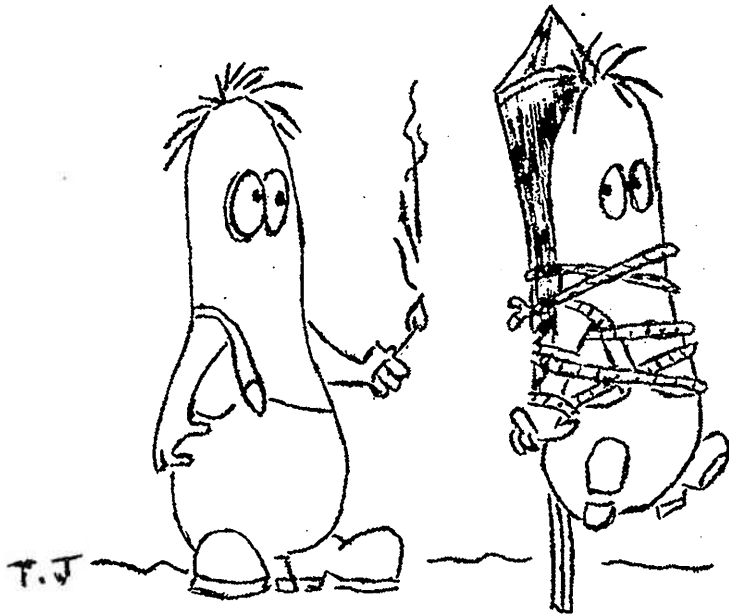


BURP!
#21

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"JUST THINK OF THE PUBLICITY -- BSFA
ORBITS FIRST BRITISH ASTRONAUT FROM
PETERBOROUGH."

This is BURP! Number 21, published for the 35th(March 1963) mailing of the Off-Trail Magazine Publishers' Association by Ronald M. Bennett, currently residing at 13 Westcliffe Grove, Cold Bath Road, Harrogate in the West Riding of Yorkshire. A certified member of W.T.Y.J.P.(1904) Inc.

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DUE TO SOMETHING OR OTHER this is the first issue of Burp! to appear, not only during 1963, but for almost two years. I'll be the first to admit that it hasn't been worth waiting for. After the lengthy cold spell this winter at least OMPAns can have the pleasure of reading the other magazines in the bundle -- no doubt while they stay in out of the rain. Let's push straight on with mailing comments:

OFF-TRAILS. Presumably, President Bob Lichtman, I can claim activity for the Treasurer's reports, then, just as the Editor is allowed O-T as his activity? If I'd only known this before, I'd have really gone to town with my reports!

GRIST Nos 1 & 1½. 1½? I liked your joke about the golf tournament and played out your chess game(Gibaud v Lazard) and was tickled by both. I am at present running a weekly chess class at school but neither pupils nor teacher is quite up to that standard. Incidentally, in case no one told you before, I am not the TAFF Administrator these days, but the ten Austrian schillings you sent me have been sent on to Ethel Lindsay.

BINARY 3. Well, Joe Patrizio, Daddy--Oh, I used to be one of those people who went to the pictures/cinema/movies/flicks at least once a week. When we had four main cinemas in Harrogate around three years ago, I have even been four times a week on occasions. One cinema is now a super market, another is being converted into a Littlewoods store and a third has come all up to date and gone bingo. And the remaining two houses(so four minus three leave two. You should worry) suffer from raucous behaviour from the more youthful of Harrogate inhabitants, so these days I don't go quite as frequently. In fact 1963 has so far seen me visiting the cinema only on two occasions. Ar^d on the first, Liz and I went to see your recommended Manchurian Candidate. Personally, I felt that the excellent overall standard of the film was greatly marred by the ending of the film from the point where an unqualified Sinatra snaps Harvey out of his hypnotic state by merely flashing a rigged pack of cards at him and burbling away in typical Sinatra Brooklynese. And don't tell me that Sinatra doesn't come from Brooklyn. I already know that, but even the cook in Rocket to the Moon didn't speak with such a broad accent. Also Harvey's waiting until a particular moment before committing his final murder(I also don't want to spoil the film for anyone who hasn't seen it)is a little ridiculous. Good suspense and entertaining cinema but totally unrealistic.

VAGARY 17. Mrs Gray, Ma'am, I could go to town on your comments against the CND, but I have the vaguest of feelings that not only would you still hold exactly the same opinions at the end of any tirade of mine, but that you are right to some degree. As a theatre fan from waaay back, though, I do certainly agree with you about writing for entertainment and not so much of the neo-realism. The Mousetrap disappointed me, though. I picked out the murderer the moment he stepped on to the stage, probably an unfortunate guess. My Fair Lady is of course superb, and I'm now looking forward to Camelot, which I understand opens at Drury Lane later in the year. Ron Ellik very kindly sent me the lp of the Broadway version and the tunes are very MFLish.

Oh for more plays like Dial M For Murder or Blithe Spirit. / The Roses cricket matches are indeed played every year. There is much being said and written these days in cricketing circles about brighter play and entertainment value and similar rubbish (brighter cricket is all very well but an extreme tends to cheapen the game), and you may not know that the "official" definition of a Roses game, in which neither side tries to give the other the slightest advantage, is "a game of cricket lasting three days in which both sides go all out, after tea on the third day, for first innings points." The usual funny haha joke about the Roses games is the one about a spectator who first clapped a Lancashire catch and then shortly afterwards clapped a brilliant Yorkshire boundary stroke. The man sitting next to him asked, "Doesta come from t'Lancashire?" "No," was the reply. "From t'Yorkshire?" "No," was the reply again. "Well, then," he was told, "Shut thasen up. It's nowt to do wi' thee!" And, I know full well that no Yorkshireman would say "t'Lancashire" or "t'Yorkshire," but this is diluted dialect for t'foalk dahn souath. Them happen woulna knoa t'cricket anyways if Sir Len imsen cem an' brayed 'em wi' t'bat.

SOUFFLE. Ah, Mr. Baxter, sir, what's all this jazz about you squabbling only with fringe fans and not writers and furthermore squabbling with people like Betty Kujawa and Ella Parker? Are you trying to tell us that in your book Ella is a fringe fan? Are you trying to tell us that in your book the only true fans are professional writers? Or what? / Oh come now, Yiddish has a far greater breadth and richness than English ever had. Or has. Or possibly will have. / No, E.R. James isn't a pseudonym. Ernest lives at Skipton, just 22 miles from Harrogate. He wrote quite a bit about ten years ago and his stories can be found in most British anthologies of the day. A sick relative left him with but little time for writing until fairly recently and he has begun to write again. I first met him at the Manchester SuperManCon of 1954 -- cons were held at Whitsun in those days -- and I remember having breakfast with him one morning. He kindly turned up at last year's convention in Harrogate and made the opening address/speech of the weekend, getting off to a great start by standing on his head to demonstrate a Yogi point. He is one of the very few people who writes but one draft of a story, polishing as he goes along by means of the x key. And incidentally, he is a cousin of another British sf writer, F. G. Rayer. He is an extremely pleasant, gracious person who is also shy to an extreme degree. / Ha ha. Don't give me that modern jazz is the real thing line.

This morning a dollar arrived from Fred Patten who asks to be put on the waiting list. Like many others he addressed our national conference centre as Harrogate. Such is fame. Last night I went along to a meeting of the National Association of Schoolmasters at the West Park Hotel and took the opportunity of showing Bert Harman the Shaggy con report by Our Bhoy Roh Ellik. He was highly delighted with his write up and sends his regards to all last year's con attendees.

WHATSIT 2. Ken Cheslin, I liked your listing of survey answers, all the more funny or more pathetic from adults. From children one might possibly expect such vague thinking. I once conducted a school survey, asking questions like "estimate the height of the classroom door", to which I got replies which included answers over a mile, or "Who is the Prime Minister?" to which one boy answered Eisenhower (he might be right in an illogical way) and another answered "Alan Miller."

MORPH 29. The Rollings are as interesting as ever. Leeds city centre is pretty well laid out on the block plan with main thoroughfares like New Briggate, Vicar Lane, Cookridge Street and Albion Street running at right angles to The Headrow, Albion Place, Merion Street and Boar Lane.

SCOTTISHE 30. Ah, OMPA's favourite fanzine. In my short time in fandom I have never known a fanzine in or out of an apa improve as much as this one has. /Willis' column was as excellent as ever. Has anyone noticed what a decidedly poorer place fandom has been since Chuck and Vinç left us? / I'd be interested to read how that champion of the Common Market, Ian Petoux feels now that we have been given the order of the jolly old chaussure. What does Ian see is best now for the economic development of the country? What does Ian think of de Gaulle? And incidentally, following all this nonsense of cancelling the Royal visit to Paris, it will be interesting to see how Harrogate handles its well known and well patronised summer French week.

PARAFANALIA 10. Liked your story, Bruce, which is after all an old theme, but it was well done here, and also your account of the GND rally. Also, for that matter the odd bits and pieces by Merv on the old folks back home. Gad, what a bunch! John Berry's piece about soccer coaching is so true (and written in his old, lovable, slightly-exaggerated style) that I suspect he has really devoted some time to this sort of thing.

SIZAR 8. You still here, Burn? As far as I know, Richard III died by having a burning poker applied to his body, which operation is not in the best interests of medical science. I may have the wrong guy, though. Undoubtedly, someone who is a mine of historical information and who actually likes history, like Bobbie, will put you straight on the facts. / Sir, the right to smoke is the right to be free. I have on occasion smoked in cinemas and have had some rude personage sitting near begin to waft the smoke back at me in a most pointed fashion. My reaction is to blow smoke deliberately in that person's direction. If the person who objects to my smoking merely uses the simple word "please" then I'll be only too highly delighted to respect his or her wishes in the matter. After all, it's a pity for me if I can't go a couple of hours without a cigarette. / For this business of nobody daring to drive over you on a zebra crossing, I suggest you try your high jinks in Liverpool. What are your favourite flowers?

AMBLE 12. Ah, Trufin Archie Mercer, don't you know that we just had to win WW II? I remember someone at the beginning of the war telling my father that of course we would win -- our bayonets were longer than those of the Germans! / Archie Mercer doll. You wind it up and it drops you a postcard.

ENVOY 10. Editor Ken Cheslin. I wouldn't describe the "en passant" move in chess as being a gambit or a ploy. It is one of the rules of the game you know. Also, I don't think I've ever heard this bit about moves having to be made "in the regulation three minutes." I forget off hand the details here (I haven't played chess at tournament level for some seven years now) but something around 28 moves have to be made in a hour. Or is it 14 moves? I know that the first moves are usually made pretty quickly in order to stock up time for later and it is of course possible to win on an opponent's time default. Making a fast move is a legitimate ploy in itself at certain times. I once took part in a "ten second" tournament which was great fun. A bell rang every ten seconds and then a move had to be made. The glaring mistakes one makes without sufficient study! But this 3 minute a move business...No!

Yes, 100 is average for IQ. Possibly you got the idea that 80 is average because everyone you know happens to have an IQ of 80? / It would certainly not be an excellent idea, thanks all the same, for convention attendees to do their own booking with the hotels. What makes you imagine for a moment that convention committees haven't enough common sense to have considered this point (as well as others) and rejected it because it doesn't work. It actually has been done, you know, in the fairly recent past and the system was found to be a wash-out. In larger hotels fans are scattered throughout the building instead of being within reasonable proximity of one another. And there have been instances of nonfans getting in to the hotel and fans who would wish to attend the con not being allowed to do so. / My own method of commenting on a mailing is as follows a) read the mailing. At this time certain points stick out as virtually demanding a comment, like a note on E.R. James this time. b) I then stick a stencil in the typewriter and belt out comments direct on to stencil, gleaning inspiration or lack of it from whatever comment I happen to alight upon on the second reading of the mailing. During this time I might skip something comment worthy in order to write an article on it later (like the mentions of the Pelican book on IQs by yourself and John Roles in this mailing. / Did you ever see any of the Fernandel pictures in which he portrayed Don Camillo? Excellent continental comedy. I particularly liked the twist on the theme in a film about a priest who was afraid to go out in public, following the success of the Camillo stories and films about ten years ago. He happened to look like Don Camillo, and was himself also portrayed by Fernandel. I like to see the scene shots of your table top and backdrop experiments. I quite agree with John Phillipent that he can shoot down critics but I did know immediately what you meant by "mechanical nude work," I think. Hence -- a mechanical interpretation, lacking that vital "spark." I'll agree with you thoroughly. Perhaps it's because like you, Perry, I'm in the N.A.S. and presumably belong to lower IQ group. Or something.

PACKRAT 5. What a wonderful cover. When, Jimmy, is someone going to start work on a second Atom Anthology? / Interested to read that the world's population is 3,000 million. Of which 78% possesses an IQ of under 100. / Excellent listing of informative sources. / I can't see where you're arguing about the Belgian thalidomide mercy killing. As far as I can see, you are merely stating a run of facts, e.g. a) The Liege killing took place. b) The mother was tried for murder and acquitted. c) If the trial had taken place under different conditions (for example in Britain and/or in camera, the outcome might have been different. d) The verdict might encourage others to adopt a similarly extreme outlook. e) One particular case is quoted. So, what's eating you? Like I say, a list of facts? Who is arguing? I rather feel that you are trying to be deliberately controversial (Ella would say deliberately bloody) and I'm willing to bet that you do whip up a lot of emotional comment on the subject. Before anyone accuses me of not possessing compassion in connection with this awful business, let me add quickly that I would hate to judge the poor Belgian woman. How can one?

PHENOTYPE CCXVIII (give or take 100). Personally, Dick Eney, I'm glad to hear that the Gult is still going strong and also that members have got around to playing friendly games. The six extracts you run for identification sound like something gleaned from Penelope Tandergate and written by Lewis Carroll and Conan Doyle.

~ UP THE POLL ~

BRITAIN'S WORST WINTER for many years has been the cause of a great number of hardships and accidents, but the direst consequence of all has surely been the postponement of a record number of football league fixtures and the subsequent cancellation of the football pools for four consecutive weeks in the new year. This certainly hit the pools promoters where it hurts them most - right in the middle of the fiscal plexus -- but they bounced straight back with a simple, yet ingenious solution. A team of "experts" would confabulate in London and decide what the results would have been if the postponed matches had indeed been played.

Just consider what this innovation could mean to fandom. It has been an eternal complaint that fanzine polls are ineffective and not truly representative because so few fans bother to participate. The problem is no more. We simply elect a committee of BNFs who will deduce what the poll results would have been if every fan had taken part. Polling itself will become redundant. Our committee of experts will decide all future results and a great deal of time, trouble and money will be saved all round. The same system would be applied to TAFF elections and Hugo awards.

There occurred an incident in the south of England not so long ago that should be of interest to fans. A woman living in an isolated cottage had been petitioning for a proper water supply for some considerable time. Finally, in desperation, she took a pile of her dirty laundry to the local water board premises, forced her way into an official's office and laundered her clothing in his wash basin. She threatened to repeat this procedure every week until her cottage was supplied with water.

Fans could quite easily adapt this magnificent idea to their own advantage. If, for instance, a certain faned persistently refuses to publish your wonderful letters of comment to his fanzine you could invade his fan den, type a couple of pages of LoC on his typewriter and, using his stencils, duplicate the pages on his machine, using his paper and ink of course. You could then leave it with him to be included in his nextish, together with the threat that you will repeat the procedure every so often should he fail to comply. Any imaginative fan employing such a course of action should soon reap results. And who knows? We may even see an end to that horror of horrors -- the WAHF department.

A recent Toronto report stated that a baby was born with delirium tremens after its mother had imbibed liberal quantities of alcohol during the last two months of her pregnancy. I find it rather difficult to credit and subsequent rumour that a certain pregnant femme fan has been subsisting on a diet of curry, whose chief ingredients are obliterate and duplicating ink, in the expectation that her offspring will be a natural born faned. However, I do feel that fandom could ensure the propagation of the species by far less drastic measures. A system of breeding and pedigree such as is used with prize dogs and cattle is really what I had in mind. The issue will have to be studied most carefully and thoroughly in order to obtain the required strains and I suggest that a committee of fan experts be inaugurated as soon as possible to study the subject. Briefly the idea is this: our finest male artists would be mated with our best female artists, the most brilliant male faneds with their female equivalents and so on throughout the various aspects of fandom. As breeding continues with

words. On this particular test this will result in the children having the following "attainment ages": The boy will have a "reading age" of 6 years no months, and the girl will have a "reading age" of 11 years two months. (How these figures are ascertained does not concern us here). It will readily be seen that the boy is somewhat retarded in his reading whilst the girl may well be said to be "a good reader." To arrive at a quotient figure these attainment ages are divided by the chronological, or actual, age and multiplied by 100, thus: $\frac{\text{Boy. AA } 6-0}{\text{CA } 8-3} \times 100$ $\frac{\text{Girl. AA } 11-2}{\text{CA } 8-11} \times 100$

Q is 73.

Q is 125.

So we know what is a quotient, but can we define intelligence? I myself would hate to try and I would instead answer that intelligence is an intangible. It is possible to test reasonably accurately one's ability in reading, verbal reasoning, arithmetic etc etc because one can be coached in these subjects. I have yet to hear of a school or college presenting a course in "intelligence." Accordingly, I feel that I.Q. tests cannot be valid because of the following reasons:

a) Intelligence is an intangible and cannot be measured. I once taught a boy whose quotient ratings in academic subjects were around the eighty mark and yet he once came out with a coldly deliberate piece of impish humour that completely broke up the class. Was he intelligent or not?

b) Intelligence tests invariably depend, at least in part, on knowledge which has nothing to do with intelligence. This renders them ^{invalid} valid on two counts: i) What is well known by one intelligent person may not at all be understood by someone of equal intelligence.

ii) If the test depends largely on say number manipulation it is at these points a test of number manipulation and not of intelligence. This is where Eysenck's tests in the Pelican book fail. Many of his questions depend on vocabulary or number awareness, for instance the complicated mathematical problems at the end of each test.

c) Ratings are far too vague for scaling extremes. At best quotients for someone with either a very low or very high intelligence are only approximations.

d) One I.Q. is of no, or at best doubtful, value. One criticism of the eleven plus examinations has been, and rightly so, that a pupil might fail if it were "not his day" or if he were "under the weather," or if his mental makeup was such that he simply produce results of which he were capable under test conditions. Accordingly, any one test cannot give a definite result or reading. An average score taken over a series of tests is far better in terms of definite accuracy. Accordingly, how many tests does one give? If one takes as an example a series of ten tests for a result which will be accurate, these ten tests will probably be more accurate than one test, or even nine tests. It therefore follows that eleven tests will give an even more accurate result, while twenty tests will be more accurate than 10. Thirty tests should therefore be more accurate than 20, 40 more accurate than 30 and so on. Where does one stop in order to be absolutely correct.....? Obviously, it is neither practicable nor possible to be 100% accurate in intelligence testing.

There has also been much written about whether it is possible to improve one's I.Q. Whether it is possible to improve one's intelligence is another question entirely and one which is often confused with the original problem. It is possible to improve one's I.Q. Try an external I.Q. test before and after reading Know Your Own I.Q. and see the difference. -rmb.