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Typed directly onto stencil by C. S. Youd of 244 Desborough Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire.
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I am moved to rejoin the Fido family by two inter-connected events. In the first place I am free from the permanent guilt of knowing that I really should be getting down to Fantast. Fantast is now the province of Douglas Webster, who can be relied upon for conscientious discharge of editorial duties. The second event was the regrettable demise of The Gentlest Art, which had provided so many of us with intellectual refreshment during winter and spring, and had made the appearance of Fido more gominely anticipated than any fan magazine in the past. Fan Dance would like - as far as is possible - to take the place of the Gent.

That means, of course, that it is setting out to please the same class of reader as the Gent pleased. I am told that there were some who objected to Douglas Webster's sheet, on the ground that it was not connected closely enough to science-fiction, and I anticipate that the same people will be similarly annoyed by Fan Dance. So, by way of explanation, let me go into the meaning of and reason for Fan Dance.

The great majority of those who enjoyed the Gent and will, I hope, enjoy Fan Dance, were a few years ago vitally interested in science-fiction. They were reared - better, they reared themselves on it, and I doubt if the zealously of the keen science-fictionists of today has anything on the enthusiasm that animated the Old Guard in their hey-day. These, you must remember, created science fiction in England, for without one of them at least it is doubtful if a British s-f magazine would ever have been launched. Recall the founders of the S.F.A., the organisers of branches in London, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester - take our own Michael, who is now busy holding fandom together until the rabid activity of peace breaks out again. The fact that so many of these are less vitally interested in science-fiction than they were may annoy the newcomers, but they would bewise to make a provision of tolerance for their own old age when the lure of the squat magazine evaporates before the stronger attraction of unpoetic poetry and incomprehensible prose. To expect you to enjoy Fan Dance if you are more interested in the fiction than the fans would be as futile as expecting Johnny Burke to enjoy Don Doughty's Tin Tacks. But it would be well to remember that protests will not have the effect of making this a science-fiction sheet. They may force its removal but they will not put anything in its place. In other words all you can do is hamper the enjoyment of the rest, and I am sure that all Fido readers are democratic enough to avoid an action both futile and unkind. Tear Fan Dance out of your copy of Fido by all means, but leave the roots to nourish the apostates.

I think that is enough by way of introduction. In case it is not obvious from my turgid prose I will close the preamble by stating definitely that this particular sheet is devoted to the activities and mental workings of FANS. And the best definition of fans I know is two people who can listen to a politician waxing desperate on the necessity for saving the earth, exclaim simultaneously - "Edmond Hamilton!" - and laugh.

The first Fan Dance will, inevitably, be mainly Youd. So will subsequent issues unless others are willing to write me interesting letters in the sure and certain knowledge that I shall be too busy to reply. So first a few words about Youd.

I have never lain down quietly under Michael's description of me as "searching frantically for a philosophy". The inoperative word is "frantically". I am willing to admit that I am without a philosophy, if by philosophy is meant a tight and systematic attitude towards life, but the very fact that I have never probed myself to formulate a philosophy from the principles I generally hold precludes the application of "frantically searching". Actually I recognise that I am still in a transition stage. Just as pacifism was to prove false so it is probable that what I feel at present will be modified, or completely altered, as my mind matures. I can wait for a philosophy.

2) On more concrete matters, I registered yesterday - July 12 - for military service. I cycled through pouring rain to the Labour Exchange, and an atmosphere of solemn and whispering apathy. There I expressed a preference for the R.A.F. and for flying duties, and was discouragingly informed that my poor eye-sight will almost certainly relegate me to some such job as pulling the planes out of the hangars through the mists of morning. Those who know me will probably be convulsed with merriment at the mental picture this evokes. Excuse me while I laugh. Hollowly.

Once again I am a full-fledged corporal in the Home Guard, having accepted a position as Platoon Clerk. I have worked out an ingenious time-scale by which I spend 2½ evenings on office work and 2½ evenings on active (relatively) training, comprising Napoleonic manoeuvres through the local woods (in the direction of the local pubs), fierce bayonet-charges against imaginary Germans armed with imaginary (thank god) Tommy-guns, and persistent efforts to land Mills bombs in four-ft squares on a 30-yd range. There is also the question of avoiding Mills bombs thrown by others, carelessness in which nearly provided me with two-dimensional vision in recent practice. But correspondents will realise that five nights a week plus Sunday mornings leaves little for writing. One can combine pub-crawling with Home Guard exercises, but there is no known catalyst for writing.

Talking of writing, I don't think Ericopkins is quite right in claiming that a writer can infer ordinary working-class conversation by a delicate use of drawing-room terminology. (Incidentally, "re...re" closely followed by "to accurately describe". Eric is losing his grip.) Possibly the best way of approximating to ordinary conversation is by mingling the lesser expletives with more acceptable euphemisms, as I attempted in "Blitz". There is a greater difficulty in presenting working-class colloquialisms and accent. Here the Americans triumph, with an infinitely more robust and picturesque speech. The reason for Parr picking on the working-class is obvious, and I am surprised that Eric queries it. For there is no ban on the middle-class equivalents of the offending words.

In the latest Fan Mail John Craig has something to say on this subject. Stirred by Johnny Burke's ignoble use of the expression "Venusian" in a story title, mildly deprecated by myself, he says:

"And, incidentally, C.S.Y., thanks for making that correction from "Venusian" to "Venerian". Why the devil people are squeamish over that latter word I don't know. Personally I think it is a sign of a dirty mind. A little healthy semantics is what is needed. All these stupid questions of taboo. This is a wide subject, of course, and it is agreed that a certain convention must be observed, and yet Stuart Chase in his "Tyranny of Words" (Methuen) puts it very clearly. If I go into a drawing room of intelligent mixed society and refer to "copulation" nobody turns a hair. Yet if I should use a good old anglo-saxon word of four letters describing the same performance I at once become a vulgar lout. And yet that anglo-saxon word can be found in any seventeenth century dictionary (don't all rush to the nearest public library - I don't suppose they've got one) and means - to plant - which, after all, is quite reasonable. For a guide to a little clear thinking and also to give you some real entertainment I do recommend the book I have referred to - and a little less of your Venusians and Lunarians please."

The question seems to be one of association. I find myself completely guilty of tolerating the anglo-saxon only in low-grade (intellectually) male company and I am quite impenitent. Chase, I am told, cuts clear across word association, striking out for "meaning" as all-essential. If this is so he is unpermissably neglecting the omnipresence of association in the human mind. Intellect is conditioned by association, and that extends to speech as much as to any other human activity. But I confess that I may have Chase wrong. I have not read "The Tyranny of Words". But I understand that Chase - a New York parlour isolationist and the prophet of certain Los Angeles yappers - is opposed only to verbal tyrannies. I have a great respect for words but an even more firmly-based respect for action, not having advanced to the requisite artistic stage (JFB). Zeus Craig agrees, as will be seen later.

3) ERICOPKINS - 8.2.41 - "I told Johnny, rashly, that he ought to support Churchill against Hitler as he will only support culture and Winston is more cultured. Just had reply from J. who declares that Churchill's speeches are literary bunk and enlists Herbert Read's support. Rash fellow that I am I must now look into it. Still I don't think I'm entirely wrong. Churchill's prose is fresh and crisp at first contact. Let's hope second impressions don't reveal too many faults!"

Bill Harris once made the extraordinary claim that none of Churchill's speeches were written by himself, but by his private secretary. This is plainly ridiculous unless one assumes that the same person also wrote his many and diverse books. We must remember, too, that Churchill tried his hand at novel writing before politics, which entitled him to consideration as a writer. Incidentally, Clare Sheridan, the woman sculptor, notes in her autobiography "Nuda Veritas" a momentary nostalgia of Winston for his lost arts. She, a fairly competent judge, considers that culture lost a valuable artist when Churchill entered Parliament. Maybe so, but with a vivid recollection of the English political scene this time last year I think culture might have lost more.

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AMERICAN HELIANCE (supplied by Eric Russell).

Julius Schwartz. (New York) 5-5-41. "My local draft number is 458. And that's low! I've already filled out the questionnaire and expect to be called for my physical exam sometime this month. Did you hear that both Campbell and de Camp are proud papas?"

Fred Shroyer: (Los Angeles) 20-2-41. "A few weeks ago I inserted a candle in the opus of the Voigin and muttered a request to Old Clotie that he go easy on yuh - assuming that you had perished gloriously in a bordello, as I hadn't heard from you since God knows when - and today comes, like a scent from the Archbishop's W.C., your letter . . . Jack Williamson and I have been battling around occasionally . . . Heard from Kuttner a few days back. He's happy with Kat and (censored - EFR) [!]. Charlie Hornig writes me that he's awaiting in a lather the cosmic whimsies of the Draft Board. And me, with a call number of 8151 out of a possible 9000, will be called sometime in 1960 for military service, assuming of course, that we don't get into the Big Brawl over there before that year."

Otto Binder: (Englewood) 25-4-41. "Apparently my last to you lies ten fathoms deep . . . Yes, I'm married and here are the details of my wedding night. (Said details were in uncrackable code - EFR.) I'm now dividing my writing time between pulps and comics. These comic books are outselling pulps tremendously, running as high in circulation as half a million. Rates are good. The writing is mainly clipped balloon dialog with hair-raising plots of fantastic flavour. I'm a near neighbour of Manly Wade Wellman now, who is also doing comics. Hank Kuttner and wife are migrating to California shortly, having lived in New York since marriage last summer."

Horace Gold: (New York) 11-3-41. "Naturally I'm doing my best to go on writing, only it gets pretty near impossible with all the organising work we have to do. How the hell you do it amid bursting bombs and plopping propaganda, I can't figure out. Even in Britain, Horace, bombs are rarely frequent enough to interrupt work. It's the organising to meet their aftermath that takes up the time. We know, of course, that the thought of all the flagrant bloodshed over here makes sensitive Americans sick. We're sorry about it, but the slightly more secretive suffering in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany itself makes some of us even sicker. God knows why or what they're telling you about public opinion in America. I can just about imagine, judging from the high-powered barrage the Press, radio and movies are laying down on us. Brother if you want to see how democracy turns fascist under the guise of anti-fascism, drags a country into war by pretending to want peace, and muzzles the 90% of the people who don't want any part of the bloodshed you and the rest of Europe were tricked into, you ought to be right here in America." ** Sometimes it seems that human beings are not worth bothering over. The defection of the intelligent - trahison des cleres - is the saddest indication of decadence in 20th Century politics. And the fact that many of them, like Eric Russell

4) who is "waiting to have a Spitfire built big enough to fit him", have no intention of practising the querulousness they preach is not really helpful. Gold may be right in thinking that 90% of Americans are with him all the way in proposing Ghandi-methods against Panzer Divisions, but I doubt it. Stuart Morris, FPU leader, was equally convinced of the innate pacifism of the English people, but I have lost count of the deposits he has forfeited trying to get into Parliament. And the worse the political scene the less pacific the British became. There is an excellent vignette in Clare Boothe's "European Spring" of two British subalterns lurching together after Dunkirk. After casually discussing the disasters of the Battle of France ("See many Jerries?" ** "Oh yes. They kept it up all the time. Noisy bastards." ** "Lose your kit?" ** "Oh, rather!" ** "A nuisance what?"), one remarks to the other: "But the whole thing proves one thing -- we've got them licked." "Obviously", remarks the other coldly and, pointing to the pudding, adds: "Not bad, for a change?"

To return to John (Zeus) Craig: "There's an awful lot of woolly politics in these Chain letters. Why do some of our younger friends take themselves so seriously? Nearly every holder of a violent political creed has had to eat his words in the last two years. The mental and verbal gymnastics of the British Communists lately have provided a first-class diversion. I heard a communist in Luton last Sunday night expounding his theory that Stalin had always set himself out to found a "true basis of democracy", whatever that may mean. Anyway I went and had half a dozen beers which is a much more sensible thing to do these days. The policy of the thick ear is the only thing which counts until this business has been fought out and won."

Agreed. Communist tactics, though, cease to be tortuous if regarded solely in the light of the preservation of Russia. This also explains Finland, and the Balkan annexations. And the prepossession with Russia can be accounted for by a belief that Russia is the only land in the world where one can be decently and enjoyably alive. They, accepting the idea that Stalin and his merry men knew their job, followed a party line for Holy Russia and the Holy Revolution.

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I AM HAPPY to announce that on the same day, by the same post, I, C. S. Youd, received notification of active admission into the Society for Drawing the Fangs of Smith and the Society for Annoying Medhurst. Since a condition of membership of both these Societies is continued activity I take even greater pleasure in announcing that these pages are now open to all desiring to draw the fangs of Smith, or to annoy Medhurst. Real enthusiasts, like myself, are invited to do both at once or, at least, in alternate paragraphs. * * * * *

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Eric Williams, returning from oblivion to Fan Mail: "For this war, at least, I have given up my pacifistic ideas; they won't work. If we gave in, in would come Nazism, out would go freedom, down would come darkness, up eventually would rise rebellion. While narrow thinkers are in power there will never be world peace for any length of time - breadth of thought is the one thing that can hope to handle a world. Therefore, as democracy is nearer broad thinking, we have got to fight so that democracy can evolve after the war. For a time it will most probably be as narrow as Nazidom, but it will shake that off and men will plan again. It is the possibility of that we must fight for. There is no possibility in Nazism. † † † To Johnny I recommend a book called "Jazz in America" by a bloke. One chapter surveys 30 real jazz records (only one of which I possess, i.e. Louis Armstrong's "Tight like this" and "Heah me talking to ya.") The book is one of the most sympathetic and understanding theses on the subject I have read. It explains what I have always contended, that the tune or theme in jazz is of only secondary importance, serving as stimulus to the players' emotions, and that it is improvising around this theme which is the whole art of jazz."

I recently treated an admiring audience to a spirited interpretation of the music of the Rhythm Club, solely on three large browns. In a condition of mild emotional elevation there is a direct contact between jazz and the essential brain-centres

5) This is not so evident with more civilised music where, in any case, the tendency is to appreciate, not participate. Theoretically one might say that jazz, or swing, or jive represents one of the heights of 20th Century culture in that it induces musical and rhythmic creation in people who would not, in other times, have evinced any musical creation at all. The fact that their creativeness is of no permanent value to culture is important only if one regards culture as something that has accrued and will accrue through the ages. If it is seen - as I think it should be seen - as a personal concern (lining up with the humanist philosophy of living a good and creative life) the importance of having ten times as many people concerned with (even ephemeral) cultural pursuits goes far to compensate for a lack of major genius. Further to this it is my personal opinion (and this will be savagely attacked by the Burke-Medhurst-Hopkins crew or I don't know my intellectuals) that a writer who can only appeal to 1% where Shakespeare appealed to 30% is worthy to be called a genius only with the addition of "esoteric". Esoterism has its place, but I don't want to be there.

And now for a little judicious advertisement. As I shall shortly be in the R.A.F. with a likelihood (they are taking observers with spectacles now, I am told) of emerging alive about 50%, I might as well rid myself of the incubus of my s-f collection, and spend the rest fortifying myself with beer. (DRSmith is allowed space to snarl.) ON SALE, as follows:

- AMAZING: Fall 29 Quarterly - 2/6. Sep. 28 (coverless) 1/-.
- The rest as follows. Up to Dec. 32 at 1/3, where coverless (c) 8d. Jan. 33 to Dec. 36 at 1/- (c) 8d. Jan. 37 to Apr. 38 at 9d. Ziff-Davis 4d.
- March, May, Dec. (c) 30. Feb (c) Jul (c) Aug 3l. Mar. Apr. Jul to Dec. 32. Jan to Nov. 33. Mar. 34 onwards.
- ASTOUNDING: Jan. (c) Aug. (c) 30 at 8d. each. Dec. 31 1/3. Feb 32 to Mar 35 (last Clayton) 1/- (Jan 33 c at 6d.) Street and Smith sold only in bulk. Up to Dec. 37 for £2 the lot. 1938 at 7/6. 1939 at 5/-.
- WONDER: Up to Sep. 32 at 1/3. Thence to Apr. 36 at 1/-. T.W.S. at 6d. Dec. 30 - May. June. Aug. Oct. Nov. 31 - May. Jun. Jul. Sep. Nov. 32 - Jan to Dec. 35. Most of 1934 and all of 1935 and onwards.
- WEIRD: Up to Dec. 1938 at 8d. Later at 6d. Apr. 36 to Dec. 39 except Nov. 36. Also some for 1940.
- BLUE BOOK Oct. 1918 (containing complete "The People that Time Forgot", magazine sequel to "The Land that Time Forgot") at 2/6. Flash Gordon at 8d. Complete set of (20) SCOOPS at 7/-.

Since the preceding was typed I have read hurriedly through Stuart Chase' "Tyranny of Words". I can understand it appealing to the low-grade mentality that infests Public Libraries with the latest Observer list, but it seems incredible that intelligent people should take any notice of it at all. It is fundamental, which means that it is obvious. We all know (or should know) that words are extremely imperfect instruments, but short of developing telepathy or returning to introspection on the primal functions we must put up with them. That being so Chase' argument develops into an attack against cant, which is neither new nor successful. How can it be, when check by jowl with honest directness the book has such passages as: "...Congress passed the Johnson Act, forbidding loans to warring nations, and so giving the American people one of the sturdiest defences against being dragged into war that it was ever our good fortune to secure. England's perfidy has been our blessing." What a host of undefined terms! "People", "sturdiest", "defences", "dragged into war". And "England's perfidy" Chase doesn't attempt to conceal his hypocrisy. There is another implication in the book: that philosophy is useless and science omnipotent. Since one cannot properly define "truth", "love", "goodness" (and "people", Mr. Chase), logically one shouldn't use those terms. No was it said, "I daren't go out at night 'cos I'm so semantic?" Follows conversation between ardent semanticist and girl-friend:

G.F. (goofily): "Say oc loves me."

6) SEMANTICIST: "What is I?" . . . How can it be admissible to use philosophical terms, and how can the terms be anything but philosophical? But necessity and convention demand some term. Yes, I can admit "I".

G.F. (puzzled): "Say oo loves me."

S.: "What is love? Must one regard it as a primal function, deriving from jelly-fish and of no more importance. Or does it betoken a higher spiritual state, a premonition of eventual human mental sensitivity? As a workable term, let us define it as the more aesthetic side of present human sexual life."

G.F. (doggedly): "Say oo loves me."

S.: "What are you? A female human creature, sexually attractive? Or a mind, a soul, part of a universal mental organisation, attached to a clumsy body. But, accepting these terms, I think I can say, as far as any human being understands his own mental reactions that yes, I love you. Do you hear me, darling, I love you."

G.F.: "Ah, nerds!"

To show just how clear Chase's clear thinking is, I will quote two passages. The first is: "But should not one be afraid of fascism and fight against it? The student of semantics is not afraid of evil spirits and takes no steps to fight them. If he observes, or is reliably informed, of (bad grammar--CSY) secret societies devoted to seizing by force the United States Government, he may be prepared to fight them. If he sees a citizen or an official preventing other citizens from airing their views, he may be prepared to fight. If he observes a group persecuting people called Jews ("Called" Jews! This is going to absurdity) or members of the Negro race, he may be prepared to fight. If the armies of Mussolini or Hitler invade his country he is prepared to fight. But he refuses to shiver and shake at a word, and at dire warnings of what a word can do to him at some unnamed future date." There, comrades, we have conclusive proof that at least one statesman has met the needs of semanticists. I refer naturally to Mr. Chamberlain, who saw Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Abyssinia and Albania (not to mention Spain) swallowed up by an evil spirit he didn't believe in and didn't prepare to fight. Follows another excerpt:

"It may be argued - and is - that if Hitler gobbles up Russia the United States will be next. One is reminded of the extrapolation of geologists as to the age of the earth. Hitler has first to deal with Stalin's army, and especially his air force. In the not-too-probable event that he conquered Russia, one suspects that he would have trouble enough to sit on 180,000,000 Slavs (people called Slavs, surely, Mr. Chase!--CSY) stretched along two continents without being eager to sit on 130,000,000 Americans occupying a large section of a third continent. I outline this common argument not so much to refute it as to give a sample of the fantastic nature of many political arguments."

We are humbly pleased to know of the fantastic nature of political arguments. At the time you wrote that it would have been fantastic to think of Hitler attacking an extremely strong Maginot Line, and the not inconsiderably French Air Force (Air Forces tend to be deceptive, Mr. Chase) and Army behind it. And even more incredible that, while sitting on 200,000,000 people called Europeans he should be trying to sit on 45,000,000 people called Britons, 130,000,000 people called Slavs, and god knows how many million dwellers in the British Dominions in every conceivable corner of the globe at one and the same time. With the certainty (mark it, Mr. Chase) that if he sits on all those (not too probable, but not impossible, Mr. Chase) he will immediately endeavour, aided by the people called Japanese (at present sitting on (rather uncomfortably) 150,000,000 or so people called Chinese and getting ready to sit on some more), to sit on those 130,000,000 people called inhabitants of the U.S.A. (so-called), plus the remainder of the two billion or so people called people who dwell on this planet.

It all boils down, in fact, to the incredible truth that Mr. Chase, for all his scientific, unemotional (!) thinking does not understand a simple science fiction fact. That a hundred men with an impregnable invincible weapon can conquer a planet. That a single nation with superior armaments can conquer a continent. And that a single continent with a superior army, air force and navy can conquer the world. And would conquer it if we obeyed Mr. Chase's advice & sat smiling scornfully. I hope this reaches certain quarters in Los Angeles & I hope it gives them a pain. For the nonce -- CSY