

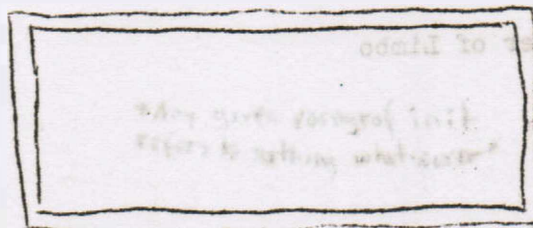


Speed's



# SUSTAINING PROGRAM

## WINTER/F4'



Where will you be in 1942 ???

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## COMMENTARY, ALPHA AND BETA IN THE SEVENTEENTH MAILING

There seem to be some inconsistencies in the Superman article in Milt's Mag; Milt at one point admits the existence of a single factor, general intelligence, most of the time he is insisting that intelligence is not a simple trait. Incidentally, his illustrations of what intelligence is are superb; intelligence is known as a statistical peculiarity, and putting it in concrete, visible form is quite a job. I think Milt is way off the beam in saying that Superman must have some trait not present at all in Homo sapiens: let him name a trait of Homo sapiens that is not present to some extent in the lower life-forms. I don't like the remarks on sub-cerebral reasoning: There is no evidence that the cerebellum or medulla oblongata are at all capable of the complicated symbol-manipulation that is thought; indeed all our experience with suppressed memories, hypnotic forgetfulness, and so on indicate that the subconscious is separated from the conscious only by certain short-outs that keep the subconscious activities from reaching the attention of the conscious, but all take place in the cerebrum. However, we do like the idea of many conscious processes becoming capable of voluntary relegation to the subconscious. So much for that.... Elmer's teletape thing particularly interested us because we have so frequently to handle telegrams at the office, and have wondered how they were sent. Can Elmer explain why there are sometimes large gaps and expletive periods scattered thru a radiogram, and how sometimes they can strikeover and other times can't? With all the symbols he shows on his tape, we wonder why WD teloperators continue writing out Stop or Period, Quote Unquote, Comma, ktp.

In Koenig's pub, Quotations and Comments move back to first place in my estimation with an unusually good selection this time, and English as She Is wrote second. For Still Another Man's Viewpoint we care little. The gentleman in question begins with the very questionable assumption that science-fiction is just for relaxation, and even without his various other errors, that would throw all his calculations off. By the way, König, where were the quotemarks at the beginning of the second paragraph of that?... Wish Unger would make it clear whether the FFF in this Mailing was an entirely special FAPA number. Incidentally, Julie, for the past six months we've been intending to subscribe when we get around to it; it isn't that we don't love you and the half dozen or so copies of FFF that have come to us one way or another.... The poetry, Chauvenet leading, was best in Nucleus this time. The words by both of the Kuslans were too vitriolic, even tho the general points behind them were usually valid.... The hektoing hint and DiCrain items were the most likeable material in the Lovecraftian.

Altho SoundOff!'s letters were good, we thot Joe's comments in it even better, the peak being reached in "So I'll just pass you on to this very decent gentleman, and go out into the corridor and sneer at Captain Future while he has the floor." His defense of the FAPA is also well put. (Idle thot: Why do "well put" and "well taken" mean practically the same thing?) Some detailed comments on damon's letter: I was fully aware of the double negative in "not in a publication, I don't believe", but it is a Southwesternism that I thot of sufficient interest to include, even at the risk of downcalling by eagleyed guys like the demon. By the way, why do we say "I wouldn't be surprised if this weren't it"? I object to erotica in fanzines not simply because it doesn't appeal to the higher intellect, but because it definitely warsagainst it. It is not a question of tolerance (I wish I had time here for a discussion of the why and what of tolerance, but that must be deferred), partially because it is not proposed to suppress such material violently, as by boycotts or whathaveyou. I also hold to the objection that is generally entered to material in general literature, that it is against good taste. (At the drop of a hat, I'll set forth my theory of good taste.)... In Horizons, On Dit shines as Alpha, the cover perhaps as Beta. In Glancing Behind Us of Horizons, check to 19 decimals on Hobby or Duty comments. The verb for redundant,

Harry, is to redound. Check to 11 decimals on your comments about an all-fandom FAPA. Could the Mark Twain commentary on omnibus German compounds that you're trying to think of be the spells that the Connecticut Yankee pronounced to overawe King Arthur's people while pulling a chemical trick? We didn't know German at the time we read it, but the notes said the various words were chains of generally associated roots, like "chair, table," etc, but meant nothing. Re del Rey's letter: We understood from our Spanish text that ey was pronounced as in English they, and our old Esperanto pamphlet says their -ej is pronounced like ey, and they call it a diphthong. But the -ay in day or pay that del Rey says his name should rhyme with is certainly not a diphthong. Also, the pronunciation isn't strictly Spanish if Alvarez is pronounced AHLvahrACE; the Spanish would be AHLvahrAITH. 'Tis in Spanish American that the pure Castilian th sound for c and z becomes ss. Elmer's letter was very interesting; he should make a living at counterfeiting; dot gift, it shouldn't be wasted. That Douglas Webster has two middle names is a coincidence, since the other British Doug, Douglas W F Mayer, was similarly cursed. DETHompson's suggestion of a Smith-deCamp collaboration strikes me as a wonderful idea. I haven't read the deCamp story he is commenting on, but Sprague does show a rather excessive tendency to iconoclasm and snoot which may indicate a psychological defect. Jerk back now to page 1 and Harry's discussion of his hektoing. We know the effect he's talking about, and think it arises from having too much ink on the pen. After several copies have been run off, the lines become solid (perhaps slightly smeared) instead of two thin parallels, tho the impression of them in the gelatin is still to be seen, and perhaps remains there permanently. This is a different sort of thing from the period defect, in which the too-deep impression is in the paper, and most of the pigment never gets on the gelatin. By the way, thanks for using my quasi-quote marks, but I'd never have noticed them if you hadn't mentioned it. Yeah, they were struck too hard, like the periods.... Jones' Sapphire is a further improvement over his previous pubs. However, he wouldn't rave over Chauvenet like he does if he'd been with Milt and me in Charlottesville when, having arrive an hour early of our rendezvous, we wandered up to the courthouse square and, looking across the street to a shady spot where several mothers had parked their perambulators while they went shopping, saw LRC snatching sticks of striped candy out of the babies' hands and slapping them if they objected. As for the proposal for a Manuscript Bureau, it's been brot out before, and the sub fanzines once had one, run by Moskowitz. It was plagued by lack of material tho, and what material it had being mostly mediocre. Things would be even worse in the FAPA, I think, when everybody who has anything to say publishes his own rag to say it in. The idea of a Criticism Bureau is even more doubtful. I don't know anybody in fandom, or any possible group of people, who would be right consistently enuf to fill this post. Whatheek, publish the stuff, and if it gets hooted on every side, that doesn't make more business for the gravedigger.

Shucky

is lovely; I don't know which of the two items is cuter.... Agambite of Inwit has some interesting discussions. We can agree with Doc's criticism of the futures portrayed in so many Astounding stories, but not with the way he gets violent about it. That the heck--when the Michelists were calling for sociological stories, they didn't say what kind of sociology; now they've got it but don't like it. I believe they did say the sociological science should be accurate, but if that is to mean anything with regard to stf, it can't, when so construed, be a condemnation of the Campbellsque futures. Personally, I think these current sociological stories do more good than harm by starting thoughts ticking along new lines, regardless of their superficial adoration of the status quo ante bellum W II.

Mercury has a very

neat setup, and we like the interlineations, but most of the material is pretty

awful. These guys suffer in double portion from all those slaponthebackian defects that somebody remarked in the Columbia Campers.... The cover on Thompson's part of Phanny is detestable. Liked his war comments. Incidental correction of no consequence: Earl Martel turned back Islam at Tours in 700something, a good while before the discovery of America. DB's plan for graduated types of membership in the FAPA doesn't appeal to me; the FAPA is essentially the club for super-active fans, and I'm not in favor of making a place in it for guys with no creative spirit. In Bridges' half, the most interesting thing was the suggestion that the Fourth Dimension be used to solve our ever-increasing storage problems. That idea has appealed to me for a long time; perhaps Lynn would like to submit the plan to the War Department thru me? It should be a lot cheaper than microfilming all our old records. The unusual format of Phanny we like very much.

On our #10 Ramblings, no comment. On Sustaining Program, ditto, other than that contained on its own contents page and elsewhere. Oh, we might mention that for our stuff last mailing we tried the experiment of using clear Cutex nail polish instead of the several-times-as-costly correction fluid. It didn't work so well, so we'll leave Cutex for the sole use of Kotmkians and Almatians to stop chigger bites. (wish we'd known of that trick during all the years we lived in chiggery Oklahoma.)

#### Fantasy

Amateur generally good as usual (didn't we say something a long time back to the effect that we wouldn't comment every time on magazines whose natures didn't lend to different comments on each issue?): only thing to particularly note, and that only for the purpose of seconding it, is Doc's contention that, the FAPA exists for the sake of its members, so the one-sheet publications have a right to be.... We wish Chauvenet would give titles to his amazing Sardonyx covers--RBD's, rather. Names for such art frequently don't mean anything, but they do seem to satisfy a psychological craving. Liked most particularly in this issue the item about the ghost of Tallwood Plantation and the space-filler of flowers on p 5; the former partly from wondering if the Blue Room in question was the one in which Rothman and I had beds on my first visit down there--the second time we slept downstairs. Schumann's observations have been better summed up in the poem Look About You in Unknown. Personally, I take no great stock in this matter, being a mechanist. Of course, the various human machines being somewhat different, our individual perceptions of a given stimulus will differ somewhat. Also, since a person's idea of a sense datum is a compound of all his previous associations with it, it is easy to see why some people call green a cold color and others call it warm; but there is nothing amazing in this. The groping for true images toward the end of the article is meaningless, because an image implies a receiving apparatus which translates certain data into certain elements. Knowing the thing-in-itself is something which has intrigued metaphysicists for milleniums, but as Kant points out, a thing known is always a thing-as-known. Kuslan is a Francophobe, eh? OK, Russell, I request a second Oasis d'Horreur (Looie and I really love each other, gentle reader, so don't start supposing a feud). Trudy's article is interesting because it represents a very general opinion of fandom, and one I'd like to oppose. In first place, get clear what standard we're comparing fans to when we say they're thwarted, feel insecure, are unsuccessful, etc. The editorial footnote partially calls attention to this. The average person, even in this country, is still a rather low order of human: economically he's a tenant farmer or little-skilled factory worker or retail clerk or some such, and his other attributes are of the same order. Compared to him, the fan isn't such a sorry specimen. On the other hand, if we compare fans to others of their same IQs, we may understand the Trudy view of them better. --There we'll have to stop, darn it. Lasttime A&B ran 2 1/2 pages, longer than e'er before, and we said we'd have to reform, or something. If this is reform, then hurrah for reaction.

## IT'S IN JIM EARLEY'S BAG

Boss Gilbert of the Columbia Camp wrote, apparently anent the DFF: "Little Tammany Hall kicked itself together the nominees for next year's election at a recent meeting." (If this weren't my correspondents' department instead of mine, I'd launch into a discussion of the intensifying reflexive in English, with "kicked itself together the" as my text.)

In my latest letter from another slaveholder's son, Harry Warner, are a couple of items that look fit for this department. One: "I was certain that between you and Chauvenet is concentrated all the knowledge of the world. But neither of you can translate 'moestitae'. Another illusion vanished." The other: "An incident occurred several weeks ago which I've not mentioned to anyone. At this distance, it's probably safe to look back on it. Bryan Place is a 9:30 pm curfew thoroughfare, and we usually go to bed a little after ten. This evening we'd just gotten into bed--my room is the one to the front upstairs--and I was pursuing sleep. It usually is a half-hour struggle before I drop off. Suddenly I heard loud voices, many voices, and then a tremendous pounding at the front. I had awful visions of Futurians by the dozen, or maybe the LASFS or something. I was determined not to take any chances on finding out, and told my parents not to go down and answer the door. Then came the wildest part of it: suddenly they started to sing that masterpiece, 'I Ain't Gonna Study War No More'. They sang two choruses, gave a final bang at the door, feet clomped down off the porch, their car started up, they were gone, and I still don't know who they were. It certainly wasn't anyone in town I know, and no word has come from any fan or fans that they were here and unable to rouse us. So I've come to the tentative conclusion that it must have all been a mistake, and they were at the wrong house. They had every neighbor for at least three houses on each side awake, anyway." Sounds like fans or revivalists to me. Any of you guys able to shed lite on the mystery? I am reminded of one of those 1936 Gasoline Alleys I was reading last nite.

That mess in the middle of the last paragraf renews an old warning: Don't roll your stencil down in the typewriter.

Widner included this beardmuttering in a letter a year ago: "MYNAMEISGETTINMENTIONEDALOT INALLSORTSOFTANMAGSANDTHINGSPRETTYSOONILLBEAPAINOUSPAINWONTTHATBENICE?"

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You can't get culture out of a test tube

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It all happened very quickly, and then the Tritonian was wiping his blade while a little stream of green blood ran out of the Ganymedeian's chest onto the grimy stel-lite floor. Several men at nearby tables looked around curiously and one inquired the cause of the disagreement. "This Jovian swine," said the outspacer, "denied the plurality of causes. He pulled out that old moth-eaten argument about the effect always being contained in the causes. I trieda tellim that so far as that had any meaning, it was just repeating 'A is A', which has no meaning; but he wouldn' listen. So--"

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whenyourfeetfeelliteandyheadfeelsstrongandylafflikeachumpatsomefoolsong--

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It hath occurred to us that comprehension of slang requires a considerable degree of intelligence, since slang throws a greater burden on the auditor to perceive the possible associations of the words and phrases used, and pick the one that makes sense in the given frame of reference. Does this prove that Americans are an exceptionally intelligent nation?

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--thenydrunkoldmanydrunk

In my prowlings among papers of five years back, I noticed that the western comic, Skull Valley, had a scientificfictional sequence. Two characters somehow, I think by following caves, got atop a mesa where they encountered mammoths, sabertooths, Amazons, and a college-educated chieftain's son who had returned to his people.

It seems like the misnamed Abbie an' Slat's has been doing some dabbling lately, too. A permanent-waving fluid which caused hair to fall out at the end of thirty days turned out to be a super-explosive, I think; and at present there are involved in the story some capsules invented by Bathless Groggins which make a motor fuel of water, and taken internally turn a human being into a nitroglycerine bomb. Needless to say, Bathless took some by mistake, and knowing himself doomed, is out to destroy Hitler. The recent sequence in which Cleopatra was supposed to have been revived from a mummy turned out to be a hoax, and unworthy of our consideration.

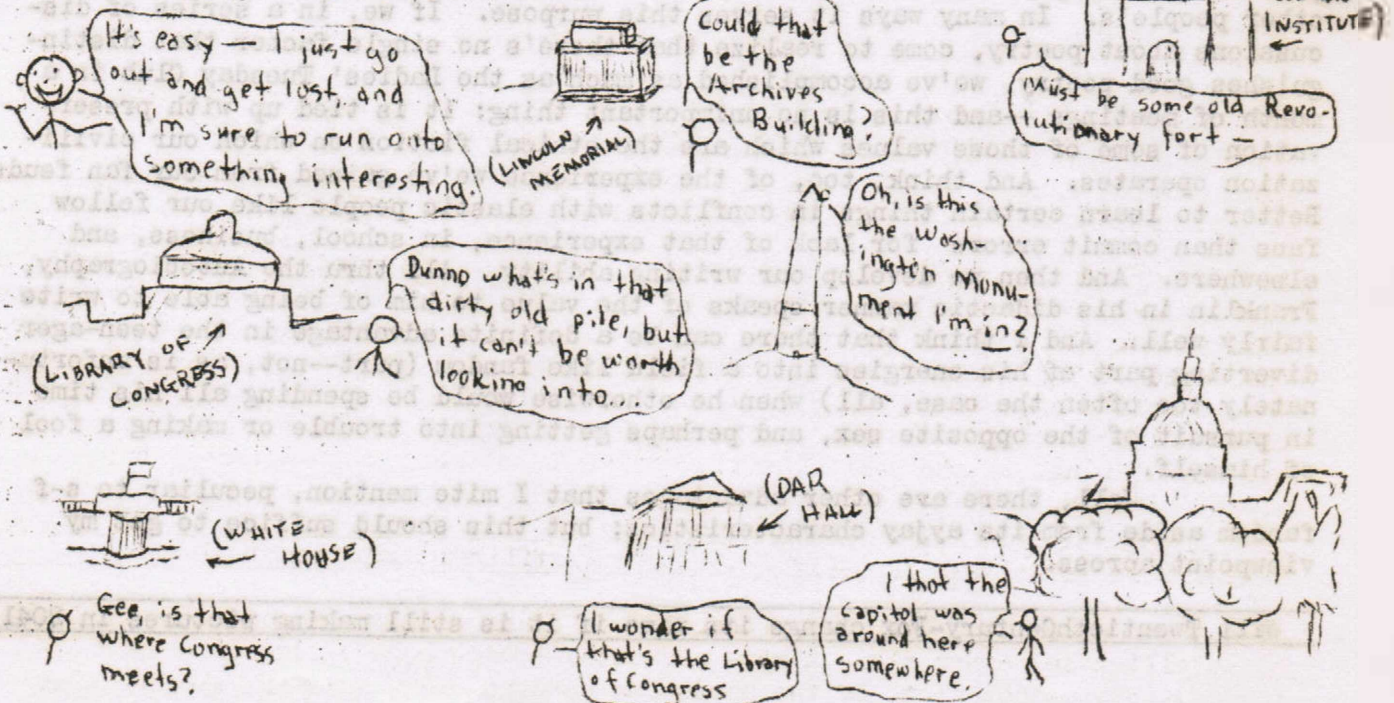
#### AND THEN THERE'S SAPPO

Or was. I think the comic is still running in some papers as a top-panel for Thimble Theater. For a wearisome stretch it deserted fantasy entirely, some five years ago, but was before and after a true 100% scientificomic rather than a dabbler. I had thot about reviewing the Jotasnozzle-Finklesnop war, which was one of the highest periods of the strip, but have decided against it. Sappo was all right, tho; and Segar showed a better understanding of scientific and scientificfictional principles than many who are doing heavier scientificomics today.

Since my list of 100% scientificomics, of which Sappo is the last, was compiled for this department in Science Fiction News half a decade ago, at least two new all-stf comics have appeared and held wide enuf circulation to call for some sort of treatment here. We will have something organized to say about Superman and Odd Bodkins shortly.

#### ichtsny

#### JOE GILBERT IN WASHINGTON



As the current book is set up at the moment, the first thing you see on opening it is a large yellow sheet on which is printed INVENTORY SALE, sale price 375. Getting a lower initial quotation from the salesman, paying cash, and being firm, we finally got the Spirit of FooFoo for \$315.

Cartoon from SEP of a scene on the Moon, at a spaceport on the outskirts of a city. Guy with a long beard has just landed in a Bleriot monoplane (such as first flew the English Channel), and says to the two amazed attendants, "Twenty-five years, two months and ten days--what did you make it in?"

In one of the Roving Reporter's columns on the school page of our Comanche paper, we used "Scintillate, scintillate, globule vivific" from some British fanmag without acknowledgment. And the word "foo" is used to separate paragraphs of the column. Another time, for which I may not have the clipping, I did a daydream, going into the future a few years to where a new auditorium had been built, and described the resultant expansion all down the line. Yah, you can make a good thing of a scientifictional background, où que vous soyez.

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The abovedescribed Roving Reporter bits were well received

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This is my chance to try to finish up commenting on Trudy's Sardonyx article. My greatest objection is that the thing is overdrawn--doubtless she was tacitly admitting this all along. Some fans have the grandiloquent ideas of fandom's purpose that she sets forth, but even they don't hold it as vaingloriously as is described in La Creme de la Creme. Yet more exaggerated is the picture of the typical fan eagerly scanning each fanzine as he gets it to see if his name is mentioned, and then leaning back and basking. It's true that practically any of us is a little pleased whenever he's mentioned in another's fanzine, but as for eagerly scanning them for that purpose, and leaning back and basking--tommyrot. And exaggeration is the death of constructive argument.

Fandom does accomplish more than gratify egos, Gertrude. One of the most important things a person does is construct his personal philosophy, and fandom is a place for trying out your own ideas and noting other people's. In many ways it serves this purpose. If we, in a series of discussions about poetry, come to realize that there's no single factor that distinguishes good poetry, we've accomplished as much as the Ladies' Tuesday Club in a month of meetings --and this is no unimportant thing: it is tied up with preservation of some of those values which are the ethical fiction on which our civilization operates. And think, too, of the experience we've gained from our fan feuds! Better to learn certain things in conflicts with elastic people like our fellow fans than commit errors for lack of that experience, in school, business, and elsewhere. And then we develop our writing ability. All thru the Autobiography, Franklin in his didactic manner speaks of the value to him of being able to write fairly well. And I think that there can be a definite advantage in the teen-ager diverting part of his energies into a field like fandom (part--not, as is unfortunately too often the case, all) when he otherwise would be spending all his time in pursuit of the opposite sex, and perhaps getting into trouble or making a fool of himself.

Well, there are other advantages that I mite mention, peculiar to s-f fandom aside from its ayjay characteristics; but this should suffice to get my viewpoint across.

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Will TwentiethCentury-Fox change its name if it is still making pictures in 2041?

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THE MORNING OF SAINT HARRY

But when Old Sol his beacon red  
Had kindled o'er Smith(Alfred)'s head,  
The pug-nosed Fascist's fearful bay -  
Resounded up the narrow way;  
And close with him a FooFoo swarm,  
Vowing to ghuehu dreadful harm.

(Here my memory of Sir Walter Scott's original

U  
Gakspiro

so do we

All we'll take time to mention this issue is that we planned to do the master sheets for the first Neutron at various times during our Thanksgiving '38 tour of the Northeast, the main article to be The Diary of a Space-Rover, by "the Visitor", and that about including an odd paragraph we'd drafted in which we blew into New York and found one who was Jollheim whistling at a papier-mache His Master's Voice dog in front of a radio store: "Hello, Jollheim," I says. # "Look out," says he, "he'll bite." # "Where's Pohl?" I inquired. # He gestured toward the gutter. # "You're drunk," I informed him. # "I never drink," he insisted. # "I'm Speer," was my next sally. After that comes an extremely weak pun on my name and Jax Beer. I never did get around to doing any of the master-sheets before the great Fonopole crackup, after which the project ofcourse evaporated. But the notes on it didn't. Now I can throw them into the wastebasket.

CALL IT WHAT YOU WISH

Only space here for a flash item from Russell Chauvenet at his new home, 170 Summit Ave., Jollaston/Mass. Says he: "I opened the front door this morning and found a note pinned to it with a dagger. It said, '170 is somebody else's fannumber', and tho it was unsigned, I think the handwriting was that of one of the Kuslans. As you know, they have long lived at 170 Washington Ave, West Haven, Conn."

## DEAR CAMPBELL

-Continued

September, 1940, Astounding: There's little I can say about Slan that hasn't been said already. I liked it, particularly in its providing food for thought, which is what I like Astounding for mainly, anyway.... Universes for Lenses was very interesting. Since reading it, I've noticed that, lying on the bed and looking at the lite bulb between two almost-touching fingers, I seem to be able to compress the image of the bulb in the direction of the two finger-tips. Probably, tho, it's just an effect of the transparency of the outer skin, or something.... Don't see why the guys raved over Quietus; I thot it rather sorry. Maybe the train thru the Middle East wasn't the best place in the world to read it, but I thot the style, the sentence construction, pretty bad, the plot childishly simple, and about the only worthwhile element in it the idea of the one restricted stretch of non-barren land on earth. Don't ask me why. (The man of Mr Künig's "Another Man's Viewpoint" wouldn't like that, but I'm prepared to defend that kind of criticism.)... Homo Sol was also read on the train, and I liked it. Asimov is very good at these non-Terrestrial civilizations, and lending them body and substance thru the use of irrelevant detail.... I thot the Coronavisor was a wonderful thing, increased contrast, and therefore improved definition, being something sorely needed in all lines of science, but the other two Washingtonians, or one of them, says/say that they have ways of doing the same thing in photographic development, getting contrast beyond that in the original object of which the picture is taken.

Farewell to the Master was a beautiful piece, one I'd rate very high. Partly I was prejudiced in its favor because of its Washington locale. There is one philosophically unsound point in it that I didn't notice till skimming it a second time: Gnut's machine which, from the sound of a voice, reconstructed the body that made that voice. This assumes that a given effect, in every detail, can result only from one certain set of causes; whereas modern logicians generally believe in the plurality of causes.... Cartier's illustrations could not make me like Butyl and the Breather as well as Ether Breather. The usual come-down of a sequel.... The Search for Zero: Very nice, bringing out a point perceived but not isolated in my thinking before, and giving me a new respect for the phlogiston theory.... The Warrior Race was a lovely and comforting sort of thing, with some truth in it, no doubt. There are beginning to be stories to the effect that the German soldiers in Paris are no longer so correct as they once were, are not leaving the mademoiselles alone, usw. Too bad, in a way.

I must make special mention of that November cover, the one for Salvage. Music? What the heck, it looks like something from Disney's translation of the Fugue in D Minor.... Sunspot Furge: More one-dimensional (golly, I hate to re-divide a hyphenated word like that!) time, more unhappy ending. And a bit improbable, in their making the 500-year jump so incautiously.... The Exalted was rather a comedown for Johnny Black. Reflects deCamp's cynicism, perhaps, in the conclusions which the genius reaches, but I'd like to get said genius into a philosophical argument.... The several-centuries-old idea of One Was Stubborn has been used before in modern magazine fantasy, and this story added little to it.... I second your comment on DBThompson's letter: "But the greatest work men can do is to fight and conquer environment". It seems instinctively that there ought to be something greater, but that's only an instinctive belief that was probably necessary for an intelligent species to survive. And even the aim of conquest of environment, it seems to me, must rest upon the only aim, the only teleology, that is written into the fabric of nature: Survival.

Old Man Mulligan was a good piece that broke down into cops-and-robbers toward the end. If a low-grade humanoid like Mulligan can gain so much from his immortality as to be able to hold his own very well among the future men, how much better we could do with

the same advantage.... Spheres goes completely haywire in the latter part. It sounded like something somebody started out composing in his head with the intention of writing it down as a story, but let it get out of hand and become a daydream. This is one of those stories, too, that is overloaded with characters. However, Sezzy-Blacky is a lovely character, definitely superior to Joe-Jim. Elmer Perdue knows a guy who was like Sezzy-Blacky for awhile--he told about it in the Haute Histoire. (Somebody tell Elmer that "histoire" isn't necessarily translated "history") --but recently wrote me that the guy had gotten high on dope again and decided to reintegrate his character, and did. But by the time Elmer returned to Wyoming, this fellow was elsewhere.... Justian Jugg's patent told a lot even to a veteran Washingtonian like me.... I've already discussed Fog in a letter published in Spaceways' letter section I believe.... In Brass Tacks, a point worth underlining was Caleb Northrup's (what a name for a fictional hero!) paragraph on the fallacy of supposing a single factor to be the cause of an historical happening.

The scientific explanation for Sixth Column had the flavor of a magic wand. Of course, since we were supposed to be seeing a hitherto quite unknown phenomenon at work, we couldn't hope to guess ahead of time how it would act, but it did seem able to do too nearly everything. Anyhow, it's a nice thing to think about, that there may be a <sup>rather</sup> spectrum with quite as varied effects at different parts of its length as the wonderfully versatile electromagnetic one.... I had The Day We Celebrate doped out from the very beginning, but perhaps that was unavoidable, since I read it on December 23, with Christmas carols coming in over the radio and thru the windows from carillons in Chevy Chase.... For reason already stated, I liked the Mechanical Mice (Such comments as this go against my promise not to take up space here with superfluous remarks; that means make a mental note to say nothing about --And He Built a Crooked House in the next paragraph, since I covered that in Pacifying Koenig).... The best thing about The Opportunists is that the misfortune that destroys civilization is, wonder of wonders, not the world war which seems to be almost the exclusive catastrophe nowadays.... Curse McCann for trying to show that Venus has no tropical jungles. Again I hope for an unnoticed error in the calculations somewhere, as in that last article on the origin of the Solar System.

City was somewhat better than The Priestess Who Rebelled, but stories like this are too easy to write, and they derive their main interest from a guessing game between reader and author as to what Stalibiddy is a corruption of. I also resent the Manhattocentric bias of this and similar stories.... Castaway did not much impress me, but I like it better now since someone mentioned that it might imply the Skylark of Space or any such epic.... The Klystron another nice thing to know about.... As anyone can see by drawing a diagram like --was it Hurter in Censored?-- did, the time theory of The Best-Laid Scheme won't hold water; it requires two kinds of time, which might be called alterable and absolute, and does not handle them consistently. Thing I liked best in the story was probably deWitt's method of getting photos of the inside of the time machine.... Willy Ley forgets Skylark Three in saying s-f has not predicted scented movies.. Ofcourse, there the Norlamins did the scent part by mass hypnosis, and it merely accompanied the music of Dorothy's Stradivarius, as the sight effects did-- but essentially, we had it.

By chance, I missed getting the March issue while it was on the stands, so can't comment on Logic of Empire or anything. Ain'tcha glad?

The Stolen Dormouse lacked a bit in plot, but the picture of the Corporate State was definitely worth reading the thing for.... Asimov's robot was not altogether reasonable; it had the headstrong certainty of the Eighteenth Century rationalists, when a cool appraisal should have shown it that it was only dealing with estimated probabilities.... Microcosmic

God was a very unusual story, but on the whole quite likeable. Again the miniature things that I love so well. Sturgeon took a lot of literary license in the story in order to compress it within one man's productive years. Formularizing the law of probability, if that is anything more than verbal legerdemain, would not likely give the results indicated, and the genius of James Kidder which enabled him to do so many things, especially abandon trial and error (which would make necessary methods depending upon a complete understanding of the nature of matter and the laws governing it, and instruments accurate enuf to keep track of each electron), is quite beyond the generation in whose environment the story takes place. Natchless, it's a wonderful story. An interesting sidelite is the complete absence of the fair sex from the scene.... From Trepidation, one might almost think there's something in Zones of Space, and Lowndes' idea of changing natural laws, and various other recent gropings away from the idea of immutability of the aforesaid.... I read The Mutineers, and rather wished I'd kept up with the Kilkenny Cats series, but haven't brot myself to read the intervening stories since the Idealist, since after all they don't seem to have many interesting new ideas to offer. Someday I'll pull out of my present concentrated interest on ideas and appreciate plots and writing style and so forth a bit more.

Time Wants a Skeleton was an interesting plot-story; I was curious about Amos when he was first mentioned, and had a sneaking suspicion all along, tho the boxes of Christmas presents didn't register. Say, did any of you guys that've attended s-f auctions recently where I've not been, happen to get that 1/3-page cut of Tony, left behind, watching the rocket try to take off as it soared toward the great crescent? If so, name your price, and I'll start haggling with you for it.... Williams is somewhat overdoing that soft sad style of his. To Fight Another Day has little to recommend it.... Bates is not up to his standard in A Matter of Speed. Or perhaps he is, since his forte has always been plot and incident of the old Clayton Astounding sort. But he has completely failed, here, to grapple with the practical problems of super-speed, which were discussed so well by Swisher in Escape. Also: Why does the belt speed up the wearer and his suit, and perhaps what he holds in his hand, but not what his feet rest on, or the person he touches, ktp?

Thru error I've discussed June right after April. The May number had Universe in it, and that's worth talking about. More can be said, tho, when I get around to its sequel.... Asimov's May robot is clever, and his suggestion of subservience to humans as an ingrained robot trait is new, so far as I know.... Solution Unsatisfactory has a putrid illustration that kept me off of it for a time. Very interesting story, tho; very interesting.... The only fault in Jay Score was that EFR didn't make it quite clear at the end whether the characters had known all along that Jay was a robot; at least, I had to go back and re-read parts before I was sure.... Not all s-f novels, contrary to your implication, need be period pieces. Anyway, the Heinlein chart is fascinating. The thing that surprised me most, after I'd looked at it awhile, was that it all takes place within the span of two centuries. In the past, we're used to a lot happening in a century--except the 1600s, anyway--but we're accustomed to stride over the future in seven-league boots.... Richard Rafael's letter opening the Our Barbarous Descendants debate moved me, after a lapse of some months, to combine that idea with some others I've percolated into the beginnings of a piece of fiction, which beginning, perhaps three pages in length, now reposes in the near-limbo of one of my folders of notes.... Before I pass on to the July issue, I have a protest against your June editorial which I overlooked last paragrap: The fact that ubglub, meaning accept, is derived from the name of the hero Ubgloo would not keep the telepathic impression of what is meant from being ordinarily clear; who, nowadays, when he hears of lynching, pictures in his mind the anti-Tory judge of Virginia, old Charles Lynch? You have a stronger point in the nam-env argument

about conflicting compartmentalizations of the Universe.

#### Methuselah's Children

I liked best of the Heinlein stories so far. Heinlein's manner of handling his material is wonderful in itself, and the material in this case was super-super. But see my remarks on Old Man Mulligan. In addition to the immortality thing. I liked very much Lazarus Long's debate with himself on his long walk on the planet of the Little People. The tale ended as satisfactorily as could have been hoped. Well, it's just studded with good stuff of all varieties, from the domesticated Zhachera to Libb(e)y's inertia-killer.... The See-Saw pretty sorry, especially for van Vogt. Story insufficiently told.... Why won't these guys who write time stories draw a simple diagram to make things consistent? In the Probable Man, the author does pretty well for the most part, but in the beginning of the story, he has two of his hero's enemies killed off by what turns out to have been his returning self, and also, as his hero steps away from the girl toward the machine for his first attempt to return to the future, he feels his later self brush past him. But it is specifically stated that when his later self returns along time, he creates a new branch of time, different from that on which he started out. The other principal objectionable feature is in the idea of any author harboring a hatred of the Germans across a thousand years. Possibly, tho, Bester has racial reasons for that.... Lowndes has already properly criticized the Geometries of Johnny Day. I am reminded of T O'Connor's "Millions for Defense", and faintly nauseated.... We Also Walk Dogs has a wonderful idea in General Services, but, as Heinlein practically admits, he has no worthwhile story to hang on it. The description of the Flower of Forgetfulness is outstanding, but not enough to justify the story's ending. And it's too bad the first story of this sort had to be so poor, because any that comes after will lack the extra something of the novelty of the idea, and have to get along on the strength of its plot and writing.... De Camp's letter was a wow from start to finish. The bum should appear in Brass Tacks more often.

Meteor Legacy-- maybe. But seems to me nothing as disorganized as that plant had to be, with constantly changing parts, could act as an intelligence. And not knowing much about biochemistry, I'm a little skeptical about the wonderful claims of what can be done with living structures to perform the functions of our mechanical and chemical tools.... Biddiver was based upon that misconception, so rife in the cheaper sf mags, of what cosmic rays do in evolution. They think that all you have to do is bombard an individual with cosmic rays and presto change he himself, not his distant descendants, filtered by a long process of selection, becomes the ultimate evolution. Nonsense.... You made one little slip in your headnote to Technocracy Byerke's letter: opinions cannot be scientifically accurate; to say they are is meaningless.... Liked deCamp's best of the book reviews. His term "the extreme diffusionist point of view" of history is probably familiar to him, but presented a new term to me to solidify some ideas around.... Williamson still doing time stories, exploiting his concepts of two-dimensional time. Maybe we would appreciate stories more if the authors weren't given, then we wouldn't complain about one guy always doing a certain kind. Williamson sticks out all over this one, tho, even the Williamson of the Stone from the Green Star. The main thing I object to in his theory is that there are only certain nodes at which the course of events may be changed. Obviously, there were all sorts of times when a very slight change of events would have killed the villain, or let him get away free to America.

Nightfall is lovely. We have to grant Asimov quite a few low-probability things, but they're all admissible under literary license. For example, the story is made more real to us by making the inhabitants of the multi-sunned world talk and act like Americans. The gripping way he gets across his effect is amazing in a guy like Isaac.... Adam and no Eve has fine writing and

a swell plot.... The overlapping Lest Darkness Fall, especially the book version, in a few places, de Camp's article on Hellenistic science was good. Could have been better, it seems.... Short-Circuited Probability is another two-dimensional time tale which requires absolute and alterable types of time. I'm glad Knight brot out the idea of convergent pasts, which has shown up lately; but he does not present it perfectly, as the present which is the result of one past is only similar to, but not identical with, that resulting from another past.... Remarks on Hedonism and Epicureanism were interesting in Test of the Gods, but the story itself, taken as a problem yarn, as it was apparently intended to be, was unfair since the solution was reached thru knowledge of some extra-terrestrial civilizations which the reader had no way of knowing about ahead of time.... In Elsewhere, we have some of the first grapplings toward the idea of three-dimensional "time", since three different directions were taken by the students who volunteered the adventure, altho the professor's exposition of them was based essentially on a picture of a two-dimensional "terrain".

Hate to be spending so much time on time, which probably isn't a subject that fascinates many of you, but the cover story for October is By His Bootstraps, which will probably go down in history as the last strong attempt to base a story on the idea of one-dimensional time (an invariable chain of events). It fails utterly. To point out a few of the most obvious weaknesses: What happened to Diktor after Bob Wilson's furthest-future appearance in the story? Do we assume that he would never, in all his life afterwards, feel an urge to use the Time Gate in a determined effort to go back and break the merry-go-round? Wilson's great willingness to do the inevitable, the feebleness of his attempts to break out of the rut, are very unconvincing all thru the story. Why did Diktor hesitate a minute when asked his name, and why was he puzzled about Wilson's queries regarding Arma? Sorry, Heinlein; bring yourself up to date. The story made fairly interesting reading, tho the plot failed to surprise, Rogers' cover being possibly partly to blame.... Manic Perverse interesting.... Common Sense was that rare thing, a sequel that wasn't a comedown. Possibly because it was really a continuation of Universe, like a full-length novel. For realism in depicting an alien culture, it is worth noting Heinlein's calm manner of dealing with wholesale and retail slaughter. The passages on common sense are reminiscent of Survival. The ending is a little bit unsatisfactory, because it still leaves open the question of what happened to those who were left on the Ship.

Rogers' interiors stink, but Second Stage Lensman gets off to a good start. With this to go on, and a fragment of conversation I heard in the Hotel Chicagoan, I'll bet I've figured out the key to the mystery.. I can almost imagine the way the author will phrase his explanation of why the Arisians went about using the people of Civilization to fight their battle the way they did, instead of outright trying to take over the Galaxy.... The Door is cute and clever, and I seem to see a bit of satire on other similar stories.... Haven't read High Vacua. Remembering Bott's astronomy article in Stardust, I'm a little curious how he made the grade with Astounding, but will wait till the Analyt Lab to see if the present article is worth reading.... Seat of Oblivion is neat.... Beyond All Weapons is a little bit unfair to the reader, but not so much as most such stories. I refer to the manner in which the narrator thruout the story describes himself as having feelings and thinking thots that he actually wouldn't, since he was the Master.... Check your calculations in that editorial, Campbell. You told me once that a spaceship, if properly proportioned, could operate on very inefficient, presentday rocket fuel, and I'm sure now that you were correct. In this editorial, haven't you overlooked the step--rather, cellular--principle?

Nope, couldn't get started on Unknown this time, but we should take care of that next issue. Milt advises the current Mag will give me advice on how to shorten my comments. If it's given in a respectful manner, I'll lend an ear.

DEAR SANTA CLAUS —

Please send:

For Kurland a ream  
or so of good stenals  
for Nucleus.



Elmer Perdue a lady  
friend he can be  
sure of.



Heck Koenig a nice  
gold-framed photograph  
of Ackerman.



And  
some darts to throw  
at it.



Art Widner an  
automobile, not  
a junk heap.



The Dixieon pro-  
motors a nice  
big hall with low-  
cost hotel facilities  
for use in '43.



The NFFP an editor



Don McPhail a million-dollar  
inheritance.



The Brooklyn Bolsheviki some of  
those ball-shaped Christmas tree  
decorations. When the metal  
caps and ring are pulled out,  
a firecracker can be stuck  
into the opening to make  
a peachy bomb.



Doug Webster a set of E.E. Smith  
object-compasses to help him  
keep tab on where his vari-  
ous British pats are.

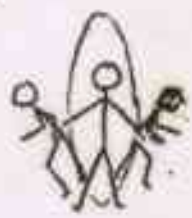


Campbell a couple dozen  
new authors who can do  
good stuff for the  
enlarged Astounding and  
especially Unknown Worlds.



- Jack

And me, Santa Claus?  
All I want is a couple  
of twins, to do half the  
things I'm interested  
in.



Your little friend,  
Jack