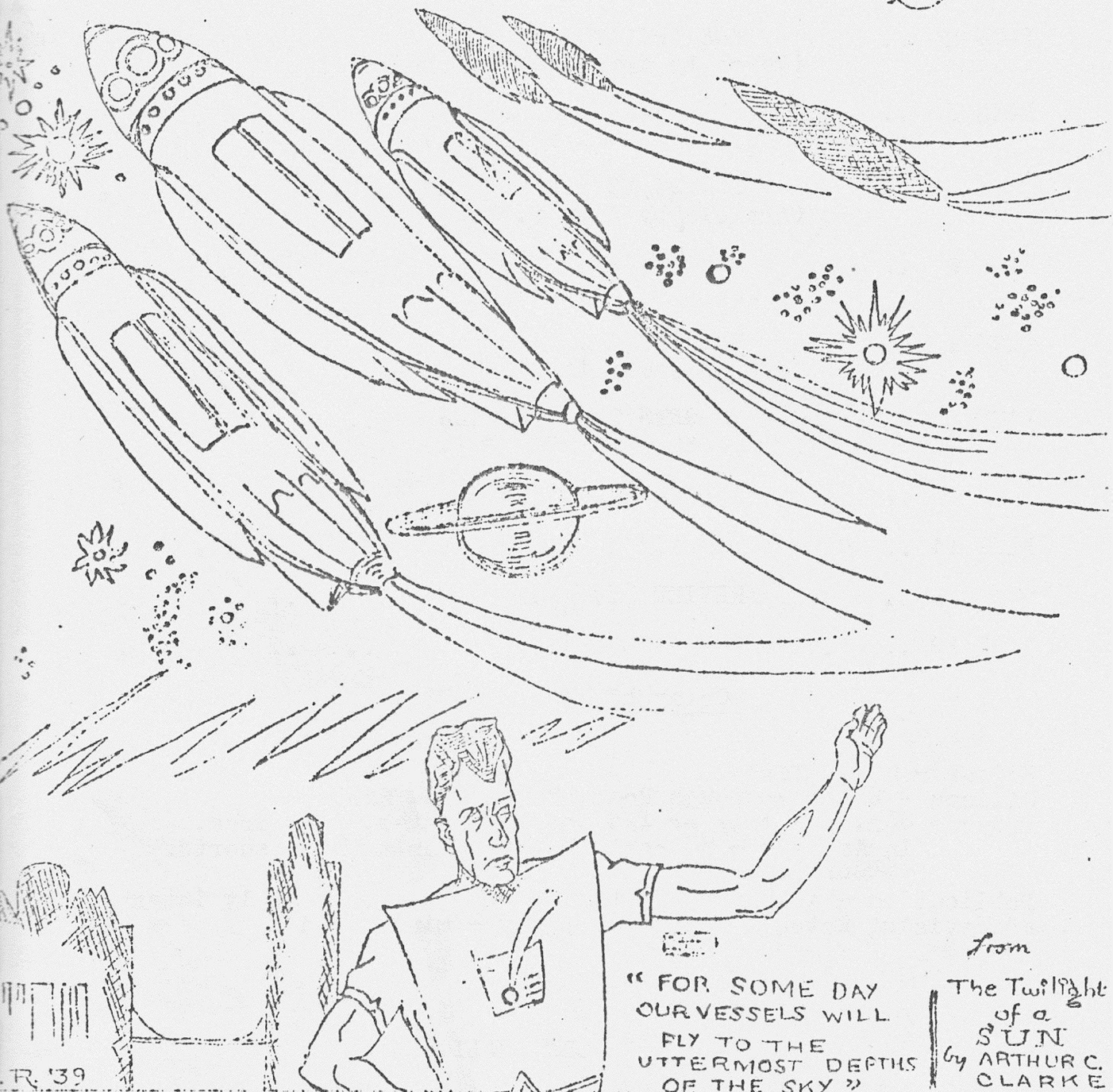


THE FANTAST

APRIL 1939 ~ VOL.1 NO.1 ~ PRICE 3¢



"FOR SOME DAY
OUR VESSELS WILL
FLY TO THE
UTTERMOST DEPTHS
OF THE SKY"

from
The Twilight
of a
SUN
by ARTHUR C.
CLARKE

APRIL 1932.

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A FANTASY REFORM PUBLICATION

"THE TWILIGHT OF A SUN"

A Whisper crept into my mind, a thought that seemed borne
on the wind,
Perchance 'twas a warning designed to reveal what the future
may hold.
It murmured that all things must pass, the stars to the
green blades of grass,
Must perish and eddy to gas, or freeze to the ultimate cold
Like a dirge that forever must race through the infinite
vastness of space,
It checked for a moment its pace, and this is the story it
told.
"We swing in our paths round the sun, in our aeon-old orbits
we run,
Though the days of our glory are done and the end of our
system draws near,
Each one a celestial tomb, we drift through the dark halls of
doom,
And oft as we glide through the gloom, in dreams we let fall
a bright tear
For the races and dynasties dead, for the people who left
us in dread,
As the days of our youth swiftly fled, and Twilight brought
Terror and Fear.
Each brave flicker of sentient life, every murmur of turmoil
and strife,
Like the laughter and weeping once rife, have blended in
one final sigh.
The children we reared in the past, who grew to maturity fast,
And cowered for protection at last, in the cities that soared
to the ~~to~~ the sky,
Sadly rose ere the onslaught of Night and sped with the
swiftness of light,
Seeking Empires and Realms beyond sight, while their Mothers
Worlds darken and die."
So our sun in its turn too will fade, so our own world will
pass into shade,
But before the last light-ray has strayed we shall face the
dark chasms of space.

The Intellect, pure, unalloyed, on courage eternally
 buoyed,
 Will span the vast gulfs of the void and win a new planet's
 fair face.

For one day our vessels will ply to the uttermost depths
 of the sky,
 And in them at the last we shall fly, ere the darkness
 sweeps over our race.

BY

ARTHUR C. CHAMBERLAIN

THE PARSON AND THE FAIRY

The Parson was happy - extraordinarily happy - for he was engaged in his favourite pastime. Attired in the sombre garments of his profession, he pranced merrily about in the daisy-studded fields; chasing, with the vitality of a youngster, the flitting butterflies. He perspired freely in the glare of the mid-day sun; and frequently mopped his brow with a large violet handkerchief; but he sang softly to himself, and felt at peace with the world.

He saw the Fairy from a distance; and stalked towards it with extreme stealth, thinking it was a rare species of butterfly. Grim and intent upon his victim - large butterfly not tucked under his arm - he approached the creature with the multi-hued wings..... and stopped abruptly.

"Bless my Soul!" exclaimed the Parson in a greatly surprised voice; and at the sound, the Fairy spun round. For a moment they faced each other: the red-faced and perspiring human, and the dainty, colourful creature poised on the flower. Then, with a shrill cry of fear - which tinkled in

the Parson's ear like a crystal bell - the Fairy leapt into the air, and fluttered swiftly away.

For a few seconds the Parson was too surprised to move. He stood quite still, with his mouth partly open, staring stupidly at the rapidly vanishing creature, until, as it dwindled to a distant speck of colour, he awoke to reality, and snatched up his net.

"Bless my Soul!" he murmured once more; and made off after the Fairy as fast as his legs would carry him.

Over hills and down dales the panting and perspiring Parson chased the Fairy; ever reducing the distance between himself and his prey. Hours seemed to pass before he was close enough to use the net; and even then it was no easy task to capture the elusive creature. Right and left: up and down..... until his head swam with the strain of keeping his eyes fixed on the gaudy being.

It was inevitable that he should eventually succeed in his object; for his grosser legs could cover the ground much more rapidly than the Fairy's frail wings. The mesh of the net enveloped the flying mite; and dragged it, kicking and screaming, to the grass.

The Parson breathed a sigh of satisfaction, and stooped down to peer at his captive. He caught a glimpse of colour wriggling in the net, and gingerly slipping his fingers through the entangled strings, withdrew the dishevelled fairy. Holding it between his thumb and forefinger, he inspected his find; and then pushed it into his specimen box, and returned home.

Spectacles balanced on nose; and chin propped on table; the Parson studied in fascination the reactions of the Fairy - now imprisoned within an inverted jam-jar. Perfect in every detail, yet barely longer than his middle finger; the tiny being possessed a beauty which her captor found most appealing. The features were extremely pretty; and her raven-black hair was enhanced by a glittering tiara, which matched the pure white dress and the silver girdle which she wore. But most wonderful of all were the wings; fragile scintillating membranes, which quivered and vibrated as though possessed of a sentience of their own. All the colours of the rainbow swirled like misty vapours on their translucent surface; and colour chased colour in brilliant sheen, even as he watched.

The Fairy beat frantically upon the glass walls of the jar, her eyes fixed imploringly on the Parson; and he was moved to pity. Ever so carefully he tilted the jar, and took the delicate creature between his fingers as before, and held her at eye level.

"Let me go!" cried the Fairy, "let me go!" She kicked and struggled in his grip; but he did not slacken his hold upon her.

"You're hurting me!" screamed the shrill voice. "Put me down. I won't fly away. Only put me down; you're hurting me!"

Too astonished to speak, the Parson set her down on the table, and relinquished his grip. The Fairy rubbed her sides painfully, then dusted her crumpled dress. A few minutes were devoted to arranging her hair; and making up from a microscopic powder compact; while she completely ignored the wide-eyed human who loomed over her.

At length she gazed up at him - once more pretty and prim - and said,

"You great clumsy oaf! You nearly killed me!"

The Parson swallowed, but was incapable of speech.

"I'm not made of steel, you know!" the Fairy continued indignantly. "You've hurt my side badly!"

"Oh - I'm - I'm so sorry", stammered the Parson, turning red under her accusing glare. Then, of a sudden, he asked,

"But how is it you can speak English? I never imagined....."

The Fairy waved an imperious hand towards him.

"How is it that you can speak English?" she demanded.

"Why, I was taught it, of course; but....."

"And so was I!"

"B - But where?"

"At school, silly! Where did you learn to speak English?"

"You go to school?" asked the incredulous clergyman.

The Fairy tilted her chin pertly.

"What silly questions you do ask!" she remarked candidly. "Of course I went to school; otherwise how could I speak?"

"But I thought that the Fairies had a language of their own?" the Parson protested.

"We have!" replied the demure Lilliputian. "But I learned English also! Why shouldn't I?"

"Oh, there's no reason why you shouldn't - save that it seems rather strange. But - how did the Fairies get to know English in the first place?" "You ask the most idiotic questions!"

The Parson turned a few shades deeper crimson, and fumbled awkwardly with his collar.

"Still" he said cautiously, "it does seem a little strange, doesn't it?"

The Fairy laughed gaily. "You are a funny creature!" she exclaimed, gazing merrily at the Parson, who was becoming

more and more embarrassed by her pointed criticisms. "First you nearly kill me, and now you're afraid of me!"

"I'm not afraid of you!" he replied hotly, but the Fairy was unperturbed.

"Be a good fellow and let me go?" she pleaded, but the Parson shook his head.

"I want to photograph you first", he announced.

"Oh, dear!" sighed the little lady. "But I do wish you would hurry. I'm late as it is!"

"Late?" queried the reverend gentleman. "Late? For what?"

"Well..... I had made arrangements to meet my boy friend, but....."

"B - boy friend?" The Parson was rapidly becoming incoherent. You mean - a male Fairy?"

"How crude!" retorted the minute miss, pouting.

"We call them elves! I had arranged to meet him, but as things are..... In any case I'm hopelessly late."

"Oh!" said the Parson; and he was silent for a long time.

"Well, look here" he said eventually, "if I let you go now, will you promise to return later..... say - at five o'clock?"

The Fairy fluttered gaily up onto the Parson's shoulder.

"Oh, thank you!" she cried joyously. "I know you would help me. Of course I will return; and I'll bring my boy friend along too - I think he'll want to see you!"

Unfortunately for the Parson, he did not notice the change of inflexion in the Fairy's voice as she spoke the last sentence; otherwise he might not have been smiling so benevolently upon the two flying creatures as they approached his window - promptly at five o'clock. He recognised one as the Fairy of his previous acquaintance; the other was a slim, dark, masculine figure, with pointed ears, and features that were remarkably satanic.

Tiny black eyes glittered at him as the elf settled upon the study table and smoothed his sleek hair; but instead of smiling a greeting, the mannikin drew a long, slim sword from a scabbard on his hip, and advanced towards the apprehensive clergyman.

"Is this the scoundrel?" he demanded fiercely.

"Yes!" replied the Fairy. "That's the villain!" He all but suffocated me inside a horrid jar; then he crushed my side, making it one massive bruise, and finally insulted my intelligence by asking me questions one would not put to a babe in arms!"

"Though!" snarled the elf, his thin lips twisting malevolently. "You shall pay for this, human!", and he brandished his tiny sword viciously.

And so this story finishes, with the Parson, annoyed and indignant, racing swiftly out of the house - along the high-road towards the village, hotly pursued by a tiny, multi-coloured creature that shrieked and shouted invective.

The idle villagers stared at him in surprise as he shot past, hand clapped to rear; and they gazed in greater stupefaction at the fluttering Nemesis skillfully finding the places the all too inadequate hand did not cover.

And, as he vanished up the road, they nodded sadly and muttered among themselves.

"That's what comes of chasing butterflies!" said one grizzled old veteran.

"Aye! I'llers said that one day 'e'd cum acrossst a fierce specimen wot cud 'it back", another murmured sagely. "I'll bet that there's wot they calls a Tiger Moth!" commented a third.

And then they returned to the ordinary routine of everyday life.

What happened to the Parson must remain a mystery. Some say he was found by the hounds three days later in a fox-hole. Others tell of his exhausted appearance in Glasgow on the following morning.

But I prefer to believe that the Elf chased him only to the portals of Fairyland, and once he had crossed that magic gateway, produced a microscopic prayer-book and bade him read a microscopic marriage ceremony over a tiny couple. And I think that in the beauty and peace that there reigns eternal he forgot that strange business called life, and really lived happily ever after. In any case, I have never encountered a person who can swear to have seen him since.

BY

-----DO-----

D. McILWAIN.

HOW TO BE FAMOUS.

For the first time in any magazine, an infallible recipe for fame....

Give up your job, whatever it is, having saved up enough money to buy a typewriter and a few reams of paper. Then go home (you can live on your relations for a while - they won't mind) and get busy writing stories. Don't worry about plots or anything. Write like mad, turning out as many as you possibly can per hour, even if you do make errors in spelling.

Finished all the stories you can think of? Right - now get a nice, large trunk and stow them all away in it, free upward, and spray a few mothballs on top. Oh yes - just sketch out a couple of plots, preferably the sort that reek with age,

and have a few fungi growing at various points, and just drop them in on top of the rest.

Now comes the important item - go off and commit suicide.

Your stories, hitherto neglected, will be bought for stupendous sums by editors and printed after months of ballyhoo and oycowash in the editorial columns. They'll get Esso and Marconi to illustrate the stories, and you'll be famous for evermore - and think how pleased the family will be to get all that money. They'll be sorry for the way they've misjudged you, and will long to have you back again, living on them. They didn't realise they harboured genius in their midst - families never do.

But this is really a serious matter, you know. Without wishing to belittle in any way the writings of certain authors, I cannot help but feel that a lot of trash has been foisted off on the public, and liked by said public, just because the author has happened to die.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft was, to my mind, the peer of fantasy authors; yet when I see a Lovecraft story in WEIRD TALES these days I feel disgusted, and reading of the story only confirms my belief that it is worthless. Stories that Lovecraft never submitted - or stories that were rejected when he was alive - have suddenly been rooted out and printed, regardless of merit. Odd fragments of his youth, experiments, are given to the public as though they were high-class material of the sort only HPL could write. "The Shunned House" was twice rejected by WEIRD - and rightly so - but upon Lovecraft's death they printed it. Hardly a fitting memorial to the memory of a great man.

And these dreadful short stories we have been getting lately are beyond endurance. True, every now and then something good turns up - "The Quest of Iranon" for example, but on the whole, stories such as "The Nameless City", "The Tree" and so on, should never be printed - and WOULD never have been printed but for his death.

Then we have... yes, you've guessed that, all right. Weinbaum who comes in for it more than even Lovecraft. It is about time someone exploded the theory that Weinbaum was a genius. Writer of swell short stories as he was, his work was nothing more than just good. "The Black Flame" was a rather hackneyed love story with an ending that no-one else would dared have foisted on the public. If Stanley G. Weinbaum were alive today his stories would appear regularly and monotonously along with the other hacks - yes, you heard me! It is obvious to anyone with half an eye that Weinbaum was headed straight for the ranks of the story-by-order brigade, and was only saved by his death.

After his death what happened? Numerous "drafts" were unearthed. Ralph Milne Farley was good enough to help finish

them, and the result was as much like the true Weinbaum as John Ru - no, I won't say it. Helen Weinbaum had a try, too, and the public accepted it all without murmuring. Speak no evil of the dead!

If Kent Cassey dies tomorrow, he'll go down in history as the finest writer of science-fiction short stories who ever lived.

And now, if you'll excuse me, I'll just go off and buy some potassium cyanide. And I know what you're thinking so you needn't bother to say it.....By the way, all my rejected manuscripts are in the bottom of my bureau, Mr. Campbell.

BY

JOHN P. BURKE.

DREAMER 3.

Variation on a Rondo.

I may not rest when winds are in the leaves,
I know no joy when all the woodland grieves
Though every sun-beam sings a sleepy song.
And though the squirrels dance the whole day long,
I know I cannot love the merry thieves.

So through the day when shadows kiss the eaves
I gather cobwebs that a fairy weaves,
Cobwebs like gossamer, but oh, so strong
To grasp the heart!

But when night falls, and drowsy twilight heaves
Her saddest sighs beside the silver shelves
Of gathered wheat; then Luna's golden thong
Enthralles an emperor who can do no wrong,
Ruler of all, who fantasy achieves
To grasp the heart.

BY

G. S. YOUNG.

"NO GRAVE!"

If you have ever lived in the real country - miles from anywhere - and if the moon has sunk behind the pines, I do not advise you to travel abroad, or, if you must, to stray from the high road.

I was called out that night to help with a sick cow. There was a mile and a half to go, taking the short cut past the churchyard, and though Kilmainn churchyard is an eerie place after dark, anything seemed better than going four miles round by road.

I had been walking quite a bit when suddenly I sensed the horror of the graveyard. It was an uneasy sort of feeling that spread all over me and weakened my knees with fright. I quickened my step and then the world collapsed as I dropped sickeningly..... down.

In a flash of horrible intensity I became aware of my surroundings..... the old disused well in the churchyard..... on the border of the consecrated ground. Useless to attempt to scale its slimy walls - I was trapped!

No screams left my lips - my fear was too great for that - but I prayed as I had never done before. My quivering hands stretched out to explore my prison and found, in the dank wall, a hole barely large enough to wriggle through. I must have been mad with fright - I crawled through!

Once in it I discovered with horror that it was practically impossible to turn round. I crawled on, for hours it seemed, and gradually the tunnel widened. And as I progressed the sides became luminous with a ghastly yellow glow. But when I rested I felt that things kept pushing past me, wet and slimy horrors about the size of a cat. Blindly I kept on until the tunnel abruptly broke into a wider space, dully lit, and I saw - "my friends". They were quite as large as a cat, big white bodies with great red eyes that stared unblinkingly at me. Worse than their ghastly appearance, though, was the subtly human look of them, and the nauseating death-odour.

I was petrified. Stark horror tore mad fingers at

my brain and I wanted to scream, laugh; anything to break the horror of that abominable silence.

Then, with my nerves at breaking point, I heard a sound from one of them, like thunder only faint and far away. As though this were a word of command, all the troup marched past me in single file, back - back into the recesses of the tunnel. For a few minutes I was alone, but too paralysed to make use of this opportunity of escape, even if I knew how to get out.

While I waited in agonized silence They came back. Each as it came abreast of me turned to stare with those wildly luminous red orbs, and as my horror-filled eyes grazed back I began to notice individually familiar looks about them.

One, I thought, was strangely like Larry Kehoe, the old Fiddler who had died some years back; another was squint-eyed like our old cowman Nat Flood and then I saw the unmistakable dummy body of Julia White, the washerman. All horribly real - and all dead those many years.

But the greatest horror was to see, surmounted by that worm body, features which had glared down at me every day from the wall. I remembered my mother pointing to the picture when I was little and gently telling me that Grandfather had gone to heaven. Heaven!

As I gazed in hypnosis at this travesty of humanity, I felt as though my mind was on rapport with its. Chaotic thoughts built themselves up in my mind and I realised that it was asking me:

"How did you come here to this abode of horror? You have many years to live before you are with us."

My mind was breaking under the strain and I only mouthed strange meanings and cries for help. Then again came that little voice whispering in my brain,

"You wish to get out? It may be possible for you are of the living. This passage leads to water, and there lies hope for you. We are not permitted thus far but then - we are damned!"

I no longer questioned anything. Desperate with fear I struggled on for what seemed hours, passing many other caverns with their complement of Them. And - I pray ever to have this erased from my memory - I noticed that many side tunnels led upwards - to the graves!

At last, when I was despairing, the roar of falling water sounded sweet to my ears. But my body had reached its limit and as the thunder of water beat up from directly below me, I collapsed in exhaustion. I was beaten, but then I felt strange tuggings and pullings at my clothes and knew that They were assisting me. Before I fell into the seething waves, one last glance back revealed the familiar face of our dancing master, Hayfoot Strawfoot, whose funeral I had attended a scant two weeks before.

Now I survived the tumultuous descent down the waterfall was a miracle. My limbs were bruised and battered on sharp rocks and the wild waters rushed over my gasping head. But the water was cool and clean, beautifully clear.

At length, more dead than alive, I floated down the river Slaney until my progress was stopped by the gnarled old elder tree that juts from the cow-meadow. Down had broken, and the sky was pale as I clutched at the high banks and weakly shouted for help. My hands were beginning to slip from their hold when I saw, outlined against the yellow sky, the shambling figure of Peter Perry, the fool.

"Peter," I cried, "run for help - I can't get out!"

An idiot's grin spread over his face as he said:

"Climb back up the waterfall and fetch me me ol' gran'ma back. Ye will know her by her broken back, for 'twas I as trow her down shtairs."

Then I recalled one of them I had seen, that seemed to have a dent in its back.

"Peter," I groaned, "have you been there too?"

"Ah," he shouted, "Peter the fool knows more than most, but he don't talk about it!" and so saying, ran off.

Before he returned with his brother I had decided to hold my tongue over my experience, for all Irish have a hatred of being regarded as "queer".

The two Perry's carried me home and I lay ill for weeks, constantly muttering about the long dead. I would surely have died but for the memory of Kilmnin churchyard and its dwellers. When at last I arose from my bed, my hair was white, though I was only eighteen.

And with this awful memory I have lived ever since, and I will be 87 tomorrow. I have left orders that I must be cremated for only so will I escape the horror of burial. Ashes to ashes.....

EXTRACT FROM THE "WICKLOW POST", JANUARY, 19--.

"One of the deaths in the recent influenza epidemic was that of Mrs. Ann Young at the age of 87. Mrs. Young had re-tested that she be cremated but, in accordance with the family custom, it was decided that she should be buried in the family grave - in Kilmnin churchyard.

BY

HARRIET HAWKINS.

-000-

COMING NEXT MONTH !!!

A strange story of a man who explored his own consciousness. Read this short tale of psychology....

"THE ILROBERT."

by

Charles Eric Maine.

"THE GEES ON MY NEEVES" - A song to the hacks.

They asked me why I said
Binder should be dead;
I of course replied
He turns my inside,
That cannot be denied....

They said "Someday you'll find
He's a master mind";
That aroused my ire,
I threw it on the fire -
Smoke got in my eyes.

So I chaffed them, and I gaily laughed,
To think they could read such trash;
But today I think a different way
I think I was.. too... rash.... for...

Now - we've got Ed Earl Repp -
What a backward step!

I just groan and say
"Where's the good ol' day -
Of Don Wondrei, Nat Schachner, Paul Ernst, John Russell,
ol' Uncle Ray Gallun an' all.... ol' Uncle Ray Cummings
an' all."

BY

"ASTRA"

EDITORIAL

Before actual production of this magazine was begun, we had many high notions of what we were going to give our readers. Now, after a little hard work, these have been considerably modified and we intend to be very chary of rash promises.

With average luck - and a sufficiency of material - "The Fantast" will appear monthly for the rest of the summer, and, we hope, the winter. As I write this, I do not know what the eventual size of this first issue will be, but, whatever it is, future numbers will be about the same. The price, too, will remain constant for at least six months.

Contributions are urgently needed - anything pertaining in any way to fantasy - and efforts from both sides of the pond will be welcomed. Articles and essays are in greatest demand, and if we can get these, we shall cut down on the fiction

content. In any base, we welcome criticism and advice, especially the latter.

No definite policy for this magazine has been formulated yet, and, therefore, advice from our readers will help in determining this. In the current issue, we hesitated over "No Grave". If you liked - or disliked - this particular story, please let us know.

We cannot advise you too strongly to read our companion magazine, "The Setellite". Reduced in price, it offers even more excellent reading matter.

(NOTE - Please excuse mixing of pronouns in the second paragraph of this Editorial.)

FANTAST'S FOLLY

"EDUCATION"

One of the essential preliminaries to the more realistic education I advocate would be a careful individual study of pupils. Each would receive the type of training for which his or her disposition, natural bent, and capabilities were suited. Those obviously not cut out for professional life would not be wearied with lessons that passed their comprehension and bored them to no avail. Unimaginative girls, with practical, as opposed to intellectual ability, but no

ambition beyond the career followed perforce by the majority of their 19th century forebears - namely, marriage, would specialise in the various branches of domestic science, not to the exclusion of other subjects but at the expense of those most removed from everyday life.

Meanwhile their brainier and more ambitious sisters, of whom, I am well aware, there is a great number could pursue their own studies in small selected classes, freed from the dragging influence of the "dullards".

I should like to see every pupil prepared for citizenship by encouragement to take an interest in such matters as local government, the Law as it affects ordinary people and other subjects about which the average adult knows too little.

Education is still too academic, in spite of modern innovations and improvements. Of what use is it to know facts about the world of past ages if we do not know how to cope with the exigencies of the world we live in? An excellent student is too often introverted and anti-social; proof that one side of his nature has been developed at the expense of others. This is a case for psychological insight and skilled treatment, while he is still at school.

OSMOND ROBB,

(Edinburgh)

AND THE ANSWER!

I know they try to turn out little English boys all in a row, as much alike as peas in a pod. They tried it here, but fortunately (or should I have said unfortunately), the younger generation has so much individuality that if they find themselves being pressed into a mold they are apt to tell the teacher to go to hell and walk out of the school-room. I have seen it done.

R C REICHERT,

-ooo-

"OLD STANDBY"

The most pleasing thing about the "Satellite" is its air of boisterous criticism of everyone and everything. In addition to the current issue I obtained issues for three preceding months, thereby rather fortunately obtaining the complete "Citadel of Dreams". I was not greatly impressed by this, though rather astonished at the degree of coherence attained. Burke was perhaps the best since he went whole-heartedly for the burlesque idea, whereas the others didn't seem to be able to make up their minds. Hanson and Temple were very good. Gabrielson seems merely idiotic, trying to defend in cold blood an idea that might be in place in a scientific fantasy, but which does not appear to be worth while bringing up otherwise. The cartoons are good of intent, but frightful of execution.

The second "New Worlds" is a little better than the first, in fact I think it is about up to the usual fan-magazine standard. I think the S.F.A. Council have rather exceeded their powers by that ridiculous message to Campbell (Hear! Hear! -- ED), not to say probably increasing the said Campbell's scorn for the species fan.

D R SMITH.
(Nuneaton)

==--==:

YE NOBLE EX. SEC!

Regarding the increase in the fantasy magazine field, I have heard it said that the quality of material is SURE to go down. I only partly agree with this statement. It probably will, in fact already has, become lower in most cases, but I do not think that an influx of new magazines will necessarily mean a sticky end to fantasy. Rather do I believe that it will find a new level (round about the old 3-mag. standard) and drift up or down as before.... this will happen fairly soon, too, I think. You will find new authors creeping in from other fields.... some have already.... and new favourites will make themselves known soon.

I also think that if two or three of the magazines drop out in the course of a year or so, and this possibility is not by any means beyond all realms of chance, there is a good chance that, with extra talent as should then be at their disposal, the editors might be able to even improve the standards of their publications. I believe this will eventually happen..... sft. could do with a hop-up, Lord knows!

G REN CHAPMAN.
(London)

(We are not in agreement with Mr. Chapman on this point. To our admittedly jaundiced mind, it seems that Doom - in the shape of a "popular" scientific fiction is already on us, and any return to the beloved 3-mag. standard now impossible. The new writers are flowing in from other fields, all right, but they are only pandering to a mob. In the old days, even if we despised Binder and Hamilton, we could in a measure console ourselves with the thought that they were fans themselves. Nowadays, when murderously inclined towards Kummer, we must bear the added humiliation of knowing that Freddy is definitely commercialising on what he probably regards as a crowd of ten-year-old lunatics. -- ED.)

REVIEW

(Please let us know if you want regular reviews)

Anniversary TWS is better than usual, but not as outstanding as might be expected. Apart from Weinbaum - the characterization in "Dawn of Flame" is the best I have

been in a scientific fiction magazine for years - only Taine disturbs the mediocrity of the stories. Finley's illustrations for "The Ultimate Catalyst" and "Robot Nemesis" are better than his recent work in *Weird*! One might condone Kline, Williamson and even Miller, but there is no excuse for E E Smith's atrocious appeal to "Rhythm of the Spheres" - coming from a Schreiner it would be bad but from the Master....! I forbear comment on the Burroughs brothers.

The May UNKNOWN disappoints after last month. De Camp's serial finishes well, but Hubbard is pointless and Fisher definitely worthless. Best of the shorts is Monk Barnworth's "Whatever". Guernsey should not plagiarise his own theme. Illustrations rotten.

Only one thing stands out in the Spring F&W - the reprint of Leinster's "Mad Planet". An opportune time to republish this, for it shows by contrast how far modern SF has fallen. Editor Gillings hints at more frequent publication - first he must get stories rather better than Verrill trips which Amazing should never have accepted. Cover good.

The second Fantasy does not justify the promise of the initial issue. Probably the best is the reprinted "Valley of Doom" (how'd ya like it, Donald?), though both "The Trojan Bean" and "Vampire from the Void" are eminently readable. For once Bean is rivalled for last place - Malloch, having "crept in from other fields" shows how bad SF can be.

April Astounding sports the best cover since "Voyage 13" and perhaps it is better than that. Schreiner is good. Stories all of an average. "Cosmic Engineers" ends very well with nice touches from Simak - "One Against the Logion" can be read without wincing. Schreiner is growing up - "Revolt" good and promises very sequels - Binder OK, but Roland Forster claims Frodo Baggins is character of that name in REH's "Gent from Bear Creek". Any confirmation? WHERE IS LOLO? Letters good, especially the Stalwart.

May *Weird* features a "vampires in the moon" story which is recommended for its uncanny style. Quinn should not propagandise for Roosevelt. REH's "Almaric" typical and entertaining. Finley's full-length inspires profane laughter.

Donald having a June '65 Wonder within reach, word "Eyesman's Spectacles" again and gladly. Whoever describes this genre as "elementary" is nuts. Best of 130 pages - trips. Hart's "Thrills of Science" highly amusing.

Amazing still the better in style but shows signs of heresy, whomst I chuckle gleefully. John Russell, damn actually advocates wiping out of names and B&P actually prints it! Kummer, too, shows an dangerous gleam. Meyer and Krug are still rotten.

"Black Magic"

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FANTAST'S POLLY
(Continued)

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"-as a world-stater of the true S.F. fan tradition". This statement of yours has set me thinking and aroused some questions in my mind of the following nature. It is true that I am, as you say is typical of S.F. fans, a world stater, but why? Are there certain doctrines native to science fiction which are inculcated into us by the nature of the literature and its attendant traditions, or is the personal make-up of the individuals who find science fiction an appealing form of literature such that they naturally embrace any doctrine which has an element of the unusual or revolutionary about it?

Or is it possible that our science fiction fan, being accustomed to science and scientific habits of thinking, finds the World State the most logical answer to the problems confronting us relative to political organization and social welfare? If such were the case it would seem, if the same processes of thought are legitimate in social problems as are followed in science, that the World State was a perfectly well proven and desirable form of government. You have doubtlessly arrived at this conclusion long ago, however, so I will not enlarge upon it further.'

FRANK SKERBECK.
(U.S.A.)

(In our opinion there are three things of which fandom can be proud. The first is its sense of humour, the second - coincident with this - is its toleration of eccentric individuals, and the last is that practically every fan is a world-stater. Personally we think that this is a personal triumph and not to be credited to that which has given us Gernsback and Palmer, Schachner and Fearn. We welcome other opinions.)

"DONALD ANGUS STUART"

As you know, there will be no more stories from Campbell under the pen-name of Stuart. This is a loss comparable with that of Weinbaum, for in Astounding's illustrious existence only Taine can be called his literary superior. Now that he has gone, we think it well to inaugurate a discussion of his abilities and will start it ourselves by saying that his short "Forgetfulness" yields precedence only to "The Time Stream" in magazine fantasies. Only little inferior to this are "Twilight", "Night" and the many other gems we have been privileged to read. This way with the tributes!

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.....next month....."Conversation Piece".....

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