

The KNANVE

THE MAGAZINE FOR KNANVES

ISSUE NUMBER ONE

THE KNANVES, IN EXPLANATION: Well, it came at last! A gentle ripple upon the carefully smoothed-over face of Shangri-La, and five top members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society pulled out of further active participation in the Chamber of Horrors at 637½ S. Bixel St. Why? Because their approach to fandom became so different from the official and unofficial activities of the LASFS that the situation became untenable.

There are two kinds of scientifiction fans, we think, and like Kipling's East and West, "never the twain shall meet." One type of fan uses the amateur fantasy field as a substitute for something vital denied him in the real world, either externally or psychologically. The other type prefers his scientifiction somewhat diluted; a little thin Pilsner, a Beethoven quartet, and most certainly a literary and intellectual life based on something besides science- and fantasy fiction. The Knanves like to imagine, at least that they are of the latter type.

So, goodbye, LASFS, with your frustrated muddle of frustrated people, frustrated utopianism and inanity. There are some good eggs down on Bixel St., and we like them a lot. But they remind us sometimes of the crowd on the Titanic that sang heroically, "Nearer My God To Thee" instead of trying to swim away from the mess. At least one can try, can't one? And if someone makes a remark about rats deserting a sinking ship, well....at least rats have sense enough to know when a ship is sinking.

THE KNANVE is our attempt at publishing an amateur mag. The main excuse for being a fan, in our opinion, is to make an effort at diversifying and increasing the number of things that the fantasy-fan should be interested in. While our first issue does not necessarily establish a good precedent, future issues will follow the excellent pace set by Bill Watson and "diablerie," in that material of fan interest though not necessarily fan content will appear from time to time.

As you read future issues of THE KNANVE, you'll encountre some familiar ghosts: Polaris, The Damn Thing, Fantasite, S.F.Critic, Sweetness & Light, and a host of other good bedfellows. Any subject is welcome; it simply will be slanted to that peculiar questioning, cynical, jocular, cosmopolitan, and and detached attitude that pushes most of the fans we have met out of being in the "just ordinary" class.

The Staff, as reproduced below, are the original four. As fellow travelers we have Paul Freehafer, who resigned the directorship in protest, Morrie Dollens, George Barr, Beverly Bronson, and Sam D. Russell, who continues to try and straddle the fence. He'll fall one way or the other pretty soon.

THE STAFF

T. Bruce Yerke
Arden R. Benson
Edwin Chamberlain
Phillip R. Bronson

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ANNIVERSARY: When all is said and done--when all of the flippant adulation of various fans has been forgotten, there remains one fan worthy of the approbation of his associates--Bob Tucker. For a period of five years, lanky, good-humored Editor Tucker has published his well-liked, vigorous Le Zombie,

HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPT.

(From Fantasy Fiction Field Newsweekly, November 8, 1943.)
"Walter J. Daugherty contemplates reopening NFFF.... All fans will remember this fan as one who usually succeeds in what he starts out to do."

and with its next issue the magazine will celebrate its fifth anniversary.

The occasion might well be carefully observed by all fandom, not as an important event in the life of an amateur magazine, but as the culmination of five, successful, well-spent years of spare-time hobbying on the part of Top Fan Tucker. Le Zombie, long a favorite in fandom, is a newsy, gossipy, little publication, specializes in funny, friendly comments on current situations and personalities in the fan-field; its humor is not witty, sometimes naive, always enjoyable.

EXCLUSION ACT: For some unexplainable reason, hectic Claude Degler seems to live in a world of constantly recurring Exclusion Acts. The latest crime, as heart-rendingly reported in the Fanews Analyzer No. 10, goes something like this-- "...[Degler]...arrived at 'Slam Shack' in Battle Creek on October 30.was EXCLUDED FROM THE 3rd MICHICON!!! After travel- over 3, 400 miles to get there, hitch-hiking across Deserts & mountains, & spending 30 to 35 dollars (bus rest of way--it was necessary to hurry so to get there to make the deadline of the 30th!) for NO OTHER REASON THAN TO ATTEND THE MICHICON. (....would still be in LA were it not for this.) [Anguished sobs, one presumes, from the Angelenos as they realize their loss.] Ashley, Wiedenbeck, Leibscher....TURNED DON (Degler's alias) OUT IN THE NIGHT & FREEZING WEATHER WITH OUT A PLACE TO GO OR EAT!!!THIS CRIME AGAINST FANDOM & COMMON DECENCY HAS NEVER BEFORE BEEN EQUAL-ED. Don had to walk the streets all night in the awful cold. Everything closed! 12 hours in cold--22 hours without anything to eat, & 2 days without sleep!"

Hmmph.

OH, DAMMITALL!

As it must to all fans, the Urge came to Joel Hensley and accomplices. The result: Vulcan Publications, and "The Apollo Fanzine", a hodge-podge of deplorable childish scrawlings, hideously duplicated, replete with ink smudges, typographical and spelling errors. Other science fiction fan publications of a similar caliber have been foisted upon the fan world of late, and if the present state of enthusiasm among the many younger cliques is any indication, there will be an early appearance of many more such atrocities.

Must the intelligent, long-suffering, older fans be forced to endure this foolery to remain in fandom, or is there some way in which the immature elements might be segregated, thus guaranteeing the old-time fans who have given years of valuable service to fandom a bit of peace and quiet, and above all, pride in their hobby? (Concluded on page eight)

A VISIT TO ACKERMOROJNIA - THE HAPPY PLANET

It was with great pleasure that Captain Smee informed me the Bronsonian Spaceliner would dock for a few hours at Amikoj, capitol city of Ackermorojnia. I had not been through this part of space for many years, and was very eager to see how the joint rule of Friend Ackerman and Sister Morojjo was progressing.

I recalled that Ackermorojnia had been colonised by the disgustingly meek followers of the Neotric League, led by the opinionless Ackerman and the greatly tolerant Morojjo. "Tolerance is our password," Friend Ackerman had stated to the Bronsonian press when he and his group fled the planet of Bronsonia because the government had been so cruel as to suppress the Cosmic Circle, a fanatical organisation seeking to overthrow the Bronsonian state.

"Let them," was Ackerman and Morojjo's platform, "if they can do it constitutionally. We mustn't be intolerant."

CHAPTER TWO

Ackerman, the National Card, and Sister Morojjo were in the pink-chambered Communal Friendship Center, which substituted for a political headquarters in Amikoj. I had quite a time getting to the Friendship Center, as part of the city was burning fiercely. Criminals, seeking to enslave the population, had caught the Blessings Hotel on fire. Ackerman had decided against calling out the Passive Defence Guard due to the fact that the criminals were within their rights, for there were no provisions whatsoever for crime and punishment in Ackermorojnian law.

Citizens of Amikoj were passing in and out of the Friendship Center, caring for burned criminals. Even the injured members of the Passive Defence Corps were making the criminals as comfy as possible.

CHAPTER THREE

"Hello, Forrie," I greeted, making my way to the dual chairs in which he and Morojjo reposed.

"Carlton," Morojjo snapped at me indignantly, "I hear that you got on a streetcar ahead of a criminal today while coming out here."

I muttered some stupid apology.

"We strive to eliminate class distinction," Forrie explained, as part of the Friendship Center collapsed when some of the injured criminals sabotaged the left wing.

I was just about to address Morojjo as to whether it would not be advisable to evacuate the city before it went up in flames when a terrific roar reverberated throughout the room.

CHAPTER FOUR

"It's a Grompp," the criminals shrieked, and fled.

A huge, hairy Grompp pushed through a blazing wall and came slobbering toward the three of us.

(Concluded on next pge.)

"Fleisch," it growled, picking Morojo up in two of its huge arms. With a shout of alarm I drew my Disolverevolver and aimed it at the monster's head.

"Stop!" shouted Forrie, "it hasn't done anything yet!"

"But its intentions are not honorable!" I cried. "Besides, it's not white!"

"Carlton," Morojo snapped, ceasing for the moment her struggles with the Grommp, "there you go with your intolerable old racial prejudice again! 'Neither race nor creed,'" she began to quote, but the Grommp was roaring so loudly now that I could hear no more.

I looked once more at Forrie, still holding my Disolverevolver ready. Sad-eyed and philosophic, Forrie declared: "What can I do? I always keep out of arguments. He hasn't harmed her yet."

Just then the rapidly spreading fire collapsed another wall of the building, and through the smoky aperture I could see that the city indeed was going up in flames. I realised I had better get back to the Spaceship if I did not want Captain Smee to depart without me.

The Grommp had vanished with Morojo.

CHAPTER FIVE

I left Forrie sitting despondently amidst the growing ruin of the Friendship Center of Amikoj, and hopped a fleeing streetcar for the space-port.

All-in-all, he looked very tolerant.

T H E
E N D

ANECDOTE: At the recent LASFS Hal-loween Party, Walt Daugherty conducted a gag-game in which Yerke, Benson, and Ackerman were required to lie down on the floor and drink milk from baby bottles. Yerke toyed warily with the nipple, asserted that he did not know how to operate "one of the things." Later on, he was well in the lead. Cried an enthusiastic female onlooker, "Look at him go! And he said he didn't know how!" Quick as a flash TBY retorted "I have a strong memory." Just as quickly Benson added "Yeah, remember last week?" The crowd roared, that is, with the exception of Mike Fern and Ronald Clyne, who followed your reporter about all evening demanding to know what had happened last week.

ARDENT: An ardent scientification-ist is Arden "Buns" Benson. One of the original members of the old Minneapolis SFL (1937), his activity since that date has been restricted mainly to reading s-f and hobnobbing with fellow enthusiasts. Buns is a rather tall fellow, and as the saying goes "the air gets quite thin up around his ears." Amiable, intelligent, a good sport, and possessed of an intriguing sense of humor, Buns is a good choice for "The Perfect Knavel". One of the last of the Minny gang not yet in the army, he is currently employed as an engineer by North American Aircraft in Inglewood, California. Does most of his travelling on a bicycle, frequently indulging in hour-long rides to Santa Monica.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE L.A.S.F.S.

By T. Bruce Yerke, former Secretary, four years.

The political situation in the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society is a closely kept State secret, similar to old Tammany Hall machinations, and in past years from my position as active Secretary for the Society, it has been my keen delight to watch the studied indifference of the various blocs towards the forthcoming elections around Christmas time. This year I fear it will be my misfortune to take a seat on the sidelines. The elections will be over this year by the time the readers see this in print. However, fans who keep track of the official LASFS propaganda may be able to appreciate the 1944 doings of the Society after familiarising themselves with the following hitherto never talked about aspects of the LASFS.

While the election this year is rather more complicated, due to new and unexpected blocs, there are two basic factors which the analyst is confronted with. First of all, there is the Official Veil, which is kept over the Society. This Basic Factor always influences the tenor of the campaigning, since the presumed Sanctity of the LASFS must never be torn by internal differences. At least, Fandom must not be let in on the fact. The other Basic Factor is the powerful Ackerman-Morojo bloc. (Hereafter termed the Ackojo bloc) This bloc in the Society has constituted a drag on the administration since the evacuation of Russell J. Hodgkins from power early in 1940. With the withdrawal during 1939 and 1940 of such active, balanced fans as Roy A. Squires, Perry L. Lewis, Ray Bradbury, Ray Harryhausen, Russ Hodgkins, David Fox, the situation was left up to Ackerman and Morojo. Since Ackerman, between 1937 when I first knew him, and the present, seems to have succumbed to Morojo's "tolerance" philosophy, which is merely a guise for a sapping Lotus Eater complex, the Ackerman "name", which should be a deciding factor in fan matters in L. A. has become an empty pomposity, like the Electors' College. Therefore, in each election, the Ackojo bloc will vote for the candidate most likely to push through a program of action or inaction which is least likely to make any demands on the painstakingly neutral position of the bloc.

The last two elections were virtually hand-me-outs. No one among the membership cared enough about the job to make it a worthy campaign. Director Freehafer merely became director again. It is known that last year Daugherty wanted a nomination, but wasn't even mentioned. Daugherty's grandiose plans in 1940, after the Hodgkins resignation, went to pot due to general apathy in the membership. Walt's long letter of resignation at the end of two months, which incriminated most of the body (especially the then incipient Ackojo bloc which was against the enlargement of the club), gave vent to the inner feelings of a genuinely disillusioned man.

The situation this year is complicated by a new clique, the Mel Brown-Mike Fern-James Kepner clique (hereafter referred to as the BEK bloc). These three members average less than a year's seniority in the club. Here is a little Tammany that lacks decisive influence only because its acquaintanceship with the fan field is too short in terms of association to know just what it wants to stand for. The three of them are quite serious, capable scientific

tion readers and fans, and very capable of running the LASFS. Something, however, keeps them from getting into the cockpit. Kepner is director following the Freehafer resignation about two months ago. He has the reins and is running for reelection. If he gets it, time alone will tell whether the BFK bloc will be able to throw off the well established influence of the Ackojo drug or not. I am told vicariously that Kepner, no doubt due to his conditioning in studying for the priesthood some years ago, managed to stay clear of the embroilments current and past, which is just what the Ackojo bloc wishes. Incidentally, the disgusting inaction of Morojo is directly responsible for the inexcusable faux pas committed by the LASFS in permitting Claude Degler unlimited use of the clubroom and its facilities at a time when virtually every member of the club was ready to resign in protest. That Ackerman and she could prevent ten or fifteen others from doing anything is good evidence of how strongly the Ackojo paralysis afflicts the Society.

A new and startling development in the situation is the presence of Fran Laney, lately of Washington and Acolyte fame, and the common knowledge that he will run for the Directorship. I was at a loss to account for what prompted Laney's decision, and discussed these matters of state with him at a lunch in an exclusive Los Angeles hotel. Laney, I learned, was imbued with the fervor to make some good use out of the enormous potential of the LASFS. I tacitly reminded him that I was a veteran of a seven year struggle with the Lotus Eaters of the LASFS, and had incurred the quiet enmity of the Ackojo bloc since I first supported Russ Hodakins in the anti-Michelist excitement of 1938. I explained that I had been tolerated as Secretary four years because minutes, no matter how caustic, are only minutes, confined to the group. The Damn Thing was quite another matter. ... Laney has the support of Daugherty, who perhaps imagines he can function as a Cardinal Richelieu if Fran becomes director. Laney, if elected, will have the support of such non-partisan voting members as Kline, Freehafer, Lazar, E. Brown, Ada Charles, and other domestic fias. Should Laney actually wish to commit the Society towards anything requiring positive action, he will meet the stubborn resistance of the Ackojo bloc.

(Eastern fans, coming from "frontier" scientifiction clubs, look forward with keen anticipation to spending time in this imagined scientifiction metropolis, which, in truth, it should be. However, like all organisations long established, eastern or other visiting fans shortly discover that frank and continent interest in scientifiction and fantasy have been replaced with personal likes and dislikes, philosophies, frictions, and cynicism. The Society has the members by the tail, and like the State, the people exist for it rather than vis-a-vis the state existing to facilitate the ideas of the people.)

The election this year, sans the Yerke clique, which was always verboten with the others, will have interesting interpretations to scientifiction fans who follow the activities of the LASFS. In any case, the political situation in the past has forced many a member into inactivity or resignation. The list was recently augmented by five more. I would say, from a socio-political standpoint, that the LASFS outlived its usefulness in 1939, and since that date, has lived on by a carefully promulgated veil of Shangri-Laiian camouflage. The situation reminds me of Weinbaum's barrel men, with their monotonous and monotoned: "We are vrrriends! Ouch!")

Knave Parve⁷ — BY BUNS

"When in the course of human events"----but we of the Knaves have already written our declaration of independence. We have had a first meeting; we have looked at our club and found it good.

One of the vaguely formed but as yet unrealized aims of the Knaves is to actually discuss (that seemingly taboo subject in the L.A.S.F.S., science-fiction.) We are ideally situated, having no small intra-club groups of young fans to violently discuss the latest rag, while ancient philosophers mull the old days, when stories like "The Shot Into Infinity", "Cities of Ardathia" and "Tumithak of the Corridors" were written; and while still others aimlessly paw over piles of fan mags, wishing they had some beer. With us, all four of us, these groups coalesce.

To start things rolling, then, this column will devote itself to the discussion of science and science-fantasy, and . . . well, and stuff.

Ah, yes. Lewis Padgett, in his story "The Iron Standard" (December '43 AST) makes a peculiar assertion, and moreover bases his story on the same, which can not pass unscathed. He, in case you have already forgotten this forgettable story, wins the Venusian working class over to the visiting Earthmen's side by the use of "Power Pills", which increase individual production and reward, and thereby stimulate the spirit of competition, which is universal. Thus doing, the Earthmen upset the dictatorial Venusian labor-union's apple-cart, and are in a position to extort sums of iron money from them.

The objectionable feature here is the "universal spirit of competition", which is so fastly written-over and so glibly announced. Competition is a spirit indulged in by few beings other than man. One quickly thinks of non-competitive societies, such as that of the bee, ant, insects in general, and lower animals too simple to harbor so complex a thought.

However, even the wild beasts of the jungle, save during an occasional mating season, seldom worry about beating the other guy out. Sure, they'll fight for a meal if necessary, but that is the unimaginative spirit of hunger. I invite Mr. Padgett to look about him and notice competitive spirit at work in the horse, the cow, (the pig, admittedly yes) and the sea-gull. To be sure, he may also observe the dog, sportively racing a passing motorist. From this confusing hodge-podge, found only on a single planet, can he make any assumptions at all, much less universal ones?

As a matter of fact, beings reared in a non-competitive state, and having this as their heredity, would be pretty even gamblers on the matter, rather than sure bets based on universal properties of life.

And that's a big enough mountain to make from that mole-hill.

No self-respecting s-f gabfest (if this one seems uninspired, blame it on the fact that it is a solo) passes without a story-idea or two. ("It's a gold mine!") Therefore this one now pounces eagerly upon somebody's re-

cent statement, defining eternity as the time required for everything to happen once. Considering the present stage of the theory of probability, it seems a pretty reasonable definition at that.

Well, though mankind's present activities are fantastic enough, the rest of Nature seems a little stogey. She doesn't seem to have gotten around as yet to some of the less probable phenomena she is capable of. Rocks remain on the ground; mutations and freaks of all species are all really rather tame, when you consider the possibilities; objects in general fall downward, and obey well-established physical and chemical laws.

Molecules of free gases disperse themselves throughout containers, and most liquids fill the bottoms of glasses. Heat is conducted or radiated always from hot to cold. Oh, there are any number of humdrum, workaday facts that might be pointed out.

Since the examples cited are true only on the basis of overwhelming probability, there must surely, in some remote aeon, be at least one exception to each. Therefore, in that same immensely distant future, there lies a scien-tifictionists' paradise. No need to venture into unknown dimensions; the good old universe we know will be weird enough.

Imagine: According to this standard we must find an Ackerman (or a Saari!) reading the Christian Science Monitor! We will never know, from the temperature of one side of a pan of boiling water, what that of the other might be. Everybody will have resigned the L.A.S.F.S. at least once. (Horrors! that goes for the Knaves, too.) One, picking up his book to read, may shrug his shoulders in mild surprise to find that the characters have transformed themselves into Ancient Sanscrit. Cookery might yield some unusual results, as chickens hatching from omelets, or hamburgers forming themselves into tender New York cuts.

Lastly, in one of the final, weary millenia, must occur at least once; the repetition of all previous events.

I can hardly wait, can you?



OH, DAMMITALL! --concluded--

Fandom has achieved national attention on two distinct occasions in the past and the recognition accorded it was most unfavorable. By the time that conditions permit another convention to be held fandom will certainly have reached a point where it will be of national interest once more. If the distressing prominence of the juveniles is still so apparent when such a time arrives, many a veteran fan will greatly rue the day that he entered the field.