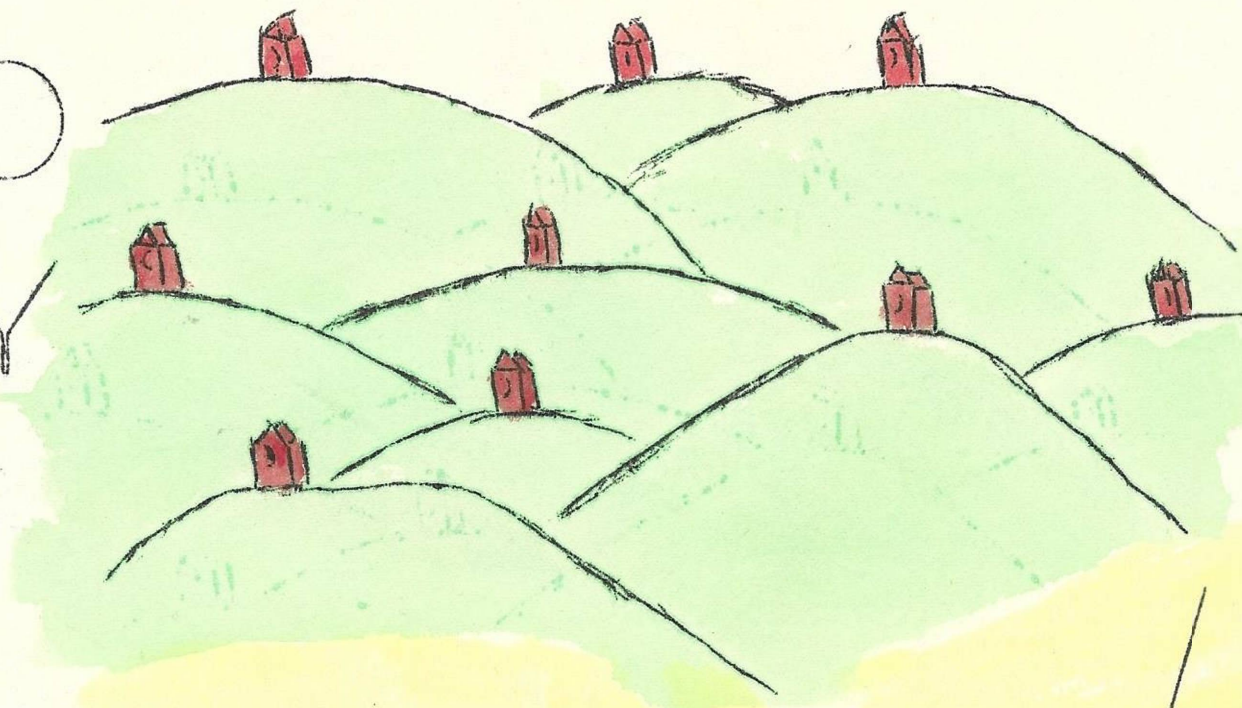


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from Ken M P Chesli, 18 New Farm Road, Stourbridge, Worcs, England.
for the 35th OMPA Mailing, MARCH 1963.
a Cringebinder Publication.



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Upon reflection I think
we'd better call it
'Shetland' " .





SINGS. AND THINGS



I chose that title merely because I like the sound of it. Tho' it was indirectly inspired by a book title. ie;- VERSE AND WORSE. a private collection by Arnold Silcock printed in pb by Faber&Faber. A rather amusing collection.

I read, Jan 1963, Encys' A SENSE OF FAPA. Completely ignoring everything else in this, or, selection from FAPA files, may I make one or two lines of comment on the Lancy thing. This AH, SWEET IDIOCY.

I must confess that I was highly surprised to read this thing. And it was, I suppose, my own fault. I was under the impression that ASI was a debunking of fandom alright. But from all I heard I had assumed that it was a scientific type dissection. Unemotionally laying forth faults, and with the same impartiality, the good points of fandom. What, I asked myself, the hell!. I am still greatly puzzled why this has such a longlasting reputation?. Were the fans of 1947 a less hardened lot than I conceive today's to be?. What the heck was all the fuss about?.

lesscc, how about a sing.

Oh, take me back to the land of fandom,
By God says Lancy, how I've panned 'em,
Far away, far away, far away from LASFA.

and so on, to the tune of DIXIE.

This cold spell we've been having has resulted in a tragedy or two. Large and small ones. Not to mention much inconvenience to many people, like burst pipes. The gas and electricity people are in a right state too, they never anticipated such heavy demands. (tho' I says they damn well should have). I mean, a built up country like this, industry rampant, 50 million population, and one cold spell reveals that our power supplies are pityfully inadequate. Not even a 10% increase in the seasonal demand. One or two more power stations and we'd have managed to get along. Reduced current maybe, but no power cuts.

Actually the most hilarious result of this cold spell is the revelation of the football pools system for the farce it is.

As you may know - (or as you may not know) - there are things in the UK called Football Clubs. Now these various clubs are organised under the Football League (or soccer league or something like that) and this Big Daddy arranges football matches between the various clubs. All this is by the side.

Some years ago, I don't know how long, some lad had the bright idea of organising the betting on football match results. So. After some years of - progress - the situation now is this:-

Each week 100 odd teams in the League play a match (for the purpose of this - thing - we will only assume one match is played per team. After all, only the Saturday fixtures are counted.)

Anyway, those 100 odd teams play. The football pools people issue a ... leaflet... listing about 50 matches and all over the country about 6,000,000 people put their 5 or 10 bobs on. The idea you see is to accurately forecast the results of these 50 matches.

One of you computer types out there want to figure out the odds on a bloke correctly forecasting 8 results? Taking into account such things as, the ground the match is played at, the folibles of the 22 players, the referee and the linesmen in each game, the state of the weather, accidents, etc.,? No?.

Well, every week millions try to. And the stakes are high. For your 5/- can win you £300,000 (nearly a million dollars).

I've yet to come to the funny bit. As you see, millions try to get the results each week, some of them have been doing the coupons for 20 years and more. With never a win. I take it you would agree that a correct forecast, no matter how expert the forecaster, is highly unlikely?.

Right. So now that so many matches have been put off because of the snow, guess what the pools people are going (by this time have) to do? Why, they are going to get a panel of experts to decide what the RESULTS WOULD HAVE BEEN had the matches been played. One of the experts, rumour has it, would be Torrey Steel, pop singer.

Gentlemen, (and ladies) I ask you!

It would be far more honest, fair, if the names of all the pools punters were put in a hat and the winners selected like that.

In fact, I hereby advocate the abolition of Football Pools. After all, the promoters are hardly working for a living, they provide no service. AND they have a goo rake-off from the pools.

What I would like to see is the government run a national lottery in its place. What would happen you see is that every person who wanted in would sign 5/- a week out of his pay packet away to the lottery. (if it was taken like PAYE it would never be misses). The man gets issued with a number, which he keeps. Then, each week, (as with ERNIE) a random number type calculator selects 50 or so winners. Of about £20,000 each.



For if each of the present pools players give 5/- (and many put much more on) that means 6 million times 5/-, or £1½ million or in dollars about 4,000,000 dollars.

If there were 50 prizes of £20,000 there would still be a government profit of £½ m PER WEEK, £26 million a year. That's what the pools lads get now.

Then again, think of all the money saved. The pools people have to have hundreds of people to sort the mail and check the coupons, and to watch people who are checking coupons.

The civil service could take the lottery on and never notice it. And you could use ERNIE for you computer, save using another one.

Britain, while no more moral than any other country, still forces people in the public eye to conform to the Anglican image. And tho' MacMillan (bless him) has struck a blow against this by allowing ERNIE, and legalising betting shops, I don't think he would be allowed, yet, to turn the spotlight of reason

on to the pools situation. By this

I mean that he has the disapproval

of the Church of England should he try to make a government industry out of what is clearly and unashamedly gambling. (ERNIE can be wrapped around with eloquent phrases so that the church can officially "recognise" that its "not really gambling", for the comfort of their hypercritical souls. And they can say that the betting shops have been made legal by the government, but We/It don't Really Approve of Them).

Perhaps what is more important. The bloke who run the pools make money. Money talks. More money talks louder. If you see what I mean.

WHEN I'M DICTATOR I'll outlaw gambling for money....hmm (except Government sponsored lotteries) and lets see, make it a death penalty for a bloke who boozes or gambles his money away and gives his wife and kids none. Single bloke is OK I suppose. Lessee, increase the penalties for all crimes of violence, particularly cruelty to children or animals... death penalty for blackmail, dismiss the Dame of Sark and the other petty nobs and bring the Channel Isles directly under British control. Instigate vast public works, like roads, (channel tunnel) new towns, power plants etc., outlaw Unions, or just shoot wildcat ringleaders. Deport Mosely and the neo-Nazis

Out of sheer kindheartedness I'd deport all communists to Russia, or China. Purge all government agencies and the Forces. (not a MacCarthy type purge, I mean tighten up security, not let people like Vassel get into positions of trust),

Boy, would I shake things up. Sigh, I have an idea that I might wind up getting assassinated.

Oh, yes, I was a corporal too.

All these puny little board games we hear about. Why, the other night Tony and I invented a game to end all games, the only trouble is that it takes so long to play.

Like. You start off with Adam and Eve, see. And one player tries to build up the race, and the other to destroy it. Like you use special cards, which you get dealt out to you. Some say, "Good year, crops doubled" or "Population up by 40%" or like that. And the other pack has cards like, "Blight his crops, all destroyed" and "Plauge carries off every third human" and so on. Like, suppose the Enemy shoves down a card, right at the beginning, "Cave bear attacks", you either have to have a "Fire Invented" card (or something else that chases the bear away,) or a "Spear" card. This means you throw dice to see if the bear chews Adam, or other way round. See?.

After the population reaches a certain level a new board and cards come into use. Each player (we were only thinking of two players actually) takes half the population and, by means of dice, (or other method) selects the region of the world for his civilisation to grow. Opposing players can do things like play "Plauge" cards, which, if the opponent cannot counter, destroy part of his population.

Also he can when his population gets to a certain figure, acquire invention cards. "Wheel", "plow", "Domesticate horses" "Sail" "Steam" and so on. If both civilisations reach a certain standard. In regard to 1, population, 2 inventions, they set out on a third board which is the solar system. The main point of this game, tho' you can war with the opponent and send him disasters etc., is to increase population and material and inventions.

For, when a certain figure is reached, by only ONE of the players, Sol is declared to be going Nova and you have to emigrate.

This calls for a fourth board. Your route is via 40 odd planets, thru' hazards, to New Earth. Each planet has a card which designates the conditions prevailing thereon. (8 goes, no H₂O, hostile natives, Armonia, earthlike, and so on, good and bad). Of these planets each player is issued with 5 or 6. Upon these he can establish advance bases. (taking into consideration the prevailing conditions previously referred to). The power of the base is up to the player. BUT he "pays" for it out of stocks of population and material issues at the start of the game. These planets are Secret, as are his disposal of forces on them. (the opponent may ask to see the "Strength card" of a particular planet ONLY after he lands on it. At the same time the "prevailing conditions" card is turned up. A "prevailing conditions" card is also turned up if he merely orbits the planet.). Each player, after noting the disposition of his forces on the playing sheet, then takes off with his remaining assets for New Earth. Warring with the opponent as he goes.



Besides his opponent each player has also to negotiate such hazards as Novas, meteors gas clouds etc.,

Each fleet has a fixed detector range for each ship (type of ship) so that an opposing fleet, out from an advance base, may lurk up ahead, behind a planet or a sun or a gas cloud etc.,

An echo is detected BUT the size and composition of the fleet is not revealed until it is "clearly" detected.

A fleet sent up from an advance base must return to its base before the base is rolled off the end of the board. (this board is a sheet about 2 yards long, on rollers under a plastic type surface.)

Winner is the one who gets to New Earth with the most men and material points.

Any remarks?

Another new game we have just invented is our sailing ship game. With this two players each have 8 ships. Galleons. 1 40 guns, 2 10 guns and the rest 20 guns, excluding the stern and bow chasers. The board is squared off, plus diagonals, and the ships sail point to point. The 6 large ships move 4 points and the 2 small ships move 8 points. But only when at right angles to the wind. Facing into the wind halves the speed, running before it doubles speed.

We have a compass to show wind direction, which is changed every 3 moves by means of a pack of cards. These bear labels like "S steady, N strong" etc., plus several "storm" cards.

The idea is to approach the enemy in such a way that he can retaliate with his 'chasers only, or not at all. To believe a broadside, you see, you have to present your side at the enemy.

Scoring hits. Players choose odd or even. When a broadside is loosed IF his dice comes up all the balls hit. If the opponents number turns up only half the shots hit.

The only way to win is to send in a broadside to which the enemy can only reply with 'chasers, then maneuver so that the enemy comes under your broadside if he decides to attack. This, is rather difficult.

Every 2 shots that get home knocks out one gun, which is scored up after the attacked has retaliated, if he can. When all the guns but 2 are lost the ship drifts. When all the guns are gone it sinks. Easy game to make. Regarding enjoymentwise.

I'd thought of a fanzine all in verse,
or blink, or prose, or even worse,
But then I thought,
Mebbe I'll earn fannoms curse,
and eventually wind up in a hearse,
So I don't think I'll bother.

Of course Bruce need not fear his place,
as poet to the OMPA race;
for I alw ays end up on my face,
trying to make these damn things rhyme.

Time, mime, same, blame, crime, lime,
all the bllomin' simo,
in
Piggy-may-li-ime.

For scrious, constructive criticism,
not to mention the occasional witticism,
Of news of great import, to evry citism,
concerning ladies of vittae, who misses 'im
and t'other sort.

By Harry;
Read Swen of the Drow.

Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been?
I've been up to London, to see the Queen,
Pussy cat, pussy cat, what did you there?
MYOB, damn you.

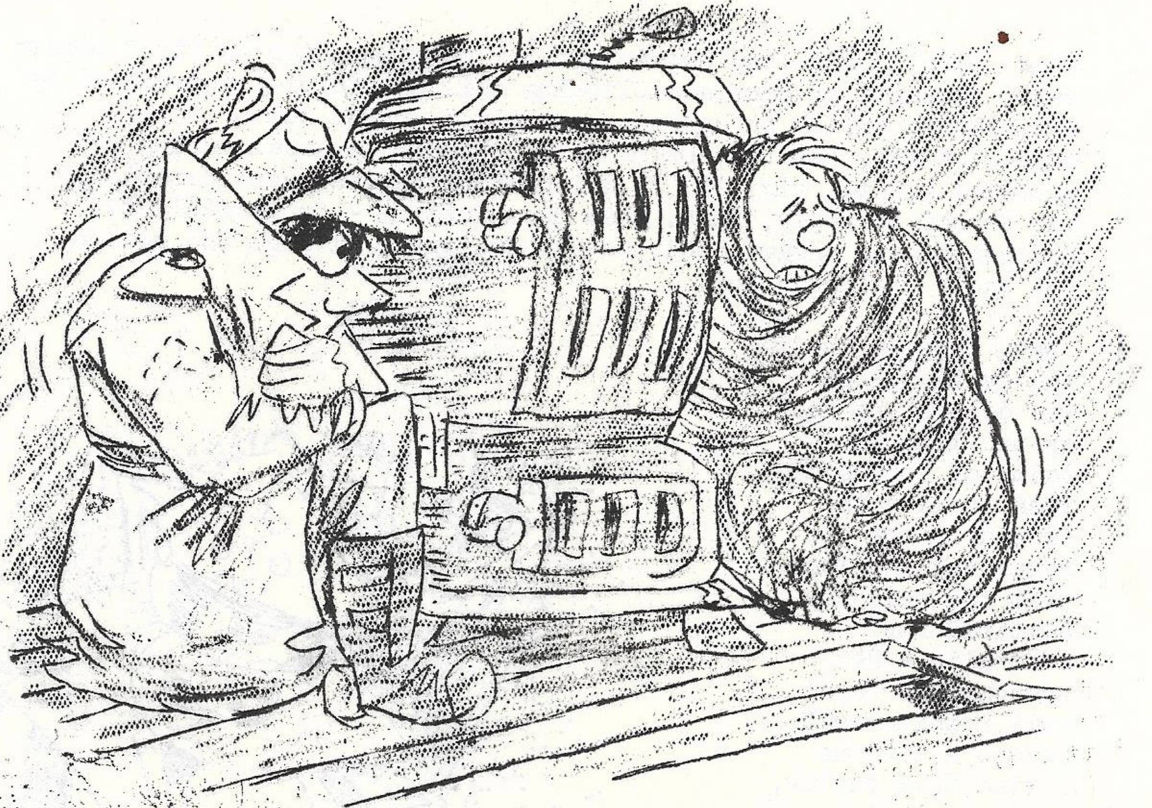
The Queen of Hearts,
she baked som tarts,
All 'on a summers' day.
Boy, were they livid.

A bloke whose name I will not mention,
(well know for fan-crime prevention)
approached me at the last convention,
threatened me with long detention.
So I subbed to CRY,

(apologies, but lookit all those
lovely rymeing words).

RAIN
OF
TERROR!

BY
KEN
CHESLIN



"The situation", I mused, "Is not too comfortable".

And indeed, it was not. For here we were, in the depths of winter, with not a penny to our name, huddled by the fire, vainly striving to derive some comfort therefrom. But the last of the coal was rapidly being consumed even as we watched, and, of course, we had no prospects of obtaining more.

There was a timid knock at the door, which Dave promptly answered. Standing there, blue with cold, was a neo of tender years. Dave reached out an arm, and, eyes agleam, grasped the poor young lad by the throat. Before I could extricate myself from the inconveniently located Priests Hole he had consigned him to the flames.

"Fool! Fool! Fool!" I screamed, "properly rationed he would have provided fuel for a couple of days". But it was much too late. So I sat down before the blaze, warming myself in consolation, and put the old think-box to work.

"It seems of little avail to sit here, we have not had a case for weeks, and I see no immediate prospect of one. Therefore there seems to be nothing for it. We must obtain mundane employment, thereby gaining lawful access to the ackers necessary to the purchase of winter fuel".

And so it came to pass. I got Dave a job with the local post-office, helping with the Christmass mail. I obtained employment for myself with British Railways, it didn't pay much, but they did provide a fire, and a small hut for me to shelter in out of the cold.

Dave had a little difficulty with the PO at first, (he insists upon carrying his duplicator with him, everywhere), but he just smiled his cheerful smile and they changed their minds. Dave possesses a magnificent set of teeth. The canines are particuluary.....

Peace didn't last long however. On the morning after my first nights watch a couple of harrassed looking railway official approached my hut, entered in, and proceeded to question me. The sum of their enquiries was, 'Had I seen or heard anything unusual during my previous nights' vigil?'. To which, after careful consideration, I was forced to reply, "No.". They then left me - presumably to further persue their enquiries - refusing to divulge the reason for their interrogation.

Dave dropped by in the evening, - he was delivering mail up the line, in spite of some silly technicality the PO had drempt up, regarding the fact that the mail was destined for Australia. - He brought the days' mail, nothing much except a curious letter from Tucker, a few newspapers, and one or two little things that he'd scrounged from the post-office. When he had departed; happilly whirring his duper, I untied the telephonist and sent her home; that I might read my mail in peace. The headlines of the local paper caught my attention.

It apeared that upon the previous night, Deadmans Halt, a whistle stop some mile and a half up the tracks, had been inundated by a black rain of a particulary noisesome composition. "Hrm", I though, "and again Hrm. Interesting...." Like the well-oiled machine it was - (possibly an unfortunate choich of phrase), - anyway, my keen, analitical mind went to work at once. After very careful assesment of all the facts my path was clear. For the moment I would do nothing at all.

The next day, as I had anticipated, the railway officials returned, Silently I handed them the newspaper containg the account of the black rain, the report prominently displayed. They, each, bit their lips and glanced nervously at one another. The elder railwayman spoke. "I see you have guessed at the reason for our visit yesterday, nevertheless, as an employee of The Railway you are enjoined to keep sildnce about this affair, until it is cleared un at any rate." I shhok my head, sadly, and handed him my card;



CATSEYES CHESLIN
INVESTIGATOR EXTRAORDINARY
- for a fee -

"It is my belief", I stated solemnly, "that you have not heard the last of this affair. I believe I might be able to assist you, and recommend that it would be to your advantage to take immediate steps to engage my services. Next week," I added grimly, "may be too late". The grey-haired one spoke then - (funny, I could have sworn that on the previous evening his hair had been as dark as mine) - "There may indeed be some truth in what you say, in fact I might as well tell you. Last night it happened again." His voice dropped to a whisper, "but this time, it was Blue!". The elder official's facial muscles developed a detectable twitch. After promising to bring my offer of assistance to the notice of the proper authorities, with the minimum of delay, they departed.

Dave dropped in again that evening. Another letter from Tucker, who was beginning to sound desperate. Newspapers, and of course the telephonist. Who I promptly unchained, of course, and sent home as soon as Dave left. The newspapers did not carry any report of the blue rain. Actually, I had rather expected this. Someone at a very high level had evidently taken steps to avert nationwide panic.



Again, the next morning, the two officials called on me. "Tomorrow you will receive a visit from a Very High Official" said the older one, "you might be interested to know too," he paused to lick his lips, filthy habit, "last night Deadmans Halt copped it again. This time it was... green". "There are Some Things", the white-haired one screamed conversationally, "That Man Was Never Mean't To Know". The elder one promptly dragged his companion away.

That evening Dave came by again, I relieved him of my mail, which included the becoming-usual Tucker missive, and sent him on his way. Thereupon I released the telephonist from the trunk and set her to brewing the tea, (well, might as well make herself useful) while I glanged thru the aforesaid letter from Tucker.

"Hmm," I thought as I finished it, "Maybe he has a point there".

The fifth day dawned dank and miserable, bring with it the Elder official and a motley crew. There were five tough looking characters, a bodyguard I guessed, the Very High Official, and another chap who they all treated deferentially. I was unable to make out this ones features because he had his trenchcoat collar turned right up, and his trilby pulled well down over his eyes.

"I have been informed," said the VHO, "that you claim that you might be able to assist us in the Deadmans' Halt case". He paused but I held my tongue, he had evidently not said all he wanted to say.

"In view of the fact that the Black Rain got the Stationmaster and his dog, the Blue Rain accounted for sixteen members of the railway Police, and the Green indelibly dyed 3 first class men from MI 5 and the tea-boy...." He

paused again, obviously in the grips of some strong emotion. "And last night, last night.... 43 members of the South African Govt., were on a goodwill visit, were stained, permanently, an embarrassingly rich shade of brown.... well, to be perfectly frank, Mr Cheslin, we are ready to try just about anything."

I stood up and carefully adjusted the folds of my duffle coat around me. "It could have been worse" I stated, in a voice that brooked no denial, "What if that had been an American delegation, and it had dyed them... red!?. The VHO shuddered and mopped his brow. "Please," he quavered, "it does not bear thinking about".

"Very well", I said, "provided I am ensured complete secrecy for my methods" "Of course, of course", "Then, upon payment of two parafin heaters, oil fires, and an undertaking that the railway will supply me, free of charge, with enough fuel to keep my fan-den warm for the winter...."

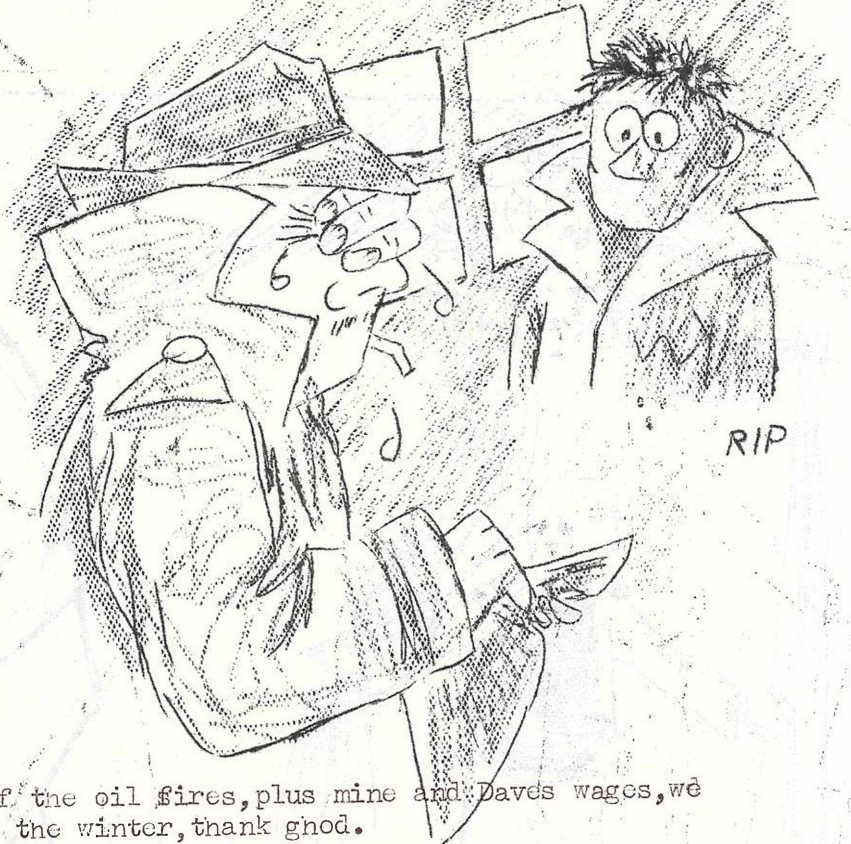
The man in the trenchcoat whispered into the ear of the VHO, who looked up at me. "Ok" said the VHO, "you will get your heaters this evening" and with that he departed, and all his men. Leaving me alone with the MI 5 man, for such he was.



"I rather expected something like this" he said grimly, "as soon as I saw the lab reports. The coloured rains consist on 85% duplication ink, 14% heavy water, and 1% which denies analysis. When you said "fan-den" just now you merely confirmed my suspicions. This is a faanish affair, and you, you are a fan!"

I nodded. He sat gingerly on an orange box and rolled himself a cigarette. His fingers quivered slightly I noticed. "It had all the earmarks..." he said... "I wish to god that...." He looked up wearilly. "Oh, if you know about fandom, perhaps you know Goon Bleary?" I enquired cheerfully. He passed a hand over his brow, evidently the habit was catching, and I thought I heard a faint moan escape his lips. "Never mind that," he said, "just get rid of whatever it is, quick. I'll see you get paid" After a moment of brooding silence he threw his cigarette away, and got up and walked out into the fog.

When I was sure that they were all well away I got up too. I hurried out and resigned my position as night watchman with the railway, then went and signed off Dave from the post office. They seemed sorry to see him go. There were tears in their eyes as they barricaded the gates behind us.



With the advent of the oil fires, plus mine and Dave's wages, we were fixed up for the winter, thank ghod.

The mysterious rains were no mystery to me, of course. I had known from the first day what they were. You see, as I said, Dave insists on carrying his duplicator with him everywhere, even while delivering the mail. Imersed as he was in his work for the PO he had streaked up the track every night after leaving me, up past Deadmans Halt, merrilly colour changeing on the duper as he went. Now Dave is a messy colour changer at the best of times, but by the time he passed Deadman Halt he was also doing about Mach 4.....I think that just about explains everything.

So here we are again, at home once more. Nice and warm with the heaters going full blast, whiling away the winter. Dave squatts in his corner, happilly running of fake Quandrys',

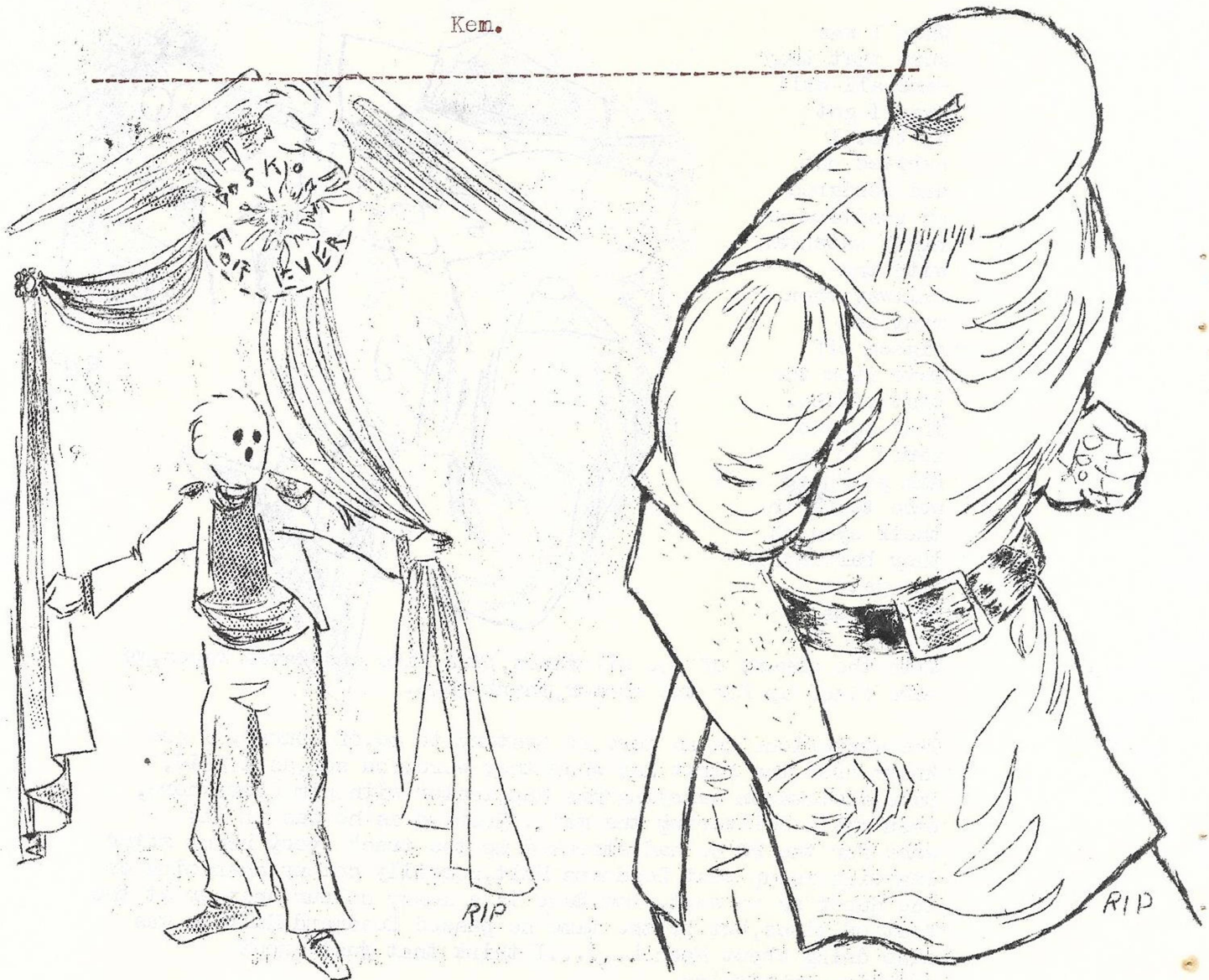
Wendy - on that's the telephonist, shes' hibernating with us for the winter - Wendy id down in the kitchen makeing a pot of tea, I guess I may as well get on with answering my mail. Say I start with this one from Bob Tucker.

Dear Bob,

Upon mature reflection I have come to the conclusion that you are right. I will destroy the plans and the prototype at once. The world is not yet ready for Rubber staples.

Yours,

Ken.



"It's that Kimmison again Sir, in a clever plastic disguise".

This is Miniac
to the credit
of
Don Studobaker

THE NAKED ARTICHOKE,

a sort of column,

by,

Don Studobaker.

During my days in Washington, (Which, you must remember, comprise the larger part of my life,) I learned many things and saw many sights. I saw fat Congressmen and their fat Wives, and I saw thin wives who had driven their husbands to a remarkable state of even-thinness. I saw magnificent works of Art. (Jeanette McDonald and Nelson Eddy, on the Late Show.) Being a Natural Born Artis, and a writer in particular, I sought Adventure; and climbed to the top of the Washington Monument, an exquisite granite edifice on the Banks of Our Beautiful Potomac. Being an Artist, and primarily a writer, I stopped to observe my surroundings, once I had reached top of the said monument.

At the top of the Washington Monument, in the point of the obelisk, is a room. In the center of the room is an elevator, (lift), shaft which descends the full length of the structure. Winding about this shaft is a subjectively endless stairway.

As I have said, and not merely to be repetitious, I climbed to the top of the monument and stopped to observe my surroundings. A lovely young girl was there, perspiring freely from the climb. It was hot August, and the wind blew deliciously through the tiny barred windows of the building. There seemed to be about thirty people in the room, all moving about and talking. The young girl was leaning against something hard and solid, probably a wall, and apparently waiting for an elevator. There was a marked contrast between the girl and the wall, and, being a Gentleman and a Scholar, I sidled over to her.

"Did you see the Capital?" I said.

"Yes," She answered. "We were there yesterday."

"I mean from up here," I said, attempting to clarify myself. The elevator arrived and began discharging its' quota of Passengers.

"No, I didn't have time to look out the windows. The bus is leaving in a few minutes, and I want to buy some souvenirs." she said, and then she popped into the elevator.

I thought I detected the faintest trace of foreign accent, New York I believe it was, but she was obviously a Tourist, of which Washingtonians are not at all enamoured.

Somewhat unnerved, I made my way through the crowd to each of the windows in turn, being careful not to monopolise the view for too long, giving the other visitors a chance. The breeze at the height was almost cold in comparison to the currents, hot and sticky, that flowed through the streets below.

Non-the-less, I made my way to the top of the stairs and trudged down, narrowly avoiding, as I went, the ammunition of a water-gun battle which raged between the levels of the open metal stairs.

Approximately three hundred yards from the base of the Washington Monument is the Sylvan Theater. I am not at all sure when it was created, or perhaps 'discovered' is a better word. A clump of planted evergreens surrounds a flat-topped mound of earth and shields it from the view of the street. This is the Sylvan Theatre, to which folding chairs are added for performances. A few years ago, when Washington discovered Culture, it was decided that the City should have its own Shakespeare Festival. The Sylvan Theatre was the obvious spot for such an undertaking. No commercial theatre could get away with it.

In another hot August, fan Tom Haughey, his mother Dorothy, and I, attended a performance of Twelfth Night. There was a threat of rain, but the sky remained cloudless, and Venus was bright enough to act as a small spotlight in the less brightly lit scenes. The monument was behind the audience, which gave a remarkable effect to some of the soliloquys, as they were apparently delivered to it, (the monument). The performance was rather good, the costuming delightful, and the wenchos most appealing. The audience laughed and tittered every few minutes at the Bards' riotous jollities,

and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves, save one.

We noticed that there were moments when large portions of the audience was silent, while a few of us roared at some monstrous pun or reference. I assumed at first that this was the natural state of affairs, when some of the audience are a bit more familiar with the work or the writers' times than most. This is natural when the audience has gotten in for free, and is made up of students, teachers, government workers, and fat little house fraus out for some fun. Still, I began to feel a little nervous when people turned to stare haughtily at the few of us who did get some of the obscureities. And the little man in the front row, the one who was not enjoying himself, went fairly frantic. He sat with a little annotated copy of the play, and each time, before the audience laughs, he would stab his finger into the recesses of his dinner jacket.

As Tom, Dorothy and I left the scene of the Comedy we looked up at the granduer of the Monument once more.



So white and clean it stood, against the black, the sparkling stars of the night sky. About one third of the way up is an easily visible line of demarkation, where the act of building was interrupted by the War Between the States. (They still call it the Civil War in Washington). A roar from afar came to our ears, but we could not tell whether it was distant thunder or the sound of jets from one of the near-by Air Force bases.

I have this thing about sopranos. What I mean is, I can't resist them. That was how I happened to be in Constitution Hall one night, with a paid-for ticket in my hot little hand, and waiting for the man to let me past the doors. Birgit Nilsson was singing, and it was an occassion I did not want to miss. I had along my hardbound copy of the complete Wagner libretti, and nothing short of twelve tons of flashing baritones could have stopped me from getting it autographed.

The programme was excellent. Dr. Howard Mitchell conducted Schuberts' Eighth with his usual mastery. He has a way with war horses that no one but Bernstein can match. The overture he chose was a modern - but not too modern - piece called, appropriately; "An Agreeable Overture". It was by a woman composer, I believe her name is Mary Howe, and she was in the audience. A charming, elderly woman; whose music was pleasant and completely unpretentious. Then Birgit Nilsson came on, in a gown that looked as if it were made of blue-white diamonds. She sang, 'In Questa Reggia' from Turandot, and, 'Pace, Pace, mio Dio' from La Forza del Destino, and she was superb. Then came the big event of the evening.

Nilsson appeared from the wings in that dazzling gown of light, and flowed to the center of the stage. She is a very large woman, but don't let that give you the idea that she is one of those ghod-awful monsters who have given the public an elephant image of Brünhilde. She is rather tall, and is a solid woman with a sensitive face, a face that gives her a strange quality of almost-innocence offstage. The lights dimmed and she began what is truly one of the most fantastic emotional experiences and audience can undergo; - 'Brünhildes' Imolation', from Die Götterdämmerung.

As those exquisit sounds of remorse, of unbearable sadness, poured forth, that old auditorium was transfigured. The music swelled and filled the room like something palpable. The hall, the audience, the orchestra, everything seemed to fade away, leaving only the glittering blue-white gem of Nilsson and the swelling intensity of the music as a focal point for reality. Wilder and wilder, the emotions became, there was no more audience, only the being of rapport and creative force of Nilssins' interpretation, Wagners' music. The flames roared up around the stage, or so it seemed; consumed her and carried her beyond our ken. For a moment she swayed. The music uttered the death knell of the gods, and it was as though all life and meaning had been completed! Then, over all the emotion, the intensity, the beauty and the despair, the theme of 'Redemption through Love', the quiet flowing of the Rhine, and the return to reality, a reality made better, the pastoral reality of the world. I discovered that my eyes had become unfocussed and had to blink them tightly several times before I could see clearly.

Backstage the hallway was filled with enthusiastic people, pushing and crowding one another in an effort to get through. The door to the reception room opened and the crowd flowed in. Trying just as hard as the rest of them, I shoved people aside and got as far as the door. Someone inside must have asked her a humorous question. I heard a laugh, a short, happy laugh, and yet; not a laugh. It was a musical thing, a quick little trill, a glisse' on an ascending scale. It came dancing out into the hall and people stopped their talking for a second just to catch and savour it.

When I got inside she was sitting behind a desk. There was a pile of coloured, autographed pictures of her on the desk. She was signing autographs and answering questions. I handed her my book of libretti, open to The Place. She took her pen in hand and looked down at the page, then a little frown crossed her face. She seemed so tall, sitting there at the desk; As tall as I was, standing. Then she saw that it was the 'Leibestod' to which I had opened the book, not the 'Imolation'. It was the role in which I had first heard her, Isolde, the role in which she was pictured on the coloured pictures. She signed the book with a flourish and smiled with her eyes, and I took a coloured autographed picture and put it in my book.

When I got to the end of the hallway Joseph Mayhew was waiting. He had driven me to the concert but we couldn't get seats together, as his were season tickets. The others of the party were already in the car,

Outside the building, Joe realised that I was speechless.

"But no-one will ever believe that!" he said.

About a week later, or thereabouts, two of Washington's most charming femme fans, Miss Elizabeth Cullen and Mrs Phyllis Berg, (Both of whom are also charming hostesses. I would pit them against Pearl Mesta anytime for a pleasant evening.) invited me to another concert at Constitution Hall. Sort of a 'Sing Along With the D.A.R.', featuring songs of the American Revolution. The Washington Branch of the Daughters of the American Revolution is, to my knowledge, the only fannish chapter. They are regularly featured in the Sports Pages of the newspapers. I was unable to attend the concert.

Up the cement stairs on the sharpley sloping lawn, ring the bell, in through the hall, hang up your coat and enter a cream yellow stucco living room filled with books in comfortable shelves, the horns from Texas Longhorn cattle, a saddle, a highboy desk, the top of which is also filled with books,



a stegosaurus with one of the horns on the tail missing, an Aztec calendar, the face of an Arcturian mummy in a small sarcophagus, a speakers desk with gavel, a genuine Indian rug on the floor, lots of comfortable chairs and hassocks, (once there was a little black scotty named McDuff, but he is gone, and his presence is missed,) say 'Hello' to Miss Cullen, and you are in the austere presence of the Washington Science Fiction Society. In this room some of the most fanish fanning in the world has been done, and is done, and will still be done, I hope, for many years to come.6

They tell me that Poul and Karen Anderson were members at one time. Jack Speer returns from time to time. This scene watched with morbid fascination the growth of Ted Whites' beard. The ephemeral Mike Gates appeared and disappeared in this very place. Joanne chased John Magnus from the living room to the dining hall to the kitchen to the back hall to the living room again, brandishing a sharp spur in hand. People have had fun here. John Berry drank neat rum as a chaser, and came closer to the D.T.s than he had ever been before, and, I trust, since. Fans to conjoin with, Bob Pavlat and Bob Madle, Dick Eney, Bill Evans, Chick Derry, and someone or other named Slithers or Scithers or Scissors, (at any rate, a rather sharp witted character), all these people are there. There are a lot of fans also - whom youve probably never heard of - because they don't publish fanzines or write letters or articles. But folks like Miss Cullen and Bill and Phyllis Berg, and Phil Bridges are the kind of people who make a club a pleasant place, and not just an in-the-flesh letter column.

Naturally we don't want then to know it, we people who are outside of WSEFA at the moment, but they have a damned good club. They might get swelled heads. I have never been to Berkeley, (though, of course, I hope to go there when I die.) but of the goodly number of clubs I've visited, the D.C. group has the most fanish atmosphere. I don't mean that lightly! The word 'fanish' is over-worked and used neotrically much too often. I mean that the people in the Washington club, both the BNFs and the members, are, well,.....You remember the way Jophan felt when he looked out from the tower, his hand on the Enchanted Duplicator?. Well, its like that at Miss Cullens house. You can be in Fandom no matter where you are, but when you walk into Miss Cullens' you are walking into FANDOM. You sense it. Its like the World made Fanish.

That sounds kind of screwy, doesn't it?. But it's true.

JOHN CAMPBELL YOU'RE MY JO JOHN.....Department of Miscellaneous Knowledge. In Britain the folk have a most reasonable system of copyrighting written material. As I understand it, one simply sends a copy (of whatever it is you want copyrighted) to the British Museum and that does it. Indeed, it is required by Law that all original material, distributed in anything more than infinitesimal quantities, ie;- one or two copies - and possibly even then, legally, should have a copy sent to the British Museum, (and also, I think, the University Libraries of Oxford and Cambridge, on demand).

In America it is quite different. Two copies must go to the Library of Congress, and be accompanied by diverse forms, plus money. In short, they charge for this service; approximately four dollars the last time I looked.

Now the reason for my commenting thusly, aside from the desire to shock and outrage my British readers at the injustice and general fuggheadedness of the American Way in regard to some things, is to bring the Congressional Library into this dissertation, something which I have been attempting to do since the first paragraph.

The Congressional Library is located right across the park from the Capitol building in Washington. It is a lovely building, a beautiful structure. One that Queen Victoria herself could have been proud of. (If it had not been for Washington, Jefferson, Franklin and some nut named Henry. Henry What I have no idea.) It is a bit dirty at the moment, but I understand that they are cleaning it, and when this monumental task is complete, the curlicues and ferrules and gorgons may once again begin to collect the dusk of ages that is so conducive to an atmosphere of study and contemplation. Dirty granite stairs rise over the subterranean entrance ways, neatly cut grass and half buried pine trees surround it. (there are other kinds of trees and shrubs as well, but not so impressive as the half buried pines), and a bronze dome surmounts it. I assume that the dome is of bronze, because it is that lovely shade of verdigreen which we commonly associate with bronze statues. (Those which have been protected from the birds.) Atop this dome is a statue.



I will, at this point, digress in explanation of Thomas B Haughey.

In the last mailing someone, I think it was Terry Jeeves, commented on a genzine called 'Mirth & Irony'. This was from Tom Haughey. I was origionally set to mimeograph this for Tom, but the plan fell through. One day, while in a slight state of inebriation, (I had listened to Rhinegold and Turandot in rapid sucession, and all on a summers' day.) I made the mistake of sitting down before a typewriter and pounding the first thing that came into my head. You might say that I was writeing in a stream-of-semi-consciousness technique. After a few lines, Tom came up and looked over my shoulder.

'Stop looking over my shoulder' I wrote, or something like that.

Having gone that far, I turned the page into a neat little Lovecraftian horror, albeit in need of much polish. I was not really very interested in the thing, so, still not quite sane, I pulled it from the typer with a flourish and presented it to Tom as a contribution for his forthcoming zine.

I had no idea that he would accept it as it was. I wouldn't have submitted it to anyone in that condition. But Tom liked it.

A day or so later, Tom called. He said he liked the story but the ending was unnecessary and contrived. That it ruined the story. Would I mind terribly if he cut the ending off? Well, Tom is going to collitch, and I suppose they teach him such things. 'wotthehell, archy,' I thot, 'wot-the-hell'. The story wasn't good enough to worry about. I thought cutting the end would ruin the story. I asked him to get another opinion.

Tom got Joe Mayhew to look at the story, and Joe agreed with him. Only he thought we should cut off a little more of the story. Then, they said, it would be 'a perfect little neurotic story'.

'wot-the-hell, archy,' I said to myself. So. They cut the end off, and a little more of the ending, and Tom published it, and somebody in the last OMPA mailing (Terry Jeeves I think) reviewed the story as 'a morbid piece of muck'. An opinion with which I agree.

Having explained Tom Haughey (?) I may now proceed to the Statue atop of the Congressional Library.

Tom parked his car in front of the Magnificent Marble Ediface which stands as a monument to the Teamsters Union, and I made a bad pun about his old modle car getting a magnificent edifus complex. We walked the few blocks to the Congressional Library, and at this point, looking up at that grand old building, I saw the Statue.

"Tom Waughey," I said, "there is an indecent St_atue atop that building!".

"What," said Tom vaguely, "is indecent about a torch?".

"That's not a torch," I said, "It is the symbol of human learning and intelligence. The symbol of the conscience, the very human soul, stripped bare and exposed to the ridicule of the elements! It is the pitiful symbol of Mans' innermost dreamings and desires, without the trappings, without the vulgar window dressings of pomp and conceit. Can't you see what the artist is saying? The despair and beauty he reveals to us in every short, fat, squat line of the thing? Don't you feel the indecency of it all?"

(No, really, sometimes I do talk that way.).

"It's a torch, Don," said Tom. "The symbol of knowlege. That is why it is on top of the Library."

A short, fat Congressman and his short, fat wife were walking past us. I could tell that they were new in Washington. They stared at my beard and my H.P. Lovecraft sweatshirt. They were slightly incredulous at the way Tom sort of fades at the edges. (It is well known that Tom Haughey is a very vague individual.).

"Nonsense!" I shouted, frightening the Congressman, but not his Wife. "In my days in Washington, (which, you must remember, comprise the better part of my time on earth,) I have learned many things and seen many sights. I saw fat senators and their thin wives, and fat wives who had driven their husbands to an even thinness. I saw magnificent works of Art. (There is a theatre in Washington which shows 'Birth of a Nation' at least three times a year, Uncut!). Being a Natural Born Artist, and a Writer in particular, I sought adventure, and I have explored the uncharted vastnesses of the Smithsonian Institute, with neither map nor Native Guide to ensure my safety. And, being an artist, and a writer in particular, and having endured unspeakable peril for the better part of my existence, and having behind me the vast experience given by a life in Imperial Washington.....".

I took a deep breath so that I could shout at the full volume of my lung power.

".....I am most assuredly capable of recognising a Naked Artichoke when I see one!"

"It looks like a torch to me." said Tom, and we went in to read about Witchcraft.

-----Don Studebaker. '63.

E N D.



Above is, as previously mentioned, Activity for Don S.

Owing to IPSO folding Dick Schultz had a couple of pages of material. Rather than waste all the mental agony etc., ((OK Dick, mebbe thats not quite what you said)) anyhow what it all comes down to is that somewhere in this issue, probably on the very next page - and taking up in all FOUR quarto pages - there is this material of Dicks.

For the record this is to be regarded as part of his, (DICK SCHULTZ) activity. Though the good Lord knows we don't have to worry too much about our activity, both of us, (or should that read "neither" or possibly "either" of us?).

The latest Harry Harrison story, Honorio Harpplayer(?) RN is the type of story one expects to see in a fanzine.....huh. don't tell me that that's what Avram has been intending all along!

Those members of the organization who are in SAPS might recall that a while ago I made a pronouncement about Heinlein's STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND. I had read the reviews of the book, and decided from them that the book had quite a number of faults to it. I then made the mistake of saying so, but that's another story.

Then a little bit later on, I sneered at Sturgeon's VENUS PLUS X.

But now half a year has passed, and more. I have read STRANGER. And have in the process re-read VENUS PLUS X. I have found STRANGER to be relatively free of the plotless preaching I thot must be in the book. And I have come to like VENUS more and more as time wore on.

This is therefore, a comparison of the two books. But in one respect only. The honesty and ideas which each man spent on the sexual mores implicit in the books.

I might try a literary comparison of the two, but that would be more than merely difficult. Ye be a better man than I Gunga Din, if you do such a thing.

Suffice it to say that I had a first impression, upon completing the book, STRANGER, of a real stf classic. An engrossing book, so chock-full of things to say that even Heinlein's figures were severely limited in depth. VENUS also comes through much better now, in effect making me say that it must have touched a social sore upon first reading.

But it is indeed sad that in a book like STRANGER, seemingly written just to display a cosmic idea-story before the public, should be sorely deficient in one area where most fans think Heinlein is remarkably free-minded. For compared to the way Sturgeon handled the same subject, I can only say that Sturgeon grasped the real problems better than Heinlein and followed through on his ideas as Heinlein did not.

THUS,

UNRESOLVED



I refer to the treatment and breath of their sex.

For Heinlein was chicken and didn't follow the path his statements would have ultimately led him. On the other hand, Sturgeon evidently followed his thoughts all the way through and decided to follow through with them all the way.

Heinlein never enlarged on the ramifications of his Nest concept nearly far enough while Sturgeon wrote VENUS with a full realization of all the problems involved. Let me go on and show you.

First off, let me recapitulate on VENUS. This was a Utopian community organized in a complete state when the story starts. (We never learn exactly the problems solved in setting up the community and setting it up furthermore, free of the traditional social frustrations and warpings. It'd be interesting to find out how to set up a Utopia without carrying over any of the previous faults, but Sturgeon never tells us how, even granting the people he'd have staffing it.) These people are all of one sex, capable of bearing and fathering children at the same time. They are roughly monogamous but without the permanency of our society nor its jealousies. They raise their young in creches and manage to do so without instilling any sense of frustration or imbalance. (Again, Sturgeon never tells us if feeble-minded children are also able to be raised in this society without becoming frustrated due to his low mental capacity. Presumably the society raises them free of this inferiority.) As Sturgeon goes on, we are treated to a confusing method of comparison. We are shown the Utopian solution to a problem and then shown the way today's Judeo-Christian Western-American society mis-solves the same problem.

And the basis of this Utopia's solutions lies in the lack of sexual frustration/envy, in the lack of the war between the sexes, in general, of the lack of our society's preoccupation with the sexual differences in male and female. With only one sex this forced inequality is gone and society can function as one unit instead of two.

Love also forms the basis of Heinlein's solution to our world's woes. In Sturgeon, it is a perfectly cut-off Utopia. In STRANGER it is Michael Valentine Smith who comes and creates in our present (well, slightly in the future) society a different kind of thinking....and sexual freedom, once Smith has "grokked" society a certain degree.

This is where Heinlein advocates Free Love with a Plus....Martian and the Martian Dictionary. With these, supposedly, the Nest becomes more than another Free Love setup and communistic economy and becomes the ultimate in communication between members of mankind. I mean communistic in the biblical sense, of course. Not the present Soviet imperialism sugar-coated.

Do you see the difference between Heinlein and Sturgeon? Apart from their heroes, the one-sex bit and so on, Sturgeon proposes a complete starting anew for mankind. A Utopia started out on the right foot for a change. Heinlein sets up his Solution in the midst of an already sick society. And proceeds to show how only a very small percentage could understand and use The Word.

After all his psi miracles. After cannibalism. After some of the most deliberately propagandistic sexual dialogue.... After all this, Heinlein chickens out.

For Sturgeon early in VENUS explained that in a society free of all sexual fears, frustrations and envies, anything goes. Heinlein on the other hand never once specifically mentioned anything about sex other than that between an adult man and woman.

For while Heinlein was advocating Free Love, he never defined what was taboo in his Nest. If, in fact, anything was taboo.

Taboos were something Sturgeon decried, for he knew their main fault. You make a taboo on anything and automatically the person is frustrated as regards it. And you continue the societies pre-occupation with sex. Which is exactly what Sturgeon wanted to get away from.

Especially since taboos suggested punishments for breaking the taboos and Officials to enforce the taboos. And then we start right up on the ol' Merry Go Round again.

Heinlein laid very strong emphasis (in his descriptions of the sexual life in the Nest) on the "normal" male-female relationship. And equally strong emphasis on the fact that "grokking" Martian enabled people to do away with jealousy. But at no time does he either condone nor condemn any deviant explorations into sex and never did he outline just what his taboos, if any, existed of. It would have taken but a second to mention them and get them done away with. But it just might be that Heinlein couldn't follow through on his Free Love bit. That he didn't care to endorse what we now call "unnatural sex" and deviationism.

He did endorse nudism, though. Hear, hear! Healthy exhibitionism could probably still-birth many juvenile prejudices and envies.

To get on with it, Heinlein did not follow through. He did not mention homosexuality, giving no opinions on whether it would be condoned but unemotionally unsatisfying (a possible escape hatch). He did not mention incest of any kind. Child-parent, sister-brother, cousin-cousin, any of it. He did not mention masturbation, bestiality, necrophilia, festishism and more important than the sicksicksick fringe.... At what age should sex-play start? How's about the ol' Nest when good ol' Unca Oscar introduces Mary Jane or Billie to sex at a tender age? Or if Little Shirley gets to 'rasslin' with Louie, age 13?

This is the sort of thing Heinlein missed. And this is exactly the sort of thing which precludes a perfect society being created from the present one unless one is willing to allow everything and anything. You put taboos up and you've got your first frustrations. And your first sex criminals soon come after it. And off we go on the Merry Go Round.

I am very much surprised that Heinlein completely skipped such a fundamental precept to his jealousy-free Nest. Sturgeon on the other hand did not skip it but deliberately pointed it out. Namely, that anything two people do can only be healthy. Thereby dumping into the "Permitted" pot everything from self-gratification (I presume) to children "doin' it" to each other. By this means Sturgeon sought to lift the emphasis off of sex in his society. (Along with his one sex, of course.)

STRANGER you will note, laid much emphasis on sex. Both in the Free Love and the lack of jealousy. Both turned into something more than that by Martianese.

Before calling Heinlein chicken, I'd like very much to know whether he had any taboos on any particular form of sex in his mind but did not write them out. For if he did have any mental reservations on how far sex could go, I'd like him to justify them in context of their own worth, irregardless of the present taboos

against such and such a type of sex. (As if anything a man and a woman do together is "unnatural"!)

This is it, then. Heinlein laid great emphasis on sex in his perfect society. And Sturgeon sought to relieve us of its burden.

Amongst other things, Heinlein also failed to give any real fundamental reason for his women suddenly becoming non-possessive and non-caring as to who's the father of the kids that are bound to come along. But then, like the magic wand, Martianese does everything without bother of explanation or rationale.

Heinlein said that dead-beats wouldn't get into the Nest. But whatabout the earnest young man who really believes Nirvana includes not taking responsibility for anything? In short, what is it in Martian that pre-selects its disciples in such a manner that only the sane, rational types get in? And if so, how do they break the rules down enough that humans can get in? For I've yet to hear of a perfectly sane human.

Another things was money (though we had the Deux Ex Machina of Michael Valentein Smith's massive inheritance). Namely, how, if all these people in the Nest are now sane people, how are you going to get any to do any work? I mean, after all, without any monkeys riding the backs of the Nest members, who is going to sacrifice his sanity and happiness to hold down a 9 to 5 job five days a week?

This is the race of the future?

If they're going to be money-earners, I'd like to know what motivation would be driving them then.

On yet another point Heinlein erred on the optimistic side. In thinking that mankind can keep his paws off anything. Especially anything in an incomplete state like his Martian Dictionary.

Can anyone here believe that grubby little mankind can let the Nest idea go on without altering it? And, of course, like all good ideas they'll be changed "a trifle" for their "own good". Of course. Isn't that what is always said when a concept's pillars are degraded into dogma and expediency?

After a while the Nest would be changed as the New Scriptures are "translated" and "revised" to make their meanings "clearer". And before you know it, we've a handy little cult flourishing, insuring the "leaders" (into what?) plenty of money, free sex and a tidbit of power. All under the protection of the "Church of the Nest" or whatever they'd call it.

The thing is, is that with taboos in effect, the Dictionary incomplete, Smith dead and mankind still being the same around them, the Nest is an unworkable idea. Our sicksicksick society would soon warp it to a more familiar (and nasty) aspect. And Smith will have died for nothing.

Sturgeon at least recognized the inherently degrading influence of present society and had his Utopia totally sealed off from "normal" mankind. And gave us a better hope for a bisexual mankind as well, in the last paragraphs. Heinlein, in his hurried ending left us with the feeling that it was all for nought.

Or so he left me, thanks to his incomplete concepts implicit in the Nest.

Comments left over from that other
OMPAzine of mine.

GRIST v4 n1 $\frac{1}{2}$ E T Mills.

was largely crossword, which I
greatly enjoyed doing. Although I didn't
send the completed thing in because I
was too lazy, and besides I figured that
Linwood or Reeves etc., would have
already have gotten in before me.

KOBOLD 3 Brian Jordan.

apart from remarking that,
(in respect of your notes regarding
grants etc) that this does not seem
to be a very good method of getting
British science/technology to the
apparently higher Russian standards.

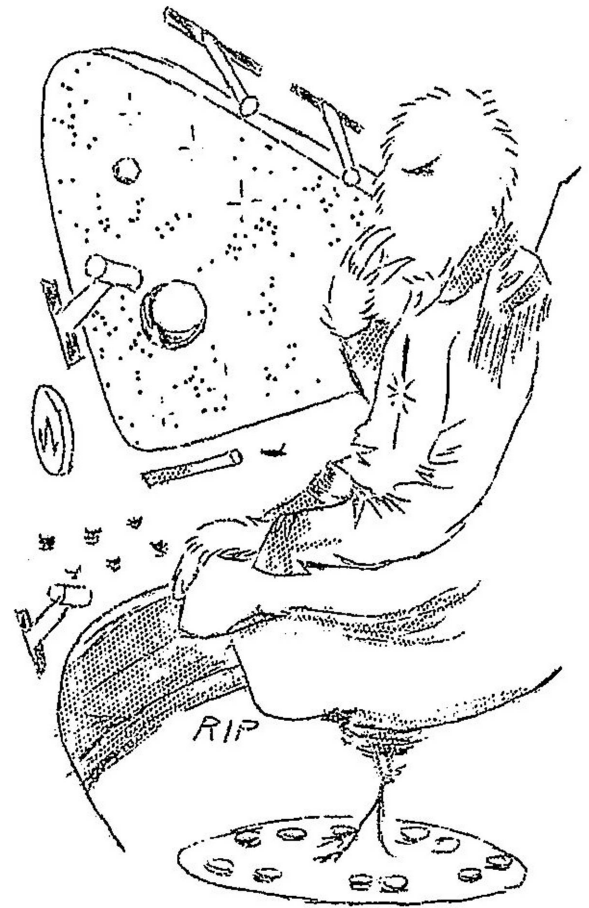
Although, (and this, which I
record with sadness, is no mitigation
however) I understand that our
American cousins seem to be in a
somewhat similar position. That is, the
unwillingness to lay out money for
any but "practical" lines of research,
the "play it safe" mentality which
has drugged both our countries'
scientists into a most distressful
condition of mental sloth.

I was particularly horrified,
and I mean Horrified to have my worst
fears confirmed recently. I read a
comparison of wages paid to Western
(US) scientists compared to the
wages received by scientists of
comparable rank in the USSR. It worked
out that the wages a Russian type
gets PER MONTH. are equal to the
wages of one of ours per YEAR.

This is hardly, I muse, an
encouragement for any lad to bother
with a scientific career. And surely
Western scientists, however patriotic,
must feel just a little envious of
their Russian opposites?.

This delightful method of
cutting our own throats has been
noted before, by wiser heads than mine.
I cannot see, unfortunately, that a
thing of limited circulation like
a fanzine can appreciably alter the
situation. Maybe they should all go
on strike for equal pay?.

all.



"lessso, if I moved the 2nd Fleet
to Rigel 11, transferred Trogi
and his cruisers to guard the
vacated position, send the 3rd
and 8th minelaying squadrons
in, in his place.....

OR! I could return to
Ghrish for an O-bomb, leave
Hü-tek Brdai here as a rearguard,
send the 44th to support
Joelm and the 56 and 57 to
stop the sector ahead...

Alternatively....hold a
tight front here. Detach the
whole Gikk fleet and out 3rd
4th and 5th from Aldcbaran
and try to take them via the
Centuarus group....

"TEA BOY !!!!!!"

"Comming, Admiral, Sir!"



THIS IS AN ODE OF SORTS

dedicated to an APA that discovered that nothing is certain.

The apa is IPSO, the International Speculative Publisher's Organization. And it will have been formally interred by the time you read this.

If it were to have a grave marker, it would have all the information that such usually have. Date of birth, date of death, the names of the parents and even an epitaph.

In the summer of 1960, George Locke was sent to North Ireland as part of his Army training. While there, he naturally visited the Wheels of IF. While visiting John Berry, Locke ventured into the attic file room, where John was keeping his fanzines.

In looking over various apa mailings, Locke complained of the way odd-shaped and small items and even whole bulky fanzines would be missing from the bundles. The articles were obviously about somewhere, but were undiscoverable. Comment was also made on the contents of the mailing and the way so many would flit hither and there and many remarks were raised about the desirability of mailing comments.

That was the moment of conception for IPSO. From those thoughts the idea was germinated for a new APA. The facets were to be many, but as outlined in the flyer sent out by Berry and Locke, the following were to become the salient features.

Apart from having the regular apa features of quarterly mailings, a OEditor, dues and deadlines, it would also have many new things.

For one thing, every member would have to have at least four pages of original material in each mailing....and no more than ten.

The idea of maximum limits for how much material could be sent in was quite an innovation. Mailing comments were to be frowned upon. And in their place the OE was to suggest topics to be discussed.

Everything was to be bound into one volume, the membership was to be thirty, and twenty extra copies were to be produced. The purpose of that was simple. The organization would let the extras be subscribed to, a dollar a volume, four for three dollars.

The page was to include the information like the above, and after a little delay in the first mailing, the deadlines were established at January 15, April 15th, July 15th and October 15th, the same dates as the SAPS, by the way.

The contributor wasn't to think of his contribution as a fanzine to be stapled together but as part of a volume. For that reason covers, tables of contents, etc. were discouraged.

The birth, after minor delays occurred on schedule, April 15th. Since the assigned topic was apas, the bones were case in cloudy manners, foreboding and hopeful both.

It's troubles started almost immediately.

For one thing, the apa was never up to strength. So many members complained that a vote was taken and the maximum number of pages allowable was raised to ten from eight. And the number of copies was lowered from fifty to forty.

The idea of "assigned" topics came under fire and the choice of topics was similarly riddled. With Locke gone to Africa and Berry become laccasical about his brain child, as he saw it mutate further and further from the ideal, the zine-apa suffered.

A Board of Directors thing got set up to select topics and the membership was allowed to choose from previous topics or a pair of new topics, which came into being each mailing.

Air-mail forms were sent to American members to allow them to print something up on one of the two topics without having to wait for the torturously slow mailing to arrive here. And M/C's were frowned upon but were permitted to exist.

The rot had set in, however. A number of things might have provided a solution but by the time they were thought of, the membership was too small to become a viable living group.

In the first place, the invitee list might have been extended and the membership limit likewise if more than thirty joined. At least it would have provided a larger group from which to draw the words of life that an apa needs to survive in fandom.

The topics might have been made in the later manner from the first but no one thought of it.

M/C's shouldn't have been even considered to become a black mark as far as I'm concerned, but then I may not be right. I tend, tho, to view M/C's as nothing less than positive feedback, strengthening the original charge and thereby keeping the machine working. Thought of in such a sense it becomes obvious that the positive feedback should not become the machine, though.

It might have helped if the nonsense of maximum pages per volume per member had never been thought of. Far better indeed if the volume idea were kept, even tho more than one volume per mailing be made if necessary due to large number of pages.

But this again is personal opinion.

The point was that not enough joined in the first place. And then this and that irritant induced more members to leave. Once the exodus had begun firm measures would have been needed to halt it.

Maybe it is better that it died than that it be mutated into just another apa. But while it lived, some of its volumes were exciting and full of pith and interest.

Locke came back from Africa to find a dying animal on his hands. He pumped blood into it but it was too late. The membership had left and all that remained was a hulk. Such things are progressive and Locke tried desperate measures to hold it together, finally throwing overboard the three-times a year minimum activity rule. But to no avail.

Locke has now sent all the members a number of air-mail forms crying over IPSO's demise for such has finally occurred. Only four contributions showed up in all, counting mine. The membership agreed that IPSO was indeed dead and requested the mailing out of all the few that came to him as an epitaph for IPSO.

Therefore, let this be an ode to IPSO. The other four pages are my contribution to what (tho I did not know at the time) is IPSO's final eulogy. It had some fine grand volumes while it lasted. I am saddened to see it go. It was my very first apa, you know. Dick.