

THE NUCLEUS

Somewhat dazed and dumfounded by the bewildering way detective story writers confuse and dazzle the reader, I, having just this minute finished "Death and a Maiden", loudly proclaim that the author has cheated me. Thruout the novel I have assiduously racked my weighty brain, ferreted out concealed clues with the cunning of a Holmes, pieced together into a gorgeous whole the tattered remnents of the story, and located with the utmost precision the ones who committed the ugly deed -- only to have the petty author produce with dazzling speed new twists and angles, and disprove - within five pages of the end - the beautiful case I had constructed, forcing me to reject my precious theory. After all, what could I do? The author was there! I, humbled, beaten, repentant conceded him to be right, only to discover on the last page that I had indeed been right the first time, but by dint of much sleigh of hand and an unsuspected streak of cunning in the hero I had been tricked into discarding the actual murderer. Such a tragedy has struck me to the quick. I shall never again recover confidence in either myself or the author. Only in Ellery Queen can one depend upon legitimate sleuthing - and even there a fast one is sometimes pulled. The lot of the detective story fan is not a happy one.

Nor is, it appears, the lot of the science-fiction fan - witness the FAPA goings on over Degler, and the interesting proceedings in LA - interesting and a little incredible sometimes. Incidentally, I rather like the ~~Ashleys'~~ choice of the new fan word - tem. But I'm notoriously slow about picking up new words and incorporating them in my vocabulary, and I rather suspect that I'll still be writing about fans when everyone else in fandom is writ\$ about some other cognomen. That may in part be due to the fact that I've only been able to get two issues of the NUCLEUS out a year, and that in between issues I lose touch somewhat with the discussions. One of the major deterrents to my activity is the technical work involved - our mimeo is incredibly messy, and for days after an issue my fingers are dyed to the bone. And yet does this lowly one suffer all for the glories of fandom! Things may change during this coming year. There are possibilities that I shall have the resources of an automatic mimeo available where I am going to work. Ah, yes, I am no longer a student in the narrow sense of the word! I now have a B.S., and my undergraduate days have passed into history together with all the crazy stunts we pulled, my wild assortment of subjects and equally wild assortment of instructors, and my classmates - my greatest loss. One haars all sorts of marvelous stories about male undergraduates, but we had just as much fun in our girls' college and almost as many escapades, and there are several that still convulse me with laughter when I think of them - only some I don't tell in mixed company. College is really a wonderful experience, and, by all means, those who can benefit from it should have it, and that does not necessarily imply scholastic ability alone. Well, at least I can look forward to graduate school, if I can ever save the money, but that's not the same thing anymore. Altho why I should have my heart set on going to school I don't know. When I'm going to be there five days a week anyway, starting early in Sept., only this time the roles are reversed - I'll be behind the teacher's desk. The prospect of teaching school thrills me. And even tho I shall be one of much maligned schoolteachers, I shall try my hardest not to look like the popular misconception of one! It has always been obvious to me that I This is vol 5. #2.

THE NUCLEUS IS EDITED, stenciled, written, published and controlled by Trudy. If you have any objections to this, it doesn't make any difference anyway. At present we are located at 170 Washington Ave, West Haven, 16, Conn. until the end of Sept.. at which time the home address changes.

would enter the field of education someday because there lies the hope of man, and there I want to be -- for the time being anyway. And, of course, Thompson's and Warner's discussions of education were interesting. One of the objections raised to dividing children according to abilities and aptitudes is that it does not make for a real-life situation for the child, but I think that's much more satisfactory to the teacher. John Dewey's progressivism - which is not the same as the much ridiculed progressivism of the school of thought wherein the child is supposed to do exactly as he pleases - is gaining greater and greater favor among the better schools today. There, the teacher, by virtue of her training, maturity, and responsibility directs the development of the child's potentialities, and makes situations arise which satisfy the needs of the child. It's fascinating work and a million times more interesting than the old traditional teaching methods. Unfortunately, too many people are familiar with this latter system - but it's amazing to think that children learn so much, even with so much bad teaching (that's consoling to me!). In the traditional system there really is a definite attempt to prevent thinking on the part of the child, just as there is almost no allowance made for individual differences. There is also no thinking on the part of the teacher. About the only problem a traditional teacher has is the one of discipline. She teaches the same formalized subject matter year in and year out with very little change whatsoever. And beware the child who asks a question for which she is not prepared! This sort of thing kills the child's interest in education, and it's really no wonder. I hated grade school, too. But the empirical school of thought has made great contributions to teaching. The child's learnings emerge from planned experiences. Such a system is based on the idea that education is not preparation for life, but that it is life, and that the child learns on a 24 hour basis. The kind of school about which Thompson writes (the traditional one) is gradually going the way of all anachronisms, and is heading into limbo at quite a rapid pace here in Conn. My new job is in one of these progressive schools - moveable furniture, modern color schemes, and all the necessary equipment - as different from the traditional classroom as a rocket is from a '29 Ford. But this wonderful school is not in New Haven - it's far enough away so that my girlfriend (who's also a schoolmarm) and I shall have to live away from home, but I'll be home weekends. Which reminds me to inform you that the home address will be changed from 170 Washington Ave, West Haven, to 173 West Helen St, Hamden not before the end of Sept. Hamden, incidentally, is a suburb on the other side of New Haven. But, please, don't address anything to Hamden until October - all mail addressed to West Haven will be forwarded anyway.

Chauvenet's

characterization of Speer in the Spring Sardonyx was nothing short of marvelous, and for that description alone does he deserve a special award. Incredibly enough, Speer as the Super-Bureaucrat is the real impression Speer conveys, and Russell hit it so perfectly, that I have not yet stopped being delighted! And as for the fanzine Arcadia, the most interesting thing there consisted of the comments by Watson. Strange that comments should rank higher than the fanzine! And whatta ya mean, Art, when you ask what's wrong with the Reader's Digest? Haven't you yet discovered the fascistic slant many of their articles have? And don't you read any of the liberal papers which tell you about these things, or just the Boston ones? For shame on you for being taken in by the Digest's puritanical airs! Which brings us to Speer's "Investigation in Newcastle". That's really serious business - and when I think that we harbored Degler under our roof, I shudder in terror! Ah, me, such is the life of a fan. Of course, this isolated instance of abnormality in

3

Fandom does not carry out Laney's idea that all fans are neurotic. Sure, there are some, but I'm inclined to agree with Stanley when he says that fans are pretty normal. Sometimes the odd ones create such a stir and make such a vivid impression that one's whole idea of fandom is colored by them. But for the most part fans are pretty staid and even commonplace in many respects. The lunatic fringe is attracted to anything and everything, and we have our quota undoubtedly, but I thoroughly disagree with Laney's vehement outcries against the normalcy of fans. Outside of the fantasy sense, I like to feel that two of fandom's distinguishing characteristics are liberalism and lefticism (I just coined that word), and that we're all going to vote for Roosevelt in Nov. But I know quite well that Speer is not a liberal, and that Ashley is pretty far from the left, and they're only examples. And yet I feel in my heart that most of the fans have some pretty good political views, or would if they knew the facts.

But Laney, with his constant harping on normalcy is off the track. It seems to me that all this emphasis on wanting to lead a "reasonably well-balanced life" with a minimum of fandom and a maximum of liquor, women, work, fun, women, liquor, and sex, sex, sex is not reasonably balanced at all. On the contrary, it is pretty lop-sided, and leans heavily upon the gratification of physical desire. It is based upon what Aristotle termed the "vegetative" or lowest part of man, not that that seems to bother Fran any, and in moderation, it shouldn't. It's only when the emphasis in that direction becomes so chronic and the appeal for this "well-balanced" life is made over and over again that one begins to wonder about the balance of Laney. Certainly it isn't normal to lay such a heavy emphasis upon liquor and sex, especially for someone who's past adolescence and lays claim to being well-adjusted. Truly well-adjusted people seem to be able to obtain both their liquor and sex with no fuss or outcry whatsoever, and certainly with no constant reference to either. It seems to me that that sort of thing is purely a personal affair, and that it has no direct bearing upon one's fan activities. If you want to lead this kind of well-balanced life, that's your prerogative, outside of fandom. Fandom should not interfere with it, but on the other hand it should not interfere with fandom. And since you, yourself, Fran, have said that fandom is not life itself, but merely a hobby, why intrude upon it with these life activities?

I myself can't explain it, but there's something about Laney that I find interesting. I disagree entirely with his ideas on humanizing fandom, and there's a great deal in his fanzine that is personally offensive to me, and yet, in spite of all this, there is a sensitivity within him and sometimes an understanding that I can easily sympathize with. I rather think that Laney is a high-strung person, moody, nervous, and unhappy, and that his writings, especially the Spring Fan-Dango - which sickened me - should be interpreted in this light. That is, of course, no excuse for the crudity and profanity that one finds in his fanzine, and the sooner he tones down his writing, the more popular he will become. There is never an excuse for a breach of good taste, and strangely enuf, I think Laney realizes that. But I think that he does not realize the strength and pungency that pervades his writing style and gives it an air of emphasizing things he may not be particularly interested in. He seems to be at a constant high pitch - whether this is like the real Laney or not, I don't know. As a matter of fact, I know very little at all about Laney, so I hope, Fran, that you'll forgive me if I've said things that aren't true.

I can agree thoroughly with Fran, however, on Speer's appalling lack of tolerance, and his attempt to defend racial discrimination when many of Speer's more

enlightened colleagues have openly admitted that it is a very bad thing. In an idle moment, I often amuse myself by wondering how many people I know would go over to the side of the Fascists if the Nazis ever won the war - and, with all apologies to Jack, he's usually one of the first to come into my mind. He, to me, spells reaction, and that term in itself embodies all I hate and fear in politics, and yet, strangely enuf, I actually like Jack. I reconcile this contradictory state of mind with the realization that Jack's reactionary tendencies form a very remote danger, but were it to become immediate I would fight him actively, and my liking for him would probably change. He, like all others who hold racial prejudices, is bothered most by the bugaboo of intermarriage. And yet intermarriage is not the Negro problem - it is the eventual solution.

Tut, tut, Jack - what do you mean when you say that the differences in the IQ tests of the Negro are caused primarily by the inborn traits, and that environmental differences are utterly insufficient to account for "disparity in scores", and that the tests are of intelligence and not of education! It's common knowledge that the higher one's education, the higher one's IQ tends to be. Also, IQ's are not static - they change; and a great deal depends upon the type of test administered, the conditions under which it is taken, and the education of the one tested. And as for your example of the public-schooled Negroes, no one should know better than you of the conditions which exist in the southern Jim Crow schools, of the fact that the Negroes are exploited in 17 southern states and the District of Columbia (our capital, gentlemen), of the utter neglect of the schools, and of the fact that for every \$100 spent on the education of the white child, only \$25 has been spent for the education of the Negro child; that for the white child the school term runs from 8 or 9 months, but for the negro it runs usually only from 2 to 6 months; that the Negro school buildings are run down and often very badly equipped, and that the teachers are usually poorly trained and always badly paid. And you say that this environmental influence is only incidental. Indeed! I would like to see how far you would have gotten along in the alphabet if you had been educated under these conditions! If we could reverse the situation and place the superior white race in the Jim Crow schools, under the identical schooling and conditions, and place the negro children in the white schools, you would see how quickly that disparity in IQ's would shift from the one race to the other. But there is further proof that you are utterly wrong, blindly and completely and bigotedly wrong when you base your discrimination on mythical tales of actually inferior intelligence. The Negro IQ has risen steadily over the years with the spread of education. During the last World War it was discovered that the IQ's of the northern negroes were higher than those of the southern whites. And if you don't believe this, why don't you get hold of a copy of the booklet "The Races of Mankind" by Ruth Benedict and others, published by the Public Affairs Committee; and read the facts and figures for yourself? Or is the scientific truth too strong for you?

Paul Spencer, a liberal after my own heart and more friend than fan to me, has been writing me wonderful tales of his adventures at Sian Shack and of the wonderful Slans who reside herein, and has thereby created a feeling within me which I think comes under the name of envy. At any rate, here is a Sian Shack that actually works and that the Slans enjoy, and so I have changed my mind about Sian Center -- I shall come to visit! More than that, alas, I cannot do, but after all, a visit.

One of my late-lamented courses in my late-lamented undergraduate career was Philosophy, a course that helped clarify my concepts about man and his ultimate aim, and I emerged from

the course with the understanding that man, as an individual, is the end of all things, that the church, the state, and the school exist only to develop man's potentialities to the highest good, that man alone is the ultimate thing, and when man is subjected to arbitrary authority which places the good of the state above the good of man, there is something radically wrong. And also, when the good of the church is placed above the good of man, the purpose for the existence of the church is defeated. The church is the expression of man's will - not God's. The church is not only the spiritual guide of man, it is also the tool. But this sort of thing is always highly subjective.

While I am far far from an enemy of Lynn Bridges, I do take issue with his article on the unions, and his statement that he favors management; I'd like to know how he reconciled this view and his views on the negro situation when he read about the transit strike in Philadelphia a few weeks ago. Or maybe the papers he read were part of the Hearst-Patterson-McCormick-Scripps-Howard chains, and so distorted the truth that he felt the CIO was against the hiring of negroes. In that case, of course, everything would fit in with his ideas very nicely - only that wasn't the truth. The transit company, in keeping with the rulings of the Fair Employment Practices Committee, found that it had to hire negroes to run the buses and trolleys, in order to avoid practicing discrimination - not because it wanted to hire negroes and treat them like decent human beings, but because its hand was forced by the FEPC - and rightfully. Incidentally, the FEPC has no power to enforce its rulings, but depends almost entirely upon social forces which are in favor of fair treatment of negroes to carry the desired weight. In this instance, the company union - which seems to be the kind of union Lynn Bridges likes - controlled and organized by management, revolted at the idea of negroes running trolleys, and the bitter, heart-breaking racial riot ensued. Now remember, this was the company union controlled by the company, and yet, not once did the management step forward and try to stop the proceedings. It could have, with a little effort, but it preferred, like Sewell Avery, to defy the government rulings, to keep its own power intact and not to hire negroes on equal footing with whites - altho that was merely a minor issue for the company. And so it remained silent - big business still fighting the government, and all those poor prejudiced fools in the union fighting along with it. But the company union is not the CIO. And unfortunately, a fool is a fool whether he be in the ranks of the CIO or in the company union. Racial prejudice is an ugly thing. It's an emotional thing, and fools are not equipped with much thinking apparatus. And so there were union men from the CIO also in the strike - but not the CIO itself. The leaders of the CIO did everything within their power to get the strikers back to work, but management was firmly entrenched that the CIO could do nothing. Because the war effort was being slowed up by the strike, the army was called in and management lost, but the negroes and the government won. Of course, Hearst gives an entirely different impression. From his account you get the feeling that management really was on the side of the Negro, and that it was the CIO that was the root of all evil. And people actually believe it! It's pathetic the way a corrupt press makes naive fools out of a supposedly intelligent populace; it's pathetic and dangerous. Well, Lynn, you may say this is only an exception, but it is not an exception, it is an example. Read the liberal papers and you'll discover a lot more of them.

Re Stanley's comments on the necessity of a capitalistic economy to be based on wage slavery, what better proof of that do we have than the defeat of the Murray-Kilgore bill in Congress the other day? Here is excellent proof of the fact that the capitalists fear improvement of the worker's lot will injure his

tractability as an employee. "What?"⁶ they cried. "Give the worker who has a wife and three children \$35 a week unemployment compensation? Why," they said, "he'll never want to work then." And what a great American myth that is! As if a family of five could live comfortably on \$35 a week and be satisfied with three eggs during that time, as if they could actually, as the Times suggested, dine on caviar, pampas, and champagne. The capitalists' reasons for their objections are obvious. After all, if a man gets as much as \$35 a week unemployment compensation he would certainly refuse to take a job which offered him only \$20. Wages would be forced up, and the cheap labor supply would vanish, and these two things give the regular capitalist the horrors. So the wonderful bill was defeated - but we'll get it some day.

Now, of course, it follows that I also disagree with Ashley and his ideas concerning unions. Surely there are corrupt and rotten unions, and there will be, as long as we have corrupt and rotten men, but Al is not being very scientific when he characterizes them all from the one or two he knows. We know the kind of union he is talking about, and I have a hunch that it's AFL, altho Al has said nothing to indicate the labor organization. As for the unions' obstructing technological advance, I rather think that management plays a much stronger part in this obstruction than Al either realizes or has made clear. The powerful companies have tried pretty hard to keep television from the market, because an influx of television sets would force ordinary radio out of the commercial picture and a great deal of invested money would be lost. As a result, television has had to edge its way into the market gradually, altho we could have had it some time ago. The same thing is true of the much superior Frequency Modulation, of synthetic quinine and rubber. The manufacture of synthetic rubber was slowed considerably by the natural rubber monopolies because they feared, and still do, that the demand for synthetic rubber would be continued after the war, and thus force them to lose millions of dollars invested in rubber plantations. The same thing can be said for oil - a fuel substitute could be developed that would probably be immeasurably superior, but the vested interests are certainly not going to let that happen. And surely, you aren't naive enuf to think that all these vaunted miracles of tomorrow which the advertisers have been promising us, are really going to come right after the war? They're not going to come for quite some time altho they're perfectly possible now. The manufacturers proceed on the theory that nothing should be given to the public in its most improved form when those improvements can be spun out over the years and thus make a much greater sum of money. The automobile industry is a fine example. The super-streamlined dream car of the future is possible right now - but we won't have it. Instead, the post-war cars will be almost identical with the pre-war models, with the exception of a few minor improvements here and there. Through a series of changes over a number of years, we may eventually obtain the car of the future, but there is nothing immediate in this process. In contrast to the manufacturers, the CIO profits from the introduction of new industries - it means more jobs. So who is it who obstructs technological advance, Al? And, como now, surely you can't be serious when you say that competition is part and parcel of our makeup? It seems that we have here in the FAPA an exponent of 19th century economic thought. But, Al, according to your own definition, that is not progress. Anyway, it's really only a myth - bait for free enterprise, and a trumped up excuse to trample other people down. And you actually fell for it, hook, line, and sinker! For shame. I really think you had a strong, independent mind. I can see it's strong all right, but where's the independence? Your falling for capitalism's fairy tale is strongly reminiscent of the way entire peoples fell for the ritual of the medieval church, and they fell but hard. You too? ... Which is all we room for, fellow slavs, all of which is only to fill out the rest of this line.