

k'taogm-m

#2

NUMBER TWO

VANGUARD

WOLLHEIM

SHAW

K'ta⁸gm-m : Thoughts and Random Opinions of Donald A. Wollheim of
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"THE WORD FOR ONE IS K'ta⁸gm-m; WITH A SLIGHT CHANGE OF
TONE THE WORD STANDS FOR MAN ALSO, AND FOR TRUTH."
(Norman Matson "Dr. Fogg")

NEGOTIUM PERAMBELLANS IN LUCIS

If the above latin is a bit off, we explain by stating that we have never studied the tongue and are guessing at the form opposing "in tenebris". It seemed like a good idea at the time.

We had prepared a rather scorching little article in response to Mr. Jim Blish's first Tumbrils, but we have decided to withhold it from publication pending certain new developments in the mental life of Jim Blish. An interesting and absorbing discussion of the night before going to stencils seemed to give very great promise of new trends for the ambitious young man from East Orange. Time will tell.

Living in Forest Hills in Long Island has its advantages, but it also has its disadvantages. One of the worst of the latter is the slowness with which the United States Mail is delivered in these parts. The Borough of Queens is assumed, evidently, by the our Now Deal Postmasters to be a stronghold of Republicanism (which it is) in the otherwise Tammany and Labor swayed city of New York. And it is probably a subtle form of punishment for this conservatism that causes mail to be ~~xxx~~ delivered through the many centers of Queens anywhere from one to six days after the same mail would arrive in Manhattan. We are reminded of the county in Alabama whose roads are dirt-rutted, unpaved and narrow though the rest of the state boasts reasonably good Macadam and highways. Investigation revealed that that single county alone voted to remain in the Union in 1861, and the rest of the state has been punishing it for its unorthodoxy ever since.

In any case, what we are driving at is that the recent mailing of the Fantasy A.P.A. has reached friends in NYC three days ago, but have not turned up at our door yet. But hearsay tells of an interesting article by Harry Warner chiding the Futurians of New York for taking such an up-and-coming fan as Larry Shaw and dragging him into the mire of Futurian corruption until as Harry is said to have predicted Larry Shaw will cease to be a fan in six months. For this dire fate, we are cursed as the bane of all true fans. Or words to that effect.

This is very sad, and it is quite true that Larry Shaw's fan activities have drastically declined since moving to New York. But we are not sure whether this is a tragedy in any way. If Harry Warner will prove just what advantage to the world or to the literature and the advance of science-fiction would be gained by Shaw's continuing to be an "active" fan and a publisher of fan magazines, we should be most grateful. For it is our feeling that by merely publishing fan magazines and writing enough letters to be rated by fellow fans as a top-notch fan, does not in itself mean anything whatever. It has no constructive significance to be rated among the top twenty fans

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and yet not to know the true score in science-fiction. It is no value to remain buried in one's room in Schenectady or in Hagerstown and type out stencils and letters for the perusal of immature minds elsewhere, unless you have something to say and to contribute to the active enlargement of your world and theirs, and of course of the *raison-d'être* of the whole business, the branch of fiction called Fantasy. It is no merit to rate the stories in *Astounding*. The editor doesn't care and his opinion is of such a nature that it will take more than what a fan thinks to sway it. Finally, the mind of a recluse, afraid of the world, unable to meet the problems of the world and of living among strong-minded people, is not capable of analysing and criticising the literature of the future and the problems attendant upon the future.

Let Harry Warner search his own soul and ask himself what he has to gain by staying in fandom. He spent some four years putting out a regular, neat, publication called *Spaceways*. It has now been defunct for two years or more. It is now virtually forgotten among fans; it has left absolutely no trace of its existence; it had no influence; it changed nothing. Mr. Warner never used his magazine to give a basis for criticism of anything. He never allowed its pages to add in the solution of any controversial problem. He never allowed the free flow of thought and debate to flower in his pages. He abused the privilege of freedom of the press to produce nothing. Freedom of the press was granted to the American people by the founders of this nation in order to allow the untrammelled expression of minority opinion (majority opinion always finds expression in the government it creates). Criticism is without meaning unless it is prepared to be a guide to something better. Criticism, without political and social understanding, is worthless.

Larry Shaw will agree with this view today. As a man, Larry is 100% further advanced than he was before moving to New York and the company of the Futurians. And if he is still interested in science-fiction as literature (and I think he is), he will in a year or so probably achieve more for that literature than Harry Warner and his ilk can ever ~~ach~~ achieve cooped up in a room in a small town in the thought-deserts of the hinterland. From being a directionless boy, without an idea of his future or his faculties, Larry has found himself a profession, is acquiring invaluable experience in that profession, has found a philosophy, has learned and gained social contacts, has learned how to guide himself in a changing world. His several months in New York have benefited him more than four years at college benefit the average hinterlander. If Harry Warner would take the advice of an older friend, of one who has a solid record of literary achievement behind him as I have, he will tear himself away from the bosom of his family and come to New York to join the Futurians. We guarantee that he will never regret it. A Futurian education lasts a lifetime.

The above is not to be taken as a blanket invitation to everyone. There are many who could not pass the entrance ~~xxx~~ exams to Futurian Prep, for many reasons, witness C.J. Fern. Others, like the Backwoods Bumpkin from the Potlatch Forest, could never learn from anything except the hard thwacking of falling logs.

MIRRORS FROM M'LO

A page of purloined poetry

TO MY STUDENTS

I teach. I expect two-percent return.
Sow words; show books; plant thought; burst doors, and point;
See World; see men at work; partake!

Students, I shall be content if you learn
By tiresome emphasis from me:

"The laws of being are the laws of thought."

"Thought is conditioned by being, not being by thought."

I am indulgent and stern.
Be deaf, indifferent. Discount, forget, resist...
But never mistake

This meaning:

"Freedom is the recognition of necessity."

"By acting on nature outside himself, and changing it

Man simultaneously changes his own nature."

(Genevieve Taggard "Calling Western
Union" 1936)

GOLF LINKS

The golf links lie so near the mill
That almost every day
The laboring children can look out
And see the men at play.

(Sarah N. Cleghorn)

PACT

It is written in the skyline of the city (you have seen it, that bold
and accurate inscription), where the gray and gold and soot-black
roofs project against the rising or the setting sun,
It is written in the ranges of the farthest mountains, and written by
the lightning bolt,
Written, too, in the winding rivers of the prairies, and in the strangest
ly familiar effigies of the clouds,
That there will be other days and remoter times, by far, than those,
still more prodigious people and still less credible events,
When there will be a haze, as there is today, not quite blue and not
quite purple, upon the river, a green mist upon the valley below,
as now,
And we will build, upon that day, another hope (because those cities
are young and strong),
And we will raise another dream (because those hills and fields are
rich and green),
And we will fight for all of this again, and if need be again,
And on that day, and in that place, we will try again, and this time
we shall win.

(Kenneth Fearing. 1940. Random House)

TRANSCRIPTIONS FROM THE TERRESTRIAL

(During 1937 to 1939, and very rarely in later years, I was in the habit of occasionally writing down excerpts from my reading that seemed to strike me as sufficiently startling, or sound, or something, to be worth having. Recently, upon digging up the sheafs of these notes, this "Commonplace Book of a Young Man in a Wild World", it occurs to me that my friends of the Vanguard APA may enjoy the shocking notations culled from these sources. And if you don't enjoy these notes, as I did, too bad for you. You ought to. So follows:)

"Liberty of thought and speech has come, by parity of fraud, to mean liberty to seize upon every defenseless mind and mangle it with every weapon of defenseless murder into a mush of mendacity. There is but one liberty which is of vital worth: the liberty of the human mind to be unpoisoned with intentionally instilled lies, the liberty to think honestly. All others follow." (Robert Briffault "Europa in Limbo")

"If there is anything that cannot bear free thought--let it crack."
(Wendell Phillips)

LOGOI

Words--words eternally--the books are filled
With words in varied patterns. Words are tossed
Broadcast upon the virgin pages, lost
Beneath a drifting soil that none has tilled
Sufficiently to reap a harvest, killed
By tumbleweed fecundity--embossed
In gilt upon a purple page, at cost
Of thinking now and hooding later--spilled
Inkily in the daily press... I seek
To tell you of the truth--and bitter cuds
Rise in the milk above a pallid, weak
And watery remainder; prose and verso
Labor beneath the everlasting curse....
Life! In thy mercy, grant release from words!
(George Hedley - MAN!)

...all sane minds released from individual motives and individual obsessions move in the same direction towards practically the same conclusions...Rational minds don't disagree so much as people pretend. They have to follow quite definite laws. We misunderstand. We don't pause to understand. We let life hustle us along. Every ~~xxx~~ tyranny in the world lives--and such systems have always lived--in a perpetual struggle against plain knowledge and illuminating discussion. We are living--let us face the facts--in a lunatic asylum crowded with patients prevented from knowledge and afraid to go sane.
(H.G. Wells "Star Begotten")

There is no salvation for races that will not save themselves. Half the stars in the sky are the burning rubbish of worlds that might have been.
(H.G.Wells "The Camford Visitation")

Millions of human minds are in a state of slavery and tyranny. How shall they escape? Rebel! Think for themselves! Dare to be singular! Let others direct; follow Reason. Let others dwell in the Land of Enchantments; be Men. Let others prattle; practice. Let others profess; do good. Let others define goodness; act. Let others sleep; whatever thy hand findeth to do, that do with all thy might, and let a gainsaying calumniating world speculate on your proceedings.

(Bronson Alcott - Dec. 1826)

Trotskyites in patrician purity
Wash their hands of collective security;
And between abolutions,
Plot immaculate revolutions.

(David Phillips)

The task of philosophy is not to explain the world anew, but to change it.

(Karl Marx)

From a certain point onwards there is no turning back! That is the point that must be reached.

(Franz Kafka)

▲ Picket Speaks

I hate to be a pickot, I ~~was~~ always long for peace,
But the wheel that does the squeaking is the one that gets the grease.
It's nice to be a peaceful soul, and not too heard to please,
But the dog that's always scratching is the one that has the fleas.
Don't ever say a kickor means nothing in a show--
For the kickers in the chorus are the ones that got the dough;
The art of softsoap spreading is a thing that palls and stales,
But the guy that wields the hammer is the guy that drives the nails.
Let me not put any notions that are harmful in your head,
But the baby that keeps yelling is the baby that gets fed.

(John Garvis - New York Sun!)

The axis of politics has shifted as it has never done since the year 4000 B.C., when this madhouse of a world ~~was~~ was created...The war has been a war to end politics. The last war for the old politics. Another motive, far more momentous, no overshadows and eclipses all paltry squabbles about frontiers, markets, spheres of influence, and all the litter of domoded diplomatic lumber. "A haunting spectre stalks over Europe--the spectre of communism"...Stoutness of heart is not the leading virtue of Europe's shepherds or of the sheep that look up and are fed up. They are haunted to lily-livered ecstacy by the spectre which they bid us scoff at in public. And every act of policy internal or external is henceforth shaped by the one sole cynosuro of their terror-sgricken souls. The old immediate interests count no longer, the old policies are dated...The empire, the command of the sea, the lifeline to India, everything can go phut, so only the spectre, the dreaded spectre can be laid...Of one thing only are we certain. Bolshhevik Russia is the hidden hand that henceforth sets the stage of Europe's contemporary secret history--the only real one, the external show that still babbles of imperial or democratic politics and national diplomacies being mere cyowash and camouflage.

(Robert Briffault "Europa in Limbo")