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Editorial Note.

A small number of fans in England received some unexpected and very sad news last month with the arrival of the March issue of SPACEWAYS. Since my business is quoting, I quote in part Harry Farmer's words on introducing a poem "Moestitia's Encomium" by Earl Singleton. "Editor's Note: It is Feb. 12, 1941 as I type this dummy page, and in today's mail came notification of the tragic death three days ago of Earl Singleton. Less than a week ago I heard from him last; I had asked him to write a regular column for this magazine and he had agreed, promising to send the first instalment of it within a few days. These two pages--4 and 5--had been held open for it that will never arrive.***Although I never met Earl, our correspondence was steady and the loss is greater to me than most fans will realise. I am positive that he would want me to publish several manuscripts of his I had accepted for

Spaceways. A long poem which was originally intended for a future issue of this magazine is published below, and another poem will appear in the contest issue, as he wished. A third item, his short story "Goddess on His Arm", I feel it is better not to put into print, however, in view of its nature and the tragic circumstances...HVFjr"

Personally I was not lucky enough to have known Singleton, even in the only way I can "know" other fans - through the interchange of letters. I had written him only once. However, from what I know of him, Singleton was one of these fans whom it is a pleasure to hear of in America - he took no part in the fan-feuds. Having studied for three years in the Electrical Engineering Department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he graduated M.Sc., was offered a scholarship by the Maths Department and was doing graduate work for a Ph.D. at the time of his death. Singleton was the editor of one of the latest US fan-magazines - NEPENTHE, devoted to the printing of verse by both fans and pro authors.

And so passes on a fellow fan . . .

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There was not a great deal of comment on the last issue of GA; and so I'm grabbing the chance to include several extracts from letters not dealing directly with anything which has so far appeared. To begin with, the question of intelligence, education & propaganda has been simmering for some while in Ragatzy-Webster letters.

ANTON RAGATZY: "You claim that the more intelligent and/or the better-educated are less influenced by propaganda in the immediate present. Well, this may be so. I know I stated my case, that this was incorrect, but I wish to restate my views, any revision being due to evolution in opinion. * * * * Modern education is naturally tainted slightly with various propaganda of government, nation, and the churches, according to its source. Otherwise, however, it is impartial. Other forces, forces of the contemporary world, in the shape of party propaganda, all tend to divert the individual in their specific direction, and at a time when the individual is insufficiently logical in his reasoning and immature in his intelligence. Now when a person early in life (this refers to the average, you understand) adopts a viewpoint, he usually keeps it, and the longer he keeps it, the less flexible his mind becomes. His philosophy becomes a habit. If you can keep all education impartial, and if you can prevent the individual's access to theoretical or abstract propaganda until he is quite mature in intelligence -- then, and not until then, will you have the opportunity for correct reasoning. I still think education an insecure method of securing unity of opinion, and unity of action. * * * Actually, any mis-

2/ apprehensions which may have appeared in my original comments on the subject were caused by the following 'logical' sequence:-

- (1) The fact that in Nazi Germany, the majority of uneducated were wholly in support of the Nazi policy, and anti-British.
- (2) The fact that in Nazi Germany, the majority of educated were wholly in support of the Nazi policy, and anti-British.
- (3) The fact that in Britain, the majority of uneducated were wholly in support of the British policy, and anti-Nazi.
- (4) The fact that in Britain, the majority of educated were wholly in support of the British policy, and anti-Nazi.
- (5) The facts (1) and (3) can be accounted for by the susceptibility of the uneducated to propaganda.
- (6) The facts (2) and (4) can be accounted for by the susceptibility of the educated to propaganda.
- (7) Recently I have discovered an alternative to (6) --
- (6) The facts (2) and (4) can be accounted for by the economic, commercial or financial interests of the educated. * * * Actually, I believe it a combination of the former (6) and the revised version."

It will be noted that this makes no mention of intelligence, but only of education. Should anyone care to venture to break a lance on either aspect, he will receive a warm welcome here.

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EDWIN MACDONALD, in a letter which kicks off "What do you mean, by Gad, sir!", makes this interesting observation: "By the way, you might ask via the pages of the "Gent", how many fans keep their liking of science-fiction a closely-guarded secret [I could name a few who make no secret of their dislike of it!], & don't let their neighbours, friends (who aren't fans), or more distant relatives, ever see them with a stf. magazine or writing to brother fans, etc. I'm afraid I don't go about with a big badge-"Science-Fiction Fan"--stuck on my lapel: people'd think I was "queer" - the people Ego describes in the "Gent". Perhaps I should have said, how many fans do not keep it a secret?"

This looks like an interesting subject for psychological research. Will readers please discuss it fully in their next letters, becoming as intimate as they feel judicious? Thanks. Incidentally, Edwin the Mac is one of the younger school of fans &, as will be readily seen from his remarks, destined to go further than most.

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Brooding sadly that no letter from young Hopkins had arrived for some time (true: my last one was a bit long), I took to leafing through my vast pile of his past ones...an extremely pleasant task. In one short 16-page effort I found the following sample of the gentlest art, preceded by some rather insulting remarks about sophisticated acquaintances. Mr. George Medhurst, who has also sinned in this respect (Adaptive Ultimate indeed...green hair & carrots dangling in front of noses - huh!) may be interested to learn that the Webster yesterday spent much pleasurable time being bally to certain sophisticated persons' mother (a bracing widow of some 60 summers, whom he once asked if she went to the flicks alone), and she informed him cheerily that after another four years' study at Aberdeen, his best plan would be to carry on at...guess where? Cambridge. Yes. Some people are crazy.

ERIC C. HOPLINS: "Have just remembered the name of that bally ballet fellow:- Constant Lambert, and he's an Enthusiast! [An E. on swing.] But Sir Beecham.....Tut, tut: a sad case. Mind you, he's not above having his little joke even with the adoring public. I well remember the time I went to a Sunday afternoon Beecham Concert to find that old Tom had lightheartedly deleted Mozart's 40th. Symphony and substituted some "Variations upon the theme 'Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree'". True it is, that he also added Mozart's 4th. Violin Concerto to the programme but

3/ neither of these cheery pieces made me cry half as much as the G. Minor Symphony would have. Luckily for the public's morale the chief work, Tchaikowsky's 5th. Symphony, was generously left in and boy! did old Tom swing it! He struts about very statelily, y'know, but when he gets down to business it's really down - and up again like a jack in the box. Jumping around, waving his arms, wiggling his eye-brows (for the orchestra's benefit), mopping his noble brow (for the audience's benefit), he fair radiated youth & energy and roared into the exciting finale, even once emitting an appealing bellow which rang across the hall (Queen's): I did not catch the words, but gather that the general message was "Hit it up, fellers!". They did. We, the poor mugs who paid, collapsed exhausted in our seats, while the Pill King strode triumphantly from the frantic scene. If you've never seen Beecham perform then you really must before you die; even if you must drag him from retirement."

Oh London Town's a fine town - and London's sights are rare. Eh, Eric ?

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And now Dicky-bird Medhurst. As I expected, it was about 2 or 3 days after I stencilled the last ish that word came from him of a large & lavish Peace between the Youd & the Medhurst. Good - it had to be. As I quote the following passage it must be remembered that RGM is really, as Yorick says, "a most saintly fellow". He ambles through life dripping benevolence on all his fellow men - except the Smith. So does the Webster. As you will see, the War Against Smith is a matter of deadly seriousness: 'twill be pistols soon.

R. G. MEDHURST: "Quote from Smith in "F.M.":- 'Rather a curious point you raise about my sticking to surnames in letters. I think myself that it's the last remnant of my secondary school education, coupled with shyness. It doesn't extend, of course [of course], to verbal communication, in other words, speech. '****Assure you I haven't forged this! Couldn't possibly have brought myself to forge that last horrible circumlocution. Well, look here, don't you think this momentous announcement should be published, in, say, G.A.? Or would it be ethical to get Ray's permission first? [He was told to object if he objected: had quite enough time to drop us a p.c. if he did.] Which sentence inaugurates my Campaign for Drawing the Fangs of Smith. Splash him all over the place as "Ray", and never again let innocent fandom be terrorised by the monstrous personality fabled to hide under the grim nom-de-guerre of "Smith". We already have a "Don", and anyway "Ray" is much more suitable for letting Light into that Dark Place.* * * Hereby demand adequate space-allowance in G.A. for my Campaign, or else. All the best, G." ...Call it the CDF'S, men.

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CONSENSUS OF OPINION DEPT. C of O would tend to indicate that the name The Gent for GA finds fairly general favour. So be it, gentlemen, so be it. The Gent. Still, I may be allowed my lonely lewd snicker over Art Williams' suggestion, the Gent-less Tart? Not quite that touch of the aesthetic which is in CSY's original suggestion; but funny, to simple minds.

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Some comments on the last issue, from, firstly---

ANTON RAGATZY: " '...real leisure for worthy objects. Such as politics...' (Hopkins). This is a fine example of intellectual snobbery. We find the whole process in a logical order as follows:-

- (1) Of this community, a certain number of individuals, either for material gain or from mental inclination, dabble in the science of government, known as politics.
- (2) The remainder of the community are known as the politically ignorant mass, and are allergic to any serious indulgence in politics.
- (3) The present system of society places the responsibility for choice of government upon the interested and uninterested, the capable and incapable.
- (4) This responsibility enables certain parties, individuals, or groups, to make use of the mass to lend weight to their political schemes or policies.
- (5) Many 'intellectuals' have noticed this problem, and offer, as a solution, the

4/ education and "persuasion" of the people in politics, thus making the whole community politically conscious.

(6) This step would mean that the gap between individual and individual, party and party, would widen, parties would increase, and the community would be dissociated into bickering, quarrelling little groups, each pulling in a different direction, would increase political insecurity and, in other words, would make a damned mess of the whole affair.

(7) All this will be the result in the present state of affairs. But since the recognised necessity is to change this, why base your reforms upon it? If the individual is not interested in politics, it should not be necessary to waste time 'persuading' him in order to ensure that problem 4) disappears.

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And secondly, DONALD HOUSTON: "Re the current issue of G.A. With this issue it improves in my estimation 100%. In fact the only thing that's wrong with it is its 'nickname' & I hereby put in a vote for it to be changed to the Gent.***In this issue I see that a certain Mr. Hanson [just call him Maurice Hanson - we'll know who you mean] picks Unknown's fine stories to pieces, as far as I can see he really has nothing against it except for the 'whacky' yarns. I would advocate a second reading of his criticisms. I grant that some of these are rotten, but what is wrong with "The Mathematics of Magic" [nothing - except that I read it & haven't the slightest idea what it was about], or for that matter "The Indigestible Triton"? [quote JFB, 3:7:40-- "... 'Indigestible Triton,' which I enjoyed, despite the shoddy writing."] Again, "Lest Darkness Fall" was not one of the 'sinister' types of yarns, yet it is one of the best stories that ever appeared between "Tuk's" covers. I agree with him over the matter that the sinister yarns are the best, but not always, no, not always. As an example of this I give "But Without Horns". I see that he tends to favour this yarn but personally I consider it to be one of the worst tales of the year. Then as to the short stories. That he could see in "All Roads" & "Yarn Dark Places" beats me, & "It" wasn't much better. In direct contrast to these are "The Fruit of Knowledge" & "The Devil's Rescue", two fine shorts, but which are not even mentioned by Mr. Hanson."

I print this as an exercise in comparative criticism. Comparative, because it should be compared with the two samples, by Hopkins & Hanson, last issue, purely as criticism, not with any regard to the conclusions reached. And also because of the fact, to which most older fans are blind, & which I have been deliberately ignoring, that while Houston is a fairly representative sample of the majority of Fido readers, Hanson, Hopkins, Ragatzy, Burke, & the others...are not. A pity.

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PC from CS: "You will, I trust, appreciate the exigencies of the editorial life which are forcing me to withdraw your instalment of "The Road to Fame", even after two pages of it had been stencilled. This withdrawal has nothing to do with the merit of your writing, which is at the least adequate, but is occasioned by editorial realisation of the insuperable difficulties lying ahead for those who would follow after. I am ultimating Smith to do the whole thing himself, saving which it will be abandoned. THE SURVIVORS has actually been abandoned (after my Part 3 had been stencilled); Bill Temple has flatly refused to write it in the bath, which is the only spare time he has now. Expect soon a nice chatty letter on the cost of stencils!"

This raises an intriguing point. Will all those whom I haven't already asked kindly let me know what (if anything) they read in bath. Statistics later.

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Your Uncle Doug lets down his hair & tells a bedtime story: "Remember a scheme for circulating MSS? I asked if anyone would care to join in...Doughty, Holmes & Houston said Yes. Being experienced, I wouldn't let mere apathy deter me. But, tho the authors were the antithesis of the readers in consideration & helpfulness, due to there being a war on only four MSS were obtained between them all. So, dear readers? For elaborate figures on the number of authors asked, apply DHouston, or.....DW"