

GIMBLE

#2, is published occasionally by Ted Johnstone, at 1503 Rollin St, South Pasadena, California, to serve as a vehicle for the relation of certain adventures befalling Tedron of Methylonia. Comments appreciated.

TEDRON IN CONQUEROR

West of the desert, beyond the plains of Conistan, lies the Western Ocean and the pirate city of Conqueror. Conqueror was not a spot for the casual tourist to visit, and news came most often in the form of entertainment by an occasional traveler. And one such, a short fair-haired man who gave his name as Tedron, was singing one night, with a borrowed lute, in The Captain's Balls, a dim-smokey tavern not far from the waterfront.

"Queen Liz of New America
Is beautiful and bad,
For she runs wild around the court
And drives her husband mad.
He does not speak to her all day
But yet she never weeps;
She spends the hours with any of
The twenty men she keeps!"

There was a roar of laughter from the customers as Tedron launched into a closing chorus:

"I've come from far away,
O'er miles of land and sea,
To tell you of the things I've seen
And all the places I have been;
And now at last my song is through,
One silver each I beg of you!"

He slapped a final chord from the strings and held out his hat in an ancient gesture. Over a score of accurately tossed coins landed in the hat, and as many more tinkled on the floor. Tedron scooped them up with his free hand, after handing the lute back to its owner, and announced to the crowd, "That's all for tonight, but come again tomorrow." He poured the coins into a purse at his belt, and bowed low to the crowd before making his exit.

Once outside, Tedron stepped into a shadowed niche between buildings and reopened his purse. He pulled a larger and fuller one from a hiding place under one arm and poured most of his recent profits into it, leaving only a few coins to satisfy anyone who might lift the small purse. Glancing up at the moon, Tedron decided to hit one more tavern before quitting for the night. He looked down the street towards the dark waters, smelling of fish and tar, then turned his back to the sea breeze that blew up the bay and faced the rising hills beyond. Up there the ships' officers met in more expensive and cleaner taverns to discuss their latest voyages and exchange stories. Tedron began his climb up the steep streep, considering his repertoire and piecing together a few more verses.

At last he was standing in the patch of light which lay in the street, a golden welcome that shown through the half-open door of The Sea Raider. Within, joints of meat turned slowly, spitted over a blazing fire, and men sat about much as they did in the dirtier places down the hill, but here the food and drink were better and more expensive, and there were two serving maids. Fairly comely lasses they were, Tedron observed, though rather beefy.

A brief look through the door, and Tedron decided this would be his last stop. He entered and took a small table near the corner, preparing to listen to the tenore of the conversation, the better to choose songs that would be more likely to earn him money than a clout on the head. Sitting in his chosen place, he was looking casually around the room when suddenly his eye was caught by a familiar face. Seated to one side of the fire, his great soft boots up on the table, a mug of ale in his hand, sat Rontel of Linn. Tedron knew this big blond barbarian, who had relieved him of his horse some two days walk from Conqueror, and was aware that this big man had a streak of native intelligence which, while far less to be reckoned with than his mighty two-handed sword, served to give him a definite edge on the average barbarian.

He sat there, feet on the table, mug in hand, unashamedly letting the younger serving-maid make eyes at him. From time to time he would favor her with a casual sneer, which seemed to affect her strangely. The big man appeared to be in a good humor tonight, and unlikely to go out of his way for a fight, but Tedron decided it would be better to wait until the barbarian left before calling attention to himself.

Then, as suddenly as a bolt of lightning from a cloudless sky, a streak of silver flashed through the open doorway and a knife struck the wall only inches from Rontel's great shaggy head. The barbarian's survival-trained reflexes drove him to the floor the instant the dagger struck, and it dropped to the floor beside him. But no ordinary dagger was this -- as it hit the floor it seemed to bounce, springing at its original target, Rontel. He leaped to his feet and snatched up the sturdy oaken table on which they had been resting short moments ago, to use as a make-shift shield. The knife, in its upward trajectory, glanced off a beam in the ceiling, then plummeted down again.

As Rontel wrenched a leg from the table and batted away the strangely motivated steel sliver, the men in his vicinity moved outwards to form a loose circle at a safe distance. As the knife, struck in mid-air, circled around in a swift search for an opening, one man casually remarked, "Must say, it's a new method. But probably expensive. Give me the crossbow any time."

The battle was fairly joined by now, but it looked as if the mighty barbarian could hold out only temporarily, though it promised to be an exciting time. Tedron looked thoughtfully at the crowd who watched, fascinated. Then he rose, crossed to the man who had spoken and stood silent behind him for a moment.

"The barbarian seems to be making a good fight of it," he said at last.

"Fair," said the man casually. "Won't last an hour, though."

Tedron considered. "Oh, I don't know... He could probably last two, if he didn't get rattled."

"Think so? I'll wager fifty silvers he'll be dead within the hour."

"Well, you're probably right -- but I'm a gambling man, what odds will you give me?"

"Five to one he won't last an hour."

"Fair enough," Tedron agreed. Then he paused a moment. "There's no chance of his winning, of course."

"Of course not. There wouldn't be any way of stopping that thing."

"You're right. But... let's just say, if he should win, maybe... twenty to one?"

"Twenty to one?" The man was on his guard at once.

"Not that there's really any chance, of course," Tedron added quickly, "but it's a nice thought."

The man laughed. "Done!" he said. "Let's see your money."

Tedron turned his back for a moment, and when he again faced the man he held his purse of silver. "Fifty silvers, you said?"

The man nodded, and Tedron poured the small chips of bright metal into his hand. The sound attracted some attention and interest, and Tedron explained that this was just a little side bet. This aroused more interest in a moment, and shortly there was a cluster of men wishing to risk the odds for a portion of Tedron's money.

The wagering slackened briefly at one time, but then Rontel's guard was seen to falter momentarily and the dagger, darting in like a vicious dragonfly, cut a gash in the barbarian's shoulder. At this, the betting picked up rapidly.

At last every silver in Tedron's store was on wager, as well as his rapier and cloak, valued at one hundred silvers together. Then, all his wealth on the board, Tedron begged leave of his 'honorable companions' for a moment. He sidled through the crowd, ignoring the temptation of loose-hanging purses, and made his way to the inner edge of the circle of on-lookers. It was becoming increasingly obvious that even the tremendous stamina of the great barbarian was being sorely tried. Tedron, his entire investment now at stake, pushed his way slowly around the ring till he was at the wall. Cupping his hands to his mouth, he leaned forward and whispered intently, "The blade, Rontel; try to break the blade!" but the barbarian gave no sign that he had heard. Once more Tedron repeated his words, and, though no sign was given, Rontel's fending strokes with the now-battered oaken table-leg became more uniformly directed downwards. Tedron quickly saw that the acute ears of the great man had heard his advice, and began pushing back towards where his money lay.

No sooner had he stepped up to the table where the wagers were piled than a shout went up from the watchers. Tedron sprang up on a chair and looked over the heads of the crowd.

Rontel, with a mighty blow, had driven the dagger to the floor, and had managed to plant a huge well-shod foot on the blade. Now he dropped his oaken club and seized the hilt of the knife with both hands. Shifting all his weight on the foot which held the blade to the floor, he tugged upwards on the hilt. His knuckles whitened, great cords of muscle stood out on his wrists and fore-arms, and then with a crack like a breaking spine, the blade snapped. There was a moment of absolute silence as the barbarian, dripping sweat and blood, slowly lifted his foot. The blade lay there, just a broken piece of metal, without a trace of the strange power that had directed it. Rontel, after a moment, casually kicked the shard into the fireplace and tossed the hilt after it. Then he righted the now three-legged table, sat on the bench against the wall, leaned back, balanced his feet on the unsteady platform, and called for ale.

There was a ragged cheer from a part of the crowd of spectators, but a number of them were grumbling as they counted out their payments to Tedron, at twenty-to-one. At last, almost bulging with wealth, Tedron sought his erstwhile acquaintance.

The barbarian looked at him coldly, then sneered civilly. "Yes, I remember you. Your horse collapsed just outside the city gates. Noticed you were taking side bets then. Loose much?"

"No," said Tedron, "in fact, I won. I was betting on you. You know," he went on, "that was a very good fight. Do you think you could do it again in another tavern tomorrow night? We would split the winnings, of course."

Rontel laughed. "No, my little friend, I think not. I believe that tonight's little show was arranged for by a wizard I know of whose daughter suddenly had a blond baby. But this flying dagger was probably his most potent weapon. Now that it has failed he will decide to just be glad his grandson has such an illustrious father. And besides, what need have I of your petty moneys?"

Tedron smiled depreciatingly, thinking of the more than eight thousand silvers that rested in various places about his person. As he rose and departed, he recalled that Rontel had neglected to thank him for his advice in the thick of the fight. But then he decided philosophically that he had been well-rewarded anyway, and perhaps the barbarian hadn't heard him after all. And so the wealthiest minstrel in Conqueror departed, and made his way back to the inn which was his place of residence, being especially careful to avoid a direct route and to take numbers of sharp turns around corners in quick succession in order not to encounter anyone who had witnessed his success in The Sea Raider and might wish to share in it.

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The next morning Tedron appeared in the great marketplace of Conqueror, a large open place down by the waterfront among the great buildings. Here every independent ship had a small area, and here the loot of their voyages was disposed of with hours of haggling with merchants from the north, or handled at the Great Auction. From the block at the center of the great square, gems worth a king's life were sold beside pewter cups, and ships were sold, and slaves.

A large red-faced man stood on the block this morning, declaiming to the crowd the wondrous values which would be theirs for the mearest pittance, and great treasures they would be permitted to steal from him for whatever they wished to pay. Only yesterday, he swore, he personally had sold a locked sea-chest for seventy-five silvers, and when the new owner forced open the lock, he beheld the silken hangings that had once graced the palace of the Lord Leader Of Linn himself. And who knew what riches would be given away this day?

Tedron listened, fascinated, as the man's spiel drew to a close. Then the first item was carried up and placed beside the auctioneer. He announced it as a keg of rare wine from a shipment intercepted en route to Tarpinia, and a voice from the crowd inquired loudly how much the auctioneer had left in the keg. But the man on the block began the age-old chant of the auction, accepting a few spirited bids, boosting them and crying the injustice of men who would take such a rare item for only one hundred -- one hundred and ten -- one hundred and twenty five -- any more? -- going once -- going twice -- is there no man among you with a palate to bid one-fifty? -- gone! for one hundred twenty-five silvers.

Tedron only watched the bidding for some time, noting that the auctioneer somehow always managed to receive a fair price for the goods, until a new allotment of merchandise came up for bids. He made some bids on a grey cloak with lewd pictures embroidered in the lining, but lost it to an unreasonably high bid, and was wondering what would come up next when a cry went up from the watchtower nearby.

A great bell began clanging, and word spread through the crowd. Tedron caught the words "Tarpinian fleet off-shore" and trotted over to the high embankment. Making his way up the crowded stone steps to the top, he pushed to the crenelated edge. There, floating just out of range of the shore batteries, sat a good dozen ships of the line, flying the Tarpinian lion ensign. Guessing what their mission was, he made his way out to the auction again.

And just in time, for there, just going up for opening bids, was what he had been searching for. The auctioneer identified the item as having been the personal property of the Queen of Trantor, in perfect condition, almost unused. Tedron raised a hand and called "Three hundred."

"Four hundred," bid another man across the court, but before the auctioneer could acknowledge the bid it was topped. Tedron bid seven-fifty, and was topped immediately by three other bids. The amounts rose; one thousand, eleven-fifty, twelve-fifty, thirteen, fifteen, seventeen, eighteen-fifty... "Two thousand," called Tedron. The auctioneer picked up the words and repeated them, exhorting the other men in the audience with the ability to appreciate this item to think of it not as a casual purchase but an investment, but there were no higher bids.

"Sold! To the gentleman with two thousand silvers and the luck of the gods! And congratulations sir, she'll make a fine wife!" The crowd roared at this sally, and Tedron laughed good-naturedly with them. He paid the auctioneer, received his receipt, and accepted the end of the rope that was tied to his purchase's neck.

"Does she come with clothes?" he asked the auctioneer.

"Just a robe," he answered, picking up one from a pile. "That'll be fifty extra."

Tedron shrugged and paid, then handed the robe to the girl he had just bought. "Put this on," he said, "and take that ridiculous rope off. It doesn't suit you."

"Oh sire," she said, as they left the market place and headed back towards the inn where Tedron was staying, "you look like a very kind gentleman, and I'm sure you'll give me my freedom."

"Nonsense," said Tedron cheerfully. "You cost me two thousand and fifty silvers, and one doesn't throw that kind of money away. But I probably won't sell you again — I doubt if I could break even on the deal — and if you behave yourself I may even marry you sometime."

With this slight assurance, she remained docile as they came to the inn and went upstairs to Tedron's quarters. Here he sat her on the bed and looked at her consideringly. "I believe that robe will do you for the time being. We must leave Conqueror soon, and before then I have some last-minute business to transact. Wait here, and I shall send one of my servants around for you." He bowed politely to her and departed, locking the door behind him.

Once out in the street he began walking down towards the waterfront again. He stopped to toss a few coins to a beggar, and inquired, "Have you heard about the fleet in the bay?"

"Indeed, kind sir," the old man quavered, "Tarpinian; they say, with a detachment of Marines from New America."

"And what are they here for?"

"Ah, news travels fast here, kind sir," said the beggar, "but sometimes just too fast for my old ears to catch."

Tedron understandingly dropped another handful of silver in the cup. The old man's eyes widened. "It may be that they are here to insure the safety of the Duke of Methylonion and to escort him to an emergency conference with His

Majesty Paulus Edwardum of New America. But they can't find him."

"The New American Middle Guardsmen are very good," said Tedron. "I'm sure they'll find him soon."

Thanking the beggar he continued on down the street, turning at random from time to time, listening. At last he heard the sound of heavy boots clattering on the cobblestones, and the voices of men. As he came round the corner he saw two soldiers in New American grey uniforms entering an inn. He stopped at the entrance and leaned against the wall as he waited for them to come out.

When they did, he stepped out in front of them. Keeping his head down and his voice low, he said, "You're looking for the Duke of Methylonia?" It was more a statement than a question. "What's he worth to you?"

"Do you know where he is?" asked the first soldier.

"What's it worth?" Tedron repeated mysteriously.

"One hundred silvers in your heathen currency," snapped the soldier, pulling out a small purse. "Now, where is he?"

Tedron grasped the purse and weighed it in his palm, then looked up at the soldier with a smile. "Hello," he said winningly.

"Your lordship!" they said, as Tedron pocketed the pouch of silver. "We've been looking all over for you. They said in Cliff Beach you had headed west, but you hadn't been seen in Diaspar, so we came here. Now we're supposed to take you back to the Emperor, right away. There's a whole fleet in the harbor waiting for you."

"I know, I know," said Tedron, "and I shall come along directly. I really appreciate your concern. But would one of you be so kind as to go to my inn — The Sign Of The Double Angle — and pick up my few possessions? Here's the key. And be careful;" he added as the second soldier turned to go, "I picked up a rare and valuable item at the auction today, and I want you to be especially careful with it."

The soldier saluted and trotted off. As he disappeared, Tedron looked over the other's shoulder and said, "Ah. There's your commanding officer now. I imagine he'll be very proud of you for finding me."

"Where?" The soldier turned to look, and when he turned around again Tedron was gone. He thought he saw a cloak whip around the next corner, but when he ran to look, the cross-street was empty.

* * * * *

And so it was that the setting sun that evening shone on the Tarpinian fleet sailing out of the harbor of Conqueror with one unexpected passenger in the royal cabin, and also shone on a figure on horseback many miles away, just beginning the eastward passage of the Plains of Conistan. Tedron, Duke of Methylonia and sometime minstrel, was heading for a conference.

-the end-

for the time being...

FREE STATE OF WILHELMSBURG
Wilhelmsburg

ANTARES REPUBLIC

La Cañada Group (Flintridge, Alpha)
Sepo (claimed)

KINGDOM OF TARPINIA

Tarpinia
(5) Yerevan
Parkandia
The Meadows
Uin
Rhondor
(24) Brooksdale
Sunland
(25) SŪran
(26) Sun City

(20) FREE STATE OF HOBBITON

CITY OF CRIMZOIDIA

(33) Central Control
Fandom
Hollywood
Washington
Palos Verdes
Parks: Luna, Mars, Earth, Venus
(1) Ministry of Records
(2) Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(3) Ministry of The Ship
(4) Ministry of The People

GEMINI REPUBLIC (NEW GREENLAND)
Torrenta
Sepo (claimed)

FUTURANIAN DEMOCRACIES
Futurania

on the following two pages:

A MAP OF COVENTRY (WITH CRIMZOIDIA)

UNITED REPUBLICS OF
NEW AMERICA (EMPIRE
OF BUCKLAND)

Cowpertowne
(13) Cowpertown
(14) Leesburg
Collinsia
Methylonia
Rhūn
Rhovanion
(16) Trantor
Eriador
(15) New Richmond
Isengrad
Gondor
(18) Osgiliath
Stanberia
(17) New London
Buckland
(19) Brandy Hall
La Cañada Group (Rowania)
Wilhelmshire

(29) Ellingrad

DUCHY OF PHILATEA
Victoria

EMPIRE OF LINN

Crimson
(21) Diaspar
Kentonina
(31) Xanadu
Lankmar
(22) Lankmar
Eight Cities
(23) Linn
Polar Regions
Evermania
(28) Klesh

KINGDOM OF NEW SCOTLAND

New Scotland

(11) Conqueror

EMPIRE OF WESTMARCH

Carolinia
(7) Columbia
Prussia
(8) Kiel
(32) Michel Delving
Pomerania
Strelitz
(27) Ottostadt

CONFEDERATED REPUBLICS

Trensénia
(12) New Ilium
(6) Jerandia
Bushania
Glorietta
(9) Arroyo Grande
Queensland
(10) Disney
Assyria
(30) Venusburg

THE MEADOWS GROUP

PARKANDIA

BUSHANTIA

TARPINIA

Tarpinian Sea

TRENSENIA

LA CANADA GROUP

TORRENTA

SEPO

WILHELMSHIRE

GLORIETTA

CAROLINIA

POMERANIA

PRUSSIA

Charleston Bay

NEW SCOTLAND

New Glasgow Bay

POLAR REGIONS

HOLLYWOOD SECTOR

FANDOM SECTOR

WASHINGTON SECTOR

PALOS VERDES SECTOR

VENUS PARK

EARTH PARK

MARS PARK

LUNA PARK

FUTURANIA

COVENTRY

EST/24/M



AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF COVENTRY

by

Paul Stanbery

COVENTRY was the name applied to a group of islands in the Arctic Ocean off the northern coast of Norway, located in an ice-free area of temperate climate, maintained by volcanic action under the surrounding water. The first known inhabitants were a group of Hittite tribesmen who migrated there from Central Asia. They settled in the isolated Tarpinian Islands and established a civilization there which came to resemble those of Asia and the Near East.

The second wave of immigration, which settled on the largest island in the group, began after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, when a shipload of political refugees from the Lombards bound for Britain landed in Coventry due to a navigational error. A group of these arrivals, finding the islands ideally suited for colonization, returned to Italy to bring more of their fellows. The period of settlement (500-900 A.D.) was one of feudal chaos.

The new arrivals found already settled in certain cloistered areas a group of strange, civilized men, who, according to their records, had arrived by ship after sailing across the polar sea from a group of countries which were not known to the later immigrants. These people kept much to themselves in their own regions but the new arrivals made use of many constructions they had built but abandoned, and many of their regional names are still used¹. In time, some of the more barbarous of these ancient occupants mixed with the new arrivals.

By 1000 A.D. the Empire of Coventry had been established among the second arrivals and an era of civilization began which reached its height about 1200. Around 1400, however, a Mongol horde invaded and destroyed the Empire, which went through a feudal period. In 1550 a new group of Europeans, the Mongloidians, arrived, and set up a government in Linn². The Trensensians, one remnant of the old Empire, set up a government with Tarpinia; and the Mongloidians allied with Stanberia, another remnant.

In 1680, Europe first took an interest in Coventry at a Council of Allies, at which it was decided the islands should be controlled by a bonafide European ruler. The Baron Bertram Fredlov von Quantastan, lord of a small bankrupt German province, was chosen, and the Baron took up residence in Westmarch, which had been relatively uninhabited during the days of the Empire, where he began building the city Columbia. In 1694 a Russian nobleman, Duke Ahmed of Suva Herzog and his retainers, fleeing for their lives, arrived in what the Duke thought was Scotland. Finding the natives there, descendants of the Mongol invaders, made better pirates than farmers, the Duke employed them in the traditional methods of pillage, from which his country, New Scotland, gained a national income.

During the 18th Century a great number of wars were fought around southern (or Outer) Trensensia and Pomerania, in which Westmarch, Tarpinia, New Scotland, Trensensia, Stanberia and Mongloidia all took part. This period was brought to a close by the War Rules Convention of 1800, held in Yerevan, capital city of Tarpinia. As a result of this treaty, national boundaries were established by the Conference of

1. i.e., Buckland, Rivendell, Gondor, the Shire, Brandy Hall, Rhun, etc.

2. 1550 is known as Year One in Coventry Reckoning.

New Ilium¹, and an age of international imperialism began.

During this period the Republic of Tarpinia² fought to establish an empire over the opposition of the United Republics of New America³. When faced with the threat of war over Isengrad Province in 1850, New America influenced the Kingdoms of Tarpinia and Jerandia to secede, forcing the Republic to collapse. Later, Tren- and Bushania joined with the Republic of Glorietta to re-establish the R.T.'s domains, which they did by re-purchasing the territory divided among New America's allies at the First Treaty of Yerevan, or taking it by force. The ruling dynasty in New America abdicated and almost all New American territory was claimed by Glorietta. Finally the Kingdom of Tarpinia, objecting to the Trensenian Imperialist government, seceded, and the Duchy of Stanberia, last remnant of New America, allied with New Scotland, which had also been ravaged by the Gloriettans; the Free States of Robertstown and Wilhelmsburg; and the Empire of Linn, to form the Stanberian Republic. The Gloriettan Army smashed the Army of the Republic and occupied its last province, Mongloidia-Kentonina, at the Battle of Claremont about 1875.

After a few political attempts to unseat Glorietta, final action was taken by the new Buckland Republic (later the Empire of Buckland) in the War for Stanberian Independance, which began in 1900, and ended in 1902, when the Republic of Glorietta was divided among the allies at the Treaty of Brooksdale.

With the death of Emperor Herman I of Westmarch, seeds for the War of 1907 were sown. Gladys, his daughter, was poisoned by Alexander, his nephew; and Herman's son, Robert, was forced to flee to Europe. Buckland offered the crown to the Duke of Stralitz, who turned it down. Alexander was enabled to seize the throne when the Antares Republic invaded Westmarch and under his command, was repelled. In 1904 his government gained recognition from all the nations of Coventry save New Scotland, which, because of their loss of Styria to Westmarch some years before, and the defeat of their allies, the Antarians, was bitter. Alexander promptly made war on New Scotland and defeated it that year. In 1907 he invaded Linn with the pretext of establishing order and a seaport on the Baranduin. But with war declared upon him and his allies by Buckland he soon found himself involved in a Coventry-wide struggle. By 1909 Columbia was taken by the allies, Conqueror⁵ had capitulated, Trensenia was occupied and Alexander had been assassinated by Prince Robert, who had been serving as a regular soldier in the Army of Buckland.

Order was thus restored and in 1910 Buckland supervised the establishment of the Coventrian Empire, an international organization which reigned over years of peace until 1921, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics invaded and established rule over the islands.

The Bleak Years of Soviet tyranny (1921-1974) were ended when the Russo-Chinese War began in 1970, bringing the whole world into World War III (1970-1971). By the end of the Russo-Chinese struggle in 1976, Russia, exhausted physically and ruined economically by years of atomic and ground warfare, had lost her outer republics to the now-independent satellites; China had reverted to feudal empire under Jenga the Mongol, only to be digested in the Panamerican-Australasian anschluss in

1. The capital city of Trensenia, which occupies, with its suburbs, a large peninsula at the base of the Terra Fortunina (Trensenian Peninsula).
2. A union formed by the Free State of Tarpinia (Trensenia and Tarpinia), Jerandia, Bushania, Glorietta, Sparta, and parts of what is now Tranter.
3. A union between the Confederate States of Westmarch, Stanberia, and Linn.
4. The kingdoms of New Scotland and Trensenia.
5. Capital city of New Scotland, surrounded on all sides by mountains, except for the narrow sea entrance to the bay.

1977, to form the state of Oceania; and Coventry found herself masterless. In 1974 the Tarpinian and Stanberian governments-in-exile¹ decided to return to Coventry and re-establish the Coventranian Empire, so they returned peacefully that year to build again.

The return of the exiles, however, was marred by the arrival of two men. In 1978 Patrich Hindenburg, a descendant of Westmarch's founder through the royal family of Prussia², who had been unable to find himself a position in the post-war political rubble of Germany³, arrived at the ruins of Columbia and began to re-build the city, claiming the title of Emperor of Westmarch. Subscribers to his plan, refugees from Germany, began arriving.

In 1979 an agent of the United States of Panamerica, a Canadian named Robert Harrison, arrived to establish bases for his country in the islands. To substantiate his claims, he brought with him a group of colonists, who settled in Trensena. In 1980 a series of small-scale military campaigns were undertaken by the Stanberians to keep his colonists out of their land. They met with success upon the completion of the campaigns in 1982. In 1986 Harrison successfully formed⁴ the Confederated Republics of Phobias⁵ and began preparing for an action against Linn, who, meanwhile, had given power to an influential banker, Consan Deglet, who had been exiled by the Mongloidian dynasty in 1983. The need for strong leadership at such time brought the Deglet family (later called Linn) to power in 1984. In 1988, Harrison made war on Linn and was repulsed, with Linn gaining New Scotland as well. In 1990 this Second Settlement War ended and in 1994 New Scotland won its independence, headed by the pretended to the French throne, Frederick.

With the death of Hindenburg in 1998 and the return of the Westmarch pretender, Alexander Fredlov, a new era in Coventranian history began. It was marked by a series of useless and destructive wars with which involvement would be too tedious to undertake here. They continued until about 2110, when the Antarctic Coventry Project interests became strongly felt. Meantime, great events were going on in the rest of the world.

"Harriman [Enterprises, founded by Delos Davis Harriman] did manage to send a rocket to the moon in 1978. Through this voyage the age of interplanetary imperialism was born. Harriman set up [the Harriman Lunar Corporation] for the exploitation of the moon. This project was very successful and consequently made everyone concerned a lot of money, without which, I might add, space travel would have been a dismal failure.

"...In 1985 [before the Terran Federation was formed] the Wingrad Expedition had reached Mars and two other...expeditions reached Venus... sponsored by Fowler Schocken Associates."⁶

Schocken Associates head Mitchell Courtenay's son, Craye D'Courtenay, married into the Harriman family millions and, by other advantageous marriages, shares

1. The Stanberian emperors were constantly returning to their homeland, only to be sought out by the Soviets and shot.
2. The southern portion of the Montrose Valley (Westmarch proper) is called Prussia; the northern, Carolina, and between them runs the Savannah (Verdugo) River.
3. Hindenburg was a relative of the famous German militarist and Weimar Republic President, Paul von Hindenburg.
4. The nations forming the CRP were those of the Republic of Tarpinia.
5. 'Phobius' was the name the USP applied to its holdings in Coventry.
6. Eclipse: The Story of the Rebellion and Independence of the Venusian Colonists, by Stanton F. Chamberlain; volume I of The Theory of Colonial Expansion, Crown Press, Brandy Hall, 675 C.R. Used by permission.

in the Taunton Associates and Pendergast Biggs' vaults were secured so that a magnificent fortune was eventually controlled by one man, William Kartr, heir of both families.

But, barely twenty years after the empire-building began, in 1990, it began to collapse. The Antarctic colonies of the Terran Federation rebelled at political control by outside forces and within two months after the outbreak of hostilities expelled all Panamerican forces from the white continent. Under the leadership of Executive General Dennis Murphey all commerce with the outside world, save that which entered through the newly acquired colonies of Australia and New Zealand, and Little America, was cut off. Although the Federation was sure Antarctica would starve or freeze in its isolation, they were proved wrong by the secret beginnings of an era of scientific progress unequalled in human history. By use of Malcolm McKay's thermoelectrum coils and the application of force fields through the Ledbetter experiments, a world of domed cities sprang up on the ice cap and hydroponic gardens bloomed where only lichens grew before. Ledbetter himself was one of many prominent scientists rescued by the Antarcticans from the anti-scientific riots of the Civil War raging in America from 2010 to 2013 between a political-religious organization, The New Crusade¹ and the Panamerican government. When the prophet-leader of the rebellion had himself elected President in 2016, the Panamerican government was exiled to Greenland.

Later, in 2020, the Antarcticans were approached by Admiral E.K. Daniels, representative of the Venus Republic, a new planetary entity which was looking for help in its rebellion against the Federation. On May 17, 2022, the United Republics of Antarctica allied with the Venusian colonists and Executive General John Bellamy Harrison² ordered the bombing of Buenos Aires. In 2028, the Antarcticans gave the President-in-Exile of the USP shelter in New Zealand when his pleasure-city capital (established by the Tri-Planets Corporation) was wiped out by the religious fanatics. Meanwhile the Federation, from its capital at Bermuda, carried on the Venus War until a year later, when Mars also won its independence, and the Federation armies, commanded by the same William Kartr mentioned above, capitulated. By the terms of the peace treaty, Mars and Venus were granted their independence and Antarctica gained Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, along with South Africa. The Federation collapsed shortly after, leaving Asia to become the Panasian Empire under Jenga's descendants, and take Australia from the Antarcticans; and leaving Europe to divide up into petty states which tried to colonize Free Africa and South America.

William Kartr, by now a man without a country but with considerable compensation, travelled to England, where he married Princess Elizabeth and became Prince Consort, adding considerably to the royal coffers. Two sons came of the union: the future King Edward IX and Tyrell Seaborne³. Tyrell was a strange young man of eccentric whims, who once, when on a historical binge, while browsing through the family trees, ran across a record that he was descended from one Sidney⁴, brother of the Emperor Alexander I, of a little country still existing in the Coventranian Islands called Westmarch, and that he himself, if his brother permitted, could claim the imperial throne.

1. Led by one Nehemiah Scudder, another heir to the Pendergast Biggs estate.

2. No relation to the afore-mentioned Robert.

3. Named after D. D. Harriman's father-in-law.

4. Sidney married an Austrian contessa; they moved to Paris after World War I; their daughter married a Ukrainian, Kelv Katar, who in turn had a son, Edwin, who became a clerk on the Harriman Enterprises staff, changed his name to Carter, and married the boss's niece, Diana, in one of the great romances of the latter half of the century; their son, Lincoln, who changed his name a number of times, finally settling on Kartr, married Barbara D'Courtenay and had a son, William.

After being informed that his brother much preferred the English climate to that of the Arctic and that he would receive no assistance of any kind whatever in his foolish scheme, Tyrell left for Coventry, where he arrived in the midst of the first Trensso-Prussian War in 2084. Browsing through the dusty libraries of Columbia incognito, he studied the customs and histories of Coventry. In his wanderings over the roads of Stanberia, he fell in with the ancient inhabitants, the Eldar, from whom he obtained much fascinating lore. Entranced by the conditions of the Coventrainians, whom he pictured as survivors from the nineteenth century (and possibly hoping to gain help in ascending the throne of Westmarch), Tyrell wrote a paper on Coventrainian history and culture and submitted it to the John Calhoun Higgins University at McMurdo Sound, Antarctica. This paper aroused much favorable comment and Tyrell's hopes were realized when he was invited to come to Antarctica to lecture on his discoveries¹.

Tyrell had picked the best possible time to visit for Antarctica was then engaged in a great scientific renaissance led by the renowned physicist Zyskyn of the University at Byrd. Zyskyn's most important project had been his formulation of the Relative Relativity Theory (i.e.: $2+2=3$), which stated basically that the universal constant² was only the constant in this space-time continuum, and that one could leave and re-enter our continuum in which that speed³ at which he was traveling was the constant. He would continue to travel through various continuums, thereby "warping" space until he wished to re-enter our continuum, which he could do by merely returning to our constant speed, but only that precise speed with the proper harmonics, completely bypassing Einstein's conception.

To prove this theorem in 2055 he convinced the Ford Foundation to send the Robert F. Scott to Alpha Centauri and it returned to Mars victorious, but with only a crew of 5 left out of 25. There were dangers and problems that had to be overcome, but the basic conception was correct. In 2072 the Antarticans resumed the regular flights to other planets, which had been discontinued after the Treaty of Marsopolis⁴, and renewed exploration plans beyond the Asteroid Belt. At the time of Tyrell's arrival, Space Admiral Harkness, commander of the "Universe" expedition in the Scott, but blinded on the way back, had just repelled (with the help of John Loring, the Martian Lieutenant) an invasion from outside the solar system⁵ and they were being celebrated in grand manner in the streets of Harrison City. It was also during this period that Zyskyn was compiling⁶ his Encyclopedia Galactica, complete records of human culture and civilizations from all available sources.

Zyskyn was captivated by Tyrell's paper and was eager to speak with him and did so, filling hours of recording tape with descriptions of politics and warfare. Zyskyn, in return, had demonstrated the records he had made from notes on the famous Alexandria Library, including some books he had attempted to reconstruct. His technique for recording sculpture, using a process similar to radar recording which could be played back to reproduce exactly certain objects, fascinated Tyrell.

During his lecture tour, Tyrell also fell in with the notorious biologist-philosopher Mephistopheles, who had recently been involved in a famous row with

1. It is also believed that Alexander, the Executive General at that time, was interested in annexing the Coventrainian group since neither the Duchy of Muscovy nor the Panasians in Siberia could take charge of them, and because Antarticans have a natural interest in polar regions.
2. the speed of light.
3. or its harmonics.
4. Which ended the War for Venusian Independence in 2029.
5. Almost all information regarding this invasion was concealed for security reasons.
6. With the aid of a large staff (almost $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population of Antarctica).

Zyskyn over the nature of life, which had gotten him exiled to South Africa¹. Mephistopheles claimed that life identity perished when the brain cells died and that the "human soul" was no more than a thought pattern present in the brain and developed by environment from its greatest inherited potential. Zyskyn held, with the Monist religion², that the soul was a separate identity, which was part of the Greater Being of the Universe, because human thought could become abstract.

Mephistopheles was allowed to return to Antarctica at the insistence of the famous clergyman, Blake, who said that argument was part of God's will, and convinced Zyskyn to return to his work.

The society of Antarctica at that time was based almost wholly on the plans of Murphey and the scientists who had helped him organize the revolution of 1990, as set forth in his manifesto, "The Nature Of Government"³. The population was pre-planned by a non-political council of geneticists on a ratio of six females to one male, and aimed at breeding a master race, supreme in physique and intellect. Breeding itself had nothing to do with marriage and was arranged by the council. Although much of the menial labor was performed by robots, the jobs not involved in drudgery, although they might involve hard physical labor, were performed by the citizens. The whole society involved astonishing political and social freedom, and those who might not wish to participate in the Murphian "scientific anarchy" plan, were allowed to move to the colonies outland from Little America. But the society was enthusiastically supported by the citizens.

Guy Petronius, a noted journalist, had Tyrell's paper presented in the popular press, and made fast friends with him. Petronius was particularly interested in the Eldar and had the idea that Coventry should be made into an artist's resort. He believed that Antarctic culture was too "sterile", that nothing save scientific discoveries were taking place; there were no passions or wars worth writing about. There was conflict, but no real human problems, for frustrations had been eliminated under Murphey's plan. There was adventure in the discovery of new planets and the conquest of the Antarctic continental wilderness, but it was always controlled in the safest possible scientific manner. Petronius had only been able to write a novel about the "Universe" expedition because it had been dangerous. He thought that Coventry, with its European-type 19th Century wars and politics would root out the deadening sophistications and supply some real "meat" for literary exploration.

William Bismarck, leader of the Antarctic "Conservative" party⁴, and the leader of the political opposition to Alexander, wished to preserve human social customs and governmental traditions. He thought that making some sort of 19th Century reservation out of Coventry might preserve the flavor and virtues of life in the pre-atomic era. Antarctica was destroying customs for the sake of personal freedom and human improvement, Panasia was doing it for totalitarianism; in the United States it was being done for religion, in Europe it was being done with war and rioting for greedy survival. Man and his old creeds (perhaps childishly romantic, but still man's ways of life) were dying out; but in Coventry they could remain forever preserved by artificial isolation. Bismarck made speeches as Petronius wrote editorials, and although the general consensus of opinion was in their favor,

1. Which demonstrated the great influences on Antarctica by Zyskin. Mephistopheles was exiled because Zyskyn threatened to quit his work for the government if Mephistopheles was allowed to remain active.
2. which was then the prevalent religion in Antarctica.
3. Coventrian edition published at Brandy Hall by Crown Press, C.R. 957.
4. The party may have been called moderate or liberal in 20th Century America, for it backed bureaucratic government organization and republicanism.

no practical means of carrying out the suggestions could be found, save the occupation of the islands, management of their external affairs, and protection of their territorial sovereignty by the Antarctic Rangers in 2109.

About that time a great discovery was made among the asteroids by John Loring. An ancient ruin of an outpost of an interstellar civilization, the Krell, was found, which was equipped with a complete system of robots and a magnificently crafted power pile, capable of powering the city at hyper-light speeds. Ralph Ford, the great industrialist of Harrison city, whose own foundation had sponsored both the "Universe" and asteroid expeditions, and who had legal claim to the Krell city, had been reading the Coventry expositions and had finally arrived at a solution to the "bottleneck" which was keeping the Coventrian theories from being established. He presented his plan, on a starry evening in 2107, to an audience which consisted of Tyrell, Zyskyn, Petronius, Bismarck, Blake, Mephistopheles, a psychoanalyst named Gautama, Alexander himself and his mate, Astarte, all assembled in the penthouse of Zyskyn in Harrison City. Ford proposed that a complete replica of the Terran Coventry, "the museum of mankind" he called it, be mounted on a deck above the vast asteroid city, which would contain ship control, maintenance, and drive units, and that the giant disc be sent off into space as "a sort of nail to hang our hopes on", in case the heritage of man should be lost on Earth by "either too much war or too much peace."

The idea was enthusiastically taken up by Alexander, who made it a cornerstone of his political policy and sponsored a campaign to allot government funds for the purpose. It was suggested by Tyrell that actual inhabitants of Coventry itself should maintain their own political institutions aboard ship and Bismarck proposed that a special crew be chosen to look over the ship, and take charge of its course and maintenance. (Petronius believed the caretakers should also observe and record the social and cultural events which occurred while the ship was in flight.) Zyskyn, however, was most enthusiastic. He believed that the Coventry ship would be ideal as a library to house his vast Encyclopedia Galactica.

It was decided that 200,000 persons from Coventry would inhabit the land masses and 144,000 care-takers (or "guardians" as Zyskyn called them) would take charge of the ship. Tyrell was dispatched to Coventry to gather volunteers for the 200,000 who would make the flight, subject to approval by the Antarticans.

Meanwhile, back in Harrison City, Mephistopheles had his own ideas about how the Guardians should be chosen. He believed that some individuals from a century when mankind was not so decadent should be employed in this venture. He decided to go about obtaining these individuals on the basis of his theory of life. Mephistopheles believed that human identity was almost wholly based on inherited characteristics which environment developed. He believed that thought patterns were the basis of and that they were inherited. Of course the source of the thought patterns originated in the chromosomes of each cell of a man's body, as did every other characteristic. If one could duplicate a chain of chromosomes, develop in into an adult being, and simulate experiences and up-bringing, an individual could be re-created. It was on this basis that Mephistopheles went about selecting the Guardians: he manufactured them, or rather, re-created them.

In secret he went through Zyskyn's Encyclopedia. He found traces of an obscure 20th Century writer-composer-actor who embodies the characteristics he imagined to be desirable in a Guardian. The writer had poured out great volumes of autobiographical and self-analytical paraphernalia in his time, and believed in some philosophies which Mephistopheles knew were precisely what was needed for one of the caretakers. He took the writings to Gautama, who, with that great amount of

source materiel, as well as other works was able to thoroughly reconstruct the intelligence, thought patterns, aptitudes, and all else that made up the mental structure of the individual, to whom the designation Coventranian One had been given. After researching to the point of uncovering various information on the physical description and ancestry of One, Mephistopheles was able, with the aid of the entire computer system of the A.B.M. Company of Pionerskaya and the protoplasmic laboratories of the Bokanovsky Chemical Corporation of Bernardo Higgensville, to breed One's chromosome chain. At that time, embryonic development from fertilization to decanting could be synthesized, and thusly, in a few months One had actually been born, or more accurately re-born. Thanks to discoveries in the field of suspended animation, in a very few years of speeded physical growth and synthetic memory development, One was ready to undergo specific training.

When One emerged, the experiment was deemed a success by Gautama, who undertook the tutorage of the young man in the ways of the modern world. When One began writing again and his output was sampled, even Zyskyn recognized (somewhat grudgingly) Mephistopheles' success. Mephistopheles modestly mumbled that he owed his victory to the fact that One had almost never thrown anything he created during his "first lifetime" away, and then proceeded to seriously undermine Monism.¹ One suggested then that Mephistopheles undertake the construction of a number of individuals he had known. This suggestion met with approval because of the success met in the re-creation of One himself. Re-construction was begun on individuals 2-144,000 by almost the entire staff of Antarctic biologists, basing details on One's memories and previous writings². Mephistopheles himself took charge of the reconstructions of those whom he patterned after some of the great figures of history, also proceeding to superimpose some of their characters over One's reconstructees.

During this period, Ford supervised the construction, in orbit around the Moon, of the Coventranian land masses and various other necessary parts of the ship, while the Krell city was in transit from the Asteroid belt and a drive unit was being installed. During the construction, various concepts of spaceship life which will be discussed at length in a later article were being made by the ten who had begun the plan.

By the time construction had been completed in 2119, there was still much planning to be done. The Krell city had to be converted for manning by humans and an electronic brain to help in ship maintenance was built into it. All the Antarctic knowledge of force-fields, supplimented by that of the Krell, was put into use. The 144,000 crew members were finally assembled and were trained under the supervision of Harkness himself at Luna City. In 2125 the final check-out was completed and the 200,000 Coventranians (without special training) were put on board with the caretakers. Gautama then suggested they all be put into hypnotic trance, so that they would forget all that had happened to them before taking off, and would awaken in flight, one at a time. The star-travelers were also given the advantage of anti-agathic drugs developed for them, for which the formulae were destroyed.

Finally the ship was ready and Tyrell alone, out of the ten, was in it as it moved out from its orbit around the Moon in the spring of 2125, taking with it the hopes of mankind.

1. Which Blake was able to reform by combining Mephistopheles' Re-Creation Of The Human Soul with the original philosophies at the National Monist Svholar Association meeting in 2112.
2. Mephistopheles remarked in the paper he published on the project: "(One's) helpfulness was extraordinary...especially when he would recall some detail regarding some acquaintance which we had not put in his memory banks...as if recalling it from another life... This...we noticed also in other reconstructees."

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