatever our views on the way it grew, it can only be considered as it is. India is a special problem, but as soon as the main groups can show

that they are prepared to coöperate effectively India should be granted her Dominion status.

A federalised Europe must be established at the end of this War if any permanent peace is to be established in Europe. But the exact form must be left to discussion at the peace conference with the new governments of Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia on equal terms with the allies. I consider that the final treaties should be submitted to neutrals for their views as to their fairness. The form I would suggest myself is that the unit of federation should be such as to give local autonomy to old historical divisions such as Scotland, Wales, Bavaria, Austria, Catalonia etc., together with regional groups covering old national areas; and a federation congress which would regulate questions of "inter-state commerce", rule the old colonies of member states, set up a central banking system, issue a linked currency, ensure freedom of thought, speech (within the limits of the law of libel), and freedom of travel, protection of minorities, and the setting up of a Supreme Court to decide questions not settled by the local courts. The constitution must be flexible enough to allow of easy amendment in any point found to be unsatisfactory in practice. And each step in social reform should be tested before the next advance.

I supported the Munich Agreement because that four-power pact seemed to me to be a step towards a united Europe and settlement of problems by discussion. The course of events finally convinced me that whilst the Nazi regime was in power in Germany only the use of superior force could convince that regime that negotiation was the better way. As a gesture to the world that we were sincere in our guarantees, I supported the introduction of conscription, and the other measures taken by the government to strengthen our forces. Events have shown that Germany was prepared to risk war to satisfy the ambitions of her regime and that only a succession of Munichs could have averted it. Yet the very groups which most criticised Munich oppose the war now. If their advice had been taken then, the war would have begun in 1938, under conditions much less favourable to us. The Government's Blue Book plainly fixes the responsibility.

I am convinced that Religion is a necessity for man; and that there is some truth in all the religions of the world. As a Theosophist, I believe in Reincarnation, survival after bodily death, and that actions in this life control environment in the next; and that the destiny of the world is guided by higher powers. Although I consider most newspaper astrology to be absurd and even dangerous, I find that the study of astrological works is a fascinating hobby; and I have been convinced that there is an element of truth in astrology, however absurd it may seem to those who would explain everything in materialist terminology. I do not believe that everything can be so explained!

NOTE--There can be little question of the sincerity of Mr. Hethington's belief in the Dragon Conscription some of our readers so valiantly slew a while ago. He has been registered recently under the new regulations and expects to be called up before Xmas. We are at variance with him on many points but will not detail them here. But now that "Folly" is enlarged . . . ?

"NOVEMBER NONSENSE"

The increased number of pages in this issue, due, of course, to a premature change into the new format announced in the last FANTASY WAR BULLETIN, will already have struck you. This change, necessitated by the difficulties abounding at present, is not yet complete. The next (January) issue will quite possibly be entirely in elite type, instead of merely the readers' section as with this number, and this, with the increased quota of pages, means that you will be getting half as much material again. In fact we worked it out, and you will be having 96,800 letters (or spaces) per issue, as against the previous 64,150 letters (or spaces). O.K., Ego? If exchanging editors are not satisfied with this state of affairs, will they drop us a line?

As hopefully mooted last month, there are two DRSmith opi in this issue. Some of you may be wondering what has become of "Fanopolis" so perhaps we should mention that, acting on a suggestion from John F. Burke, we have decided to call the fifth instalment the last, anything else being in the nature of an anticlimax. Fantacynic heartily concurs in this (these monthly polls have been a strain on his delicate constitution--he had an idea that Burke would some day forget to give Smith 0 with a resultant slump in Fanopolian stock).

When war broke out we made a mental vow to eschew politics in FANTAST for the duration, but it seems that our readers object to being silenced. Phillip Hetherington has supplied "Creed of a Tory" as a moderate version of "On Conscription", and we invite comment. Perhaps other readers will come forward with their creeds - communism, michelism, fascism, technocracy, or what-have-you? Anticipating remarks that this is out of place in the magazine, we respectfully point out that we are the editor, and it doesn't take up a lot of room, anyway.

Our stock of mss. begins to run out, and with our standard getting progressively higher (we hope!) there is inadequate replenishment. Please have a shot at something--you know our policy is most catholic. We have some good material on hand for next month. All missing mss. have now been rescued and our other stock includes a second "Have You Read It?" article, an ingenious short by our tame communist, Doc Lowndes, and a cataclysmic one-scene play by none other than General Eric Cuthbert. You lucky people! By the way, typing contributors can still help by evening the edge of their texts, filling in to the end of the line with a rare character. Only the line should be 80, not 65 spaces now--yes, you can do it with ordinary Pica-size type.

And now to the poll. Owing to the necessity for giving results of two months' voting we will economise on comment.

August: 1st- Cover---9.40. 2nd- "Folly"--9.15. 3rd- "Fanopolis"--8.62. 4th- Editorial--8.00. 5th- "Last & Forst Men"---7.808. 6th - "Just Like A SF Story"--7.00. 7th- "My Task--The Task of Man"--6.58. 8th- "Machines, Men & Methods"--6.46. 9th- "Langwidge"--5.00. 10th- "So This Is England!"--4.53. After 2 successive months of "Folly" and "Fanopolis" 1st & 2nd, it is pleasing to see an outsider take the honours. Congratulations, Harry! Avge. for issue--7.26. PFO

September: 1st- "Folly"--9.64. 2nd- "Fanopolis"--9.17. 3rd- Edit-
 orial--7.67. 4th- TIE. "It's A Devil" & "Conversation in a Ship"
 ---7.54. 5th- "Have You Read It?"--7.18. 7th- "Dreamland"--7.14
 8th--Department--7.00. 9th- "Monday Morning over the World"--6.98.
 10th- "No Visitors"--6.08. Avge. for issue--7.59. "Folly" & F/c
 back again--For the last time! Soul-stirring struggle between old
 friends Smith & Burke for 3rd place, but while they compromised on
 a tie, September Silliness nosed in to pip them. Of 14 ratings,
 "Folly" had ten 10s, three 9s and one 8--good going. Note how even
 the marks are. First eight reach 7, and none under 6. Best issue
 yet--.33 over no.5, which was itself a .05 drop on no.4. One ap-
 peal. Please mark everything--including "Department".

Daw and Mosko absent again, we fear. Not yet back from Philadelphia

+++ F A N T A S T I S / F O L L Y

Please excuse further delay--due to waiting for this typewriter to come.
 Carefully noising his typewriter on the edge of a snell-hole, D Webster lets fly
 "I see among other things in the September FANTAST a little A.R.P. news in
 the form of Eric Hopkins' gallivanting during air-raids. A mere nothing, I may
 inform you, a matter of insignificant consequence compared with what has been
 happening to us in Aberdeen. You may or may not know the facts. Anyway, two or
 three weeks ago a friend of mine surprised us by stating that "Aberdeen is a
 shambles". Great commotion and no little interest. It seemed (I haven't veri-
 fied the facts but have also heard them elsewhere) that English authorities in-
 dignantly interrupted a programme to refute heatedly the fact, broadcast by a
 German short-wave station, that a raid had been made on the "small fishing-vill-
 age" of Aberdeen which had, in the process, been reduced to a shambles. Rather
 unpleasant experience, you'll be thinking - but "small fishing-village", hang it
 all. Blow me down, did these low, unintelligent /bullet-headed/ Germans not
 know that the dearly departed of which they spoke was the city of Aberdeen, no
 less, the third city of Scotland (beating Dundee by a short head) and a city,
 moreover, cultured enough to boast one whole member of that supremely intellect-
 ual species, the stt. far? But, at any rate, you'll admit that this was a much
 more thrilling experience than Eric O's - one is not reduced to a shambles every
 day of the week. And again: I believe that The Man himself has promised that
 Aberdeen Is Next (after Edinburgh, Rathbone and Macabre, I s'pose): that ere
 Sunday - tomorrow - has gone its way, this noble Granite City will, in effect,
 be no more than ruins, granite chips and corps of corpses. Do you not see the
 awful implications?--you are reading a letter from the late inhabitant of a town
 which (when you read it) is nothing more than irregular lumps of felspar, quartz
 and mica, blasted into shreds, with a thin green mist of poison-gas hugging the
 bomb-holes and swirling in whorls with the breeze. It's worse than "A Chapter
 from the Neutronomicon". I tell you - I'm all of a shiver, as are all the inmates
 of this burg. Some even carry their gas-masks with them.*****Cover: prefer Tur-
 ner to Gottliffe -- in fact to most other cover-coppers. But I certainly like
 the verse you print; many subjects, ideas or feelings can be put over much more
 efficiently in poetry than prose, because you are quite ready and willing to be
 transported by the former into a species of Dreamland, a faeryland of the
 mind and imagination. Gottliffe's poem, for instance, would merely look silly
 if translated, in substance, into prose. This one doesn't contain much, although

the form is elegant, and being partial to the medium I'll say 8. "No Visitors" --No. Knew what was coming, of course, and was only interested in whether he'd bring it in successfully at the end. About 5. "Monday Morning Over The World"--this is the Michel, I take it, the Michellist Michel? (I haven't the energy to verify this conclusion, but it doesn't matter much) Well.....it's all very well being modern, says I, and neglecting to start every line with a capital; but surely it's the Imp of the Perverse that prompts one to ignore capitals altogether. Possibly one has used all one's capitals on the title? I liked this a good deal, for it has a sort of broken rhythm and some fantastic images; it shows thought and care taken in the phrasing -- not something you could sit down and dash off in a conversational manner. Yes, I like it more on reading again, and I imagine Michel enjoyed writing it. 9. The Smithology. I may say right away that I too would have awarded "Oceana" 10, or 10+. Fie on Burke and Macinpain, the unimaginative blighters! My reactions to this piece were interesting. 1st. par: middling. "Pass anased comments on the continued remoteness of the crags" is too pedantic and stilted for my delicate constitution. Ah! more in my line--the sort of fantasy one finds in Unknown. The "where no living man may ever visit", followed by the description of the ordinary-seeming men, in extraordinary circumstances, was a nice piece of delicacy (or a delicious piece of nicety--please yourself). Also there is the delicious bathos of the leaving of sardine-tins and beer-bottles over the mountain slopes. The tourists wandering blasphemously over the sacred steeps is more in the manner of "Oceana"; it reminded me vividly of another short of the same variety - Lovecraft's "The Other Gods". And further, the atmosphere of the cavern and the toiling slaves gave me visions again of "Metropolis", of the Tower of Babel, the pater-noster machine. Of course there all was polished and clean and precise, but somehow with the sweating, never-released workers the atmosphere seemed the same. Yes, withal some excellent thought and pictures. And the uncertain desperation, the futility of the feeling at the end - something one feels in dreams, when half-asleep, when dazed by failure. Very good (just a shade, perhaps, beneath his previous fantasy)-10. Burke: not so hot, and while there is something of value here and there, it really isn't now, and suffers a good deal in comparison with the above. Say 6.56239 approx. Grrr! May we count the "approx." as .000005--for rating? Rowland's article wasn't bad, although most of the interest was in the book (as it should be) and not in his writing or construction; it sounds a bit like "Quo Vadis?" -- or am I getting confused? Possibly "Gone With the Wind"? 7. Haven't read "Fanopolis" as I haven't got part 4 yet. With which we come to the interesting pot-pourri of "September Silliness" --- interesting in every way, and especially, perhaps, in the ratings, for I hardly appreciated the worth and thought in the FANTAST so much until I came to reread part of it just now and administer marks and remarks. 8. "Department?" was just beautiful; personally I won't participate at the moment, but to the scheme and Smith's useful dissertation on tea-leafoery - 9, with the expectation of amusing results. "Folly" - a little spoiled for me, as I was reading remarks, for the most part, on articles I have not yet seen (gentle hint: when deprived of my FANTAST my disposition is none too considerate). But there's always a large amount of constructive opinions and badinage on this and that, of the same kind as you read in the Reader's Section in PICTURE POST. All right - so long as no-one starts a "caning" or "glamour girls" war here! 9 for this, v. ging on 10; keep up the editorial interjections, which contribute in a big way to the value.*****One thing I was wondering about - this marvellous and (to me) mystifying neothism (sic) which you employ. Doc Lowndes invokes GhuGhu; Kuslan, I think it was, seemed to be a follower of one FooFoo (or some similar deity), whom or which he regarded - with good reason for all I know -- as his Saviour; and was it not your esteemed self

who mentioned, moreover, an Asmodeus or another god with an equally exotic name? Just what is it all about? Me, I have become used some time ago to the Lovecraft mythology and that of Howard, and am acquainted with many others; but this one has caught me unawares -- the great mind is baffled. Asmodeus is a real demon, we think. For the rest, would some kind American write an article for us? I do remember that When We Were Very Young my father used to baby-talk us with some sort of formula that went: "Goo-goo (or Ghughu), Annie-Ann". Too much to hope there would be any connection? We greatly fear so!*****As I appear to be coming to the end of this page, the end of this letter must coincide with it. And, as an exhortation and encouragement to you, let me say that I enjoy a fan-mag as such, but to describe my reactions to FANTAST, I must echo the words of General Eric C. Cuthbert - give him his due! Williams. D. WEBSTER

No introduction is necessary to the next:-

"Now the wearisome formality of registering is over I feel quite puffed up about it, as if I were a front-line soldier resting on his laurels after a mighty victory. Beyond giving a spontaneous cheer on one of the clerks mentioning that jig and tool draughtsman are reserved from 21 upwards I conducted myself as every right-feeling young man should do, sah! My stock depreciated considerably as a result of that cheer, I fear, it seemed to be considered not in the best of taste. I don't think it will take more than a year at the outside to raise the age of reservation for such as me to 25 or even above, just long enough for all the good jobs to be snatched up, but every respite is gratefully received. There is a decided vogue of thought round here of the opinion that within a year we shall be fighting with Germany against Russia.*****But away with such idle chatter, let me get at the meat, 'way for my inevitable remarks on the subject of the Fantast, whose arrival I greeted with a loud scream of joy and relief, followed by a frenzied gobbling-down of its contents. I will now give my opinion of those contents in my usual methodical, though doubtless wearisome style.*****Gottliffe's poem, while not an adequate substitute for Turner, was the best poem I've seen from him yet. At that I cannot wax really enthusiastic about it. The first two lines are good, as is the last, but that which lies between is disappointing. Gottliffe's poetic license should be endorsed for "On even us must that dark dank mist flow." The primary purpose of language, namely, to express a thought, is in several places subordinated to the need for rhyme "rime" - please and meter, with resultant confusion of both aims...7.*****While on the subject of good lines, who was it wrote "A rose-red city half as old as time"? Can our readers help, or is the name of the Secretary of the Parnassus Club a Dunsanyan secret?*****The opening story lacked only one thing, originality. It was told competently and the climax came naturally, though rather weakened in my opinion by the preceding explanation of the doctor. There was no point in telling us that the boy's parents were ghosts twice, and I think the visit of the doctor might have been omitted, or else the closing paragraph. I prefer the omission of the doctor's visit, since this inevitably tends to bring the sentiment side up too obviously for the full impact of either sentiment or fantasy.*****However, the lack of originality is the most prominent weakness. I am not condemning the story on the grounds that the plot is unoriginal to the follower of English ghost stories; I do not condemn any story for that alone. What I do disapprove of in this particular story is that the style is unoriginal, it has the dull flawless English that permeates the whole of second-rate English literature. What I want to see in the Fantast if you insist on publishing stories, (and I am sending you one so I hope you do) is not angles of attack on the difficult question of conveying eeriness in words. A la "Heart Attack"*****I have commented at some length on this story because I like it enough to be sorry that it is a s

not within my estimation of what constitutes perfection in this type of writing. There is a difficulty in marking it, for in many ways it is most commendable, but at the same time it has its faults...8.***I can't make up my mind what Michel is trying to say in his verse. I thought at one time that he was trying to give an impression of a future world, possibly that is the true explanation. However, I cannot commend his effort to do so. The mysterious introduction of pylons towards the end seems to be another theme, one of several perhaps. Free verse I can stand, I might even say that in many instances I prefer free verse to the other sort, but the purpose of words is to convey thoughts, not to be subordinated entirely to obscuring thoughts for the sake of effect. There is no effect where there is no meaning...4.*****I hope all your readers have realised that "It's A Devil" is entirely humorous in intention. It is actually a joint effort the idea came from a friend of mine when we were in the midst of the labour of walking over the moorland on Skye from Sligachan hotel to Sgurr nan Gillean.**** Burke's indictment of civilisation is about the best thing I have read of his, common-sense neatly set out with originality. The only thing I have against it is that there is nothing particularly fresh about any of it...8.*****"Have You Read It" promises to be a useful feature, and I think I shall read "Hosanna" if I ever see it in the library. I have only read Newman's "Armoured Doves", about which there is a certain trite naivete that rather annoyed me. I do not anticipate being greatly thrilled by this other book of his, for it would appear to be somewhat philosophical in parts and Mr. Newman's philosophy disagrees with me. However we must not lose this feature, which promises so well...7.*****I perceive that Fantacynic has been taking a hint from Nomo King, the Monologue King. Ghu forbid! I ask myself whether I approve of this unwarranted intrusion in the whirlygig of nonsense. It is well-done though I have the feeling that the well-known "Hearts and Flowers" of the days of the silent films would be the most appropriate music (subtle crack!). It is, I think, well-placed, showing the contrast between the vocal disagreements of fans and their true unity in appreciation of the greatness of fantastic literature. It helps to lend a touch of artistry to the series, transforming it from a mere burlesque into an actual parable on fandom...10.*****The editorial still continues to be interesting, especially in the gratifying references to myself. I think that the actual worth of "Oceana" was about that indicated by the average mark; it was too clumsy in parts to be really worth-while...7.*****It will be interesting to see how the "game" develops.*****"Folly" is, of course, unmatched, despite my undue prominence which I begin to suspect must be due to a desire to annoy Mollvain. He and Burke are prominent in adding spice to a department which, after the first page, is interesting beyond comparison. It gives us all the pleasure of reading several other fans' comments, combined with the deep and lasting joy of knowing that we haven't got to reply to the letters...10.*****I found the October Astounding quite up to standard and scintillating by the side of Fantastic Adventures No. 2, which is chiefly notable for the fact that the best story is by Fearn, leaving a tempting opening for a crack about Eddington's statement re the persevering monkeys and the typewriters.

DRSMITH

A new reader, Gordon Cousins, comments thusly:-

"Your lay-out for the cover is quite a good make-shift, and the verse it features is pleasant in the pseudo-Georgian style. The first stanza is far and away the better of the two, the second being spoiled by poor assonance and conventional phrasing and thought. 6, I think.*****I can see little reason for publishing "No Visitors". Despite an auspicious start, this tails out in a most depressing manner and, in any case, the secret is given away in the 6th para-

graph. And I think it was damned careless of the kid's parents to wander through doors in that light manner--they might have scared the lights out of him. Mackley carefully points out that they had substance ("he could still feel the moist spot on his cheek that had been his mother's kiss") so why not turn the doorknob like decent human beings? 3.*****I liked michel's "monday morning over the world" no end, despite the weird arrangement of the lines. There are phrases in it which catch the imagination, and a subtle sympathy which indicates (even if we didn't know it) that JBM is a scientific idealist. Just the antithesis of "Brave New World". 8.*****Smith is good, despite a plot which staggers with slightness. No, I don't know that it is so slight, really, and the Beachcomberian allusion of paragraph 3 is happy. 7 for this, too.*****"Conversation in a Spaceship" hasn't quite the professional touch, nor yet the rankness of the amateur. The idea, of course, is not very new and the topical allusions stress obvious faults. Still, it is interesting and the crack re Harry Kay (whose "On Conscription" I recall in the back-numbers you sent me) is humorous and good-natured, two attributes that are not found together nearly as often as one could wish. 6.*****"Have You Read It?" I enjoyed and I very seldom like book reviews. Happily, I have not read "Hosanna", but now mean to remedy that omission at the earliest opportunity. I revel in these "if" stories - remember that short story appearing in some anthology (Mercury Story Book, I think, though I can't recall the name of the yarn itself) concerning a visit to the past that was "if-altered"? "Fanopolis" is a curious mixture. Some of the jokes are good, but they are clumsily introduced, the interview with the Very Busy Fan being most so. The lapse into romanticism would be more welcome were it not such a gigantic purple patch, and there is one mistake in it which will make every music-lover wince. 6.*****"September Silliness" (this alliterative business is silliness) was as we expect an editorial to be, hurriedly turned out between the duplicator and the typewriter. Give you 5 for luck.*****"Department?" is worth 6 for Smith's lunatic logic.*****"Tolly" is, of course, grand and worth 20/10. GSCOUSINS

Comment from Harry Warner, Ye Ed. of SPACEWAYS & HORIZONS:-

"Without further ado, to the sixth Fantast. The cover is excellent in its simplicity, though it would have been nice if it had been possible to type the poem at an angle. But I realise that was near impossible. [Near!/?] The poem itself is very good, about the best Gottliffe has done. My only fault with it is in the second line in the second stanza--"Hiding" - throws the meter off completely. If "To hide" or "And hide" had been substituted it would have improved it quite a bit, without altering the sense. I'll say nine, being very generous. Cleaning up the poetry first, I refuse to rate Michol's. I still can't fathom his stuff.*****"It's A Devil" I didn't like so much. Maybe another reading or so will do it better, but it isn't what I expected of Smith at all. /Smith never is what you expect/ Entirely toonaive, somehow. And then, too, whenever the weird or fantastic of this sort is introduced, a description of the machines used seems ludicrous somehow. Maybe I'm nuts--probably I have hit thenail right on the head!--but I can only hope for better things next time. Four.*****Burke seems to have taken a page from a volume about the size of "Gone with the Wind" for his extract. At least, it reads that way. Seven.*****No, I haven't read it, and probably won't unless J. Michael sends it in one of his periodical packages of books. It gets six, nevertheless. I still think a book review of a new book in three or four hundred words is the hardest thing to do in fantasy. Fanopolis keeps up to its standard or very near it. One or two quips seem a little forced this time, but it deserveth seven, with strong leanings to a higher mark. But best to end it, I believe, before it starts downhill too much. Editorial I give seven; better if you had more room to say things

other than the standard ones. However, Smith making aeroplanes--is he a lunatic, genius, or aeronautical (sorry about the spelling) worker? First probable, second possible, but worker...! I'm beginning to wonder if he won't turn into a J. Chapman Miske. Huh?****And I forgot. Re Fanopolis: it's Tosti's Farewell, not Tosca's. Typographical error--but only a couple noticed it, and neither was Ego! The latter is the young lady who murdered Scarpia in that most blood-thirsty of all operas.****Shan't comment on Fantast's Folly extensively, save to say that it deserves an eight, and the elephants are like meeting long-lost friends. By the way, when Hopkins hits those astronomical figures in number of pages, does he do it by handwriting on small, large, or what size paper? I just can't imagine 34 of these. Hand-written large-size pages--34 again this month!
HARRY WARNER, JR.

And now - with due solemnity - we present . . . H a r r y K A Y!!!

"Cover. Idea is fair, if you have a really good poem excellent, in this case - 8/10.*****No Visitors. 8/10. I rather like this sort of thing - in moderation.*****Monday. In the light of the Bulletin, why no capitals? What are 'potent cars'? Really, I think it is affected, quite apart from any virtue such a genuine effort might hold. Why 'defecated massily'? It's even chances he means 'excreted'. In any case, so what? It gave me the impression of a silly little boy kicking his elders in the face - to show how clever he is. 5/10.*****It's A Devil. 7/10. Average to good. Conversation. 9/10. One of the best laughs you have given me. I feel tempted to give it ten, but deduct one because I feel that if it were someone else I should not like it so much. Cheers--he has a sense of humour! Incidentally, it was Ted Carnell in the first draft, but Burke revised it/*****Fanopolis. 10/10. Better and better, why stop? /See next letter/ Arthur and Ted are only two of the many London fans. Why not bring us all in, or is the VBI one of us? /Meant to be Eric Williams, but apparently the joke fell flat! Carry on Fanopolis. I like Sanctuary.*****Department? 7/10. Should be most interesting, have no time - yet. How about proving the theory of Organic Evolution? Text-books on Biology, geology and Palaeontology permitted, none on Evolution. Folly. Usual rate. I have no time to handle Lowndes in detail as the table is being demanded for supper, but might suggest that he is now back in his usual unintelligent style, as in NW, (pause for missiles), the intelligent, moderate letter which I commended in the previous issue being merely the only way he could attack those who excluded him from the NISFC. NISFC please. Speer insists! And 'only way'? Have a look at Science Fiction Progress some time! /*****A further impertinence. If you, I beg your pardon, Fanopolis, try again, Fantacynic, does not feel up to introducing the Londoners, could I do a chapter? /We invite you--all contributions judged strictly on merit/ HKAY

And now, the bane of our existence, the evil star of Vollheim and Moskovitz--Fantacynic!

"The latest issue of your rag was of its usual mediocrity, or, should I say unusual mediocrity. Gottliffe, Smith, Burke, all the gang. Only one contribution showed any signs of value, though I will admit that this showed not only signs of value, but the very hall-mark of genius. I refer, naturally, to "Fanopolis", which surpasses even its own previous heights, despite your lamentable typing, at all times striving to reduce excellence to absurdity. I see you spotted one error in time to add an erratum, but this is insignificant beside your remarkable mutation of 'Tosti' into 'Tosca'. Even sex knows no bounds to editors of footling little periodicals.*****Your suggestion (though phrased in rather peremptory tones) that "Fanopolis" should cease at the present point displays intelligence, something with which I would never have credited you. Even I can-

not be expected to improve on perfection, and the end should now be mystifying enough to qualify me for a place with the ultra-moderns. I am sending you here-with yet another gem (despite your pointed remarks) which is probably too ingenious for your semi-illiterate readers. This applies in particular to rest of letter censored

FANTASTIC

Without preamble, one who is probably the most aloof and refined of British fans --John F. Burke:

"The cover looks impressive in its way, and I think a change is good for everyone. Gottliffe's poem pleases me - it makes nice reading, anyway.6.***** "No Visitors" - I thought from the name that Dave was adopting yet another pseudonym, but the style is certainly not his unless he has been making some radical changes of late. It reads very like Jim Rathbone in parts - is it? No The story is obvious from the beginning, but it is quite competently written, and I think with a little development and an extension of the detail it could make a short up to the standard of the WEIRD 2-pagers.6.*****Michel. I can't really make any comment on this, being woefully ignorant of the meaning of such flights of fancy. It definitely appealed however, which is more than so many of this sort of poem succeed in doing.7.*****Smith. Aha! I like this better than last time, but it STILL DOESN'T GET ANYWHERE. Smith possesses a wonderful ability to use a lot of breath saying nothing. There's an idea here, but it's so feeble & completely undeveloped that no-one's likely to notice it. Essays are all very well, but fiction with a plot is a nice change every now and then. The style is good, lacking the pompousness and self-conscious verbosity of the never-to-be-forgotten-or-forgiven "Occana" but the thing stops there. With patience Smith could be a really grand writer. Like Burke? As it is....5 (and he's lucky!) Surprising how topical my little ditty is - I even laughed at some of my own jokes.*****"Have You Read It?" is the sort of department I don't like as a rule, but this one is pretty good. I really felt like reading the book after I had finished the review, which is saying quite a lot as most of them leave me cold. Who's "Rowlands"? I guessed at Roland F., then at JMR. Thinking it over - no, I'm still not sure.8.*****"Tanopolis". Oh boy! TEN! I think this is the best yet, or maybe it's just in contrast to last month's rather poorer instalment. Someday I shall rise in wrath at all those cracks about me, but as yet I am still too hysterical to worry much. Anyway, it's publicity. (I know - Hauptmann got publicity, but it didn't get him anywhere - much) dare we hope? Who in Hades is the Very Busy Fen? No - at the moment The passage at the end came as a surprise, and despite the great danger of bathos in such a situation, it's welcome. I have always considered you expressed yourself far better in verse, and were rather inclined to stumble over prose, but this piece is lovely - it seems a pity that you could not have rounded off the whole thing with this, as any more will be an anti-climax to such a startlingly beautiful passage. Yeah - 10! Sorry--we're broke! If we have to vote on the Editorial, give it 6 for luck. I am highly amused to note that by awarding Smith such a low mark I have helped in pushing my own article into first place. Loud laughs - how that guy must hate Dave and I!*****"Department?" is good. This is how I like Smith - as long as he sticks to this sort of thing we'll get on fine.*****Polly 10 again. Smith again good stuff - his "analysis" (?) of my work is very interesting. Doesn't he realise that my articles aren't meant to be funny? I've just thought of a sweet little idea that you may get in a short time.*****Eric C. is amusing. We had one of those raids -- some planes came over without giving the correct signals, and everyone was having a helluva time until they showed the signs.*****Doc is good, and I may add here that I am in complete agreement with his views on the Chamberlain government. This is the most serious obstacle in the way of a World

State at the present, and in the way of a world peace of any sort. Read the Daily Worker! Read "Fantast"--our lies are more subtle Eric is good, and this is undoubtedly a swell group of letters (possibly excluding my own rather uninspired criticisms). Why so modest? *****This issue is definitely above standard I don't know if my marking average comes out as high as usual, and I'm too lazy to work it out, but I don't think you've had such an issue before where I got the maximum of enjoyment out of almost everything. JOHN F. BURKE.

After which, our Tame Assassin, gooping from Somewhere in France:

"I'm sorry that you lost my last letter from Maudford for it contained some carefully-turned phrases intended for the decoration of Fantast's Folly, and also what I considered some quite pertinent criticisms of your publication. Still, I won't grieve so long as you keep me supplied with further issues to criticise. Heaven knows, I shall want something to criticise with both the SFL and BIS going into cold storage.*****No Visitors wasn't at all badly written, though the plot belonged to the "And then I woke up" genus. Why not have the boy dead as well - the complications might then be worth pursuing.*****There's not a lot to be said about "It's A Devil". It was nicely and neatly done. Smith knows something about form.*****The instalment of "Panopolis" was the best yet, the only one, so far as I recollect, that hasn't been at all patchy. This one, which I thought delightful all through, seems very much as though you wrote it.*****With regard to the Editorial, I'm glad to note that the envelope bore only the innocuous words "Please forward".*****"Have You Read It?" - I haven't, nor do I particularly want to, though the feature is not at all a bad idea. Nor is "Department?" which might well be made into a regular feature on the lines of the "New Statesman"'s week-end competitions. It has just occurred to me that there is a remarkable similarity between Smith and Edgar Allan Poe. When I said that Smith knew something about form I almost added some remarks about Poe's insistence on the importance of form and structure in writing. Smith's defence of tea-cup fortune-telling contains the very elements of analysis that made Poe famous with "Murders in the Rue Morgue" & "The Mystery of Marie Roget". Again, Smith is a very able and telling critic - so was Poe, very much so. Poe's sense of humour was one of his most individual characteristics, and so is Smith's and strangely similar to Poe's. I hardly think that Smith can have modelled his style or even acquired a sense of humour merely by reading one volume of Poe's stories, which he told me a year or so ago was all of his that he had read. I rather think that the minds of the two happen to be cast in more or less the same mould. And if Smith thinks this is fulsome flattery, let him remember the fairly sticky end that Poe came to. It would be interesting to know to what extent Smith indulges in alcohol and drugs!*****"Monday Morning Over The World" tickled me no end. I don't think anyone can deny that Michel has talent - his second stanza might have been written by D. H. Lawrence except for the "O sing the ultra-violet's praise" which reminded me of Aldous Huxley's "A gramme is better than a daz" ditties in "Brave New World". My fancy is intrigued by modern verse, probably because, like Michel's effort, it is delightfully cryptic. I recall a surrealist poem by Tzara, an extract from which is as follows:

"manhattan there are tubs of excrement before you
inbaze inbaze bazebaze nleganga garco
you turn round rapidly inside me
kangaroos in the boat's entrails".

That is absolutely authentic, neither exaggerated nor trimmed.*****I now have "Fantast's Folly" and your letter to deal with though the censor must already feel overworked. I have omitted to allot marks in case he thinks it is some form of code. You can allot them yourself if you think fit, according to the tenor of my remarks. No fear*****Eric Hopkin's account of an air raid alarm is

a real masterpiece. That's the only comment I have to make on F.F., I find, though it was generally well up to standard. MAURICE K. HANSON

HALF-WAY (or more) HOUSE:

Who sent Ken Chapman FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, sent me WEIRD, and Ted Carnell "a perfect barrage of stuff"? Who is this latter-day Gool Samaritan--why--none other than the one, the only FORREST J. ACKERMAN! Our deepest thanks, 4SJ for your generosity. May your line increase! Greatly regret to say that temporary dislocation of a certain paper supply (you've guessed it, Johnny!) will force future FANTASTs to cost 4d., and can't even guarantee that this is the last rise. Subscriptions will be adapted as well as my arithmetic permits. *****Despite the War, we hope to have an Anniversary issue of sorts issue-after-next & will greatly appreciate an increased flow of material from everyone (and this means you--definitely). *****And finally, may I wish all readers, correspondents, friends and enemies, a very Merrie Christmas, and the happiest of New Years. CSY

Our American Correspondent:-

"Your cover is quite well done, as per usual, although I must confess to slight disappointment upon not seeing another glorious effusion from Turner thereon. But it is tastefully executed and well merited of 10. *****Gottliffe's poem suffers slightly from unhappy sonics and metrical flaws in spots, but is good for 9, I'd say. *****Heil Civilisation provocative and amusing even if somewhat cynical. But may GhuGhu send me intellectual cynics any day in preference to self-sufficient philistines. Put down another 10. /This wasn't for marking/ *****"No Visitors" was well-written, but a victim to obviousness. The subtle approach is good if, at the end, you are left with a sense of strangeness or horror. But sheer ghosts are not horrible or even strange to the hardened fans who read "Fantast". So, 5 for good writing. *****"Monday Morning Over the World" is one of the few Michel poems over which I can really wax enthusiastic. He captures here, as does Kenneth Fearing, something of the revulsion that the modern intellectual must feel upon solid contact with realities when that is translated into imaginative outreaching. Would suggest you get more out of JBM if possible /We would like to, Any hope, JBM?/ 10. *****"It's A Devil" leaves me cold. DRSmith writes well, but that seems about the most I can say for it. It is really more of a bit of preaching than a narrative. And the concept is hardly striking or fantastic. 5. *****"Conversation in a Space Ship" brings up something which has long been a point of irritation with me: presenting colloquies as stories. This colloquy method, involving imaginative settings aside of time, of criticising contemporary civilisation etc is a very good one and certainly enhanced by classical tradition. But to wrap it up in pseudo-fictional trimming, stf. or otherwise, is merely to detract from the meat offered. It must stand or fall on its intellectual appeal, and space-ships /ferocious command from Prof. Clarke--you must not hyphenate "spaceship". Bow to superior wisdom!/ do not aid this appeal --they only give an impression of poor taste in this matter. 8. *****"Have You Read It?" is a most excellent review of what looks to be an absorbing book. 10. *** "Fanopolis" goes on without too much rhyme or reason and I rejoice. 10. ***** "September Silliness" and "Department?" are interesting though only good for about 5. I really think the editorial ramblings should not be rated anyway, only slammed if they're boring and narcissistic, otherwise assumed to have been approved. /We agree--count editorials out from now--slam the other guys!/ ***** So we wind up the general review with a big juicy 10 for "Fantast's Folly". ***** Now, if I may comment upon remarks made by Messers /too true!/ Smith and Burke in reference to my letter a couple of issues back. Firstly, Mr. Smith, I was not describing any ideal pacifist or ideal pacifism. It goes without saying

that the ideal pacifist would never consider violence as the means of settling any dispute or as a means to any end, would not fight even in self-defense. What I did describe was the practical pacifist. But let's go into it further -- I ~~rather~~ digressed into trying to differentiate between just and unjust wars. Who is this practical and realistic pacifist?*****The practical pacifist is one who does everything in his power to avert war. Specifically, that entails putting the maximum amount of pressure upon his parliamentary or congressional representatives to take no steps or support no measures which would make war the necessary outcome thereof -- on the contrary to take positive steps and support positive measures in the field of national and international relations and diplomacy which will tend to avert the danger of war. And, as I stated before, capitulating, cowering, appeasing, or collaborating with aggressors increases rather than decreases that danger. The practical pacifist must further spend much energy in propaganda work, /you couldn't be doing it now, now? spreading his or her ideas or knowledge on the subject in order that a mass-sentiment, backed up by practical methods of making that sentiment known and giving it weight, may result. /He refuse to meddle with mass-sentiments--read HG/tells!/ What part can the practical pacifist play when war comes? This: given that his nation is engaged in an imperialist venture, (masked with idealistic slogans and hypocritical claims to be defending the integrity of some other smaller nation, or masked with lying claims that some other nation has repeatedly rejected peaceful proposals and is now compelling war -- as is the case with the Allies and Germany today) then the practical pacifist refuses to bear arms, takes no more part in aiding the venture financially than it is impossible to avoid (indirect taxation for war can't be avoided) and works for the defeat of his government and military machine abroad. That is, if only his country's forces are adventuring for conquest. If both sides are equally imperialist, then the practical pacifist will concentrate only on forcing his government to withdraw from the conflict, victoriously or otherwise. (Specific example: a practical pacifist in Japan would work for both the defeat of the Japanese troops in China, and for the cessation of the war; a practical pacifist in Germany or England or France would work only for the cessation of the war.) /But surely--the longer the war the more chance or breakdown all round and a final communist walk-over? There you have practical, realistic, pacifism, and if anyone thinks that is a cissy's job, they don't know what they're thinking about. As many people have found out, it's lots easier to fall in line, to "take it", and be made much of as a "hero" than to have the courage of your convictions and be scorned, persecuted, and possibly shot for it, branded as a "spy" or traitor.*****To You!: granted that little or no fighting was done on German soil during the fracas of 1914-18, still the war was sold to the German people on the grounds that they must defend their fatherland against the terrible British and French barbarians. And the only difference between Allied and German atrocity stories is that the Allies' read a little more convincingly to the American mind. The Germans just didn't realise our psychology and reactions as did the Allies.*****To Mr. Burke: you have missed the point. Whether or not a successful attempt is made to deceive, wars still can be differentiated into the category of just and unjust. In the just war, the practical pacifist will support the war, but put pressure on his government to make every effort for its speedy termination and for a peace which will not bear bitter fruit after a few years' breathing spell. He may or may not bear arms, depending on his conscience. Were the USA to be invaded, for example, I, as a practical pacifist would, I believe, be justified in taking up arms to repel invaders. On the other hand, I would not consider any man who refused, and still supported resistance the while working for a just peace to be a coward. Thus: no man can be justified for going off half-cocked, for taking any war at its face value. We must recognise that any war is very probably unjust and that it is being sold to us on

crooked labels --- particularly if our country is sending troops outside our own borders to invade some other country. On the other hand we must not instantly assume that because our troops are being sent afield the war is unjust, snap judgements in either direction are similarly indefensible.*****Your remarks upon Stalin, Youd, do not hold water. /Sir, I am not a purveyor of waterproofing!

Particularly so in the light of two things: (1) The most outspoken anti-Communists here, who happen to have friends or relatives in Poland, publicly expressed their fervent hope, at the time, that these relatives and friends would find themselves in territory occupied by the red army. (2) Newspapermen have admitted that large numbers of Poles who fled to Hungary, at the time of the German invasion, returned immediately when they learned that the red army was moving in. And I might add that the only Poles who cared to "defend" their government against the red "invaders" were those enemies of the people who knew that, once the red army was in control, their heydays would be over. You may draw your own conclusions from the recent overwhelming decision of occupied areas to set up soviet governments and apply for admission into the USSR but it doesn't seem to indicate the Poles valiantly defended themselves from Stalinists, does it? /Doc does not go nearly far enough. When I think of the way those evil Finnish capitalist powers provoked poor, patient little Russia, my blood reached unheard-of temperatures. Some knaves dare suggest there is fighting--ridiculous! Others even claim that Soviet planes dropped bombs on Helsinki and killed civilians--scandalous!! And, worst of all, people have breathed that the new Terijoki Communist Government doesn't represent the feelings of the Finn peoples!!! Let us unite under the beneficent guidance of Stalin. Kamerad! Salud!/

We do get about! Follows lute komment from Cambridge:-

"Closing down now, in order to dash off to a meeting of Archimedeans, Cambridge mathematical association, who are running a lecture tonight on "Space Flight" by, of all people, Arthur Clarke!*****/Pause for breathlessness--now go on/ Nov. 30th: Just seen Arthur off at station. He stopped overnight to admire the Library and poke about in the Cavendish Laboratory. His lecture went down extremely well, to quite a packed audience. He preserved a nice balance, not keeping his tone too serious throughout. After lecture, a perfect barrage of often quite intelligent questions from audience which Arthur stood up to extremely well, exhibiting his world-renowned verbal agility and his exhaustive knowledge of everything scientific that has ever been accomplished by man. Audience crowded round afterwards, still showering questions on Arthur's unbowed head, & gazing at the diagrams of the P.I.S.S.S. that usually adorn the walls, and floor, of Gray's Inn Road. Meeting didn't break up till 11 o'clock, when everyone made a break for the door to get into lodgings or Colleges before the Bulldogs caught them breaking the Cambridge Curfew /H.B. Doc Lowndes: "Bulldogs" has no ulterior political significance/.

This is what wins our hearts!

"On a recent visit to Swisher's I perused the last issue of Fantast and several numbers of the War Bulletin. Much to my consternation and then pleasure, Fantast was unrecognisably better than the magazine which printed that thing about skeletons scrabbling around in a graveyard in one of the numbers I received. That last number of Fantast was quite superior to the current number of Spaceways, although it is perfectly true the case was otherwise last June." /The "thing" referred to, older readers will recall, was that phenomenal "No Grave!". We may give you a sequel to this soon!/

ANSWER TO ERIC HOPKIN'S PUZZLE:

"Whereupon the gent. said that 2×2 was the same as $2 + 2$; now $2 \times 2 = 4$ & $2 + 2 = 5$ (the false premise given), therefore $5 = 4$. Take 3 from both sides, & $2 = 1$. He & Pope are 2 persons. So he & Pope are 1 person. So he is the Pope!

CONTENTS

FICTION

THE BENEFACTOR	D. R. Smith	3
HEART FAILURE	D. R. Smith	3
DADDERS	Fantacynic	10

ARTICLES

EXTRACTS FROM A JOURNAL	E. C. Williams	5
NICHROMOLOGY	R. W. Lowndes	7
THE CREED OF A "TORY"	P. S. Hetherington	14

VERSE

ONE DAY...	J. P. Rathbone	4
------------	----------------	---

DEPARTMENTS

COVER	H. E. Turner	1
DEPARTMENT?	Readers (the energetic ones)	12
NOVEMBER NONSENSE	Editorial	16
FANTAST'S FOLLY	Readers again	17
(Full acknowledgements and thanks to Harry Warner and Spaceways for unconsciously suggesting our new-type contents' page.)		

Ed. by C. S. Youd, 244 Desborough Road, Eastleigh, Hants., England.
 Price 3½d. per copy, 1/9 for six - in U.S.A. 40 cents for six.

Advertisement Section:

FANTASMER goes bi-monthly! In order to present to its readers 24 pages of excellent material in each issue, FANTASMER has now taken on the mantle of bi-monthly appearance but costs only a dime an issue. Current number has superb coloured cover, depicting Dante's Inferno and material by Solitarius, Brittannicus, Moskowitz, Freehafer and others. T.H.Grovesman, 18 Maryland Avenue, Hempstead, N.Y.

ANOTHER BRITISH FAN-MAGAZINE!!! Dave McIlwain informs us that January will see the publication of GARGOYLE, a new maglet to feature humorous material par excellence. This brings the total of British fan magazines to eight--beat the black-out by subscribing to them all! Address GARGOYLE, D.McIlwain, 14 Cotswold Street, Liverpool 7.

MAGABRE now out, and a really excellent first issue, too. Hitch your waggon to this star while it is still on the horizon, and see it rise! Address as on page 13.

JUST turn to that page again and run your eye over the list of magazines there. All require your support if they are to maintain progress. Don't delay!