

# Sardonix

Volume Two	an aimless Publication	Number Four
Spring Issue, 1943	Published for the F...P...	Blaine Chauvenet

GREETINGS and good day.

For a wonder, I have actually slugged out a few stencils before starting in on this 'editorial page', and hence have a slightly better idea of the offerings within than is customary. I have for some incomprehensible reason mandered on for no less than 12 pages discussing stuff in the last mailing and going off on the usual side-tracks suggested thereby. You will find Creighton Buck's "Night of Brahma" in this issue, too; it is a guaranteed genuine Campbell-rejected tale! We print only fiction rejected by the best magazines. The Listening Post is expanded to two pages, to make up for the issue skipped. Credit is due to Ariel Menzingerini for digging up the quotes traced to Miller and Vigotsky. All this surprisingly adds up to 18 pages; this one will make 19 and complete the issue, so that Norm Stanley's column and much else besides are left over to await another day. (Now that Norm is publishing FanTods, I can cheerfully recommend disappointed followers of "En Passant" to try FanTods instead: 'tis the same vintage, you know!)

Very likely you will notice in the mailing a horrid bulky object labeled "Collected Verse." I am responsible for this ghastly addition to the postage expenses for this mailing. Fortunately, you will notice that the reverse side of each sheet is left blank, so you can use your copy for scratch paper, doodling, etc. Those whose strange tastes lead them into actually reading the verses could do me a favor, however: I should appreciate a list of the poems (identified by number) and ranked in an order of decreasing merit. Tuck it somewhere in your next issue, or into a letter direct to me, and I'll be pleased; I am interested in finding out the relative standings of the poems, and therefore anxious to obtain as many ratings as possible.

The March issue of Astounding has no outstanding stories.

Richard Garrett's book "The Twilight of the Gods" is a fairly interesting dabbling in fictional mythology, but I go for George Ade's fables in slang much more readily.

"Islandia" by Austin Tappan Wright pictures an ideal society on a primarily agricultural basis, a society with no need nor desire for labor-saving devices, no anxiety to get somewhere quickly, never-mind why. Technological progress is pictured as very, very slow and leisurely, and never allowed to interfere with the happy process of living. Those who are bored by this work may know at once that they have come to be characteristic machine-age creatures, dependent on machine-culture and unable to adjust themselves to any other.

"Cool waters tumble, singing as they go,  
 through apple boughs. Softly the leaves are dancing.  
 Down streams a slumber on the drowsy flow,  
 ly soul entrancing."

---Sappho.

[ √1 ∞ √1 ]

## NIGHT OF BR.HL.

by

R. Creighton Buck

Ragnar, last of man, stood silent upon the parapet that overlooked the deserted Plaza of Triumph. The reddish light of the sun, in long slanting fingers, touched the alabaster pillars that edged the vast square and they were crimson -- gilded with rusty bronze. The broad expanse of the central arena seemed to smolder in the blood-red glare and the giant brooding statue of the Peace Man flushed scarlet.

A thin whispering breeze sprang up abruptly, signaling to the waiting man the end of yet another day. Ragnar pulled the hood of his cape close about his head; from long experience, he knew that the cold would soon follow -- a gentle, deceptive cold that slowly grew until it bit savagely into the very marrow of his bones!

He would wait, he decided, until the setting of the sun. He smiled wanly at that. It had almost become a ritual. First the long climb to the parapet that crowned the slender tower, and then a lonely vigil as he watched the green spiked shadows of the valley rim march toward the city. Now, as he watched the sun's rays glance from the great golden dome of the Temple of Thought, he knew that the pageant was drawing to a close. The world had once more crossed the fiery-hued borderland that separated day from night; and sunset was upon the city.

Perhaps, he thought, the last sunset: the smaller twilight that prophesied the coming of the greater. The final dusk of the far vaster nightfall of man.

As they had so often in the last hour, Ragnar's eyes went to the figure of the Peace Man. Serene, immutable, the immense image stood in the exact center of the square and gazed down upon the city as though in blessing. But now, there was something futile in the Peace Man's majesty. The ancient face seemed to change in the ruddy light; the deeply shadowed eyes took on a look of despair, unplanned by the forgotten artisan who, centuries before, had carved the noble features.

Gone now was the Glory, the Triumph!

In their place were only sadness and an empty square.

Desolation.

Ragnar shivered and drew the cape closer. In all this vast city, pride of a world, culmination of a thousand centuries of progress, he alone lived!

Gone were the multitudes, gone now were the races that in the vibrant energy of their youth had erected the statue -- called it the Man of Peace, and named the square in their conceit, Plaza of Triumph; forgetting all else in pledging eternal peace!

## Eternal Peace!

Eternal peace had come, a cloying peace of satiety; a peace that made of effort a dismal, useless thing, a thing to be derided! Why should man strive, when there is nothing wanting, when strife itself, by common concert, is no more?

And so, eternal peace had come at last to all the planet. The earth was barren. Even the briny pools of the cracking ocean beds were sterile. He alone, a single man of all the races of the globe, still breathed.

Ragnar turned and walked swiftly from the edge of the parapet. Too many of his friends had gone that way; a brief moment of unchecked fall and then forgetfulness, surcease from all struggle. It was hard to resist, harder now than it had been months before when Japhet died, leaving him to bear the load alone. Strangely, in the last week, the burden had lifted. No longer did the approaching end of humanity oppress him with the weariness of futility. From the mists of his memory arose an ancient line, and he spoke it aloud:

"Man, born of woman, is of few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

The sound of his voice rang queerly in his ears, like the peal of an unused bell, and made his loneliness a palpable thing. Yet what he had said was true. That his race should end like a candle, blown out by the wind, was a catastrophe no more. Dust unto dust was the law!

Slowly a black curtain rose from the eastern horizon, and spreading across the sky like an ebony cloak, wiped out the final trace of ruby light; it dropped to the glistening city, smothered the last glowing sparks, and night had come again.

For a timeless second, darkness reigned; then, outlined against the velvety night, Ragnar saw the Peace Man, glowing with soft light -- light that came from deep within the figure, and shone like a halo around his head. Months before, Ragnar had turned off the other lights of the city. He was not so lonely when it was dark; star-shadows peopled the streets and gave him company.

Stepping closer to the parapet edge, he could barely see the prophetic words emblazoned at the base of the Peace Man. Enigmatic words that had appeared in the last days of the fall.

WHEN TH T TIME WILL COME TH T MAN  
SHALL DIE, THEN SH LL I DIE TOO ;  
AND WITH ME, THE EARTH AND LL TH T  
IS ON IT: FOR EARTH ND SKY HVE  
THEIR BEING IN THE MIND OF MAN LONE!

Ragnar and his companions had puzzled long, wondering at the words and at the miracle of their appearance; some forgotten trick of the ancients, they had thought. So much had been forgotten.

So much!

He had even forgotten hope; and now he knew that soon, perhaps before the next grain of sand should fall in the hour glass of the Cosmos, all would be forgotten! The thoughts, the plans, the hopes of all of man would merge into the limbo of the eternally forgotten!

There was pathos in such a dénouement. That this cosmic venture, this divine experiment that began with the Creation, should end like the flame of a lamp whose wick is dry -- once burning brightly, and now grown darkly dim! -- another failure to be inscribed in the Book of Records; another embryonic flower that grew, yet did not bloom!

Must man now wait for a second Creation?

Would there be a rebirth, a new Manvantara, after he was gone?

The questions rose to his lips, and died unanswered -- for who was there to answer? A fierce longing for peace filled his heart, and he felt the surge of an incredible tiredness sweep over him like a dark flood. Was the world again on the thresh-hold of pralava, that final dissolution, preface to Creation? Was he, Ragnar, the last glowing spark that held back the Night of Brahma?

Who was he to stand in the way of God!

Man had willed himself to death, had deliberately chosen the path of inertia, stagnation. Progress had ceased; ambition had gone out of man's soul.

Now he alone, last of man, was Master of the Universe --- and master of nothing!

He would write -- but who was there to read?

He would speak -- but who was there to hear?

He would command! But who was there to obey?

Master of none!

Ragnar thought he saw the stony lips of the Peace Man curl, and he smiled bitterly in sympathy. The city of masterless men had found a Master! And now he was alone as no man had ever been.

What profit it a man if he gain the world, and lose that which is his soul; for when man exists in no man's mind save his own, does he in truth live?

Ragnar felt again the strain of an intolerable compulsion flooding his mind. The barrier that checked it crumbled, and the dark pancea welled up into his consciousness. He gave way to it, unresisting, uncaring. Two short steps took him to the brink of the parapet. A black object hurtled thru the night and dropped in an arc to the feet of the Peace Man.

The thin breeze, now icy, whipped uncertainly at the edge of a black cape, tugged until it covered a white face.

The last of Man was at peace.

tingled with the fading whisper of the breeze came the muted whirr of countless wings. The whole square was lit by their glory. Time ceased.

A soft voice was raised in question.

"He was the last?"

"Yes, verily, the last. The last of Man."

As though in benediction the assembled beings intoned together the words:

"Man is dead."

"And Earth, and all that is on it."

"For Earth and Sky have their being in the mind of Man!"

The throng was silent. At length, one of their number murmured: "What will HE do?"

"We must wait."

There was a stir in the winged host; a voice came, a voice of supernal glory and majesty -- a voice that held sadness too.

"It is over." For a moment, HE paused.

"Erase the slate! I shall start anew!"

With a silent rustle -- for who was there to hear -- the Peace Man crumbled into dust, and with it the City; in a moment, yea, in the twinkling of an eye, vanished the Earth and all that was on it, or above it. Sun, stars, all that Man by his thoughts had created, all were dust.

There there had been ordered universe, now was chaos -- and a thoughtful, brooding Presence that waited, and planned a new Creation.

So fell the Night of Brahma that closed the chapter: MAN!

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"Good night. Ensured release,  
Imperishable peace,  
Have these for yours."

--- E. Housman

(These lines are carved on Housman's memorial tablet over his ashes, in Ludlow, England.)

## IMPRESSIONS---WINTER MAILING

THE MADMAN OF MARS

Remember Bob & Kos?

DVT, MILTY'S MAG: Yes, we know---a reputation is hell, when you get so you feel you've gotta keep upholding it, Cramps your style when you want to just relax & be your own sweet self again! \*\*\* The bit of modern American folklore was quite interesting, tho. Up FAPA!

MUTANTS: I love the  $\phi$  rating system. Incidentally, we learn that even a weak mailing like the Sept, one was worth at least 40¢! Compare that with yearly dues of only 75¢, plus bigger & better mailings most of the time, \*\*\* I hereby promise Walt to read 'Reflections in a golden eye' before the next mailing (June). Those surrealistic jokes, so-called, gain no ground whatever on me. I do know that they are popularly known as 'shaggy dog' stories; at least, a couple of articles in ESQUIRE featured such jokes during the past year or so, including some of those Walt enthuses over.

EN GARDE: I'm getting so I look at En Garde's cover first thing, to see what new delightful variation on the crossed swords motif the ingenious editors have thunk up! I've never been disappointed, but I wonder how long it can last? This is about the best yet, although the gunnery officers on both ships were possibly embarrassed. \*\*\* The article on dreams both amazed and interested me. Thinking back to my own childhood and dreams of past years, and checking with the remarkable facts given us by Al, I conclude that I once possessed at least the rudiments of the same power, since been largely lost by neglect. Specifically: I used to dream of a certain hollow tree. One could go down this tree, and enter an endless series of underground chambers, passages, halways, throne-rooms, and whatnot. Most important to me was the fact that other boys and girls joined me there when I went down the tree in dreams. Some nights certain of them would be there, and on other nights, others, but presently I got to know most of them, and to look forward to meeting them once I found the tree in a dream and went down it. But I never knew, in a dream, when I was going to find the tree; I never could remember beforehand just where it was; I could only recognize it when I saw it. And as I grew older I seemed to find my way there more and more seldom. Now I don't even remember my dream-companions in any detail, though they were once as real to me as my schoolmates. At present, I dream occasionally, but seldom with any unusual vividness. As to the desirability of cultivating an ordered dream life--- I'm not too sure one wouldn't pay for it in other ways, even if only psychologically. If I were able to make my dreams as vivid as reality, and more desirable, would my present intense interest in the real world remain the same? Speaking for myself, I'm afraid the answer would be negative----and I don't believe I'd want to try the experiment. \*\*\* Incidentally, J. W. Dunne has shown that it is possible to dream about future events in the real world, and then profit by this knowledge to alter the future. (See the impressive array of cases given in 'An Experiment with Time'). If conscious control of the dreaming mind is adequate to do so, how about sending it into the future, deliberately probing for future happenings? It would be intensely interesting to find out if such a thing should be possible.

FANTASY AMATEUR: How lucky we are to have Al Ashbey for Editor!

YHOS: Chandler Davis' article reminds me of a piece Prof. Conklin of Princeton had in "Natural History" in 1910. Conklin's idea is that super-man is a myth, that man has already reached the limits of mental and physical development. The only path for further evolution which Conklin thinks is still open is in the direction of social adaptation. It follows from his line of reasoning that the future may see a super-state, but is unlikely to see a super-man of any kind. It is with the last part of this idea that most sf. fans would disagree, if only because as readers of sf. we have been thoroughly conditioned to the notion of the radical changes possible during geological time. As far as I am able to determine, there is no biological reason why man should be at an end-point of his organizational evolution at the present time.

It is interesting to notice that social adaptability, the only trait Prof. Conklin will admit may change is the one in which Chandler believes is changing. That social evolution is a biological possibility no one with a knowledge of insect societies can deny. That it has occurred in man in the past is obvious, and we can at least hope it will continue in the future.

Unfortunately, however, the attempt to demonstrate a change in this respect which has occurred within the past 5,000 years seems overambitious. The records of the dynasties of Egypt extend back 4,000 years before Christ; so, nearly, do the cuneiform inscriptions of the ancient Sumerian inhabitants of Mesopotamia. The record deciphered is one of a considerable degree of civilization; countries existed as more or less organized states. The record is also one of wars and conquests; unending struggles of man vs. man relieving the primeval battle against nature. In this respect it is hard to detect any recent advance. Indeed, I have always sympathized with a remark the Nevian, Herado, made in "Triplanetary": "Destruction, always destruction! Well then, since they are bent on destroying each other, it does not matter if we destroy them all!" (I quote from memory, being too lazy to look it up!).

But returning to the discussion of social adaptability, I wonder just what the term is supposed to include? Ability to make a living and raise a family under even adverse conditions? There's certainly been some drastic selection in Russia along these lines during the past 30 years! Or if social adaptability is meant to imply increased intelligence and initiative coupled with a growth in social morality, it is by no means clear that these factors have been particularly favored during the recorded history of mankind.

What is really worthy of our attention is, I think, that almost any ordinary child is capable of learning how to live naturally in a free world where men are willing to respect each others' rights as a matter of course, not from fear of punishment, present or future. I am inconsiderable with H. G. Wells' opinion that the problem of bringing about a better society is primarily an educational one. There is no greater crime than to instil a doctrine on children who are still defenseless against suggestion, yet this crime is being perpetrated as a matter of deliberate policy throughout the world. For instance children in the U.S.A. are taught to believe that democracy is the

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best possible form of government. They are definitely not given an impartial summary of the benefits and disadvantages of the various governing systems in force on the earth, as far as these are clearly known, and then encouraged to make a free choice. Similarly, in Catholic schools, no fair presentation of the non-Catholic viewpoint is ever made, and pupils are trained to believe, not to think, as far as certain subjects are concerned. I am against all this in principle. Naturally I believe my own opinions to be correct, or I would change them at once, but I do not expect to teach my opinions to my children! Far from it! What I would want to teach my children would be simply to think for themselves, to make up their own minds. I do not believe any method of investigating a subject is superior to the scientific method, which is simply, in the words of Huxley, to sit down before the facts as humbly as a little child, and not be afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead.

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How?

Going back to Chandler Davis, I would write 25 to 100,000 years where he has 1 to 10,000. I have a good deal of respect for the geological view of change in a given organic species.

That the future world should be a larger edition of the world today is improbable in a high degree. For instance, a thousand years from now we will not be so gaily squandering the available reserves of petroleum and coal as we are at present. What has happened during the past 150 years is simply that mankind has made a bet against fate and the future, and has staked all the available natural resources of the planet on this bet. The bet is that the advance of science will uncover a permanent source of power before the present sources are totally squandered. Maybe it was a good bet, but it certainly interferes with the winning of it to wage inter-species wars like the one at present. Hitler has no sense of responsibility to the race at large (among his other lacks!). Anyway, it is certain that in the future, say 10,000 years from now, power will be either unlimited and practically free, or else very, very scarce and correspondingly expensive. In either event civilization as we have known it is sure to be profoundly modified.

Not  
quite  
THAT  
BAD!

Interplanetary travel will never be more than occasional heavily subsidized scientific expeditions (like present expeditions to Antarctica) until power sources are available at a cheapness not yet dreamed of in our present society. It would take very strong motivation indeed to induce a man to venture into space with no hope of any personal (ie, financial) gain. I will state that 45 out of 50, if not even more, of our FARA members would turn down a bona-fide offer to join the crew of an experimental rocket, on condition that they sign a release in advance freeing the sponsoring society of any blame in the event of their accidental death due to a possible failure of the rocket. I must admit I should probably be one of the 45. Riding around the galaxy in ease and comfort aboard the 'Skylark of Valeron' is one thing, and staking your life in an experimental job which may not even lift out of the stratosphere is quite something else again. The chance that the first rocket to leave the atmosphere to circumnavigate the Moon would return safely might be put at anywhere from 1 in 10 to 1 in 1,000---but are you really prepared to risk your life even on a 1 in 10 shot? If I shuffle 1 red card in with 9 black cards, would you be willing to stake your life against, say, \$100,000 on your chances of drawing the red card?

Nope.



You think it over, and make up your own mind! Personally, I'm not having any: the gamble in "Seven Footprints to Satan" might have momentarily tempted me, but I'd have turned it down, even if the thing hadn't been a put-up job. I have too much respect for the laws of probability and too little confidence that I have been chosen by Destiny to be the exception who comes out on the winning side.

I like Art's title for his review department, and I note with pleasure that he conducts it on lines very similar to my own---the remarks commented on being used as starting points for further remarks on the same or related subjects, often amounting to practically a fresh article on the topic being discussed. This exposes the fundamental fallacy of that misguided Californian who objected to "reviews of reviews" etc.

Bob Swisher has read and rated all the Astoundings, from prehistoric times up to the present day. You can find the data you are looking for, Art, by simply looking up his files--I believe. My desk is like yours. I'm afraid this may apply to my mind also---the mention of things you intend to settle sometime but somehow never do is regrettably familiar! \*\*\* I have dipped into the "Red Badge of Courage" without reading it thoroughly. Guess you can live happily in ignorance of the book---I do, anyway!

Comic strips? I swear by Terry and the Pirates. Damn my eyes and call me Betsy, but there isn't another strip which comes within yards of it in my estimation. There isn't any other that I follow faithfully, tho I do like Prince Valiant and vaguely hope someday to see Aleta, Queen of the Misty Isles, again. Oyes--there is a daily cartoon called 'They'll do it every time' by Jimmy Hatlo which is pretty good, and meets my inspection most every day. But those are all I'd really miss. I see in the Nucleus comment that Art's adopted an expression I believed I originated: 'a thing or three' instead of the commonplace 'two'. Conscious, or unconscious influence---or just another example of 'great minds run in the same gutter'?!  
Polly  
+ Her  
"Pals"

It is a mistake to say that the more-or-less omnivorous bear is a great success, biologically speaking. The ecological niche filled by the bear is a relatively small one and bears are by no means numerous at the present time (ever see a wild one?). An adequate comparison of different species on the joint bases of feeding habits and relative abundance would require more research than I have time or energy for, or present interest in, but it is interesting to note that many species of birds which feed on a very narrow range of food sources are much more numerous than bears are. On the other hand, the wide distribution of birds such as the English sparrow, which will eat nearly anything, testifies to the real advantage of the omnivorous habit.

"Explain the difference between microbes, bacteria, bacilli, viri, and what have you"? Gladly. 'Bacteria' and 'bacilli' are two names for the same thing, the former being commonly employed. Bacteria are unicellular organisms relatively simple in structure. They do not contain chlorophyll but are related to the blue-green algae which do, and they approach more nearly to the animal than to the plant type, being essentially non-motile, owing their distribution to wind and tide, and similar external forces. Bacteria are distinguished from protozoa by their non-motility and by the fact that they do not have a nucleus (or at most have only a primitive one). Bacteria

reproduce by simple fission, both daughter cells being identical: thus a bacterium need not necessarily die, yet no bacterium retains its own identity very long. The protozoa are single celled organisms, like the bacteria, but belong more to the animal type. They possess distinct nuclei, and within the compass of a single cell there is often a remarkable degree of specialization, as anyone who has compared amoebae and parameciums under the microscope is well aware. Protozoa are also interesting in that they do not exclusively reproduce by fission, but show the beginnings of sexual reproduction in that two individuals may lie side by side and exchange part of their cytoplasm before they separate and each divides. This process is known as conjugation....."Microbe" refers to almost any microscopic organism, especially those which cause diseases. It is not a scientific term and does not refer to any particular group of beings. As to viruses, I can say little, because little is known, and because I am not familiar with the results obtained by use of the electron microscope. This last is the only tool capable of making viruses visible, and it is a very recent development. All I know at present is that viruses are sub-microscopic particles, whose size has been estimated as ranging from 2 to 12 millimicrons. (A millimicron is one-millionth of a millimeter).

I see Art keeps up with the times--- the cottage in the bresh and the autogyro in the garage is also my idea of the immediate postwar future, tho in my case the bresh will probably turn out to be on a sea-isle off the coast.

Baseball is more fun to play, especially if its softball. Football is more fun to watch---or so I think. I like football as an exercise in strategy and tactics, besides such things as open field runs, etc. You should watch Harlow-coached Harvard teams when they hit their peak in Nov. I saw Harvard beat Yale 15-6 in 1957 and I remember that game much better than any baseball game I ever saw, even tho I've seen Dizzy Dean at his peak, and once watched Crowder hold the Yankees hitless for 8 2/3 innings. (Crosetti singled to left). But what good does it do to argue? The games seldom or never compete directly with each other, and I'd rather play either myself than watch the other, anyway.

In a barbaric world, bowmen would survive. I got me a bow'n'arrier for Xmas and dissipate an occasional afternoon at ye a. & h. sport of archery with great pleasure.

SCI-FIC VARIETY. Ackerman is also popular in the USA.

My want list: The Moon Maid by E.R. Burroughs; Asleep in the Afternoon by E. C. Large; The Mysterious Stranger by Mark Twain. I really want those, and if you've one to sell, I'd appreciate first chance at the loot.

LETTERS OF HENRY S. WHITEHEAD Rather interesting; it was at least decidedly worth Paul's while to mime the stencils!

CENSORED: Lesser Gravity is pretty good. I also like Unscientifacts. The shipment of CENSORED reached me after I'd sent out the June mailing, how long afterwards I no longer remember. I spent most of the summer away from home; I only ran across the stack of CENSORED in September, too late for sending in the Sept. mailing. I hope Fred Hurter believes in forgiving and forgetting! For my sins I weep.

SUSPRO: Again, I loved the cover. Keep 'em coming, JFS! May I

and why you feel that one shouldn't print verse in prose form? Sometimes its more amusing that way, methinks. \*\*\* I noticed that no one actually stated he had published more than 8 titles. Very well, I hereby claim, formally, the all-time championship for fanzine publishing (as far as numbers of separate publications goes; quality is best left out of this discussion). I make this claim, not because I am really ignorant enough to think 8 is a record, but because I want to find out what the record is and who holds it. See?!

As to neckties,

I am not a believer in self-discipline. Namely, I don't see any point in doing things you do not find enjoyable just to prove you can force yourself to do such things. It ain't logical. It is sometimes supposed that the mere act of self-denial is praiseworthy. I challenge this viewpoint. I think self-denial is meaningless unless a) it benefits someone else, or b) it benefits yourself. For instance, adrift in an open boat you might do without your few drops of water because of someone else's greater need. Or if alone, you might ration yourself strictly to increase your chances of survival. But to deliberately do with less water than you need, where water is to be had for turning a tap, would appear to me the idlest folly, nevermind what great self-denial might be possible in such a case. Wearing neckties with me is just a custom which has become a habit; sometimes I am in a hurry and go out without a necktie, but when I discover this I seldom bother to go back to remedy the omission--- it does not make me feel uncomfortable to appear in public without a necktie. I am afraid that I will sacrifice comfort for social aims only with reluctance and under compulsion: I've owned a tuxedo two years and worn it four times. I do not say that this trait in myself is admirable or that it may not be a relic of barbarian ages, but personally I prefer to think it is the other way around and that the future will see less, not more, conformity in dress and 'manners'.

According to me, the one great trouble which bothers JFS and keeps him from enjoying life as fully as might be, is his refusal to let himself be occasionally governed by his moods. I live according to rational ideas and pursue studies which call for dispassionate and rational thinking. But I am not always logical, and never want to reach such a state: there is an almost religious pleasure in temporarily putting aside the basic drives which govern my ordinary existence. Beauty is an emotional experience, and he who refuses to let himself be governed by his moods (sometimes, not always) is deliberately shutting himself off from precisely those regions where beauty is to be found. Last night I spent a pleasant hour after supper strolling through the twilight without any particular motive except a general delight in life and 'because I felt that way.' If I had refused to let myself be governed by the mood, I might have stayed indoors diligently answering some of my neglected correspondence, or working at something else---but I think I would have been the loser, and I wouldn't want to cultivate a self discipline which would cause me to miss such experiences.

So am I waiting for the 2nd Prince Valiant book. The 1st. was the only comic magazine I bought in 1942, except a Terry & the Pirates picked up for nostalgia's sake & memories of yesteryears (Captain Blaze and the Dragon Lady).

About the S-F Caut-Chouc---while in NYC last fall I noticed a place on 42nd St. where recordings were being made for all & sundry at very low prices---59¢ for both sides of a 7 inch disc, eg. I should like to take up with Singleton where we left off in 1940---or is his address

verboden for non-DC-dwelling sf. fans?

ROMAN: I got discouraged right away by the second line of the first stanza of Book One: "At kilometers six the minute more than each preceding minute." Ugh. Glancing over it, I can only remark that you used a very nice grade of yellow paper, JFS----I wish the paper in KHOS were as good. But probably this is too light for double-printing....You didn't trouble to keep the roller clean of ink, I note. Well, it doesn't matter.

THANNY: I like the cover. Now to the fight: On looking into the matter more closely, I find that in 1482 when Ferdinand began his 10 year war which ended in the conquest of Granada, the Moorish power in the rest of Spain had already been broken for a couple of hundred years or more. In the past the Moors had represented an enlightened branch of Mohammedism, but in the middle of the 12th century a fanatical sect of Almohades crossed from Morocco, conquered the Moorish territories, and then in 1212 were themselves crushed by the Spanish power. It was between 929 and 1031 during the Omniad dynasty that the Moorish power in Spain was at its height, and during this interval the civilization of Spain was far in advance of that in the rest of Europe: eg. at the Mohammedan universities mathematics and medicine were studied; literature, commerce, and agriculture were fostered, and a fine system of irrigation works was constructed. In later years the surviving kingdom of Granada remained just such a cultural center until over-run by the Spaniards. I will now call upon Hendrik Willem van Loon: "Most modern historians seem to agree that the Moors were in practically every aspect of life superior to their Christian masters. They were better scientists, better physicians, better merchants and navigators. They knew a lot more about irrigation and the cultivation of fruits and cereals than the Spaniards ever found out. They built better houses, much better suited to the climate of Iberia, and they believed in personal cleanliness and a great many other virtues which were by no means acceptable to their Christian enemies. The Moors, however, were no angels. They had their full share of human shortcomings. Like all desert races, they were incurably clannish. Every sheik was every other sheik's enemy, and, as a result of an almost endless series of civil wars, the Spanish caliphate finally went the way of all Moslem empires. Granada fell in the year 1492, and, after that, Spain once more belonged to the Spaniards, who ever since have done their best to reconvert the Moorish flower gardens into the wilderness they had been....and to turn every prosperous city into those clusters of neglected hovels dominated by overstuffed cathedrals which are so typical of the modern Iberian landscape." (from 'Van Loon's Lives', pages 409-410). Van Loon goes on to explain the popularity of the Inquisition in Spain as primarily a device by means of which the conquered Moors, who had been forcibly "converted" to Christianity, could be convicted of backsliding and their property annexed to the benefit of the state.

D.B.T.'s theory that it was the influence of Moorish example, or of Moorish ideas, that was responsible for the Inquisition is thus seen to be true only in a very lefthanded way ---the Moors were the victims, not the instigators! On the subject of the Inquisition I need only remark that while, true enough, it was Peter II of Aragon who in 1197 was the first Western ruler to decree that heresy was punishable by death at the stake, Christians had executed Christians for heresy as early as 385 AD. Pope Innocent III, infuriated by the murder of a papal legate by some hotheads, launched in 1209 a sort of crusade against the district of Languedoc in southern France, where a sect called the Albigensians was then

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flourishing. This expedition also had the further purpose of depriving Count Raymond VI of Toulouse of his lands, for he was in disfavor as a result of tolerating the heretics. The war which followed, directed by the will of the Pope, vicar on earth of Jesus Christ, laid waste the whole region; at one siege alone, that of Beziers, 20,000 people were slain in the storm of the city---without any inquiry being made as to whether they were actually heretics or not! The Inquisition was also applied, but on a lesser scale, in Germany and Italy, but was not active after the 14th century. The revival of the Spanish Inquisition under Ferd. & Isabella, late in the 15th century, was done under the authority of the State, not the Church, and remained under state control as a useful weapon against rebellious subjects and Jews. But I trust I have made it clear that the Inquisitional spirit and practice were abroad in the very bosom of the so-called Christian church during the middle ages, and indeed found lodgement in the breast of the 'Supreme Pontiff' supposed to be the earthly representative of a just and merciful God!!!!

So now it's Don's turn again. I have tried hard to show that a) Moorish culture was definitely superior to the European culture of its time and its loss by conquest therefore regrettable; b) the Inquisition (which came to be so popular in Spain) was definitely indigenous to the Christian faith as practiced by the Holy Roman Catholic Church and preached by the Popes, especially and to wit Innocent III; and c) as a consequence of these propositions, that we may suppose there would have resulted a net gain to humanity had the Moorish culture not been stamped out by the inferior Spanish one. (While it is true the Moors unfortunately waged civil wars with each other, you will note that the Spanish shared this trait: there was an example only 5 or 6 years ago!). Well, take it away, Don.

INSPIRATION: And now he's a Sgt. Golly. There may be gold braid in the FAIA before the war's over. Wanna bet? \*\*\*\* Anyone with something worth saying can have a few hours of my time per 5 months to rattle it off on my mime. As Bob Swisher would say, "My time is worth nothing." Apropos of non-readers of pro-mags, my spirits have revived wonderfully after encountering "The Cave" and "Mimsy were the Borogroves" in the Jan and Feb 1943 issues of ASTOUNDING. ANHH, that's the stuff! \*\*\*\*\* Regarding that idea of war as a stimulus---yeah, I've noticed that tendency. People do sensible things, like learning first aid, growing vegetables, taking exercise to keep in shape, all because "it will help you do your part in the war effort." Why shouldn't the same efforts be put forward in peace-time?? And, of course, it is an ironic fact that if the time and energy now being devoted to destructive purposes all over the world, and similarly employed for the past half dozen years, had been turned to constructive purposes instead---well, we would have to be reading about and wishing for Utopias!!

SALUTE: Fish to you sir. I have an eminently readable copy of the issue of WONDER which ran "Dream's End", and I cannot imagine the slightest reason for reprinting it via hectograph. Shades of Joe Gilbert and his ill-fated UFM! The list of British fans in British forces leaves out FAIA member Youd---from whom, by the way, I have not heard in some months. Wonder if his outfit joined the African venture? I know no more than you.

RAMBLINGS: Juffus is the only FAIAfan with 2 regular, separate pubs. Brilliant of me to figure that out all by myself, wasn't it?

still about RAINBLINGS: Ariel Mengarini told me once there's hardly anything more futile than writing love poetry which you don't actually send to the one it's written about. What I want to know, is, did JFS supply Singleton with a copy of the masterly analysis of ES's character contained herein?! Of course I am especially interested becoz the reason I liked ES in 1940 so much was that he seemed to me to be much the same sort of person I am. I do not know what two years have done to Singleton, but I suspect Jack's analysis to be subjective and hence false. That is, we have JFS judging Singleton by the standards of JFS.. Wein, Weib und Gesang; f'rinstance. I myself have no taste for Wein, circumstances beyond my control prohibit my taking any interest in Gesang (I'm completely deaf); and the third proposition plays no part in my life at the present time, nor has it for over a year. Yet if Juffus should draw from this the conclusion that I 'have nothing to live for' I should roll on the floor, laughing!

X, the unstapled futurian review: Tsk, tsk, m'frans: the temporary suspension of Michel was instigated in the first place solely becoz dues due in June went unpaid till the first week in Sept. I thot that had been since settled to the satisfaction of all.\*\*\* I found the genealogy quite entertaining.

SF CHECK-LIST: Impressive, as usual. Enjoyed the joke, top of p.9

SARDONYX: Messy, wasn't it? Oh well! In case Walter Marcnette happened to notice it, I wish to apologize for a slight typo error (ahem) I made in praising HORIZONS' covers. 'Pipple shoodunt rilly hev ze same first names', he added darkly. 'Stew confbozin.

LEAN-TO: A definitive listing of the contents of the mailing, available with the mailing, is a definitely worthwhile idea, and I think the slight expense properly chargeable to the treasury. Come again!

READER & COLLECTOR: I was particularly interested in the list of fantasy tales in Golden Book. I regretted more than ever the sad fate which overtook my fantasy---I mean, my Golden Book collection, which was nearly complete. All gone now---and I'd menat to save it for my grandchildren! \*\*\*\* That was a lovely PS to the Al & Abby letter.

HORIZONS: Quite a jolt that cover gave me for a moment. I mean the lettering, of course! Picayunish piffle: I object to the statement that Switzerland wouldn't put up as stubborn a resistance to invasion as Greece. Why do you suppose Hitler's forces haven't invaded it?!? \*\*\* Liked the review of Van Loon's Lives, becoz I bought a copy of it in November and have read 320 of the 335 pages to date, with good prospects of finishing soon. (That reminds me that ISLANDIA is the only work mounting over 1,000 pages I've read from beginning to end). \*\*\* Most interesting to me in the issue was the quote from Doug Webster's letter. Doug has it bad, which surprises me. Why be ashamed or disgusted with oneself? I learned long ago that the better the terms on which I lived with myself, the more agreeable life was going to be for me. If I am dissatisfied, I expect to expend the energy in changing my conduct in the future, not in regretting the past. I have done many things I would not do now, but I see no valid reason to be ashamed of them. \*\*\* I of course spotted the quote from Mark Twain as being from the Connecticut Yankee.

WALT'S RAMBLINGS: Walt's lucky. I started two chains once, and one never came back at all; the other made one circuit and then vanished into the blue somewhere on the second trip round. The mention of FRONTIER reminds me that I once volunteered to publish this magazine, and as a matter of fact still have all the material Paul Klingbiel sent me. But I was somewhat discouraged by the small sub-list, and what with some tough courses last spring and some high class touring last summer, FRONTIER found a lonely grave. And yet, who knows? I might reissue it someday. \*\*\* We know why Hilty likes the sound of "Lieutenant Rothman." We read that story, Final Blackout, too! Speaking of books and things, it has just occurred to me that I've never known a fantasy fan who mentioned any childhood acquaintance with Hugh Lofting's delightful stories about Dr. Doolittle and his animal friends. One volume that I remember dealt with a visit Dr. Doolittle paid to the moon, travelling on the back of a huge moon-moth. On the trip across he carried some oxygen-flowers, and I believe mention was made of the difficulties the moth had in flying across, due to the "thinness of the intervening atmosphere." That's scientific after a fashion: the air does get thin a few thousand miles up, I have been told. But, despite this mixture of sober science the work is really a delightful fantasy, though perhaps more appreciated by children than such aged, hoary veterans of intergalactic wars as comprise the majority of our membership.

CALIBAN: Editor Shaw gets a big hand from this corner. Best 'first issue' which has ever appeared in the FAPA since I joined in 1940, I would say. Charlottesville has an adequate supply of bookstores but that is because the University is located here. The supply of second hand books isn't so good, except for textbooks. \*\*\* I personally enjoyed "Piracy Preferred" very much. It was the later stories in the Arcot-Tade-Morey series which proved boring. Roughly speaking, the more things that trio could do, and the faster and further their spaceships went, the more tedious the longwinded yarns became. I'd take the Stuart stories over the Campbell ones anytime: "Forgetfulness" being an all-time all-star tale, for instance. \*\*\* There are two world calendar movements. One advocates a 15 month year with uniform months; one hops---hopes, that is---for a 12 month year so revised as to provide uniform quarters. Personally I rather like having the same date occur on different days of the week in successive years. Nuts to the world calendar people. The metric system reached high tide when I. C. AAAA meets were switched over, but then they were switched back again: seems that the track fans didn't give a damn for a record at 1,500 meters, but were all agog to see the mile mark lowered. Looks like the entrenched English system will hold out a long time. The metric is, of course, used in all scientific work, but I personally find it much easier to think in miles than in kilometers. Shows what habit can do. I don't recognize the original of which 'Strip Polka' is a parody, but I enjoyed 'Strip Polka' very much indeed! By all means continue the poetry corner!

TALE OF THE 'EVANS: Ave atque vale. We're sorry to see EEE depart, but hope he succeeds in shortening the war in our favor! ---- As to the suggestion that NFFF and FAPA combine, I am strongly opposed to it.-----I fail to see that it is not possible to both enjoy and criticize something you read.

PHANTAGRAPH: The combined-with heading is as amusing as ever. I never tire of this perennial joke. \*\*\*\* DAN underestimates consid-

erably man's physical prowess in relation to the organisms around him. Even without weapons, a reasonably vigorous man has cause to fear only a small minority of other animals. However, this does not much impair the essential validity of his argument. Gorillas vastly exceed man in strength and are a match for anything except an elephant or a python, but they haven't spread over the whole world! ---- The argument that a fascist humanity would face extinction is of course an absurd extravagance. The result of this particular war in a long series of wars will not be final. If we win, it remains to make the victory good in constructive as well as destructive ways. If we lose, there's no reason to suppose that future generations may not redeem our failure. But I think that events are proving that the fascist mind is truly out of date and incapable of realizing its primitive theories of power and violence as sole arbiters in life. That was true on a strict struggle-for-survival basis, but is without meaning on the higher level of struggle-to-establish-a-better-society.

POGORUS: For a hectopub depending on purple, not bad at all! By Jove, I've just discovered two red pages; pardon! \*\*\* Regarding fans and senses of humor: I have been or am personally acquainted with Stanley, Swisher, Widner, Rothman, Speer, Perdue, the Kuslans, Singleton and several others. I failed to detect any such thing as a complete lack of humor in any one of these. I really can't think of any human being I've known well who could truly say of himself "I never lark and I never smile and I never lark nor play"! The charge is absurd. But at least there is some truth in the thesis that plenty of fans seem to take their own importance in the world far, far too seriously. Pursued as a steady policy, that does have drawbacks. \*\*\*\* I really enjoyed "Harrigan hitches a ride." Polished up a little it should have been saleable to a promag, I think. Anyway, while it may have been inspired by Wrong-way Corrigan, it's good on its own merits. \*\*\* I would take issue with some scattered statements in this fanzine if I thought there were going to be more issues of it for replies and further discussion. Ho hum. Oh well!

FAN TODS: The choicest item for last! The reason I loved it most in the mailing is simply that it devoted most space to me. Norm made a delightful tale out of the visit; of course, he was doubtless helped by having on hand the records of our largely written conversations! I had forgotten a few of the things on the list of those discussed. 'Yesterday's 10,000 Years' ought to run on as long as the material holds out! Definitely a nova notion. \*\*\*\* Mt. & Mahomet: ah, yes, the erudition and ignorance! As I recall it, the former was largely supplied by NFS and the latter by LRC, but I see that Norm has most tactfully and kindly concealed this fact in his account! \*\*\* The memory has worked well, even sans photos, for our cruise across the bay and back stands out very clear and sharp in my mind as one of the two or three most enjoyable events of the year 1942. Send that 43 brings more such visits and such sailings! \*\*\*\* Last issue wasn't the 'super-duper Sardonyx'---but this one may be. There's enough bulk to the thing---and it isn't all hogwash, whatever you and you and you may think. \*\*\* I'm tickled by the passing reference to 'tetraheda of space' anent Suspro's trademark. That story has been a strong favorite of mine for years and years! ---- Anent time, how come the 'two temporal dimensions'? My impression of the moment is that there is likely only one. Dunne argues that there is a Time which moves, but this movement takes Time of a higher order, and so on indefinitely---"the series principle". Dunne thinks we live



in a "serial Universe" and claims that man is indeed immortal but the immortality is in other dimensions of Time. In this way Dunne proposes to hurdle the objection which had most influence in leading me to reject immortality the physiological fact that thinking depends on the functioning of the brain. If what Dunne believes is true, and his arguments seem well worthy of attention, it is going to be necessary to make a drastic overhaul of my present philosophy and throw many old notions out of the window. I am therefore proposing to study Dunne's book (An Experiment with Time) closely and seriously as soon as the March exams at the U. Va. are over. At present I have hardly more than looked it over, noting but not closely analysing the arguments. I'll report back later, no doubt; probably in the June issue of SARDONIX. -----Talking about this idea of man's combativeness makes me think it might be worth while to take a look at the combativeness of the lower animals. To my knowledge, combativeness for its own sake, i.e. wanton aggression, is comparatively rare. Basically struggle arises from the twin urges to live and reproduce. On the other hand, there are organisms which equal or even outdo man in the capacity for ferocity. Take, for instance, the West African shrew, *Crocidura occidentalis*. It's difficult to imagine a more vicious form of life. They will attack and eat anything organic, and their appetites never seem to be satiated. For combativeness on a more organized scale, consider the species of ants known as *Formica sanguinea*, which regularly organizes slave-raiding expeditions against related species such as *F. fusca*, for the purpose of capturing pupae which are later reared as slaves. The conclusion to be drawn from these observed facts is that there are both inherently combative organisms and inherently combative cultures in the non-human world. On the other hand, such cultures as those of the bees appear basically non-combative, and all things being considered, we can justly conclude that no group of beings can succeed without some combative qualities, but that those which possess the combative tendency in marked excess seem to derive little or no added benefit, in a biological sense. To return to the human world, in my opinion the evidence just cited has a direct bearing on the problem and allows us to recognize that inherently war-loving cultures are a possibility, but a possibility leading into a dead end. Eg. the Spartans, or the Aztecs of ancient Mexico who waged war for religious purposes. These remarks are rather an addenda to than an argument with Norm's thesis that present culture is not suited to war. I subscribe warmly to the observation that "the survival of a culture is determined by the willingness of the individual to be a part of it." The argument in favor of the fullest development of the individual seems as impeccable as the idea is desirable---and yet, meseemeth the whole trend of our times is in the opposite direction, towards the formation of coherent societies in which the individual plays the role of a somatic cell in a complex organism. The accompanying philosophy suggests that any given individual may be dispensed with at need, and that it is the welfare of the whole which counts. When I say this is the apparent trend of the times I mean in the English speaking world as well as in the 'totalitarian states.' And my personal reactions to this trend take the form of strong disapproval, but I suspect that much of this springs from selfish reasons. Eg., I want to be free to take a couple of years off and sail around the world, whenever I feel like it. And yet, to be honest, I do not really believe that the super-state of the future will have much difficulty in persuading its citizens not only to take pride in their citizenship, but also in performing their duties. And I am not in the least sure that existence in such a super-state would be monotonous or boring or stifle initiative, etc. But I'll not display my ignorance further, at the moment!

"Life in great cities is not unlike that in the primeval forests. One passes from one burrow to another along canyons that are only a little lighter, and breadth of vision is everywhere excluded by towering battlements palpitating with the lives hidden behind them. Always there is life around one, but it is hardly visible; imagination must work overtime to formulate its progress, lest one pass forever through the dense crowds utterly alone."

---I. T. Sanderson

"Morals are a form of insanity. Give me a moral man who insists on doing the right thing all the time, and I'll show you a tangle which an angel couldn't get out of."

---T. H. White

"...but before I resolve to do the one thing or the other, I must gain my confidence in my own ability to keep my resolves when they are made."

---A. Lincoln

"...he had nothing with which to reproach himself. And that condition is not at all far from true happiness."

---C. S. Forester

"...that sheer pagan delight of the dive, when in the air man becomes all animal, freed from every restraint and denied every safeguard save the strength of his own muscle and nerve."

---T. O'Brien.

"There is no better cure for mental or physical stagnation than a ship at sea with all the wind she will stand. It is more exhilarating than a cold shower and a mint julep on a hot summer day. In fact, it is as refreshing as a day ashore after a long time at sea."

---R. T. Kauffman

"A man never realizes how far he has gone for a woman until he has to retrace that way without her."

---D. L. Lemon

"It is very true that one says to oneself: 'I will have had a lesson for next time.' But that is not the case; for fortune always comes on us in new ways, quite unforeseen by imagination."

---B. Cellini

"Since write he must, interminably the literary artist writes about himself because (in this respect at least resembling the other members of his race) he has no certain knowledge as to anyone else. And the part he has played in other persons' lives he will likewise

expose in a manner that is not always chivalrous. Indeed, he will undertake much unetrical research with the assistance of women who do not entirely comprehend that they are participating in a philosophical experiment. And all this, too, he will print in his damned book, for from a social standpoint the creative literary artist is always a traitor and not infrequently a scoundrel. Meanwhile he becomes callous, by virtue of never yielding so entirely to any emotion as to lose sight of its being an interesting topic to write about. All that which is naturally fine in him, indeed, he will so study, and regard from every aspect, that from much handling it grows dingy. And very clearly does the luckless knave perceive this fact, for all the while, amid these constant impairments, his vision grows more quick and keen, and mercilessly shows him the twisted and scathed thing he is."

---B. Cabell

"A man who won't lie to a woman has very little consideration for her feelings."

---O. Miller

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"Understanding of words is not sufficient if we want to grasp a person's speech. We must understand his thoughts. But even that is not enough. We must know his motivation. The psychological analysis of any utterance is not completed until this plane is reached."

---L.S.Vigotsky

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"The deaf man says the dawn is bright and red; the blind man says it is a song of birds."

---H.G. Wells

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"As a young doctor I was often puzzled when the minister at the funeral of a child intoned that the child was better off with its maker. No parents ever fell in with this idea. 'Doctor, save our baby!' is the parents' cry. Parents do not want their children to go where the minister says they will be better off. Let the reader figure out the meaning of this for himself. I gave up decades ago, but there is something wrong somewhere."

---A.E. Hertzler

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"I forget who it was that recommended men for their soul's good to do each day two things they disliked; it was a wise man, and it is a precept that I have followed scrupulously: for every day I have got up and I have gone to bed."

---T.S. Maugham

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"I was now sixty years of age but, as I view this matter--- though I know that few professional philosophers would agree--- that is quite early enough in life for a definitely conscious philosophic credo to be established. ---Havelock Ellis."

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