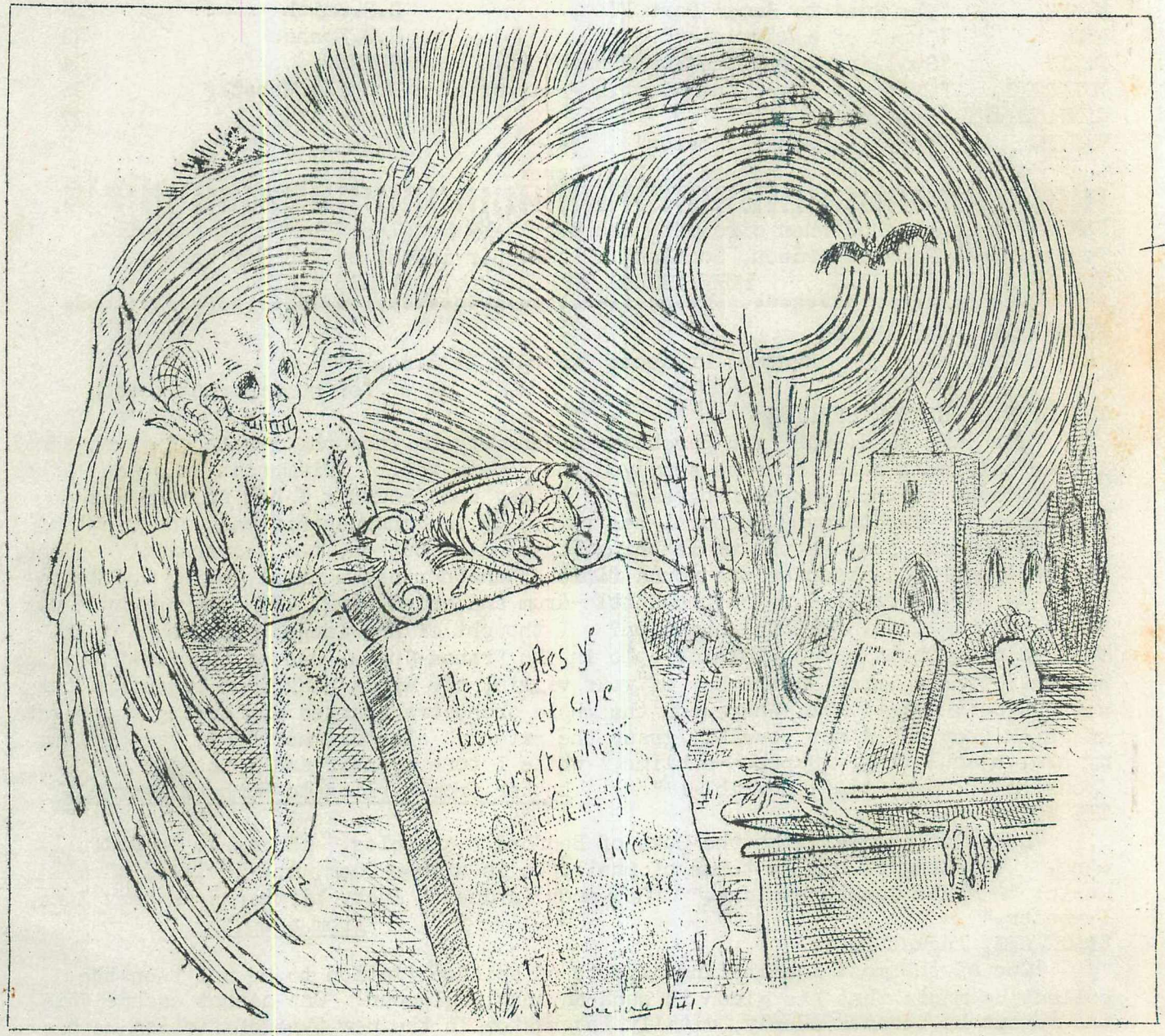
December 1941

fantasy



THE FANTAST Vol.2 No.5 Whole No.12. DECEMBER 1941
INCORPORATING THE SATELLITE

Covers by H.E.Turner

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FOR NO APPARENT REASON

Fantast Presents Excerpts It Likes

for no apparent reason

THE LIFE OF HECTOR BERLIOZ:

"6th June 1828.--Are you parched with anxiety to know the result of my concert? I have only waited in order to send you the papers too. Triumphant success! After the applause at the general rehersals of Friday and Saturday I had no more misgivings. ** Our beloved Pastoral was ruined by the chorus that only found out it had not come in just as the whole thing finished. But oh, the Resurrexit! and oh, the applause! As soon as one round finished another began until, being unable to stand it all, I doubled up on the kettle-drum and cried hard. ** Why were you not there, dear friend, faithful champion? I thought of and longed for you. ** At that wild trombone and ophicleide solo in the Francs-Juges, one of the first violins shouted: 'The rainbow in the bow of your violin, the winds play your organ and the seasons beat time!' ** Whereupon the whole orchestra started applauding a thought of which they could not possibly grasp the extent. The drummer by my side seized my arm, ejaculating, 'Superb--sublime,' while I tore my hair and longed to shriek: 'Monstrous! Gigantic! Horrible!'" Letter from Berlioz to Humbert Ferrand.

THE WORD:

"Dear Comrade,--I like the Duke of Bedford's articles. He is so beautifully sane. Thinking of him in terms of music, he is a Tone Poem, the lovliest of all music: "Andante Conexpressione." How much is due to lucky birth and an easy life, I wonder."

From a letter.

SPACEWAYS, August 1941:

"One of the most fascinating aspects of science fiction to me has been the collecting mania that has given it such an unholy glamour. One cannot escape this the moment he becomes deeply, vitally interested in the new type of fiction he has discovered. .... And this is true even though he knows the danger that lies before him--that of being so absorbed that living from day to day becomes only a secondary matter."

Larry B. Farsaci.

Fantasy Show-Down

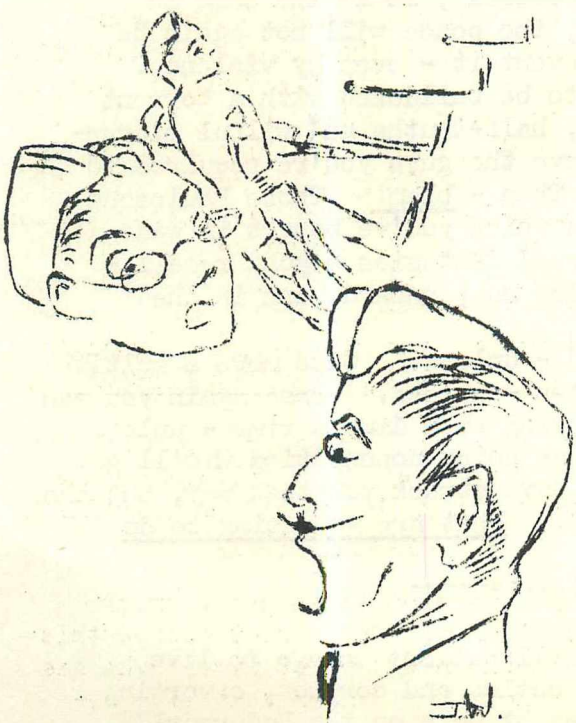
by JANUARIUS

Brothers, the way things are going suggests that pretty soon - whether you damn well like it or not - some of you are going to be brought face to face with the ultimate in fantasy. Yea, verily, unbelievable though it may seem, you are going to be confronted with the awkward fact that not even the most fervent fan can escape reality, especially grim reality.

You know, this science-fiction stuff - which is merely a form of literature as old as the Chinese - is regarded by the heartiest and sturdiest of its fans as akin to a religion. Some of aforesaid hearty and sturdy fellows have made the word fan almost synonymous with fanatic, and anybody who has bothered to read history knows that humanity has made some sort of limping, reluctant progress only because from time to time it has received a vigorous and well-deserved kick on the ass from cranks who were willing to pay the penalty of their own fanaticism.

Just how fanatical is the fantasy fan, just how deep and sincere is his vision of the future, just how strong and determined is his desire for the rationalisation of this naughty world, is a matter for speculation. No crisis great enough to test this sincerity to its utmost has ever come along - until now.

We have seen some of these gentry wallowing in the futuristic drawings of the "world-famous" Paul (who has never been heard of by most of New York's millions), and they have given us the impression that here was idealism bold and unadorned, here was wisdom with far-seeing eyes, here was courage of a nature that would consider crucifixtion an easy price to pay for a world such as that depicted on the cover of Flabbergasting Stories. Maybe Barnum was our father.



With pardonable cynicism, a few of us from time to time have nutured the uneasy suspicion that the frankest gloatings over the feats of mighty rocket-ships have been done by guys who couldn't step into one without experiencing a decided effervescence in the gonads; that the drooling over the activities of Buck Rogers, Hawk Carse, and Giles Habibula is often by people with chests like canned rabbits; that the eye-bugging over heat rays, disintegrators, atomic bombs and various kinds of planat blower-uppers is performed by gezeebers who's still be running like hell if somebody had shoved a shiv at them seven years back.

The question is this Have YOU got one fiftieth of the intelligence and one tenth of the guts that you demand from your faviourite science-fiction characters? If you haven't, then God (if any) help you, for science-fiction won't. Naw, not even if you're so full of it that it squirts out of your ears You 'll be just what the coterie of cynics has long suspected, namely, a loud-mouthed bunch of phonies who'll go deathly white and shut their traps at the first bark of a purple-faced sergeant-major,

and who can be made to do a lock-step into the international bloodbath along with the rest of ths surplus population. We're using strong talk? Sure! we're talking about death, the only original Invisible Man.

But don't misunderstand the purport of this little sermon. We aren't advocating refusal to fight in defence of one's country, neither are we suggesting that fans are any worse - or better - than any other section of the community. What we're striving to do is, by blunt talk, and by the unpopular method of calling a spade a spade, to bring you to the crux of the matter, which is this: are you prepared to fight and suffer and die for nothing more than ephemeral claptrap and shadowy ambiguities contemptuously tossed at you by pious pressmen and lordly liars? If not, what are you going to do about it?

There's a war in Yurrup, a war between the rival gangs of Adolf "Instrument-of-Divine-Providence" Hitler and Winston "God-Almighty-is-on-Our-Side" Churchill. Some very powerful and influential people would like you to jump into this fray, either on one side or the other. But their chief purpose, first, last and all the time is to see to it that those who have paid the piper don't come home with strange ideas and demand the right to call the tune - especially if such an impudent demand be backed with the very weapons said influential people have provided, patriotically, and profitably.

The pals of Adolf and the buddies of Winston would like the armed support of America's youth. To some of these prosperous cadaver-wholesalers, you are just a commodity. You can be handled, shipped and generally tossed around with much more ease and correspondingly greater profit if you, dumbly and loyally, do no more bellowing and display no more objection or ambition than a steer meekly entering the slaughterhouse.

This is being written from Britain, in the midst of the blitzkrieg. This side, some people are in the calaboose for daring to moo and wave their horns. Some are suspected and under watch. Many are in the fighting forces and openly or secretly formulating war aims of their own. Probably, it is the same in Germany. The probability is that, come what may, the peace will not again be sabotaged if those who fought and suffered can prevent it - even by violence.

Mah frans, it may be that soon you're going to be bulldozed with a torrent of official, ecclesiastical and journalistic lies, half-truths and wilful misrepresentations all carefully designed to make you love the guys you're required to love and hate the guys you're required to hate. Then - blam! Those Paulesque cities and future lands and ultimate civilisations which you've bought in wads at ten and twenty cents a throw are going to become real fantasies beyond recall - unless you're ready to pay a higher and harder price now, onward, and in the aftermath.

Once again glib leaders betray a million dead - unless. Once more a multitude of lavish promises may be conveniently forgotten - unless. Once again you can kiss goodbye to those future worlds you've been buying at a dime a time - unless politicians are gravely mistaken in regarding you as noisy nonentities who'll go wherever they're pushed. Brothers, it may never have struck you that way, but the future is yours if you're tough enough to shape it. What are you going to do about it?

-----=::::§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§::::=-----

Shhh! Don't look now . . .

Have you ever wondered just how those lost civilisations manage to live, 'way under the earth in slimy dark caves, eating beetles and corpses, cavorting with the ghouls? Well, read Sid Birchby's "Straight Dope on the Underworld" in the next Fan, and learn. It's oogy. You'll run a mile. Eek!

Aspects of Violence

by Eric C. Hopkins

Death came
clubbing
cleaving
crossbowed
hoofs beating
lance tipped
surprising in glades
organised in fields
explicit in blades
implicit in shields.
Columnar
casting phallic shadow
while she and theirs
were in a sunless meadow.

But now
Death comes ideally democratic
high flown by strange hands
a migrated sentiment
returned to home but wintering lands.
Blind with another youth
seeking locality
passionate above the silver
of a people's mortality.

Below
the objects of many years' parading,
lying, plaintive pleading,
triumphs and treachery,
bravos and butchery --
Sleep
tossing and turning
losing and learning
the meaning of humanity.

The years of preparation
dwindle with gravity and serious intent:
disruptive
disrupting creation.
Vegetable mineral animal
smash melt and mangle
the living and the flowing
blasted and buried
beneath the decorative shelter sod.

Bombs of stunning grief have burst
and through the morning mist of tears
futures fade into a past
of brief nocturnal hands and cares.

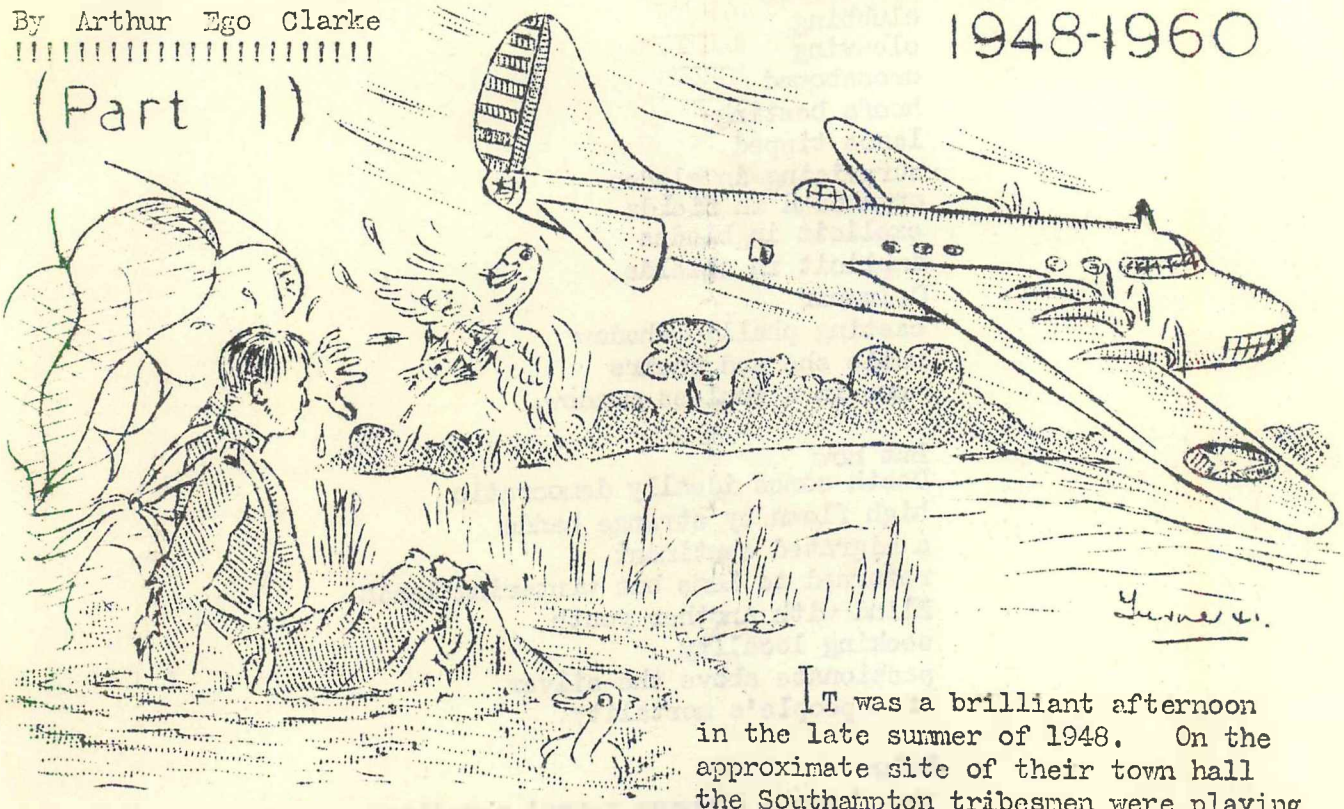
Jab jab jab in personal skies
tears fabric of indulgent dreams.
These hot expert collectors' eyes
have dried our moats and burned our beams.

A Short History of Fantocracy —— 1948-1960

By Arthur Ego Clarke

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

(Part 1)



IT was a brilliant afternoon in the late summer of 1948. On the approximate site of their town hall the Southampton tribesmen were playing cricket - so little had the English character changed - when they were interrupted by the drone of aero-engines. Reflex action cleared the pitch in a matter of seconds, only a few of the more hardy or less experienced remaining (suitably concealed) above ground to see what was coming.

It was just one 'plane, though it was making more noise than a squadron of Beaufighters. Its fifty thousand H.P. were pulling it through the air at a comfortable 400. On its wings were the markings of the Anglo-American Bomber Command.

The locals emerged again. They didn't trust aircraft markings, but they knew that any ship with a wing span of over five hundred feet was pretty sure to be American.

Once or twice it circled leisurely over Southampton: then a shower of leaflets descended from its bomb hatches. A few bombs came down as well, but this was so obviously a technical hitch that it caused no ill-feeling. Though by this time air-borne literature was scarcely a novelty, the pamphlets were quickly collected and the pieces of duplicated paper were soon passing through the length and breadth of Hampshire. They were odd documents. Onone side was printed, by some obscure technical process, a highly imaginative picture of a young lady with vari-coloured wings. Underneath was the cryptic caption:

" READ VOM ! C U AT THE PODUCKON ! ! "

That was all. The other side was more intelligible.

WILL ANYONE WHO KNOWS THE WHEREABOUTS OF C.S.YOUD, LATE OF
EASTLEIGH, HANTS, PLEASE ASK HIM TO PROCEED AT ONCE TO
BALLIFANTS, BISHOPS LYDEARD, TAUNTON.
Signed: F.J ACKERMAN COL. U.S.A.A.
A.C.CLARKE SQD/LDR. R.A.F.

This was England's first intimation of the arrival of Ego and Forrest in their irregularly acquired California bomber.

The war had unofficially come to an end early in 1947, when one of the invading British armies was turned back by the French customs officials. For all practical purposes, fighting has ceased after the occupation of Berlin by the Russians and Moscow by the Germans.

Ego, who had been testing bombers in America prior to flying them to Europe, had seized his opportunity and returned home in one of the giant new Californias, stopping at Los Angeles to collect the redoubtable Colonel Ackerman. Full of zeal, the two reformers were determined to set up a new order in Europe with the aid of a battery of duplicators and some dozens of cannon, machine guns and hydroxygen bombs. Their first step, they realised, must be the gathering together of the old guard of British fandom. With such a nucleus, anything might be achieved and probably would be.

Forrie had been kept busy right across the Atlantic typing out notices to call the faithful together. Ego had naturally chosen his home as a rendezvous, oblivious to the fact that it might take the northerners months to reach it. One by one such centres of infection as Aberdeen, Manchester, Liverpool, Nuneaton and Leeds were showered with the appropriate notices, and with their plane's payload considerably reduced the two missionaries flew to Somerset to wait events. With much wear and tear on the reversible-pitch screws Ego managed to get the California down in his cornfield, though it must be reported that after one look at the landing ground Col. Ackerman had left hastily by parachute. This incident caused a certain amount of coldness between the two, enhanced by the Colonel's unfortunate precipitation into the duck-pond.

For the next few days they whiled away the time at Ballifants and discussed interminable plans for the future. They didn't mind how long they waited: there were plenty of fan mags to read and Ackerman was editing six simultaneously though Ego was the only subscriber.

Maurice Hanson was the first to arrive: he knew the way (such as it was). His friends were rather surprised to find that one of Maurice's intelligence was still, after ten years, only a private. It later transpired that Maurice had once risen to the dizzy heights of Corporal, but had later been reduced to the ranks for striking a Sergeant who wanted to hear some swing when the Choral Symphony was being broadcast.

Not long afterwards Flying Officer Turner made a spectacular arrival in a Typhoon equipped with rockets. At least, that was the explanation he gave to the numerous tubes projecting from the trailing edge, but no-one ever saw them in action and scepticism was further increased by the discovery of a nest of mice in one tube. Certainly no other Typhoon had ever been seen that flew as slowly as Harry's.

In the next week there were many happy reunions on board the California, which by common consent had become G.H.Q. Sgt. Temple, who had arrived driving a gipsy caravan which contained his numerous offspring (including the famous Temple Triplets) seemed unchanged and was greatly struck by the Ballifants cider press which he soon restored to working order.

Professor Medhurst, the Sage of Oxford (otherwise known as the Brompton Lozenge), explained he had been delayed by the lengthy calculations he had made in order to find the quickest route. His mode of conveyance, a perambulator fitted with an outboard motor, was not beaten for ingenuity until a somewhat shaken D.R. Smith arrived in a hedge-hopping tank whose propulsive springs were of somewhat unequal strength. Ronald Ray's track across country resembled that of a grasshopper in the last stages of intoxication. The mathematical Medhurst at once began research into the curiously involved statistics of the Drunkard's Hop.

Space does not permit a description of all the strange sights that astonished the vale of Taunton in the coming months. We can only mention briefly how an exhausted Doug Webster arrived leading a highland pony laden with "Fantast" stencils: how Frank Arnold appeared in a 250 ton tank having, as he boasted ominously, driven in a perfectly straight line: how Lieut. Birchby came on the scene late one night in great haste, hotly pursued by the Pay Corps Military Police on the charge of misappropriation of funds, and how the same funds were used, in part, to persuade the M.P.'s that it was all a mistake. Nor can we omit to mention how the mighty Russell, now a Physical Training Sgt. in the R.A.F., arrived bulging with muscles and with a fund of stories which everyone hoped that no-one else could possibly understand. And hoped in vain.

All this time Ego had been improving the defences of Ballifants so that if need be it could be held against attack from the outside world. There were still roving bands of hot gospellers and fundamentalists wandering round the countryside, and any s.f. fans caught by them would meet a horrible end. Eventually a deep moat was dug right round the place, and ingenious electrical traps were set in odd corners. Light artillery was provided by hundreds of second-hand rocket tubes in fixed positions which could be fired automatically (it was hoped) from a central switchboard. Squardon Leader Clarke had contrived to acquire much R.A.F. material and many were the 60-foot lorries laden with stores that drove up in the night and disappeared before dawn . . . .

Most of the occupants of Fanopolis, as it was early christened, resented this disturbance of their literary and social activities, but as Ego had the key of the cider barrels he succeeded in getting his own way. So when the emergency arose, the camp was prepared for it.

Shortly after Ego and Ackerman had completed these fortifications, the news arrived that a large army was approaching from the south. More accurate information disclosed that there were actually 500 troops, and a small quantity of artillery, under the leadership of a bespectacled but grim-visaged generalissimo dressed in what was still recognisably Home Guard uniform. The consternation of the fans was immense, especially when tales of pillage and - er - improper behaviour began to trickle in.

A few days later a horseman arrived at the peripheral defences bearing a message from the leader of the approaching army. It was short and to the point.

" Dear Ego,

Thanks for yours to hand undated. Can you billet my men somewhere? I propose to have a shot at conquering Europe - if you can lend me some petrol and a few rifles; also socks and any army boots (sizes 10-11). If you care to come in on this I have a vacancy for a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Be seeing you in a day or two.

Regards,

Sam (Fld. Marshall).

P.S. Have you heard from Harry Kay?

P.P.S. I've been turning out some rather good stuff lately - salacious yet with an obtrusive idealism - which I'd like you to see. S. "

THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW AGE

by JOHN F. BURKE

When William Hazlitt wrote "The Spirit of the Age", he did not excercise restraint; he gave his honest opinion of the contemporary men he had chosen as characteristic of his age, and was, as usual, surprised that anyone should resent his frankness. Like Hazlitt, I shall be annoyed - but not quite so surprised - if these short sketches are misunderstood. At first I considered using a pseudonym, feeling that readers and victims would be more inclined to pay attention to my views, not dismissing them as the work of one they know to be demented. The editor assures me that my style would be recognised - like that of the gentle Elia, though perhaps for different reasons. Here, then, are my opinions of fans with whom I am reasonably intimate; I hope that none of them will rise in arms. My intentions are of the best. In most cases I shall ignore the thing that brought us together - science-fiction - as it plays no part at all in our lives nowadays.

1. Christopher Samuel Youd

In March 1939 I received a letter from Christopher Samuel Youd - "Sam" to the multitude - saying: "To be brief, blooming and brutal, I am at present negotiating for the purchase of a duplicator wherewith to put out a quarto sized monthly, to be named, as I threatened, 'The Fantast.'" This was the first announcement of what was to be the finest fan magazine ever produced in this country, and one that has always been equal to, usually better than, the American fanmags. As well as working on this noble enterprise, Sam, under the name of "Fantacynic", wrote for the "Satellite", giving it an infamous reputation and incurring the wrath of the Science Fiction Association Tories.

As a pacifist, Sam tore patriots apart in the early issues of his own magazine; as a patriot he devoted the later issues to slandering pacifists. He is quite unashamed of his frequent and sudden changes of mind, which he considers healthy in that they keep his brain from stagnating and his ideas from becoming fixed. "The reactionary Beaverbrook Press . . . " "Even the Beaverbrook Press is taking a left slant . . . " "No, Johnny, I never read the 'Daily Express'." Doubtless one who goes round in circles is justified in saying that he is moving. Sam is nevertheless annoyed when accused of "Frantically seeking a philosophy." When I was seventeen he informed me that I was at the stage he had been at when he was sixteen; when I was eighteen he informed me that I was at the stage he had been at when he was fifteen. I am evidently going backwards, unlike Sam, who is flitting from flower to flower in search of the pollen of Truth. Apropos of this, one may note his letter of the 17th. January, 1939, which says: "I don't quite understand your criticism of the 'Skylarks' . . . You violently condemn the love interest -- it has been widely praised. You equally violently condemn the characterization - Smith used it as an illustration of good scientific fictional character work . . . " Some time last year or early this year, "The Fan"* published an article by one C.S. Youd, condemning the over-praised "Skylarks", and using all my arguments to do so.

In June of the same year he said: "If you are mentally unbalanced, you have a blood-brother in me . . . I come from working-class parents and proletarian surroundings (probably accounting for my distrust of communism - I have no sympathy with the People) . . . there is little prospect of my ever returning to the cow-like multitude." About this time he sent a card to Michael Rosenblum declaring himself a

*Wiggins' SCIENCE FICTION FAN: the article was later reprinted in GARGOYLE.

"social misfit", and confessed in a letter that in a psychology test he had scored 15, when 0-25 indicated an introvert. He informed me that I was "nearer the community in spirit" than he was. As he quite rightly pointed out recently, there is no reason to condemn him for changing his attitude and becoming more civilised of late, but I cannot see that square pegs should take running jumps at round holes, and Sam's terrific efforts to like his fellow human beings are all wrong. He should accept his character and not try to twist it to suit the world. "The beauty of life is that each should act in conformity with his nature and his business."

As a poet Sam has appealed to many. He himself admits that he is most fluent when he has nothing to say. Dissatisfied with the adolescent romanticism of his earlier efforts, he is continuing along new lines, but makes the mistake of pretending that his earlier work was somehow a mistake, and not a product of his own mind at all. It is foolish to be ashamed of one's early efforts in any sphere - it is fairly certain that they were essential in one's development, and can no more be wiped from the memory than one's first long trousers, first girl friend, or even the first science-fiction magazine. Sam need not blush for "The Dreamer" or other poems of that time. To see the faults in those youthful attempts and to learn from them is one thing: to dismiss them completely is another and very foolish thing altogether.

This fluency in verse is equalled only by fluency as a letter-writer; unfortunately this ease and grace does not appear in such fiction as Sam has tackled, and although he has toyed with the idea of becoming a professional writer, his dissatisfaction with his efforts to date and his present mood of intolerance towards intellectual pastimes tend to turn him away from the path of literature. His dislike of "intellectuals" - a class which includes a surprisingly varied assortment of people - has led him to become an inverted highbrow, praising the tastes of the general public and treating the less popular forms of art and entertainment with scorn. He experiences great difficulty in reconciling this attitude with a liking for good music, in which he is beginning to take an interest. "I dislike emotion," he says, and tries to explain away the fact that he cannot resist Wagner.

With a great deal of talent, Mr. Youd may never become the writer he deserves to be because of his lack of application and his inability to make up his mind as to what to do with his life; he is less likely to succeed than many of his acquaintances with inferior taste and few talents, but more determination. I have heard it said that he may become a political commentator, and at the moment this seems to be the most likely future, taking into consideration his love of sending letters to editors and keeping them continually aware of his existence.

The foregoing are characteristics rather than faults. If he has a fault, it is a tendency to be susceptible to the flattery of the mighty - a tendency which he will deny. A radio speaker or an editor has but to reply courteously to one of Sam's indignant letters to turn Sam into a supporter for life. Edward Hulton has assured WORLD REVIEW and PICTURE POST of at least one constant reader by being polite to Sam.

We come to the personality. He is well-built, having filled out surprisingly in two years. He accuses me of not taking enough excercise, but complains that I walk too much. He has a cherubic countenance, spectacles, and once had wavy hair. As I write this he is in hospital, minus the hair. His voice is mellow, ideal for reading melancholy poetry. He affects a cynical smile which deceives nobody. A weekend we spent at Maurice Healy's turned him into a confirmed drinker. Liquor evidently sharpend his perceptions: he spent ten minutes in front of a door philosophising, working out all the implications of turning the handle, and en-

deavouring to bring his scientific intellect to bear on the problem of getting hold of the handle in the first place. I remember how he went up a descending elevator (though I fail to see how an "elevator" can descend). His example was followed by a lady who was obviously unfamiliar with the district and thought this the correct procedure. I remember his wandering through Birkenhead with Harry Turner and myself, expressing astonishment and pain at the sight of a Labour Exchange with two doors, marked "men" and "Employers". If ever he discovers that lavatories in the East End of London are marked "Men" and "Women" while those in the West End are marked "Ladies" and "Gentlemen", he will probably break his heart. While he was in Liverpool, we saw him change his mind - a process that has much in common with an earthquake. "No," says Sam, passing a bewildered hand across his innocent brow, suddenly furrowed. "No, I don't mean that at all. What am I talking about?" I think just the opposite." The subject was women, their intelligence and their subjection. Sam knows all about women, but cannot persuade any woman to believe this. I remember how he slunk behind my wife (then my fiancee - happy days!) and myself, with a female friend of ours, shamefully carrying her umbrella, which he hastily thrust behind him whenever we turned to see how he was getting on; he hates to be thought chivalrous. Yes, I remember quite a number of things about Sam, for he is good company and talks as entertainingly and forcefully as he writes, even though one tires of the repetition of the phrase, "Oh, my God, Johnny!" Perhaps it's not so bad if your name is not John.

When Sam decides what the purpose of living is, he will bring to bear an acute mind and a wide general knowledge acquired through his manifold activities that will ensure his success. No-one could fail to be impressed by his complete sincerity - a sincerity none the less intense from having impelled to attack a viewpoint he has fanatically upheld a week before. If he would weigh every opinion carefully before adopting it, attacking it with every weapon, every critical faculty, first, seeing if it will stand the test, he would find himself in fewer inconsistent attitudes; he has been advised to do this directly by R.G.Medhurst and indirectly by the writer whose book inspired this series.

I commend Mr. Youd, my much-respected comrade, to William Hazlitt. Let him read "On Consistency of Opinion", which says: "I cannot say that, from my own experience, I have found that the persons most remarkable for sudden and violent changes of principle have been cast in the softest or most susceptible mould. All their notions have been exclusive, bigoted, and intolerant . . . they have been of all sides of the question, and yet they cannot conceive how an honest man can be of any but one - that which they hold at present. It seems that they are afraid to look their old opinions in the face, lest they be fascinated by them once more."

May Samuel find his philosophy before he is too old to profit by it.

* * * * *

Room for a filler ? Goody !

Hear ye, hear ye - gather round and harken to your uncle. No, not you: that weedy-looking guy just behind. What ails you, brother ? Won't your best friend tell you ? Nope. Or do you need Listerine ? Nope. Or do you yearn to have the Secret Facts of Sex revealed to you ? Maybe, but it's not that. Yet it's something connected with science-fiction, for obviously you're a fan. What you want, friend, is ZENITH. ZENITH is England's foremost fanmag, edited by Harry Turner at 41 Longford Place, Victoria Park, Manchester 14. It's gorgeous ! Printed in 17 colours ! Full of pretty pictures ! It's beautiful ! Get it, feller, and know life.

Bough-Bride

by Bill Hobson

Impersonal snow lies where we sat
  Beneath the bough inebriate;
The chilly wind sweeps past like death
  Where panted our unvirgined breath.
There's cloud above, and flaky snow
  Where glimmered stars and mad moon-glow----
Oh, many a winter such as this
  Shall vinager our honeyed bliss;
Shall bury it so dark and deep
  No future couple passing fleet
Will ever guess on some new night
  The cries we sent to starry flight---
The empty flask of bath-tub brew
  Which slipped upon the dawn-wet dew----
Or that today while I inscribe
  I know not where you are bough-bride.

----+#oO§§§§Oo#+----

Recipe for Immortality

By Maurice K. Hanson
******* ** ******

Few who read this will be great men. With all the respect due to Editor Youd's readers* it can be asserted that there is little liklihood of there being one amongst them who will be remembered in even two generations' time.

A few writers, there are, with some distinctive talent, a sprinkling of persons of lively intelligence, and any number with irreproachable idealistic aspirations. But none have thus far given any special evidence of greatness or potential eminence, though it is somewhat early in the day to say so, particularly in a world that has seen Hitler rise from being a mere house-painter.

Yet the way lies open for one of them to become one of the greatest figures of the day, one whose sayings journalists will be eager to record, whose fancies will form fodder for advertisements, and whose name will become an honoured one in the history of homo sapiens.

He need be no veritable giant of intellect or possessed of a soul incandescent with aesthetic feeling. An intelligence quotient of 110-120 should suffice - he should be noticeably bright of intellect, that is, and must possess some considerable degree of general ability.

Physically, he will need to be really fit, probably fitter than most fans are, but no more fit than the majority of them might become by paying proper regard to food and excercise. The reader having decided by this time that he is the very man for the job I should perhaps add a cautionary note that years of really hard work would be entailed, but there are no doubt many who would make even this sacrifice for the sake of the fame that would be theirs.

I refer to the fame of the first interplanetary voyagers, for space-travel can certainly be made a thing of our time. The statement that the British Interplanetary Society has designed a lunar space-ship that could be built today

* This article was written sometime during November 1939.

for some quarter of a million pounds is not mere propaganda. It is a sober statement of fact. All that remains for a trip to the moon to be attempted is the provision of the men and the money. Most of the technicians who have designed the ship would themselves be willing to attempt the trip today, but the majority of them are already men of mature age and by the time the ship is actually constructed will in all probability be too old to withstand the strain the journey will impose upon those who make it.

Even if a start were made today, with all the necessary facilities, upon such essential preliminaries as testing materials and perfecting fuels already prepared in a rough form, the actual journey could scarcely be accomplished before 1950. Before this work can begin, however, the present war must end and the necessary money be amassed. The latter happening may follow as a direct consequence upon the former.

When the war ends there may well be an outburst of public idealism such as that which accompanied the foundation of the League of Nations and which this time may accompany the formation of some kind of federal union. If the British Interplanetary Society plays its cards properly it might be possible to crystallize this enthusiasm into the sum of £250,000, for how could the new era of world-wide peace and happiness be better inaugurated than by the exploration of new worlds to which man can bring happiness and order as he intends to impose them upon his own planet? For once the man in the street and the millionaire, delighted by the comfort and security of peace, may find within themselves a spark of the "man must go on" spirit, and the British Interplanetary Society must make it part of its business to cash in on the phenomenon.

The reader who seeks immortal fame, however, must act now. He must study engineering and mathematics, electricity and astronomy, biology and chemistry - particularly engineering and mathematics - with such zeal and ability that he should easily be able to obtain an honours degree in at least half of them. He must obtain as much literature as possible that relates to the B.I.S. space-ship and make himself thoroughly acquainted with the principles upon which the ship has been designed.

Having done this much he should be in a position to supplement the ranks of the men who designed the ship, and being young - probably still a minor when he commences these labours - will be able to carry on their work and, if the journey is delayed until such time as they themselves are unable to make it, become one of the first men on the moon.

If this should inspire any of your readers, Editor Youd, to the point of taking up my suggestion I would warn them to bestir themselves. For a billet in France would be an excellent place for studying engineering and mathematics, electricity and astronomy, biology and chemistry; and I have a certain amount of start.

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And My Indigestion

by Eric C. Hopkins

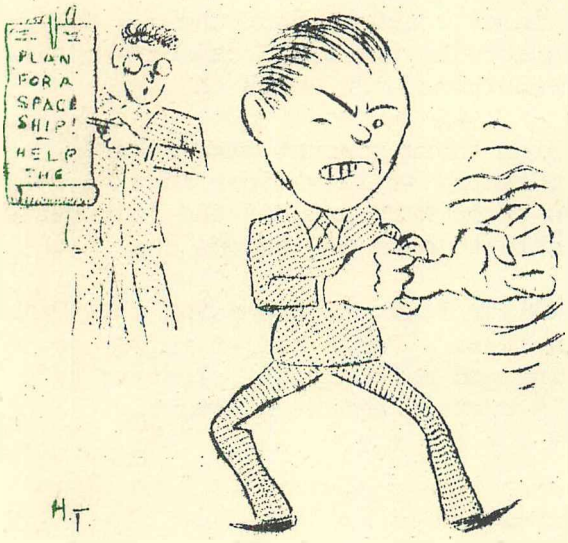
**** ** *******

I have been asked to reply to the above inspiring appeal and promise, with the implication that I shall elaborate an opposite view-point. Well, that is not difficult although, being well aware of the Fan's fond fancies, I know it is hazardous; but I wonder, noting that the above was written before the land war began, if Maurice Hanson would still adhere to those opinions which were expressed, not in this

world, but in an age of snow, concert parties for bored troops, Governmental warnings to a sleepy people, and isolated bugles smothered beneath the virtuoso trills and trumps of an unceasing orchestral tuning up which never quite swung into the vigorous overture of production. A time of 1939 hopes based upon 1918 victory; we supposed that we would sit back in the theatre, lie in our beds, and board the usual suburban-City train, and then read one morning with a certain exaltation that the Germans are appealing for an armistice and the old Empire is tops once again. But we didn't sit back in theatres, the drama was too appalling and, instead, we dug each other out of the shocked ruins. Not the unconscious bed but the pregnant, too potent shelter was our restless envelopment; we could not always board the suburban-City train and, as was emphasised at the time, we certainly missed the 'bus. Not one morning did we read of a genuine German appeal for an armistice but on four occasions we did learn of perfectly sincere British evacuations from the over-run Continent. We who had thought to witness the death of the gods, Siegfried's funeral-march, and hang our puritan washing on his line as we went, were dazed into ineffectual astonishment by the harsh but beautifully effective opening chords of the initial German opera. We had truly understood that the mills of the gods grind slowly but they grind exceeding small; we had only misunderstood the loyalty of those gods.

Everything is relative, as the Jew said and Hitler understood. The last two years have been longer than any other two years in history and any writings separated from the present by that period of time must be suspect of out-moded thinking, ignoring the less transitory literature of course. Applying that qualification to Hanson's contribution, then, I will proceed to a very brief discharge of my task.

Very little can I say, and that will certainly be ineffectual considering my audience, but just put down that "Skylark" or "Planet Plane" for a moment and think of Mother Earth - not as she may be in thousands of years time if Wells becomes World Dictator - but as she is and as she may be in twenty five years time if you in your small way confine space-ships and super-scientific cities to your fiction and think in the realistic terms of road-deaths and work-houses. Can you really find intellectual justification for a damned space-ship when the necessary quarter of a million pounds would far more sensibly, usefully, and humanely render assistance to the people living in these islands now, or in Russia now, or in almost any country at the termination of this war? Do not say - Oh well, what's £250,000 out of all the world's wealth. A collection of that amount is worth a thousand millions in the pockets of the people and should - must be employed sensibly and humanely.



So the hospitals, among various ministers to humanity, must now compete with a space-ship? I'm ready to laugh at anything in this cursed war.

There are three yardsticks with which any project can be measured: (i) ethical desirability, (ii) economical possibility - and - (iii) political probability. Putting the B.I.S. spaceship up against these I should be inclined to reject it on the third ground, that there is no liklihood of men cooperating to the desired

extent in the visible future, but I most certainly reject it on the first ground, that at present it is not ethically desirable and represents, as an aim, a waste of valuable time and energy. Amidst all this debasement and distortion of facts and human values I cannot perceive the usefulness of a space-ship as a medium of individual happiness and world peace. Happiness to the few individuals, yes, even in death, but quite probably a threat to world peace and so to the happiness of the majority.

Space travel is a further expression of the human spirit's urge to strive, yearn, and battle its way into the terrible unknown? Yes, I know, I know. 1066, Columbus, and all that. Well, it might be a novel conception for you to regard adventurous spirits like Columbus as the founders of modern warfare. Almost all war, and certainly modern war, is definable as a more violent phase of economic competition - the spur of Hitler's aggression is economic necessity (according to his view) and the spur of our resistance is economic necessity (according to our view). So these embodiments of the adventurous human spirit - Columbus, Tasman, Cook etc. - by their discovery of economic riches in exploitable territory merely sow the seed of wars. The wars that have been fought in America between European powers and against the natives! From Pizarro to the American War of Independence the chronicle is bitter and bloody, and more bitter and bloodier when we include American international strife. Those old sailors were heroic, but monstrously evil fathers of the future. Must we add Hanson, Clarke, and the deluded followers of the Space Creed to the immense list of those who were hopeful but wholly unhelpful?

Well, not wholly unhelpful. The exploration of the planet has increased the wealth of certain sections of the world's peoples in certain ways, but no action has single consequence -- effects multiply like the ripples around the splash of a stone in water -- and unfortunately a proportion of the effects tend towards evil or to be evilly used. The good result of exploration has been increased wealth in certain ways for certain people; the bad result has been recurring war. Now you can perhaps realise one of my apprehensions of space travel. Basing my judgment upon the accumulated human experience of centuries, I believe that space travel would probably excite the world to war. But ignoring that remote consequence I still believe that space-travel would not add an iota of happiness to a single individual excepting the participants and their small numbers of supporters, in the visible future. I think it foolish to shoot off a man with an Honours degree standard of education in six big aspects of man's knowledge to the moon in the tradition of man's undying spirit, when he could be far more usefully employed on earth ministering to his fellow-men's rapidly dying bodies.

Hell, I could go on and on but it shouldn't be necessary. Just look around you, read the papers, listen to the radio, discount the propaganda, read trustworthy writers, and stare at death. The skeleton is never a pleasant sight and the present rate of addition is greater than man has ever achieved before. The nationality doesn't matter; thousands of men and a lesser number of women and children are dying and being mutilated every day. Something should be done about it. You would fire a rocket at the Moon? A fine solution - for those in the rocket.

No, it will not do. The scientific knowledge of man has advanced far beyond his knowledge of himself and his fellow creatures, and it is time we pulled up for a breather while the atmosphere is still uncontaminated with poison gas. If you would rather give five shillings to a hospital and five shillings towards the

construction of a space-ship than the ten shillings to the hospital (metaphorically speaking), or, more plainly, part of your energy and ability to the project of a space-ship rather than to the amelioration of your fellow humans' suffering or the securing of better conditions for them; then I must again resort to that useful Dickensian quotation and most regretfully submit that you are possibly too young and certainly much too silly to appreciate the realities of the world situation.

I regret any flaws in my prose which may be due to the probable fact that a billet in France in November 1939 was a more amenable environment for the study of engineering, mathematics, electricity, astronomy, biology, and chemistry, than is a billet in Northern England in September 1941 for the abuse of outlandish ideas.

I declare the forum open, and bless you all.

15:9:41

! !

GALATEA - the first space ship

by JOHN MICHEL

She was a dream first,
Then a drawing on paper;
But life-blood pulsed in the pencil marks.
They gave her ribs of Earth's steel;
Her eyes of crystal and her feet
Were shaped on machines that hummed a love-song.
With caressing hands, the arc welded and clung
And plate by plate her sides were bound.
The crush of iron on iron was her labor pain;
The hiss of acetylene and hydrogen her birth cry;;
She was born in thunder and weaned on power
And she stood like a proud Valkyrie
---The first of her race.

Presently, space-flung, she stood complete
In a mountain dell and beneath
Her masters laid down their tools and smiled,
And smashed her belly with foaming wine:
Galatea, they called her.

She vanished one day in a blast
That shook the world.
She took the void like a soaring bird
And came back to go again.

§ + §

Culled from an experiment . . . . . .

Contemplate butterflies. Watch as they swing in your sight
The long lazy sheen of their wings parabolic,
The flaunt as they fling in their flight
Away from the pollen, their duty.
Their duty
Is alone, in the end, procreative; is beauty.

--CSY

the bells of hell

First performance by SID BIRCHBY, the following being lifted from his letter of comment on Fay, and intensive blitz on the---
****

Creed of Eric Williams.

Eric will not be unduly flattered, I hope, if I say that he professes a mentality exactly like that which H.G.Wells must have had when younger; nor will he be annoyed if I say that H.G. has the mind of a draper's assistant. That is not a sneer at draper's assistants, who are most highly suitable and competent technicians for assisting drapers, nor at H.G.Wells's very creditable achievements in popularising science and campaigning for a better world. Speaking at a meeting to which H.G. gave an address, the chairman once said, and I think very truly, that people who consider H.G.Wells as a back number who has nothing to contribute to society often forget that they are looking at a world through spectacles coloured largely by him.

He is quite a clever man. But he is still only a draper's assistant who has been to night classes, and is still very limited in consequence. And he is still a back-number. He makes the most appalling mistakes and judgments in his latest book "Guide to the New World", of the type which a life-long belief in the scientific method and logic untinged by bias should have excluded.

This book, which was published early in 1941, gives a general impression that the war was all over bar the shouting; that Hitler had shot his bolt, and that all we had to do was to begin the new Utopia.

Since then the conquest of the Balkans, Crete, Libya, and a little sideshow in H.G.Wells's tyrannous, degenerate, moribund Russia have rendered the idea a little unreal. Nor, lest I be accused of bias, will I do more than draw attention to his view that the birth of the new order will be attended by no more obstacles than the obtuseness of the hide-bound officials of the old one. (But really, he should know better than that - in my opinion - after studying and commenting, as he has done at length, on Post-War-I politics.)

Eric Williams falls into the same error as Wells in thinking up to a point and then balking at drawing the right conclusion. In one breath he appeals for a nebulous 'sweeping away' of 'old ideas of thinking' and a 'spirit of reconstruction'. In the next he says that Russia once seemed to have that spirit but 'God knows where it is now.'

Yes, Eric, God and a few other people, included among whom are the German High Command. Where do you think the fighting tenacity of the Russian peasants and partisan fighters has come from? What do you imagine makes the women and youths take up rifles, their menfolk die fearlessly on the barricades of Kiev and Rostov and Leningrad, and Odessa, and wherever the Germans have gone? What kind of a civilised society do you think they are fighting for, one that's swamped under a welter of reaction or one which has proved to be worth dying for? And do you think the people of anti-Communist France, in the days of June 1940, were inspired to similar efforts by faith in their system?

That spirit of world-construction that you speak of is just where it has always been, in the hearts of the ordinary Russian common people, and they believe in it with a fervour that can hardly be imagined, because they have seen it at work for twenty years.

I am not preaching Red Revolution to Eric, because I am not in the Communist party. I ask him, if he can, to consider dispassionately how the 'new world' of Wells and himself can be practically achieved, bearing in mind that airy phrases

about 'changes of heart' and 're-education to a world-outlook' cannot be accepted as means, but only as ends, and that we are living in a matter-of-fact world.

I ask him to consider whether Wells didn't do just that thing, years ago, in many books, and outline a system very akin to that of Soviet Russia, only to skitter violently away from the New World Order when it was born. Why, the plan for the emergence of the First World State and its history as put forward in "The Shape of Things To Come" is almost a carbon copy of a Communist inspired world reconstruction. The way the technicians take over production and rule; the state controls; the new education; yes, and the purges, are all exactly parallelled in Soviet history and theory. Yet would Wells admit it? I doubt it. In fact, he definitely would not, as his later misinterpretations of Russia show.

Don't despair of this world, Eric. Although you don't know it, it is the New World. You are privileged to be its midwife.

(*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*)

The Road to FAME

By D. R. Smith

RECAPITULATION:- The band of science-fiction characters making the pilgrimage to the Hall of Immortal Fame now comprises Proferrors Challenger and Summerlee, Lord John Roxton, Malone, Seaton, DuQuesne, Kinnison - the Lensman, Arcot, Morey & Wade, Hawk Carse & his servant Friday, Gregg Haljan, Sergeant Walpole, Cossar, Clarence - the American Idea of the Young English Aristocrat, and Johnny Black. Their passage through the Maze of Possible Plots via the One and Only is being barred by the Monster of Good Taste, a relux-horned, rock-eating bull whose arena cannot be circumnavigated. Tarzan, who has gone down into the arena to tackle the beast, has been tossed high into the air. Now continue with--

Part IV

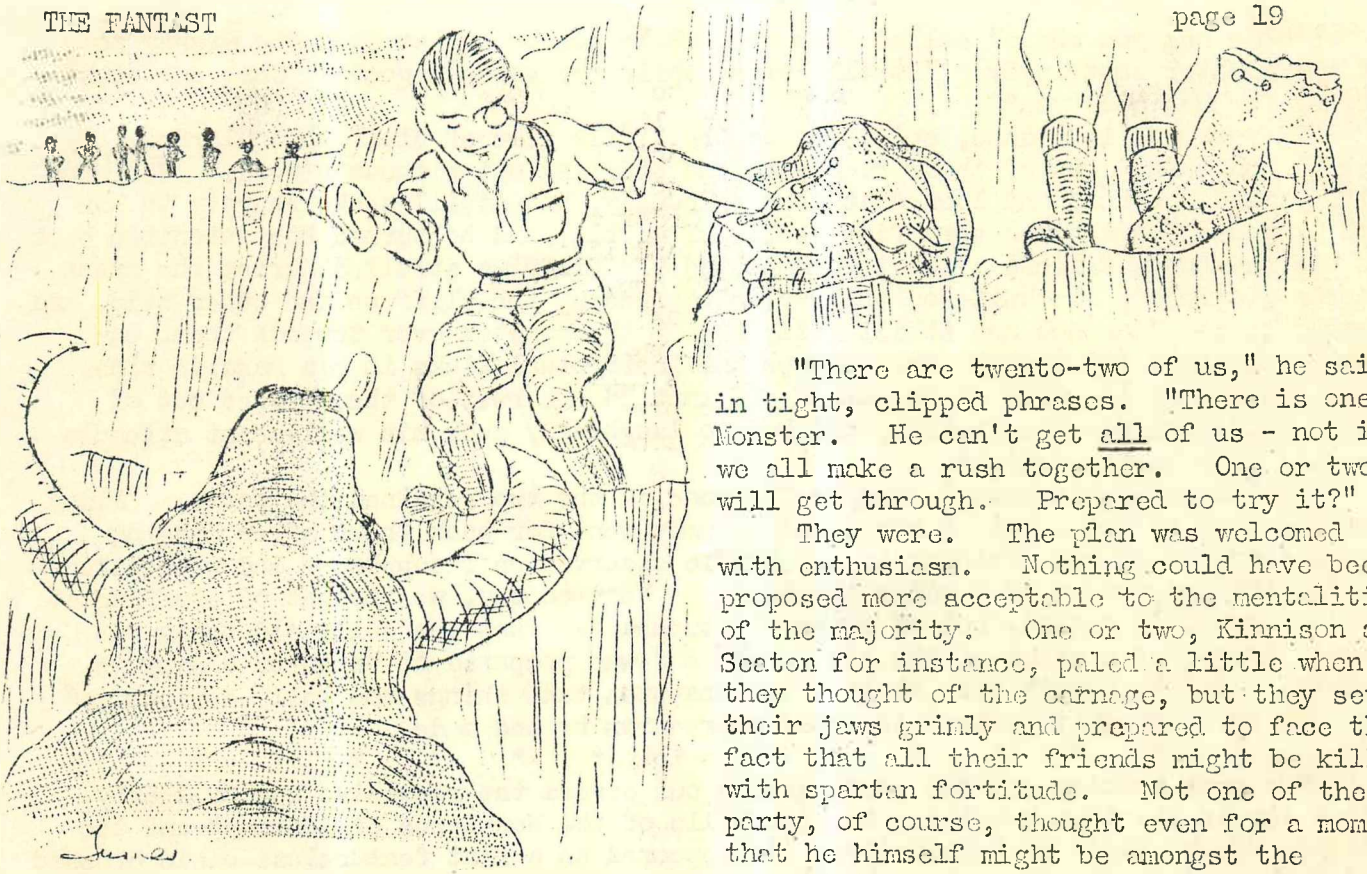
Tarzan was in the air for not more than ten seconds. In that brief time Sergeant Walpole had accurately estimated his landing-point, had stooped to his ruck-sack and wrenched free from the straps his tent, and had shot the roll of fine tough cloth forward and open with a cry of "Take hold!" And Malone ("Rightho"), Challenger ("Piffle"), Cossar ("Obviously"), Aarn Munro (wordlessly), Friday (prompted vigorously by Carse) and DuQuesne (to spite Seaton) had seized hold of the edges of the cloth, had pulled it stiff and taut and had caught the falling Tarzan neatly and safely on the middle of it, the impact being lessened by the fact that he landed a hundred feet higher than where ge took off.

"Nice work," said Lord John Roxton appreciatively. "Are you hurt at all, old man?"

Tarzan, staggering to his feet, shook his head breathlessly. "Only winded," he gasped. "Brute caught me in the middle."

"A fortunate end in one sense," said Summerlee sourly. "But we are still as far as ever from a solution of our problem. Force is clearly out of the question."

There was a silence at those dour words. The Maze had beaten them, the Monster seemed unbeatable too - was this the end of their valiant attempt? Not thus were the heroes of science-fiction to be defeated, they whose matchless courage and incredible luck had extricated them from far more sinister situations. Hawk Carse, the cold-faced adventurer, was first with a solution.



"There are twento-two of us," he said in tight, clipped phrases. "There is one Monster. He can't get all of us - not if we all make a rush together. One or two will get through. Prepared to try it?"

They were. The plan was welcomed with enthusiasm. Nothing could have been proposed more acceptable to the mentalities of the majority. One or two, Kinnison and Seaton for instance, paled a little when they thought of the carnage, but they set their jaws grimly and prepared to face the fact that all their friends might be killed with spartan fortitude. Not one of the party, of course, thought even for a moment that he himself might be amongst the casualities.

They were preparing to spread themselves out solemnly when someone noticed the absence of Jimmy Atkill and Clarence. This shortening of the odds brought out the worst in the usually amiable pilgrims, but before they could lash themselves into much of a fury the two appeared. They were staggering under the weight of their rucksacks, for these, as was seen as they came nearer, were filled with large pebbles from the river-side, but both were grinning as if greatly tickled by some secret thought.

"Stop fooling, you two, and listen to this," said Carse curtly. "We've decided that the only way for any of us to get across is for all to make a dash at once. Got the guts to have a go?"

"No jolly fear," said Clarence positively. "I used to play a game like that when I was a kid, and I was always the first to be blooming well nobbled."

"Besides - we've an idea worth two of that" grinned Atkill. The cries of derision and anger at his impertinence were ignored as he and Clarence clambered cautiously down the cliff to halt on a ledge just above the Monster. While the beast crowded below threateningly, as one who is not prepared to stand any more nonsense, they cautiously unslung their loaded rucksacks.

"Is the fool going to pelt the Monster with pebbles?" snorted Carse disgustedly as Clarence produced a large pebble of pure white marble from his bag. He was not. He held it in finger and thumb before the large intelligent eyes of the animal, and the bellows and rumbles of rage ceased magically. "Here's a present for a good boy" said Clarence coaxingly, and the animal delicately took the rock out of his outstretched hand. A crunching sound, a munching, and a gulp, and the Monster was snuffling pleadingly for more. The pilgrims stared unbelievingly as the two dropped into the arena and began feeding the great beast with lumps of marble as one feeds a horse with sugar; and the invincible brute blew marble crumbs amicably in their faces, bowed his head sorrowfully at being scolded for doing so, snuffled anxiously at the rucksacks and gratefully accepted the gift of "just one more bit and no more".

"Come on, you chaps" called Clarence, while his friend stroked the mighty nose of the Monster soothingly. "Stroll across while the going's good. Cart our stuff across for us, will you?"

They obeyed in a daze, splitting up the little pile of stuff that Clarence and Atkill had turned out of their rucksacks and starting out without a word. The Monster raised his head and looked at them ominously, but Atkill spoke sharply to him and Clarence found him a very fine pebble of marble, and he turned his attention back to his new-found friends. Quite unmolested the Pilgrims strolled across the arena, Tarzan picking up his knife on the way, clambered up the cliff on the other side, and turned to see Clarence and Atkill gaily riding the Monster over towards them, encouraging their steed with merry whoops and ineffectual kicks in his massive ribs. They got off at the foot of the cliff and emptied the rest of the pebbles out of their rucksacks for the Monster, and had to laughingly duck his well-meant attempts to kiss them in his delight.

"All done by kindness," laughed Clarence as the two rejoined the party. "Jimmy spotted that it was a bit of marble old Grumpy went for back there after chasing Gregg - result of his training in scientific observation I suppose - and we decided to try the old wheeze of feeding the brute. Mean to say, we thought of stuffing it 'til it couldn't sprint, but of course it turned out that the jolly old thing was simply dyin' for a snack of the old marble and was prepared to be quite chummy in return. Fairly smooth work what? You chappies take things too bally seriously."

Which crack quite ruined the good impression he had made.

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The next morning saw the party gazing out across the repulsive Bog of Apathy which lay in the trough between the foothills of the Mountains of Contempt and the plateau of the Plain of Mediocrity. It appeared as a flat featureless plain crossed and recrossed in all directions by flat streams of muddy water flowing so slowly that they were covered with slimy algae, fading almost imperceptibly into banks of dark grey mud and separated by expances of bright green sward or clumps of coarse grass.

"The map," said Challenger heavily, "contents itself with saying merely that great care must be excercised in crossing this bog as the surface is frequently treacherous. It is about forty miles wide."

"A fat lot of good that is," said Lord John gloomily, gazing across the misty expanse. The air was heavy and dead after the crisp mountain atmosphere, and a fine cold rain began to fall from the grey sky. Only the harsh cry of a dispirited heron drifting glommily across the waste in front of them broke the dank silence. It was a formidable task to pick a safe route, with a most unheroic death as a penalty for failute.

The man who suddenly decided to take the lead and show that he at least had the qualities of pluck and perseverance required by a Pilgrim was Commander John Hanson - whose only knowledge of land was as something on which space-ships rested while they refueled. He strode blithly down to the edge of the swamp, saying "Come on!", and the others followed with glances of mingled annoyance and amusement.

For a couple of hundred yards he was lucky in following a fairly sound spit of land, and by sheer audacity progressed a further dozen paces across an expanse of smooth squelchy sward before he suddenly found that he couldn't wrench his feet out of the mud for another stride, that the mud was over his ankles, over his knees, flowing hungrily up his thighs towards his waist . . . .

"Throw yourself on your face, you fool," shouted Cossar from the rear of the crowd watching in dumb amazement. "Someone crawl out to him with a rope."

The victim of the bog had sufficient sense to obey, but the crowd of heroes

watching made no rush to follow the second piece of advice. The mud was cold and wet, and most of all it stank with a peculiar blend of sewerage, rotting fish, and general decay, and the prospect of crawling out and getting smothered with it was most distasteful. Moreover it did not call for any of the glorious feats of strength and courage such as the heroes were capable of, and there was a general feeling that it was up to some lesser being of smaller sensibilities. Commander John Hanson was almost out of sight when Cossar and Malone burst through the crowd and crawled and wriggled out in desperate haste, Cossar with a rope the other end of which was held by Lord John Roxton. Their combined efforts got the rope around the unfortunate Commander, and while they crawled back the mighty thews of the science-fiction heroes pulled him out with an almighty "plop" as the bog reluctantly released its hold.

"Stinking job" said Cossar. "Where's the nearest water?"

It was a slime-filled pool not many yards away, and after washing the worst of the mud off hands and face the three made the unpopular decision that the rest of the mud would have to dry on them - rather unlikely in view of the persistent rain. They were placed in the rear of the procession, and Lord John Roxton, armed with the map and a compass, took the lead without any quibble.

The only sound ground was that marked by the tussocks of tough grass, and it was on these that Lord John progressed by a series of zig-zags. It was frequently necessary to cross stretches of pure mud by means of two or three hasty strides in which the feet sank ankle deep, and quite often a Pilgrim would measure his length face-down in the muck, as the result of a slip. The streams, thick with green slime as they were, had to be forded, and they were often thigh-deep. In a short time everyone was plastered from head to foot with the stinking mud. The thin drizzle of rain had no cleansing effect but sufficed to complete the physical and mental misery of the party.

"This is impossible," said Kinnison bitterly, struggling to his feet after his fifth flop onto the mud. "We can't be making a mile an hour in a straight line, which means staying the night out here. That's impossible: there's no water fit to drink, we can't eat the iron rations without water, and we certainly can't light a fire or pitch a tent or do anything to make life endurable. We must go back before it is too late."

There was a murmur of assent. There was nothing great or glorious or magnificent in this miserable bog-trot, nothing but the dumb endurance of acute discomforts. They were cold and wet and hungry, and these are not enemies which can be knocked down with smaching fists or blasted out of existence with ray-guns. The morass stretched out into the rain-mists on all sides, inertly deadly, incredibly unpleasant.

"We might get nearly across - and then have to retreat ....." sighed a voice with a hint of approaching panic in it, a horrible thought. They were approaching that stage of utter helpless misery when suicide seems the easy, attractive solution.

END OF PART THE FOURTH. WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT ?

D.R.SMITH, AT ANY RATE, DOES NOT.

sothisisthewaytheworldendsthisisthewaytheworldendsnotwithabangbutawhimpersoseztseliot

PUBLIC NOTICE

You all know Webster, the chap who edits this thing, and you all know that he has his foibles. He likes to Find Out Things; he runs sinister questionnaires. He has another in mind & demands your cooperation, with the possibility of results being published in the future. He wants to Find Out all about Women's Hats. Dilate on Women's Hats, he says. Let yourself go. All of you. Yes, you too.

THE CREED OF A COMMUNIST

by RAYMOND FRANCE

What are my beliefs? The word is unfortunate: it suggests mysticism, and we are the opposite of mystics. Rather, of what have I been convinced by my own experiences, by coming into contact with the experiences of other wiser than myself, of these two correlated with these visions stimulated in me by some acquaintance of fantasy fiction?

First there is this: that the greatest factors contributing to human misery today - physical factors of hunger, poverty, malnutrition, disease, ignorance, and war (those pertaining to my natal land at least) - are no supernatural afflictions, or things to be traced to mystic powers, but are material, man-made things. Things against which a people can fight intelligently and conquer.

I believe that the centre of gravity of this vast amount of human misery lies in this central fact: that the means of production of all those material things which pertain both to human needs and pleasures are owned by private individuals and operated sheerly for the personal profit of these individuals. That other factors, although not to be denied, are secondary. That the root lies in the scientific and technical (economic) problems rising out of the capitalist form of society and cannot be laid at such mystic doors as human error or malice. That, in short, a "humanising" or "reform" will not solve the problems before us.

I believe that the class which owns the national economy of my natal land is determined to keep that control at any cost; that human misery will not stir it, that no considerations will induce them to relinquish that power voluntarily. That they will plunge our land into devastating wars and invite foreign powers to conquer the land rather than permit the people to gain control for themselves. That they will stop at no depth of falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy, and treachery in their efforts to prevent the people (our people) from uniting in an effort to throw out the obsolete sociological-economic-political affair that is capitalism and set up in its place a society and economic capable of meeting human problems face to face and solving them directly. This society to be known as socialism.

I believe that when this is done, those of us who survive the bitter and prolonged struggle against the class enemy and their dupes will see a future that makes the most optimistic of science-fictional predictions or visions pale in comparison. That, however, before this world can come, there must be a period of hard work and, perhaps, a slight suspension of some of the "civil rights" which are the lawbooks of our land, but which the vast majority of our people have never in full enjoyed.

That "full democracy" while certainly a thing to fight for, can only be an empty mockery so long as millions hunger on the one hand while food is burned on the other; when millions want for the necessities of life while all the material equipment necessary for the production and distribution of those necessities lie idle, work but part time, or are diverted into production for war, because using them for a direct solution of human problems would not bring profit to those who own them.

I believe that those who temporise in these times are not only deceiving themselves but misleading others - that a great many of those who preach reform or "class peace" now are conscious agents of the capitalist class whose duty it is to deceive the people, to lull them into a sense of false security or hope that their needs can be met under the existing order.

I believe that national war on the part of any capitalist government is the basest of frauds and humbugs, designed only for the dual purpose of seizing more fields of exploitation for the ruling class and diverting the desire of the people

for a better world into channels which can bring to these people only increased misery and horrible death.

I believe that the first duty of every citizen of any capitalist nation at war is to work for the defeat of his own government and the immediate conclusion of the war. I believe that the "nationalism" and "patriotism" appeals of the capitalist classes to the workers are part and parcel of their bloody deceit; that they themselves would not hesitate to turn traitor were they to see their power slipping from under them. The events of the last 100 years all over the world have fully confirmed these beliefs - the facts are here for all who have the intellect and courage to see.

I believe that it does, indeed, take courage to disbelieve the lies and humbugs of the ruling classes. That for any individual who is in such a position as to have something to lose cannot be blamed too much if he prefers to close his eyes to the truth. He is, of course, a traitor to humanity in the larger sense, but he is innocent in comparison with those who are the instigators of the great lies. I believe that the worker has nothing to lose; that to die fighting for a world of his own is infinitely better than living in a capitalist world and supremely better than dying like a dog for the vested interests of his capitalist rulers.

My credo is a dangerous one; these are dangerous times. But in such times, one must live dangerously if one is to live at all, unless one is to retire into self-deluding monasteries and try to pretend he is living.

My credo is immortal because it is the credo of the people and only the people is immortal. My credo is greater capital than the gold of the wealthiest financier because people are the only real capital that exists.

My credo is the credo of man, outreaching, conscious of his ignorance in the cosmos, ever desirous of pushing forward and learning more. My credo scorns the opiates of mysticism and religion and rejects any philosophy which would deaden the onward march of the human mind, which would divert the physical struggle for control of the earth that is ours.

My credo is international and draws no line at the colour, the race, or the philosophical beliefs of any man who fights side by side with me. My credo does not recognise the false doctrines of "superior" or "inferior" peoples, classes, races, or creeds.

We seek not the perfect world, but a better world. A world which we will ourselves build, in which all of us shall have a part. I fear not about the temporary suspension of my rights to say what I please so long as we the people are at the helm of our own state. I know that when the enemy has finally been liquidated, then we, the people, will show the world what democracy really is. It will be a monolithic democracy - one in which all opinions will have their say. But one in which, when decisions have been made, no minority will be permitted to work against the will of the majority. I believe in the innate wisdom of the simplest of men, under such right conditions as we the people shall create, to rule themselves.

I believe in the scientific, socialist world society of man.

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British Society for War Relief of Starved American Fans

Now that USA is at war, we deem it just & proper to stand by our allies, protecting them from grievous mental disrepair. Think of it, gentlemen: of these poor American fans, alert-minded & resourceful though they be, stranded across the ocean without the very life-blood of their existence, "Tales of Wonder"! This monstrous infamy shall not be ! As we write this we know not whether to pause & wipe away a tear, or suppress it & get the stencil finished. We have plans to help our starved US friends. We shall send them ToW. Piles of ToW. Contributions to the BSWRSAF funds will be more than welcome: send all moneys to DWebster c/o this magazine & the best use will be made of them. A good cause, Comrades !

Swillings from the Sif Trough

by SWINE !!!!!

So, one day, Douglas Webster said to me: "I've had a really evil idea. Namely, you shall write a column for Fay. A column . . . " (he lapses into wicked dreams). I am a soft-hearted, accommodating fellow . . . and here it is. Some of you innocents think you know the lowest depths of "fan" abuse. You have admired Samuel Youd's Fantacynic, you have wondered at George Medhurst's Snag; but, brothers, you don't know anything! You have yet to meet me,

at your service,
SWINE.

§ § § § §

Readers of scientific fantasy are, within their limitations, mostly quite decent people. They are even, relatively, tolerably civilised. They tend to think in terms of humanity, rather than of races. The majority of them, while shocked at the barbarity that is turning this planet into a giant charnel-house, are yet whole-heartedly in this war because freedom and civilisation are at stake. They fight to save homo sapiens, including that betrayed and God-forsaken section of it which calls itself the German race. This war is a grim necessity, and a monstrous tragedy. No s.f. "fan" is so blatantly uncultured as to find glory in the flag-waving, thrills in the slaughter, triumph in the revenge.

Bearing these remarks in mind, I, SWINE, wish you to consider a paragraph written by a London "fan", FRANK EDWARD ARNOLD. It goes like this:

"Everyone around me has been cheered to see my last two letters in your pages, chiefly because they agree with me that our American friends should hear more of the old bulldog and "By Jingo!" spirit that inspires so many of us in the land of hope and glory. .... By now the blitz is on the other foot, and by Heavens, is it kicking! If American folk still think of us as brave people just stolidly taking our punishment, I beg of them to try and forget it. Think of us rather "as a great people standing upright and fighting for its life", a people with blood in its eye and vengeance in its heart .... "

Frank Edward Arnold was, at one time, the would-be "Dictator" of the Science Fiction Association. He is of the type that would regard a charge of "Jingoism" as a compliment.

There is a story about this London "fan", which SWINE would prefer not to believe, because it revolts me a little. I have it, unfortunately, on usually reliable authority. It is related that one day, towards the beginning of the war, the SFA "Dictator" burst into a "fan" meeting aglow with triumph and shouting good news. It appeared he had heard a rumour to the effect that a group of home guards had, just after the bombing of an English city, caught a couple of German airmen, involved in a forced landing - and clubbed them to death with their rifle butts. The rumour must have been false. What Frank Edward Arnold felt about it was real, and, SWINE feels, even at second hand, unpleasant.

The passage I quoted three paragraphs is from a letter published in FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, October 1941. It is one of a series, apparently sent to Miss Gnaedinger, the Munsey editress, periodically, as a sort of bulletin of British "fandom". Each of these letters is signed "FRANK EDWARD ARNOLD, SCIENCE-FICTION ASSOCIATION". The implication, to an outsider, would be that this gentleman is writing on behalf of the SFA. SWINE would like to point out that Arnold has absolutely no authority for this. The SFA no longer functions as an organised

body, and so, as our friend no doubt realises, it is difficult, if not impossible, for the Association officially to repudiate these views, which must read unpleasantly to many of our American allies.

§ § §

After pausing briefly to wipe the blood out of my eye, I should like to draw your attention to a rumour (through R.G.Medhurst) that a number of the blue-nosed puritanical "fans" boycotted ZENITH on the strength of Douglas Webster's witty and impressive announcement of it, in the August "Fay". I should imagine that Harry Turner would prefer not to number these people among ZENITH's subscribers. It is typical of humanity, is it not?, that those who are most ardent in the burning cause of Progress should show old-maidish squeamishness when they imagine that an outworn, indecent, and reactionary moral code is about to have a snook cocked at it. Follows a SWINISH poem, which I am lifting, without permission, from a letter of a London fan:

Progressive, if youthful, stfans
Seeth with wild, revolutionary plans:
But, says Michael to me,
'Say "coitus", and see
What horror spreads over their sublimate pans!'

§ § § § §

Thus, Ron Holmes of Liverpool, in the October VOICE OF THE IMAGI-NATION, tells Forrest Ackerman "The art-work is doubtful (I'm no prude, but I read Stfn mags for Stfn - I can always find that elsewhere)." The doubtful artwork consists of what 4S calls "Vomaidens". These are uncovered samples of (more-or-less) youthful female human beings, shown from a (more-or-less) discreet angle. One wonders just what is the "that" to which our puritanical Liverpool friend refers. And one wonders at the state of the mind which is immediately led to think of "that" in a pictorial representation of a female body without clothing.

§ § §

In the paragraph before last I referred, in a manner that might be mistaken for approval, to two "fans", Douglas Webster and George Medhurst. This is hardly SWINISH. Let us consider the first-named. You all think that Douglas is a dashing "fan" who loves a fight (verbal!), doesn't give a damn for anybody's feelings, and will print anything that will start a row. This carefully built-up reputation hardly stands the test of actuality, which is a SWINISH, but certain test. The time is not ripe for publishing details of the case I have in mind. For the moment, I shall content myself with quoting, from this fearless Aberdonian, "Bear in mind that I once suppressed an anti-Pitman-Rathbone poem by Sam (nothing very violent, I assure you) and will still act accordingly". "Free Speech if We Bust!" is the Aberdeen motto, boys.

§ § § § §

As for George Medhurst: you will have observed his noble and disinterested, if somewhat hysterical, outburst, after D.R.Smith had ventured to indicate a possible abstract, amoral beauty in finely-made weapons of war. He has, in a fervour of high altruism, convinced a Conscientious Objectors' Tribunal of his preference for avoiding discomfort, in this war. I would not question his sincerity. And I have no doubt that he will, someday, give us a very plausible explanation of his undergoing a radio training course which has the object, I am told, of enabling him to take part in the production of certain instruments to be used destructively by other people.

§ § §

Gentlemen, meet Mr. Fletcher Pratt! At one time, one of those progressive souls who create magazine science fiction. Author, for example, with Irvin Lester, of THE REIGN OF THE RAY (SCIENCE WONDER STORIES, June and July, 1929). This story, described by optimist Gernsback as a "masterpiece of science fiction", deals with a future war. The scum known as the "working classes" are the villains of the piece, and urging them on Satanically are the SWINE who run that huge scale den of vice, Bolshevik Russia.

That was twelve years ago. By 1941 our author's thought has ripened. In the LABOUR MONTHLY for December more words of this Fletcher Pratt are quoted from the NEW YORK PRESS. This is what he says:

"It will take a miracle bigger than any seen since the Bible was written to save the Reds from utter defeat in a very short time. The Reds are on their way to a debacle not parallelled in history." He is not reported as winding up his remarks with the customary "Heil Hitler!"

There may be two Fletcher Pratts in the United States. If so, one of them would be well advised publicly to disown his peculiarly unlovable namesake.

§ § § § §

Now that a wave of sex-consciousness is sweeping adolescent "fandom", "fans" may find psychological material for study in the professed attitudes of two Londoners, Sydney L. Birchby and George Medhurst. The former is reported to have coined the battle-cry, "Female Psychology just Isn't Worth It." The latter quotes one William Hope Hodgson as authority for his claim of the presence in women of what he describes as "a streak of a sort of malicious meanness." What, if anything, is behind the coincidence of this sudden outbreak of London misogyny?

The editor of FANTAST, I am told, suggested: "Have you miserable suckers come off second-best in roughing it with a set of bitches?" He goes on, ambiguously (if my information is to be trusted), "I'm on their side." And, later, "I like older women." This would appear to be a premature setting in of Maturity.

§ § §

I hear that one of the supplements to FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST has been unstapled and removed from the copy of a subscriber. The supplement was a thing called SHOCKING THE BIBLIOPHAN, and the subscriber, above all people, was Eric Frank Russell. What, was my immediate SWINISH thought, has Michael Rosenblum to say of this?

§ § § § §

Well, friends, this is science fiction's own sycophant, SWINE, saying "To Hell with you!" I hope you find his Swillings nutritive. There may be more, there may, if editorial censorship has its way, be less. If you hate anybody's guts (in the unpolished but vivid phrase of our American allies), tell me about it, and I may give you a place in the Trough. The address is: SWINE, c/o Douglas Webster, Idlewild, Fountainhall Road, Aberdeen. But be careful! I hate all guts.

§ § §

Tying Up Loose Ends Dept. by Douglas Webster

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Two years ago, almost to the day, there appeared before British fandom's bespectacled eyes a special 30-page Christmas issue of that amazing magazine, THE FANTAST, then still edited by our noble friend C.Sam Youd. To begin with, we can imitate his excellent example in wishing you, one & all, a very Merrie Christmas. But when we started this issue we had not the slightest intention of emulating that example with regard to length. We had thought of a "fight" issue: so we collected together most of the material most calculated to set fandom a-frothing, & dived

in. From time to time we came up for air, horrified to see that so little space must hold so much matter; until here we are at p.27, with Folly still to do. This is scandalous. Folly must be short.

We will publish no further "fight" issues. Personally, we do not like this one. The idea seemed good, the pieces are in themselves good, but en masse the effect is of a bunch of serious young men industriously splitting hairs or screaming defiance to the stars. We thus do an injustice to both contributors & readers.

We had intended giving you a long harangue on how, famnag-editing, we live & learn. But space prohibits, so you must see for yourself. We're not particularly interested in what you may think of the less successful results of the learning, although if, like SWINE & DRS, you are at your best in a welter of calumny, by all means let yourselves go. For Folly, next issue - if there is a next issue - will be high, wide, and handsome. One item to which we would draw your attention is the request on p.21. You may, with Smith, scorn psychological inquiry; you may, with Doughty, think a fanmag is no place for such frivolity; we don't care what you think - we want you to cooperate, & if in the process you can let slip your opinions, so much the better.

The present. Not even the most unsophisticated, we hope, still imagines we print only such material as we agree with personally. Were a little editorial bias to brighten things up, we would range ourselves with Parr last issue, with Hopkins this, & with SWINE in general except when he's attacking Webster. Needless to say, "Fantasy Show-Down" was stencilled before America entered the war: we commend to you the section which deals with promises of post-war utopias. The only regular item missing this time is Broadside. At the last moment, when we'd decided we couldn't cram in one or two Youd poems of an admirably infuriating quality, word came from CSY that the theme for Broadside we had suggested didn't work out; but we've hopes of giving you both poems & column in the future. SWINE's column, immediately before this, is in no way a substitute for Broadside. But we like & will defend it. Quite like old times, isn't it ?

The future . . . if any. After this issue, material becomes very badly needed: without material, we'll find it hard to continue. Greatest difficulty, however, is the paper-supply. Any further issue will probably come on a variety of coloured paper. Therein will be found: Eric Hopkins' monumental essay "Ostensibly on Swearing"; Sid Birchby's "Straight Dope on the Underworld"; an excellent Creed of a Mystic; further incisive instalments of The Spirit of the New Age, Messrs. Hopkins, Webster and Russell being entertained; Russell Chauvenet's "Night Rain", and other poems. With which we leave you, bowing low & humbly before Harry Turner, the man of the hour, for his noble and, we fear, self-sacrifising work on this issue.

. . . . . And so God bless you and send you a Happy New Year.

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/F A N T A S T ' S/ /F O L L Y !/

Roland Forster, lately A.C.1 Forster, sums up what most must think:

"Opinion. Eric Williams is an idealist. Most of us, I think, agree with the social aims he expounds as being desirable objectives, but . . . Eric, you're dogmatic, despite your title to the article and despite the opening paragraph. "I would sweep away every boundary line from his mind ... " "Security in the shape of profit must disappear." "People must be made to feel part of a huge march upwards." "Yellow, black, white and brown races must forget their footling differences of colour." Etc. Yes, I agree that these are all desirable ends; but how the

blazes do you think they're going to be achieved? A world reorganisation of Man's mentality, you suggest. "All of it could be achieved if every man gave his mind to it." Agreed. But how are you going to bring about that mental reorganisation? That is equivalent to demanding a change in human nature, and surely you realise just as well as any of us that it can't be done. In these matters I prefer to take the realistic view, to seek the possible rather than the ideal. Look backwards over the social history of the past 150 years. In that time we have achieved what, in theory at least, amounts to political democracy and moved a fair distance along the road towards a social democracy, althouth we must acknowledge that we still live under a capitalistic state of society. Now, is there any reason why that process of social evolution should not continue? I think not. Therefore, I say: give us another fifty years, another hundred years, longer, if necessary; and you will find those things which you lay down as immediate objectives coming to us gradually, almost unconsciously, by the natural laws of evolution, which must apply to social and political life equally as much as they apply to life in general. (6) ** De Omnibus Dubitandum. Julian Parr's plea for faith seems to supply that portion of a "Creed" which is missing from Eric Williams' "Opinion", although it is not, strictly speaking, completentary to it. I doubt whether Eric and Julian would agree with each other on faith and scepticism. For myself, I scarcely know what to say, since my views are self-conflicting. The rational, critical side of me says, nonsense. Why should it be essential that we believe in a world outside ourselves? It isn't! Is religious scepticism destructive and malignant? Of course not! Religious scepticism has probably done more for the physical benefit of humanity than faith has done for its mental benefit. Yet there is an inner, perhaps a sentimental, part of my mind which tells me that religious belief has indeed worked for the moral well-being of mankind; that I should like almost more than anything else in the world to believe in immortality. While remaining an agnostic - through lack of faith - I find myself wishing that I did possess that faith which would enable me to feel that there was some purpose in life, that all is not futility, that after the short span that is our human lot I - my mentality, my soul; call it what you will - would not return to an eternal nothingness. It's an unfortunate and a very uncomfortable position to be in, and I have begun to envy those who have the certainty provided by faith."

Jack Speer:

"To Rothman's letter in Folly, a comment: Happiness isn't as simple as letting things slide and taking it easy. Some people are so constituted as to find most happiness in fierce striving. Pleasant sense of martyrdom. Remember Webb Curtain [never heard of it] in Unknown Worlds; as he came to the end of his free-will period, looking back he discovered he'd enjoyed immensely the high living of it. Happiness is too mercurial a thing to guide your life by; seek it and it's lost." [Herein we inaugurate an all-DC Speer-Rothman scrap in Fay: Rothman should have answered by Summer '42, & Speer again in our next Christmas number.]

And now the Warp . . .

"Much tho' I regret to say it, being rather an admirer of Smith's, I think the serial is too longwinded for its content. There seems little inspiration & invention in it - not enough to sustain its length. It flashes here & there, but not often enough. However I'd better not be too critical or DR will be able to smack back at me in the next issues if you can squeeze in my "History". " [Intellectual honesty, huh?]

. . . and the Woof, who wrote thus as the last Fay was hot off the presses--

"I heard of your invasion of England. I'm feared it is the thin edge of the

wedge. Please note that it is customary for White Men to explore the lands of barbarians, & not vice versa. .... We did not go to Pontypridd, unfortunately. We came to the wettest & coldest field in the wet & cold country of Wales, & in the middle thereof set up a little tent of canvas, & in the middle thereof sat & paddled our feet in MUD. We have become Creatures of the Mud. Have you ever met any? They carry a field on the sole of each boot; they move in slow-motion, & can be attacked from the rear with ease, since they are too clumsy to turn in time; their diet is worms & rice; their complexions are muddy; they are of the earth earthy; they mumble wildly while moving from place to place, & occasionally give vent to a war cry: "Muddy, muddy, MUDDY Hell!" ** Beware of them. They are largely of Scottish breed & therefore cannibals. /This was followed by the following./ All my thanks & things for "Fantast", quite a bellyful (as we crude soldiers say) of fanatic interest. Re Harry's cover: the lady fakir squatting on the bed of nails, & the sensitive gentleman (is it?) who simply cannot bear to look, is pregnant with meaning, if nothing else, & though God & Harry Turner may know the meaning & I don't, it's all very much to my pallette (please examine picture for this joke, & if you can't find it a) you're shortsighted b) it's not a joke c) it must have been two other people). ** I might point out that the extract you give FOR NO APPARENT REASON concerning the Welsh Baptists' railway tickets to heaven was consciously intended as satire, as explained in a letter in a subsequent issue of the "New Statesman". Please look before you leap. And don't say you knew it all the time. /Tush!/ ** "Cosmic Case No.5" was nostalgic, reminding me of stencil-cutting nights at the Flat on "Novae Terrae" & Maurice splashing that pink gummy corrector stuff all over the place. The Case was as amusing as any of its predecessors. /Interesting. We use blue Correctine: amazing stuff; we also wield a nice line in purple. HET has orange; MFE white; CSY bright red; while JMR wins hands down - he doesn't use correcting fluid at all!/ ** Good old tub-thumping Ericwilliams! He can now expostulate as well as his (& my) beloved Wells at his most exasperated. Though the "groan" is all Eric's own. He suffers, does that man. ** Julian Parr has got something there. Science will never discover God, because Science is Doubt. Even if science did discover God He would only be a provisional theory to be dropped or adapted in favour of a better one. We act on the quantum, electro-magnetic, or wave theories of light, but no scientist has faith in them. Faith is not based on knowledge, but - faith! Does this make sense? No, dammit, it doesn't. Here, I'm backing out before I go all pecooliar!"

August Derleth, first US friend definitely pro-war, wrote, 7 Nov:

"It looks very much over here as if we were already well into the war, undeclared of course, in the modern fashion. It's a good thing our government recognizes the fact that two can play at that game; indeed, one of the greatest disadvantages the democracies have faced all along is their eccentric, and, in the circumstances, rather stupid desire to battle beasts in a gentlemanly fashion. The Japanese business of blowing up a ship and then apologising is farcical. The proper answer to a matter like that would be to set Tokyo on fire and make apologies, saying the bombers mistook it for Berlin. .... So conditions are certain to change rapidly over here soon. Many of our midland areas are destined to become industrial to a large extent -- a change I naturally deplore, since I prefer the quiet rural setting in which I write."

Sid Birchby:

" .... He /RGM/ & I went to hear Puishnoff do the Beethoven Emperor Concerto yesterday. Was mildly pleased with it but delighted with another piece - Sibelius' (Ed.note: Curses ! Here we are at the end of p.29, & there's that amazing torso for back-cover. Oh well, you'll just have to stand another two pages . . .)

Symphony No.2. It gave me the most vivid mental pictures since "Fantasia". Perhaps since Eric Frank Russell is now in town & has been stuffing us with Fortean propaganda, they took the form of some of his wilder pipe-dreams. (Images of space-ship landing; local natives fleeing - emergence of They, plus strange machinery, drilling operations; flash to natives peacefully living in a cave; alarm sounds; distant rumbling as the invaders drill nearer & nearer. There the vision faded.) /Tut-tut, Sid; and you a grown-up fan, too. But more of EFR's invasion later, if we can find letters that don't need censoring./ Purely subjective, of course; one could just as easily interpret it as the charge of a panzer division. ** To approach "Fantast". ** Cover: Yes. /All these cracks at the cover - which we thought was an excellent piece of work - will be squashed if we find Harry's letter./ ** Portrait of the Artist. Congratulations, Mr. Youd. Rate 10, definitely, for the almost flawless style, so beautifully true to the interview-essay tradition. Whether or not the subject-matter was true, and, not knowing Johnny Burke, I cannot say if it was, the ease with which the flow of portraiture is maintained would be a credit to an established essayist."/Our own opinion, too./

Here's Harry:

"Mike seems to have been baffled by the last Fay cover, which reminds me that last time I sent a hasty screed to you I was just on the verge of disclosing the esoteric significance of this work of art. I think I'd reached the point where I had been pondering and had drawn a squiggly shape resembling a palette. Well, to make a short story longer, I decided to make that the main theme, so to speak, and that brought me to the subject of art, which reminded me of Henry Moore, so I scribbled summat resembling his sculpted monstrosities and that reminded me of the studio. So that explains the presence of the easel and door and sundry wallpaperish designs. It also explains the rum face on the left, which is extracted from a Picasso reproduction hanging on the studio wall. The thing like a stomach in the middle of the pic is merely the subconscious reflection of the sudden realisation that I had worked up a terrific appetite thinking the whole thing out. /You see, the pondering period had lasted for three hours: after this, the maestro squiggled the squiggle, & on turning it upside-down, found a palette. He now continues . ./ So it's all very simple really, you see. Or maybe you don't. You're not meant to anyway. What's the point of surrealism if everyone understands it? The less the number of people who comprehend, the more successful the picture. Obviously. Where does the title come in, you ask? Well. H'm. Well, we've had fifth and sixth columns, so why can't the artists, who do play a part behind the scenes, so to speak, in shaping the course of the world's culture, be regarded as the seventh column? That's as good an excuse as I can think of at the moment, so it'll have to suffice!" /Now we ask you, gentlemen - what more could you want?/

The third Flat member, Maurice K.Hanson:

"I like this issue much better than the last possibly because I'm not feeling hypercritical at present, possibly because there seems much more of it and possibly because it is better anyway. ** As for the back cover, well, there it is; I don't like the style of the hair. ** The excerpt from Le Zombie is almost a work of art. It reminds me of a letter from a certain British fan I once got, ending, crushingly, "The latist Novae Terrea was the louiest." ** I was disappointed by the fifth Cosmic Case but I suppose that Smith's biographers will find it valuable as indicating his love of cats. (I like cats, too.) /So do Youd, Forster, Burke, Temple, Turner, Rosenblum & us; would other readers let us know their preference?/ ** "Swine" is fine. ** As for "Broadside" part of me is revolted by this picture of a couple of would-be intellectuals spending their time analysing each other & rushing into print with the result in a Bloomsbury mutual admiration

society manner, and part of me says what the hell, anyway? It was by no means dull reading & the geography of Liverpool has its interests, too. I'm not quite sure of the meaning of "precious" but I fancy it's what "Broadside" is. ** Harry must be elated that the U.S. Postal Authorities regard him as a pornographer. But why all the fuss about his nudes? I don't get it. I take it he features them so much because they are one of the few art forms that come out reasonably well on a duplicator? /Sooth. Borne out by Harry's very sensible self-education as a stencil artist, from early bold line-work to later more intricate stuff./ ** Re Craig & "Fantasia" I've yet to find a fan who (like me) thought more of the Casse-Noisette sequence than any other. This satisfyingly demonstrates my superior aesthetic discrimination, & that I was not obsessed with "Sacre du Printemps" merely because it was fantasy."

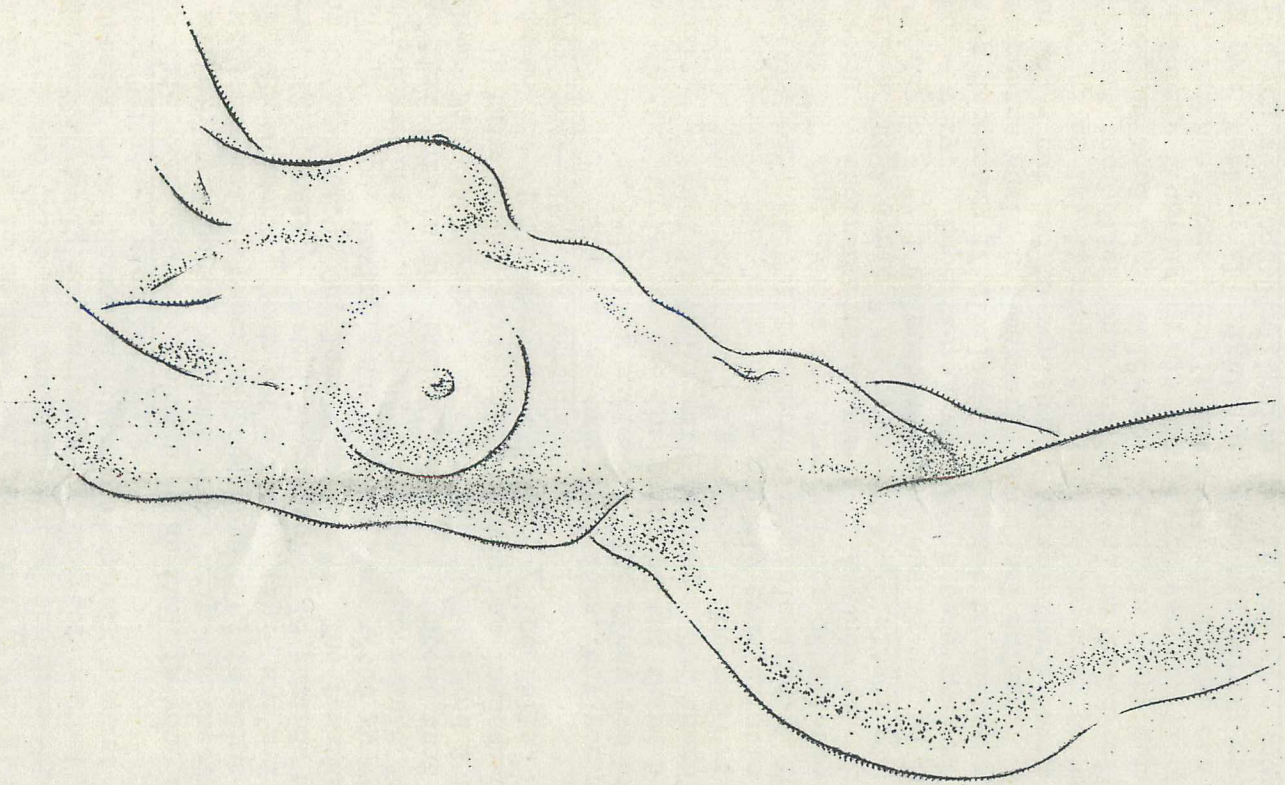
Clippings from Burke----8 page letter:

"Why is this fellow Smith represented so much in your august pages, and yet no sign of an article by JFBurke, without whose help the sheets of a fan magazine might as well be used for toilet peper without bothering to peruse them. /Can't imagine/ ** Who is Frieda Wilson? Your pet g.f.? /Nein: she's a pet, & a g , & a f., but all three, alas, nein./ Swine is superb. It reminds me of some other poem, but I cannot think what. Oh, lovely work ** The remarks on self and Joan are inexcusable /Why?/ you, having seen us some time after we were married, will have noticed how we have changed. /Changed or not, the result delighted us continually./ What a shame that this is the last B'SIDE. I suspect that Sam is yaller. ** Sid Birchby's rhyme No.1 is lovely. I chortled /We liked 2 too/ CABeling is unbelievable - is this really true? ** Despite the inadequacy of my comments, I think this issue one of the very best FAYs." /Nice fella, JFB./

Clippings from Youd----10 page letter:

"FOR NO APPARENT REASON is an excellent idea, but you might make up your mind whether it is to be satirical or serious. The first two excerpts are very funny. I spent five minutes trying to see the point of the third before I realised it was meant seriously. /Miguel is God: quit yapping. But there's much in what you say./ DIAECTIC /Sorry - typing too fast./ is vague. The authors never seem to know what they are getting at. The last line - crudely evangelistic - is unworthy of two so sophisticated persons. ** William Harris is misleading. You would never guess that he is an ardent BBC fan; knows the tone pitches of all the announcers, and speaks of repertory men by their christian names. And how touching that he should credit the world with a "fine sense " to be dwarfed /Misleading? The man's a dashed hypocrite, by Jingo/ ** I understand that John is out to lacerate Julian Parr. Reprehensible - very. Superficially he has a case against Julian's plea that spiritual faith is necessary if civilisation is not to collapse, but I think, like Japan, his early successes would not outweigh the final defeat. Russia abandoned spiritual faith in God - but had to replace it by spiritual faith in man. John, who may regard himself as an intellectual sceptic, is the most pathetically reliant of human beings. Without the belief that art is vital he would collapse even more completely than a disillusioned Aggie Goldshaw. And, in fact, between Aggie trusting in her God, and Johnny trusting in his art, I see very little fundamental difference. ** You see, a faith of some kind is essential. If you can replace religious faith by something even better, all right. Russia has partly succeeded. Artists partly succeed. But you must not disillusion people and give them nothing to replace the lost belief. ** SWINE. If this is by your girl friend I suppose I must be lenient. But, quite frankly, I have never liked this donnish sort of archness. This is reminiscent of "What is this that roareth thus?" You know it of course. ** FOLLY is about the best yet. ** Back cover. I think it's Joan. John hopes it isn't meant to be Marion. Perhaps Harry knows? Perhaps!" /We wouldn't know./

reclining torso



reclining torso