

FUTURIAN

WAR DIGEST

JULY 1941

VOL. 1, NO. 10

NEWSLETTER

ALL THE ODDMENTS

First item to report this month is news of James Rathbone, who has been wandering round the near East. His letter gives as address c/o Imperial Communications, Durban, South Africa; but is postmarked from London, England - so he has arrived home again. However, he is at present in hospital with some sort of nervous trouble. We wish him a speedy recovery; especially as he and the girl he left behind, Miss Rita Pitman, are waiting anxiously to get married!

Incidentally a round-about item of news about Harold Gottliffe via the ordinary press, was that his hospital ship was unsuccessfully bombed during the affair round Crête. No casualties was the report.

Two changes of address: Hugh John Ellis of Barrow-in-Furness joins the gallant ranks of the bombed-out; new address is Berkune Cottage, Lindal-in-Furness, Lancs. And S.A. Beach leaves Aberystwyth for 18 Coychurch Rd Bridgend, Glamorgan.

More Service news: William Frederick (Woof) Temple, after spending a leave with wife and family in Cornwall, is now in a Field Regt in Monmouth "not doing at all badly, Mostly Scots, Hoots, wha's ma haggis". And Signalman E.C. Williams has now arrived in Llandudno for the nonce.

The visiting season has commenced. Eric Needham of Manchester & Eric Hopkins of London had a minor convention of their own, wandered all round the metropolis, discussed everything under the sun and made an unsuccessful call on Arthur Williams. Eric Williams (this is getting a bit confusing) did manage to find both Arthur Williams (no relationship) & Ken Bulmer in during his recent leave in London and all three had a grand free-for-all discussion. "Renny" Rennison of Blackburn visited Bert Lewis in Preston & spent a day investigating Bert's beautiful collection. Both enjoyed the exchange of views. Rbn Lane and Harry Turner, both of Manchester, met for the first time recently - there is a possibility of an stf. club (very informal) for Manchester, being formed.

Ron Holmes appeared before his local C.O. tribunal this month. Verdict land work, ambulance or civil defence.

London letter

As a result of a chain-letter recently sent around to them, half a dozen London fans are now in touch with one another.

Tom Dovey, new fan-find of Sidney Bounds, reveals himself as enthusiastic cave-explorer, and met myself and two other cavers last week. Raising query; any other fans interested in speleology? Over Whitsun I visited deserted lead mine workings in Mendip Hills, source of Roman pipes in baths of Bath, reputedly Phoenician in origin. Am going to spend a seven days leave caving in South Wales.

Sidney L. Birchby

FORT'S BOOKS REPRINTED !!!

The Fortean Society of America announces that in collaboration with Henry Holt & Co., they have reprinted all of Charles Fort's epoch-making books, in a single volume together with a complete & exhaustive index. The price is 4 dollars post-paid anywhere in the world. The four books in question are "The Book of the Damned" "New Lands" "Lo!" "Wild Talents" and all try to show Fort's ideas of the incorrectness of modern science's interpretation of the universe. We hope that this edition will be available in Britain.

Other Booknews.

A new series of shilling paperbacks has been issued by Messrs Methuen. The first 12 numbers contain two widely differing fantasies, namely "The Jovial Ghosts" by Thomas Smith, which is one of the Topper series, a hilarious Rabelaisian farce; and "The Wind in the Willows" by K. Grahame, a childrens book of the Alice-in-Wonderland school.

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FIRST "SYDCON" A SUCCESS !!!

Australian fandom held its first convention on April 13th - Easter Sunday - at Sydney. The idea was first mooted in the fanzine Cosmos, & Vol Molesworth and William D. Veney took the arrangements in hand. The usual Aussie squabbling then occurred but at the last minute feuding was forgotten and all Austra-fandom united to stage a worthwhile affair.

Notable features of the occasion were; the entrance procession with the Sydney, Melbourne and Newcastle groups all carrying banners, auction sale of all sorts of stf miscellanea, David R. Evans, guest of honour summing up Australian fan activities from the very beginning; gramophone interludes and the popularity of the Things To Come march, and the banquet at the Hotel Australia.

The attendance reached the staggering total of 67, which certainly reflects great credit on all concerned, and compares favourably with American conventions.

An edition of 500 copies of a special booklet had been prepared and was reported to be sold out. Eric F Russell said that 250 copies were sold in Australia, 150 sent to USA, and another 100 sent to British fans. So far this latter batch has not turned up but we hope for its appearance soon.

A great deal of friendliness and fraternisation took place and many people now feel that they know others, who a short while ago, were no thing more than names. Everybody present enjoyed the affair thoroughly and are looking forward to next years "Melbention" or Melbourne convention; which the Melbourne group had been plugging vigorously during the day, including the singing of a specially-written anthem.

The convention was officially declared closed at 10p.m. and all fans gave three cheers for the committee who had spent so much time and money in arranging the entire affair. In courtesy, Australian S.F. News.

DAVE MCILWAIN CALLED UP

Liverpool's David McIlwain received his papers to report for service with the Royal Air Force on Saturday, June 28th; so by now he will be in the service. He wishes all his correspondents to note that he would prefer them to hold up all letters until they hear from him, so as to avoid congestion in the McIlwain billet, until such time as he is more or less settled down. But fanmags etc. will be ok, as he still wishes to keep up with fanews.

This of course, means an end to PAN Publications, though they were probably entirely finished off in by the "blitzing" of printer Reggie Potter. So until after the war, we must say -- farewell "Garge".

A Note To American Fan Editors

We are now working out a system whereby the maximum value is obtained out of any extra copies of fanzines which wend their way in this direction. A second copy goes around fellow-FIDO editors and at the moment a "chain" is being made up so as to circulate any third copies of mags amongst the main body of subscribers. So that if you are good enough to send three copies of your magazine to this address, anywhere up to 50 people will read it. This will give fanzines a tremendous jump in actual circulation. There are difficulties in arranging to pass comments on to editors but we hope to arrange it.

Incidentally would Britishers who would like to receive such mags. etc and will guarantee to pass them on within three days, please inform either Jack Gibson or myself.

Latest News of James Rathbone, just received is that he now in Bellesdyke Military Hospital, Larbert, Scotland.

Jack Gibson hopes to be able to include a complete list of the books & magazines available in his Science & Fiction Exchange to be incorporated in the August mailing.

AN INTERESTING ARTICLE

"Mara and the Monroe Doctrine;"

- Reflections on some recent changes in American Public Opinion", by Gavin B. Henderson, is an article of considerable sciencefictional interest. It appeared in "Chambers Journal" for May '41. Mr Henderson points out that American public opinion has been "influenced not so much by leading articles in the principle dailies as by a type of literature so worthless and ephemeral that it has received little attention". The trash in question being the "pulp". He is concerned largely with the Science Fiction Magazines (he spells it with capitals throughout!) The claim is that it stf. (along with President Roosevelt) that has been responsible for the mass swing-over of opinion in America from complete isolationism to a more or less active interventionist mood.

Stf. it appears, has worked this wonder by hammering home the lesson that "Machine warfare has done one notable thing already. It has killed off the possibility of isolation for a nation, and made the invasion of far-off lands almost as easy as those nearby". This he quotes from "Wonder Stories" for March '32. Brer Henderson cites story after story from Astounding, Wonder, and Amazing featuring war and invasion and destruction, from "The Death Cloud" (Astounding, May '31) to "The Invisible Invasion" (Amazing, April '39).

Its really quite a nice little boost for stf. especially in such an unexpected place. Such sentences as "These stories are a riot of undisciplined imagination, and only rarely have the slightest literary value" are probably a concession to the readers of Chamber's Journal. His sympathetic interest in stf. is reasonably plain. Rather a pity he didn't manage to work in a reference to Tales of Wonder. R.G. Medhurst.

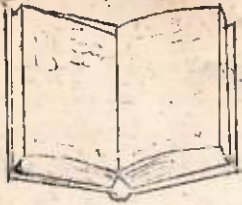
Since the appearance of this article we have been in touch with Mr. Henderson who says, "My approach to the subject is perhaps rather different from yours. I am a historian, and primarily interested in foreign policy; But of latter years public opinion has played a greater and greater part in moulding foreign policy; and I am therefore necessarily interested in the various things that influence public opinion- including Science Fiction. This influence has, of course been much greater in the U.S.A. than here. It is not a topic in which, so far as I know, any work has yet been done; and I wrote my little essay to try to persuade some American student to get on to the subject."

This certainly opens up an interesting vista worthy of some thought on our part. Incidentally Mr Henderson would be pleased if anyone could inform him of some good stf collections which could be accessible to him in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, where he lives.

MAGAZINE REVIEW

"STIRRING SCIENCE STORIES" Vol.1, No.3, June 1941

This magazine is certainly showing promise, - its semi-fan line-up gives it a freedom from formula greatly to be commended. No less than 14 stories in this number, all interesting but in my humble opinion the fantasy section is far superior to the science fiction. Best tale is "Mr Packer Goes to Hell" - Cecil Corwin, surely one of the strangest underworlds ever portrayed in fiction followed by "Martian Fantasy" by Henry Andrew Ackermann; - "The Silence" - Venard McLaughlin and "Karzan Collects" - S.D. Gottesman - all of a very high standard. Other stories are by A.J. Burkes, Walter C. Davies, Hugh Raymond, Basil Wells, Walter Kubilus, R.W. Lowndes, and D.H. Keller. Bouquets to Hannes Bok for his fine art work.



BOOK REVIEW

By BERT LEWIS

There are three books of note for my review this month tho' I'm afraid this is a little delayed owing to pressure of my own work; all these books however are quite worthy of note.

The first is by Rex Warner, many of you will, no doubt, remember his "Wild Goose Chase", his latest effort is of a different type and quite topical in a way. The book is called "The Aerodrome" (Bodley Head 7/6) and tho' sub-titled "a love story", bears no resemblance to the kind of romance these three words usually describe. It is much more than a love story, it is a grim fantasy and a grimmer warning of what might happen in this country, were a Fascist regime to seize power. It bites deep and possesses a rare individuality, it is not a comfortable book, some it may shock, with its cold sincerity and colder logic and demands, for its authentic place amongst the present-day writers who are producing something really new. It centres in a typical English village, where the "enemy" Air Force takes over the local aerodrome in its ruthlessly efficient way and the village is reduced to something like slavery.

The second story by Morchard Bishop is "The Star-Called Wormwood" (Gollancz 8/-), is a fantastic satire directed against all wars. This also is a book which may well make some people feel uncomfortable, as the author sets about his task, not hesitating to bring in the ecclesiastical as well as human affairs. The result is a curious compound of Wellsian adventure and caustic commentary, during which an unlettered rustic from early Victorian days, finds himself transported to the world of A.D. 839, in the company of shades of Coleridge and Blake, being gradually made aware of, the, to him, almost incredible stupidities of modern man at war.

The third book is only reviewed in brief as, up to the time of writing only little is known of the contents, here it is for what it is worth; "Invasion" by Henrik Van Leen (Harrap 5/-) the book is supposed to have been written by Van Leen, who, in 1960, discovers his old manuscripts of a Nazi invasion of the United States in the early 1940's, the story is written contemporarily, its place in S.F. lists is very obvious.

c-c
 WE WANT TO SAY that this issue is respectfully dedicated to Mr Douglas Webster of Aberdeen, who so kindly provided Fido's rapacious maw with 2 reams of paper which we are using for this issue.

We must apologise for unwittingly conveying inaccurate information last month in the momentous question of chain-letters. Apparently the idea was originated by Ego Clarke, who discussed it by post with several other people, whereupon Hal Chibbett brought out the "Probe" letter on the idea that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

 The elegant and élite periodical publication you are now perusing is entitled FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST and is devoted to fantasy fiction. Generally known as "FIDO", it is published monthly from 4 Grange Terrace, Leeds 7, by J. Michael Rosenblum; @ 3d. per copy, 3/- per year postfree. Americans can remit promags to the value of 75 cents in lieu of cash. Thanks are due to these worthy souls who are responsible for the accompanying "litter".

QUIZ : NUMBER TWO

compiled by Arthur W. Busby

- 1) When did Street & Smith take over Astounding from Claytons?
- 2) The principal theme of H.G.Wells book "Wheels of Chance" is -- ?
- 3) Give three feminine authors who have written for either Ast.or Amazing
- 4) Fort's "Lo" was serialised in Astounding some years ago. What are his other books?
- 5) Who is the British Secretary of the Fortean Society of America?
- 6) What degree does Stanton A. Coblentz hold ?
- 7) When did Astounding first publish i. In Time to Come, ii. Mutants ?
- 8) When was an editorial from The New York Times reprinted in an SF mag?
- 9) What day did the great Stanley G. Weinbaum die ?
- 10) S.G.Weinbaum wrote a story under a pen-name. Title & pseudonym please?
- 11) What Astounding stories featured a. Billiards, b. Baseball, c. American
- 12) Bill Temples first published fantasy story was ? football?
- 13) What are the following by profession 1. Willy Ley, 2. L. Sprague De Camp, 3. John A. Clark ?
- 14) An author invented a fictitious character only to be informed later that there was a person of that name actually engaged on the work the author depicted. What was 1. Author 2. Story 3. Occupation 4. Character
- 15) Chan Corbett wrote a story called "When Time Stood Still". Another author used the same title ?

There's the little lot. See what you make of 'em. Answers next month.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Postcard from chez McIlwain informs us that a gramophone record from 4e Ackerman has just arrived. Entitled "Hola el Halivudo" it is a talk in Esperanto. Would any fans studying Esp-o and who would like the loan of the record, let me know.

Wanted; Chess Set. Julian Parr, 26 Edward St., Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent Warwick Hockley, 183 Domain Rd, Sth Yarra, SE1, Melbourne, Australia, will be "darn glad to hear from British friends who'd care to write.

During the last month letters have been received from E.C.Hopkins, A.C. Clarke, T.Overton, H.Vella, A.Dewick H.J.Ellis, D.J.Doughty & J.Banks to which I fear I, shall be unable to reply. Other people I have tried to answer. One new FGPOer only Robert J. Silburn of Aberystwyth.

UNKNOWN (American editions) May & Dec. '40 @ 1/6 each. Write first, to Edwin MacDonald, 25 Dochfour Drive, Inverness, Scotland.

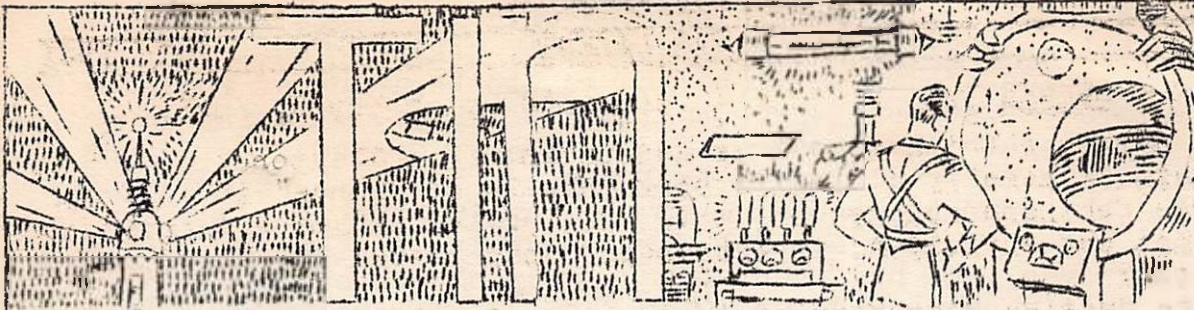
STOP-PRESS

I am extremely sorry to have to report that the continuation of FIDO is once again in jeopardy. This is due to the new Act recently passed by parliament which makes conscientious objectors who have received a conditional exemption, such as I have, liable to be called up any time, at three days notice, for anything the government decides is "civil defence" and to serve anywhere. There is no appeal of any sort and the only alternative is presumably jail.

I have already received a "general" type of notice and might not hear any more. However should I get a second "call-up" notice, I fear that will be the end of FIDO.

Careful accounts are kept of all subscriptions and should the worst occur, all money paid will be returned at the earliest opportunity

Let us hope that is the end of the matter but if FIDO doesn't turn up at any you will know what has happened.



ISSUE 3
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REVIEW

ASF May '41

COVER NOVELET this month is Bob Heinlein's "Universe", a great NOVA tale of a civilization built down the generations by the descendants of the crew of a gigantic interstellar exploratory ship which missed its goal - a fascinating story - JWC informs us, via his Editorial on Heinlein's graph of Future History, that Bob's working on a sequel. Anson MacDonald, who is, as you already know from June FIDO, Heinlein again, is responsible for the other novelet - "Solution Unsatisfactory" - which poses the unanswerable question of how to form a defence against, and how to best control the inevitable irresistible weapon! Eric F. Russell hits the high-spot of the shorts with "Jay Score", he keeps you guessing right down to the last paragraph with this tale of a very tough native of Earth. Harry Walton is again present, this month with a somewhat complicated, but enjoyable incident in subspace - "Subcruiser". "Liar" is contributed by Isaac Asimov - concerning Herbie, the robot who couldn't hurt anyone's feelings! The remaining short's not really worthy of mention, being the worst that JWC has let in for many moons, a Vic Phillips and Scott Roberts collaboration under the title of "Fish Story" - very appropriate! The serial is thus left for consideration - L. Sprague de Camp's "Stolen Dornause". This is a novel built on the same basic ideas as a serial he ran in the early UNKNOWN, "Divide and Rule!" Tale of the highly aristocratic feudal world of the future - and of the reconciliation of the parties to the feud - all hanging on the fate of the stolen semi-corpsae of an engineer in suspended animation. Whacky in the true de Camp manner, but a great, and humorous tale. Illustrations by Kramer, Rogers - specially on Universe - and Schneeman. NO -- there's no article!!

JUST enough space again this month, to note that this maglet is perpetrated at 31, Bexwell Road, Downham Market, Norfolk, under the supervision of Don J. Doughty. Kindly duplicated, and distributed with the FIDO mailing each month by J. Michael Rosenblum.

NOW I want to make an appeal to all you kind-hearted fans - yes, I know that you are hard-hearted, but maybe the next guy isn't, and this is meant for such as he. IF you can think up anything at all stfictional, such as a short article, or anything in the way of poesy, and even if you don't think that it's very interesting, just bung it along to the address above, I'll take all you have to send - other people may be interested in it. As you may remember, this sheet was started with the object of being devoted to ASTOUNDING, the undoubted leader of the Stfield, but it was obvious that such a policy, having such narrow limits, could not hold us very long, wherefore the sheet has evolved to the usual chatty (I hope!) and generalised stf-sheet that you hold to-day. Without your help and support in the way of material it will deteriorate to nothingness -- if you'd rather have it that way, well, just don't send anything! DonJD

RAMBLING thru' the letters that have arrived chez moi since the last ish of TT, I find that Jack Gibson is again present, asking, "What do you think of this Radiolocation? Can it be the humble begining of the meteor-detector so beloved of stf-authors? Can it? I think so." I think so too, Jack, and so do several other people. In fact JWC - or McCann, if you prefer it that way - had a filler on that subject in an ASF a few months ago, can't find the darn issue at the moment, asking the same question - and that, lads, before we had heard a word about it! Ken Bulmer has been chasing ASF backwards, and has "run across a few copies of late 1935 and begining 1936 Just reading BLUE MAGIC by Charles Willard Diffin. Boy, what a story! Now, if Campbell were to get some more of that style of action and plot, he would bring AST right up the top, where, admittedly, it is, but there is some mighty strong competition creeping up...The whole story has, well I must say it, an atmosphere, an aura surrounding it that is just the sort of thing I lap up. It has an indefinable something that brings it above the rut of stuff appearing to-day. I wonder what has become of CWDiffin lately? He's not, by any chance unfortunately dead, like so many SFists of late?" Gunner Ted Carnell has a word or two to say on the subject of UNKNOWN: "Of all the trials and tribulations magazine stf has gone through since 1936, nothing has affected me so bitterly as the news of UNKNOWN going large-size. I read it in FN when I reached home on thursday, and it almost turned my leave sour! I've been opposed to large size always. The size is too cumbersome to carry comfortably, read comfortably, or file decently. They look like Sob Romances or something, carted round by a love-sick swain... maybe I'm allergic to the size, but I virtually creep all over at the thought of UNK lowering its dignity to such a level." A closing shot from Eric Needham, somewhat of an anti-climax, after the tone of several other letters on the subject - "Somehow I didn't think so much of SLAN: it is what I would call a perfectly pointless story..." And that after I had a very hot anti-van Vogtian - John Morgan - converted to a very pro-vV with the help of SLAN. List thou to John - "I can only admit that SLAN is just about the best SF story I've had the pleasure to read for a long time ' ' ' ' one must give honour where it is due, and there you have it." *****

***** TT's TT -- Tittle-Tattle
**** ** from ~~*****~~ Frank Mills

ASTOUNDING and UNKNOWN: As ASF gets more Unknownish every month, Unknown changes its title to Unknown WORDDS. This brings two problems to the fore. I. Is Unknown going to feature sfn, as its title seems to suggest, or is it going to continue with its present policy??? At the moment a lot of stories that Campbell puts in ASF are really more suitable for UN, so does this mean that UN & ASF are going to change places, one publishing sfn and science-disguised fantasy, and the other pure sfn, or what??? II How are the BREs going to turn out now that UN is going large-sized? With the paper shortage I certainly do not think that we will get a large-size reprint; so that leaves two alternatives. Either there will be no more Unknown BRE, or it will continue with its present size. Both are about as bad, but if we do see something of UN it will be better than nothing -- however, I have my doubts.....

THRILLING WONDER STORIES: With the April issue this mag. enters a policy fairly similar to that of STARTLING. It will feature a long complete novel and about four shorts every month. The first, in this issue, is by that great classic writer of sfn - Henry Kuttner! However, his story is better than the usual tripe that he turns out, and it is illustrated by Virgil Finlay. The supporting shorts were fairly good, and according to the Editor, John Taine is signed up for a novel - propaganda? Well that's all for now, and I hope that you have enjoyed this gossip column. (This is not by me - and is muchly cut.D)

Those of you who do not know that this sheet is stencilled by Douglas Webster at Idlewild, Fountainhall Road, Aberdeen, must be a pitiful minority. JMR duplicates.

* * * * *

This which you hold in your hands being the last Gent, I take this opportunity to confound Art Williams (see TT4) by producing not four but six pages of Letters &, I hope, no material whatsoever. There is nothing, I think, of any relevance to stf., and if I can choose nicely, nothing of any relevance to anything. We then pack up and depart into mistiness, snickering absent-mindedly at the frothings of Grunt-Leader Carnell & Groan-Leader Holmes (neither of whom can stand the sight of anything produced by Webster). We also exchange our ego for an editorial "we" by taking command of FANTAST, about which, in anticipation of this happy event, we have said many complimentary things in the past. All this who read this are advised to subscribe at once: if they are friends of ours & don't do so, they'd better start thinking quick.

CSYoud: "Michael tells me that Fido is too overloaded for a Warbull this month, so you will have to do the explaining to the gang. That being so, would you mind printing a list of people to whom issues are owed, as follows:-

Hanson (3): Clarke (2): Hopkins (2): Forster (5): Williams (1): Smith (3): Gabrielson (1): Parr (3): Robb (1): Ellis (3): Skeel (3): Lewis (1): Hodgkins (USA--3): Swisher (USA--1): Medhurst (4): Needham (1): Veney (AUST.---4): Macdonald (1): Bulmer (1): McIlwain (3): Kuslan (USA--3): Birchby (3): Ellis (HJ--3): Doughty (3): Rennison (3): R. Lane (5).

Please announce that anyone who finds a fault should write to me explaining what has been missed out." /Please note this request. Those mentioned (apart from exchanges) will receive the numbers of issues indicated should Fay happen to last long enough. Material, needless to say, is not only urgently but desperately needed/

SMITH wrote, before seeing the June Gent: "Which brings us round to the last issue of the dear old Gent. After studying Ragatzy's reasoning I wish to start some of my own on the same lines. That that is is, that that is not is not; for that that is not is not that that is, nor is that that is that that is not; it follows that that that is is, that that that is not is not, that that that is is that that is not that that is not, that that that is not is that that is that that is not..... ***** Medhurst I have already answered here and elsewhere. Rest assured that once having drawn the sword I shall not sheath it until the lights of Europe and of Cambridge shall once more be lighting the unexplored avenues and unturning the unturned stones so that this green jewel set in a silver sea shall not go down before the forces of that Wicked Man (Medhurst) and all our yesterdays but light the way to dusty death."

/This particularly rapid unintelligible patter
Isn't generally heard, and if it is it doesn't matter./

* * * * *

Many moons ago, the Webster spent a letter or two arguing Fort with La Rissole; by dint of unbelievable ingenuousness the former evoked the following --- ERIC F. RUSSELL: "You've missed much if you've read no Fort. He isn't just a scientific heckler. He's decidedly atheistic as well, and his wit is bitingly malicious. You'd enjoy his very lurid description of the Mont Pelee disaster, perhaps the worst in the annals of the human race. After devoting a couple of paragraphs to powerful sketches of falling trees, boiling seas, the onward rush of lava, the roar of falling masonry, the howls and screams of 30,000 parboiled bodies, etc., etc., he casually ends up, "Somewhere, a sparrow fell and according to conventional theologians, this was noted." He enjoys himself with that time South African farmers spent three months praying for rain, at the end of which time, According to Fort, God got fed up, told the angels to see to it, and they, knowing no better, sent the whole three months

2/ supply in one dollop. A couple of lakes and an ocean dropped, sweeping away thousands of cattle, bursting bridges, wrecking towns, leaving a death-roll of several hundreds. His police is sweetest when recording the advent of Einstein's theories, and how those astronomers who favoured Einstein looked at the sky and found evidence to support him, while those against him looked at the sky and found evidence against. Says Fort, "If we had a spectroscope, it would be for us."*****Touching upon your other paragraph anent Forteana, I guess you ain't quite got the hang of it. Us guys don't just heckle science and no more. Firstly, we draw differences between Science and Dogmatic Science - the latter is our especial prey. (A few scientists are Forteans, believe it or not.) /I do - I know my scientists/ Secondly, we're constructive enough to have plenty of theories of our own, with data to back 'em. Thirdly, we don't offer our theories as God-given facts, as do Dogmatic Scientists. Moreover, I think you give the scientists more credit than they deserve. If you ever bother to look deeply enough into the source of most of the world's inventions you'll be surprised to find how many of them have been attributed to a scientific world which, in actuality, was at the time trying to get the inventor across the barrel for a larruping. You mention the automobile, for instance. Well, that was invented, or the internal combustion engine was invented by Gottlieb Daimler, a German mechanic --with some parallel credit due to Benz, another German mechanic. Neither of them were scientists, though the scientific world has since stolen their thunder by tagging them "scientists". Marconi wasn't a scientist at the time of his first successful experiments, neither was Edison, nor Bell, nor the Wright Brothers. Harvey, who discovered and demonstrated the circulation of the blood, and is now recorded as "a scientist", was actually pilloried by the scientists of London Surgical Society. (Dogmatic Science again!) You'll find that most of the world's basic inventions and discoveries have been made by unknown, independent, and unrecognised research-workers having no connection with official science, and that usually these workers have received more scorn than kudos from scientists until the truth of their discoveries could no longer be denied - whereupon their very detractors have stolen their thunder by listing them as "scientists" and thus giving "science" credit it never deserved. An ancient trick culled from the religious world which, finding a heretic successful in his heresy, despite victimisation, then canonises him and claims him as their own. "He Was a Christian" - long after he is dead and unable to deny it. Thus, "Joan of Arc, once heartily and thoroughly cursed by the R.C. Church, is now an R.C. saint, by order of the Pope! Dogmatic Science is nothing but Roman Catholicism with its pants down and its genitals exposed."

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THE THINGS THEY SAY... Ken Johnson: "... very busy at work, yeah I wish Hitler was still in the paint business ... " Ron Holmes: "The mentioning of Christianity stall was what we authors call a "hook".... " Marion Dadio: "...ya big nyaff ..." Rex Knight: "... congratulate you on the persistence of your epistolary style ..." /I think this succeeds in being maddeningly irrelevant to anything/

** ** * * *

Dave McIlwain: "Gent is good as usual, but I notice no boost for Esperanto. Why is this? Sabotage, that's wot it is - I'll inform the Gestapo. /Oh dear, what have I done?/****ps- owing to enemy action, there will be no more PAN PUBLICATIONS. /And in a later letter.../ No more PAN PUBS I fear. Whole outfit blitzed last month. I will know for certain soon."

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ERIC HOPKINS: "Re Parr's query re bad language literature, I think it is possible to accurately describe average common life without using the actual words. (Unless 'tis plainly reportage.) So much can be done by inference, but not by the substitution of some middle-class epithet which would only make the story ridiculous. In NEW WRITING are one or two stories which use the actual words, particul-

3/ arly one about a builder's day in which the foreman & a boy let each other have it neat. /"Boss" by Leslie Halward: an entertaining piece, which is more than can be said of several I've read in NW./ But of course, the good writer is not concerned merely with "a detailed, accurate account of a working man's private life" and so Ragatzy's premise should never arise. If the writer sets himself the task of reporting verbatim a fragment of a working man's experience he cannot avoid repeating the swearing because he will have to repeat everything else, but if he is a true writer and fixes his attention upon the essentials he need not introduce a single oath. Swearing is only a superficiality and great working class novels can be written without it. Why fix on the working man, anyway?" /Just a convenient instance./

....THIS BATH QUESTION....

FOR:- SAM YOUND explains the fundamentals: "Eric Hopkins is worse than a novice at bath-reading. I have a horrid suspicion that he and Johnny are of the type who plunge into a bath, and almost at once rise like Venus, dripping from the foam. I believe they spend the intervening two seconds in frantic ablutions, which probably slow down the heart action and take some months off their lives. /I agree: a thoroughly disgusting practice. But wait till you see the Ego's ghastly heathen ideas, or the awful rites performed by such eminent authors as Russell & Craig.. / Further- more, Eric at least seems to be given to jumping in while the water is boiling; folks with more sensitive skins are careful to have the water luke-warm before insertion, and then to turn on the heat, stepping it up until the steam whistles through their eye-brows. Naturally, when the water cools one administers more hot water. This can be carried on almost indefinitely, although it is true that the water tends to deceive. Turning the tap off when the heat gets unbearable, the sudden movement contacts a lurking layer of cold water, which swirls round the naked form like rain-soaked trousers. I do not believe Rita reads Railway Time Tables, even in bath. But I know someone who takes a cold bath every morning all the year round. He went to school with me, and casually remarks in mid-December that it was a bit of a job to break the ice this morning!" /An amazingly healthy devil, I suppose?/

MICHAEL ROSENBLUM enlarges on material: "P.S. Large Gent O.K. /I hope so! / -- read almost anything in bath, depending more on condition & binding. Don't read books in good collection but read books, magazines etc. not in my collection & that I needn't worry about. Keep a special book-jacket for the purpose."

And BILL TEMPLE puts in a word for idiosyncracies: "The "bath" business must have started when Sam Yound remarked in public that I had no spare time except in my bath. /Right - you should be proud of what you've started./ Actually I'm very busy in my bath. I also read, & go in for the more heavy type of literature. I started with Morley's "Dutch Republic", worked my way through Gibbons' "Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire", & am now in the 14th. Edition of the "Encyclopedia Britannica". You see, I can never bring myself to get out of a hot bath, & have been known to spend weeks in one. Joan, failing to get me out by hammering at the door, used to batter it down, but the constant door replacement got expensive, & anyway you can't buy wood now. She resorted to feeding me through a tube. It's no good taking short books, like "Gone With The Wind", with you, for you finish it too soon & have to get out. I always take works of several volumes. I recline on my back balancing the spare volumes on my head, & rest the volume in use on the two taps. (A delicious wrinkle, this!) I always turn the pages with my toes, which is a healthy exercise, invented by Darwin, I believe." /Amazing./

AGAINST:- JACK BANKS reminisces: "As to your low personal questions, I don't know that I've ever read in the bath. If I'm at the cinema or theatre, I generally walk out during the National Anthem, unless stuck in the middle of a row. Got an aunt (a

4/ Fascist minded person, tut tut) who walked out of our local pier theatre last year, during King, and said to a sailor or someone in uniform who tried to stop her, "Take your hands off me, you little worm". I know someone else who says he only stands up out of sympathy for a nation that can have an old battle hymn for a national anthem."

JOHN CRAIG goes into the finer sensuous details: "And now to this bath business.

Class me as inclassifiable. I imagine that this is some sort of a gag. /Sir!/ I regard reading in bath as a barbarous practice, the bath should be reserved for sensuous meditation, unless it's a cold bath to remove a hangover. Also, never having been to Hollywood or taken part in an American film I have never, in real life, come across a bath that presented any reading facilities. /See above for some constructive examples of ingenuity in this respect, you lazy devil. Of course, CSY forgets one efficient method for keeping warm in a bath, namely, fill up a hot-water bottle and take it in with you: this cannot fail./ Whilst in soak, however, I should raise no objection to being read to, in soothing tones. For this I would choose something after the fashion of an old fashioned recipe book containing descriptions of how to cook large porterhouse steaks smothered in onions - and rum baba made with hundreds of eggs and pints of double cream. Sic transia gluttony - I like my belly."

DONALD SMITH, of course, wants to do something else: "I don't read in my bath at all. The very idea of it! Every true born British citizen sings in his bath, and so do I. Or do you mean "read in Bath"? If so, I have never been there, so I don't know." /Bah!/"

GEORGE EDMURST, in the midst of addresses, dates, "Dear Doggie"s, &c., has a wiggley integral-shaped "P.S. Don't read in bath, merely soak in it. /Good God - another of them?/ Did I ever tell you the tale of my "God Save the King" reaction though? /The uncapitalised King belongs to RCL./ It involves assault and battery!" /Well, tell me then, boy, tell me. Remember: Never do the dirty on a fellow Narkovian - try to be a decent sort of swine./

MARION EADIE is, I think, a possible convert to the Cause: "...Anyway, why this anxiety to know what people read in baths? Do people read in baths? I mean, do they really collect half a dozen cushions, pile them into the bath, balance a tin of Quality Street on the taps, and then get in to recline and read? Personally, I'd rather read in bed. But then folks are queer. Or do you mean, what do I read while scrubbing the grime out of my pores? Yes, now I come to think of it that seems more likely. Sorry to disappoint you, but I don't. I prefer to occupy myself by reciting "Tam o' Shanter" (entire). It usually lasts me out. If it's not too personal, what do you read? /I must confess I found myself getting through "Alice in Wonderland" the other week, but didn't find it congenial. Last night, SPACEWAYS. I was 90% asleep while reading DAW's article, but through long experience didn't drop the magazine into the murkiness. My father read THE WOMAN'S PICTORIAL in his bath not long ago. Mps?/ I'd like, now I think of it, to read a book by Beverly Nichols - any one will do - so that at the end I could have the intense satisfaction of symbolically drowning it. After first filling its eyes with soap." /Marion, you are a kindred soul: kindly fill its nose & mouth with soap, with my love. Tweak its nose too, please./

ARTHUR CLARKE is by far the worst of the philistines: "This bath business" is beyond me...I can truthfully say that when I am in a bath my main consideration is how quickly I can get out of it again. I never stay in more than ten minutes, as Bill Temple will confirm. I used to get annoyed with him for luxuriating for hours in tepid water, back in the dear old Flat days. /Egosity: you should be ashamed to admit it. Full sympathy to Bill, & I trust that he will find a combination of the Youd and Webster methods conducive to longer & merrier soaks./ I regard bathing, like

5/ eating, sleeping, as annoying things to be dealt with as quickly as possible. True, I do not enjoy the simple things in life. In the same category I put having my hair cut. Anyway, it would be too much of a risk to take any book into the bath with one, even a current AMAZING... still less any of the mags devoted to what Eric calls "eerie lust"! The poor thing would get limp in no time and would have to be run through awringer. ***Hell, who started all this, and why? Me. Why? You'd be surprised, my friend.]

JULIAN PARR shows no spirit of adventure: "I don't read in the bath, thank you very much, sir." [Same as all the other unimaginative geezers; nuts.]

ERIC RUSSELL wafts us to foreign climes: "No, I don't read in my bath, and never have done. I treasure books too highly to risk dropping one in the mud. Sometimes I sing though, treating the whole surrounding area to a mad-bullish version of Onie Kai Maoli or some other exotic Polynesian piece. 18, sweet, and with an elastic belly is what I look like when I get out of the bath. I'm exceedingly keen on these Polynesian tunes, often stand draped in nothing but the towel, and perform the real and highly suggestive version of the hula hula to the sound of steel guitars coming over the radio. I don't give a hoot for jazz and suchlike junk, but I always was a sucker for the plaintive will of steel guitars, the throb of well-strummed ukeleles, and the rhythmic swish of grass skirts. When in N.Y.C., I spent a couple of hours in Ringling Brothers' Circus just watching a team of pukka performers, and learning how to make my navel do figure-eights. Horace L. Gold and Otis Adelbert Kline admirably witnessed my own seductive hula-ing when I spent one night at the latter's flat, very drunk. Gold's dark and scrumptuous fiancée (now his wife) joined in and narrowly escaped a raping. Gold passed out shortly after, and me and Otis tried to put him to bed, but our legs wouldn't stay stiff while we lifted the body. So we went and dug up another bottle, upon which the corpse revived and loudly demanded alcohol. I can't quite remember what happened after that, and neither can Gold, but I believe my hula was performed with just the right abandon." [This leads EFR to other reminiscences, such as the saga of Kuttner and the Six Foot sausage, and the time a fellow author's wife well, we'll skip them. Some other time, maybe.]

THE UNCOOPERATIVE:- ANTON RAGATZY has the best excuse: "The neighbourhood, in fact most districts in Stoke-on-Trent, contains houses of somewhat antedeluvian aspects, and only a small proportion of them contain baths. I have not yet been billeted at a house with one, and so cannot answer your query."

MAURICE HANSON has a new angle: "...two points to comment upon in the June issue. (1) Did you ever try reading under a hot shower? Moreover a shower on which the temperature control handle gradually slips from hot to cold? (2) It's too bad about the phoney Earl Singleton. All too fans commit suicide. It's the fan-mags that do that." [Your (1) does seem irksome. However, extensive experience through the years, with shower-baths in all the remotest wilds of Scotland, has shown me that single-controllers are the goods. The really fiendish thing is to be caught with an unfamiliar two-control-handle one which alternated for no obvious reason between scalding-hot & icy, at the slightest touch.]

ERIC NEEDHAM has another: "I have you heah, sah. Not in 4 years have I had a bath. I go swimming at least twice a week [Gosh - another ice-breaker?], so never avail myself of an opportunity to read something in a bath. But I think the "Water Babies" by Kingsley should be good for aquatic reading. "WB" contains some of the most illogical and delightful logic I ever read, and I don't need a bath to read anything." [Which is about all there is of that; all being sublimely irrelevant

6/ and taking up much more room than I'd expected. Which is a pity, since some most amusing examples of The Things They Do. People do queer things to the significance of 'this bath business', the revealing data herein gain obviously be of enormous value psychologically - when a real psychologist to study the mind of the fan. I'll do it myself someday. /

HARRY WARNER mentioned (30th. April): "This war is at present a rather funny--peculiar, that is--thing. Counting up, I find that of the three dozen items on the first two pages of today's Baltimore Sun, thirty-three deal more or less directly with the War. It's much the same throughout every newspaper: war, war, war; convoys, convoys, convoys; brute Hitler, brute Hitler, brute Hitler. But oddly enough, the people here in Hagerstown and I presume all over the country don't talk much about it. I was Elsewhere during 1917, but unless I've been grievously misinformed, there was war hysteria then. Today we're at the same point we were in the first month of 1917, and nowhere except in the papers is there war hysteria. Movies about the war aren't popular, magazines steer rather clear of it, you hear lots of news over the radio but no plays or anything of the sort dealing with it--the whole situation is amazing. Possibly it's due to the feeling of older people that "This is where we came in"--and that it's no use discussing something that's fated to happen every twenty-five years or so. /Whereas, instead of considering any superstition about anything being "fated", they should discuss it as hard as they can, & act upon their conclusions. / Well, the way things are going the next World Stf. Convention is bound to be held in London or Paris or Berlin, depending on H. Hitler's fate, in 1942, so we can talk it over in detail then." /Looking forward to it, Harry. /

Now, one or two examples of The Things They Do . . .

PROBER: "...It gets very exciting after a time, tracking down the elements of the future in one's dreams. I keep a Printator and pencil by my bedside every night, and start up at odd moments to record the fleeting elements of dreams. My wife curses like anyfink, cos I keep on waking her up. I tell her she has only got to put up with it for a dozen years or so, in the interests of science, but she doesn't appear really enthusiastic." (HSVC)

CIVIL SERVANT: "Several of us from the office decided to have a "night out" last week, and we made an excursion to one of the swimming ponds. After the swim we played leap-frog and other such pastimes in the Meadows, which is, as you know, one of Edinburgh's many open spaces - and wide too." (TSB) /Leap-frog /

TRAVELLING SALESMAN AND AUTHOR: "For about fifteen years I've visited this fair Isle /of Man/ four, five and sometimes six times per year. It is my haven of rest. It produces fair women, good beer, and knows nothing of science-fiction. Leastways, I've never been able to discover a Marx fan. Some fine day, I'm going to turn out a Fortean article on this place. They've got a breed of tailless poultry as well as tailless cats, and once had some tailless cattle - but nobody was interested 'n preserving them for posterity. Fuchsia here grows to tree height, and I've seen samples you could climb. In England, it's a bush. A cutting from said bush becomes a tree in the Isle of Man, and a cutting from the tree reverts to a bush back in England. I could rake you up some more curiosa Marxiana, but matters press." (EFR)

SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDENT: "My work is really tremendously interesting. I have to deal with people who assault their mothers and people who drive their husbands into lunatic asylums and people who live in one room with two other families and people with milk-jugs full of pawn tickets - in fact with all sorts of people whose only feature in common is that they want money. It's pretty awful some of it - I don't mean that I don't enjoy it, but there's an awful lot of things wrong with the Great British Empire I took some sweet peas to some of them one day, & they were pathetic - a lot of them never move from their beds or their firesides, & never see flowers or anything but dirt." (SC)

And that is the end of our broadcast in English for tonight. Thank you for your /attention.DW