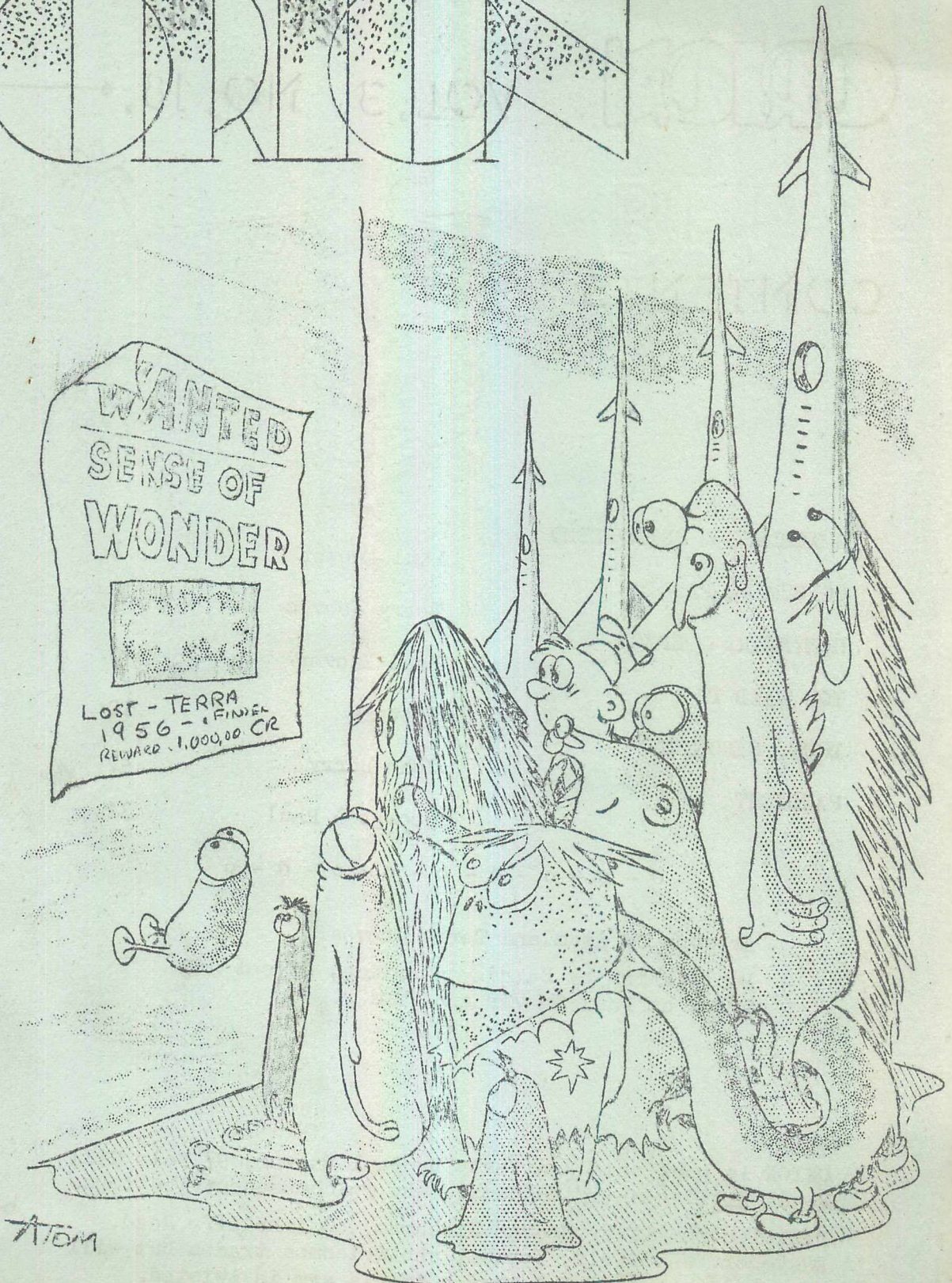


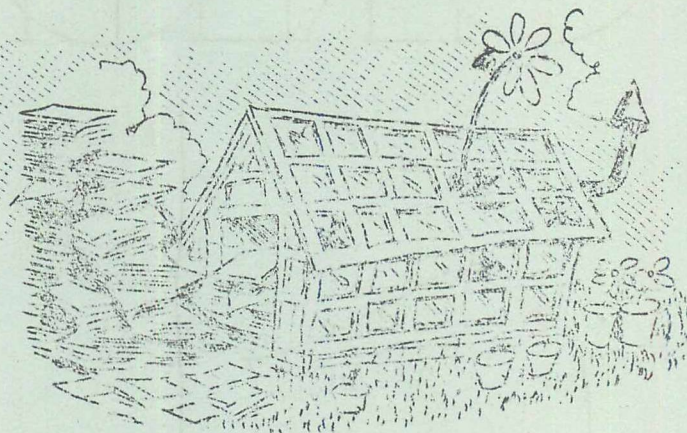
ORION



ORION

VOL. 3, NO. 18.

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Artwork by Atom and Terry Jeeves.

Duplicating by Baird. Stapling, offset and
typos by Paul Enever and family.

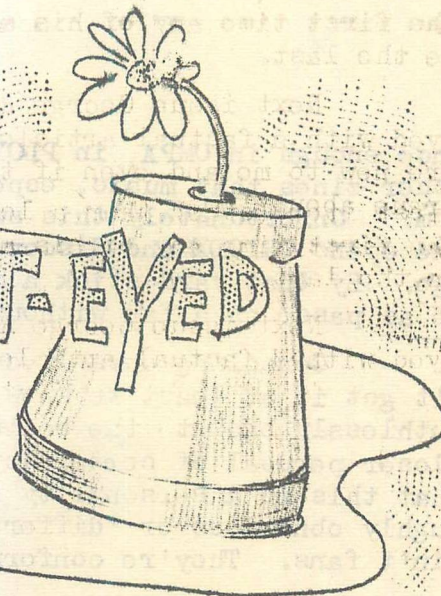
ORION is published quarterly by Paul Enever, 97 Pole Hill
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accept 3/6 (50p) for 4 issues if his arm is twisted.

BEARDLESS & BRIGHT-EYED

BY

PAUL
ENEVER



When the worlds' publishers are gouging one another's eyes out to gain possession of my posthumous papers I hope they pay due regard to the pile in the bottom drawer of the airing cupboard. It contains all the O/18 editorials I've written and discarded. In it they'll find some of the sublimest prose ever typed and some of the damnfoolest notions ever committed to paper. About the only thing they won't find is a discourse on the recent tragic loss of a sense of wonder.

I haven't written that one -- yet. Primarily because I suddenly discovered that I hadn't lost it. Encouraged by certain allegedly friendly fans I've lately imagined myself too old to own any further capacity for wondering (among other things) but, as the title above indicates, I've suddenly taken a new lease of life.

As from about a month ago I find myself filled to brimming-over with wonder; so lavishly endowed with it that I've been going around bestowing some of it on such friends as weren't nimble enough to evade me; and still so replete that, with a captive audience right here in front of me, I'm going to share it with you.

Perhaps I'd better make it clear, though, that about the last thing I Wonder About now is sciencefiction. Instead I Wonder About fandom. (Of course, I've Wondered About Fandom for years but this is the first time I've got vocal about it.) First of all, as examination of that pile of rejections would show, I started off to Wonder which particular fandom we were in at present. I suspect it's about Ninth but I lost count of 'em somewhere around Second and never caught up since. Still, the number doesn't matter.

The point is : What sort of fandom is this one ? We all know it isn't a sciencefiction fandom and that doesn't bring many tears to our eyes, but is it a Music Fandom ? There's evid-

enough in OMPA, in PLOY, in GRUE and A BAS and half-a-dozen other zines that music, especially jazz, is a major focus of fandom. Unfortunately this sweet illusion is shattered the moment one opens TRIODE and discovers that we live in a tape-recorder age. By that yard-stick a fan without a taperecorder will shortly be as passé as a fan without a typewriter.

Consoling ourselves with the thought that though we haven't got it at least we know what it is we find ourselves pitched ruthlessly back to the beginning -- as ignorant as ever -- when a closer perusal of certain other fanzines reveals all too clearly that this is a Personality fandom. Fans who aren't either thoroughly obnoxious or 'different' to the point of eccentricity just ain't fans. They're conformists.

It was hereabouts that my Wondering About fandom came to a temporary halt. One can't live in a permanent state of Wonder without eventually going neurotic; so I sloped off into my half-finished greenhouse and worked off my frustrations on a wedge of lovely soft putty. And it was while I was fitting the last pane of glass that a new Wonder came over me all of a sudden-like.

Why, I thought aloud, isn't there a Greenhouse fandom? If Bentcliffe can hawk his taperecorders round fandom and Mercer and Brunner and Vendelmans can blow their trumpets (or squeeze their concertinas) all over the place, and fans can go around with large and vulnerable chips on their shoulders just begging for a feud, why shouldn't I start a Trend?

Why shouldn't I contact all those fans who possess gardens and encourage them to build greenhouses; and then I'd have a keen and receptive audience and could fill ORION with Zauchneria californicas and Belerepene guttatas and be just as esoteric and cosy as all the other musicians and taperecordists and convention-eers and would-be-feuders.

I wonder why I don't ?

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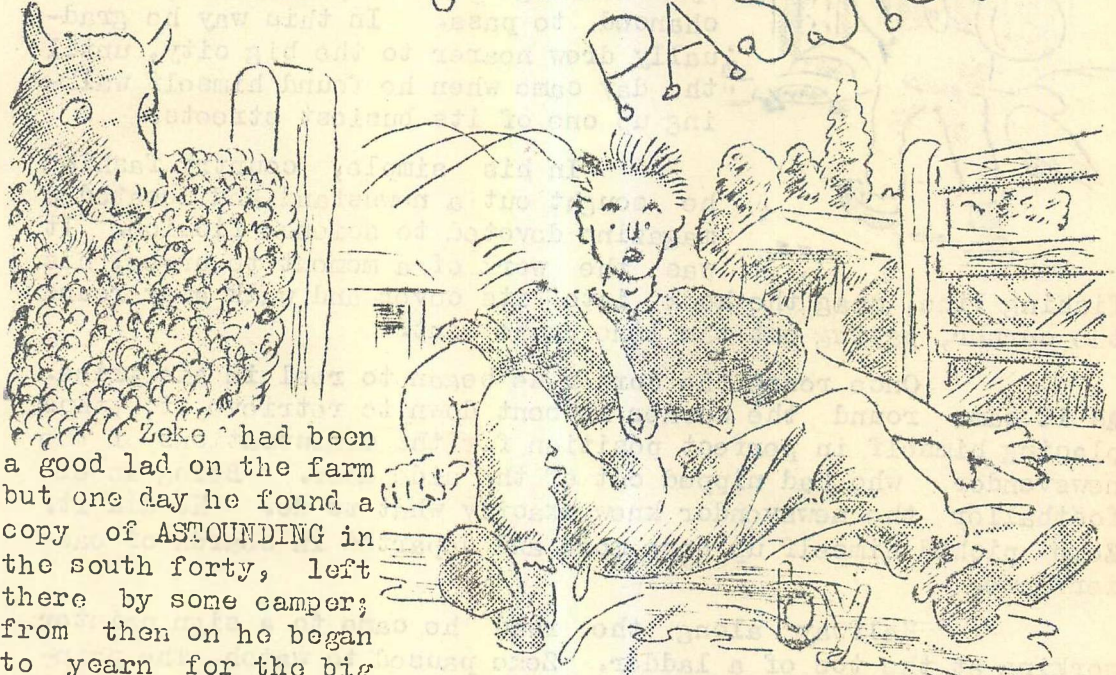
I wonder, too, what the 'individualists' will think of this ORION? It isn't, so far as my prejudiced eye can see, a lot different from all the previous Orions. Practically all the same words have been used and in some cases almost the same sentences; just slightly rearranged. The same people have written to YSI and John Berry is still in there, lawless and disorderly. The one and only innovation is the Terry Jeeves story. It is the first item (other than a letter) I've had from Terry and it is the first time any of his artwork has appeared in O. Hope it won't be the last.

Next issue George Richards takes over Beardless & Bright-eyed with a factual article about the Marie Celeste. The facts are new to me and even if they're old to you you can at least argue about 'em.

'Sall,

Paul

CONSUMING PASSION



Zeke had been a good lad on the farm but one day he found a copy of ASTOUNDING in the south forty, left there by some camper; from then on he began to yearn for the big city, where he could get more of the stuff.

TERRY JEEVES

At last the longing became too much for him and his work began to suffer, until the farmer decided to help the lad find his proper place in the world. He threw Zeke out.

The simple lad picked himself up from the road and was about to return to the farm for his kitbag when the farmer obligingly threw that out, too. His aim was good. Once more Zeke picked himself up and set out on the road to the city.



Since he was a simple country lad it was two days before he discovered that he had started off in the wrong direction, and two more before he passed the farm on the return journey. Being a sentimental lad he naturally wondered, as he passed the gate, if the farmer would miss him. He need not have worried. The farmer didn't; instead he scored a direct hit with the copy of ASTOUNDING which Zeke



had left behind.

The lad plodded on, occasionally pausing to quench his thirst from a sparkling stream or to allay his hunger by breaking into any empty house he chanced to pass. In this way he gradually drew nearer to the big city, until the day came when he found himself walking up one of its busiest streets.

In his simple, country fashion he sought out a newsstand and located a magazine devoted to science fiction. It was the work of a moment to unroll his fishing line, snag the hook into its cover and walk away round the corner, paying out the line as he went.

Once round the corner he began to reel in his prize. As it came round the corner he bent down to retrieve it, thus placing himself in perfect position for the ministrations of the news vendor, who had nipped out of the side door. Being an ex-footballer the news vendor knew exactly what to do. He did it. Zeke picked himself up once more and departed in search of easier game.

Halfway along the road he came to a sign painter working at the top of a ladder. Zeke paused to watch. The painter finally noticed the pathetic figure in farm clothes and something about the upturned face appealed to him. He emptied his paint pot over it.

Zeke staggered off, determined to show these people what a simple farm lad with an honest heart could do. He observed, he listened and he learned. Weeks went by, and he was no longer the simple lad in farm clothes. He now had a suit of Harris tweed which had once belonged to a labourer and which he won by the simple expedient of filling his sock with sand and applying it to the left ear of the labourer as he left a bar at the end of the day.

It was obvious that Zeke still believed in the simple way of life.



(Continued on p. 5)

He prospered as time passed but at heart he was always the simple country lad. He still used the same sock, filled with the original sand.

Nevertheless, beneath this simple exterior burned all the old yearning for science fiction. He decided to try again. He chose a time when the newsstand had no other customers but, remembering the fiasco of the fishing line, adopted the direct approach. He walked straight into the shop and two minutes later came out again with his magazine. The simple stocking had again proved its worth. In his usual forthright fashion he had also added the contents of the till to his own finances.

The years passed. Thanks to his simple sock of sand Zeke grew richer and richer. His passion for science fiction had also grown and scarce a day went by without Zeke scanning the newsstands windows for the gaudy, fantastic covers which so appealed to him. Once he had tried a Western owing to a faulty reconnaissance, but had thoroughly disliked it. The thing obviously catered to people of a very different taste. Zeke stuck to science fiction.

Police were hunting far and wide for the man who stole only science fiction and the contents of the till, but Zeke's simple innocence guarded him well. Then, one day, the first warning of disaster came. His sock needed darning.

Zeke noticed first just after he had been down to collect the latest Galaxy. As he left the shop, slipping the spare money into his pocket, he noticed a slight stirring in the recumbent body of the news vendor. He looked at his sock. Sure enough, there was a small hole in the toe and through this some of the sand had dribbled so that the sock had lost its potency.

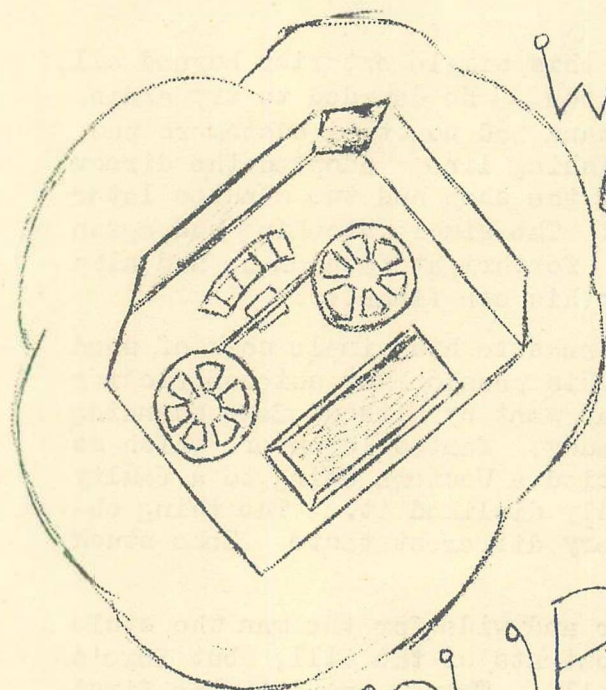
To Zeke's simple mind this meant the end of all his now found wealth and science fiction and he decided to make the most of the remaining sand before it all ran out. He hastened to another newsstand, hurriedly belted the assistant a fourpenny one and frantically gathered up every copy of every science fiction magazine he could see. If this was to be his last diet of sf, Zeke was determined it should be a good one.

Leaving the shop, he made his way, by back streets, to his rooming house, threw the nearly empty sock on the bed and began to devour his science fiction.

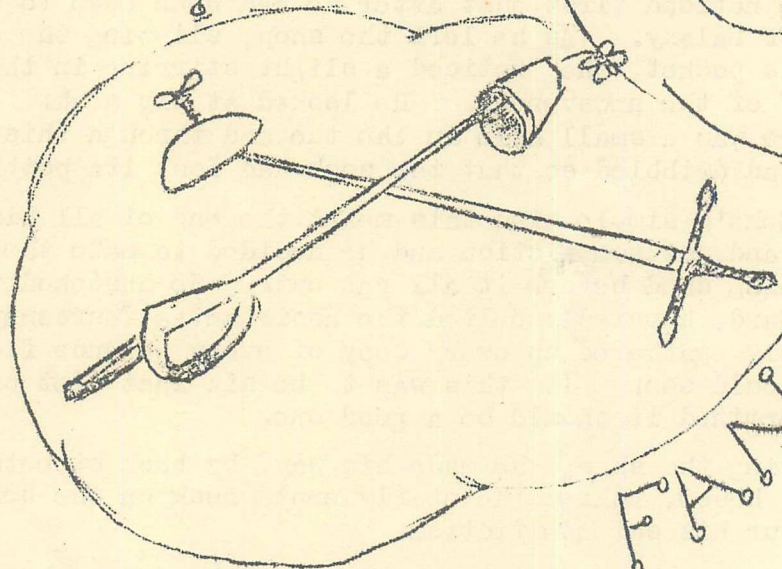
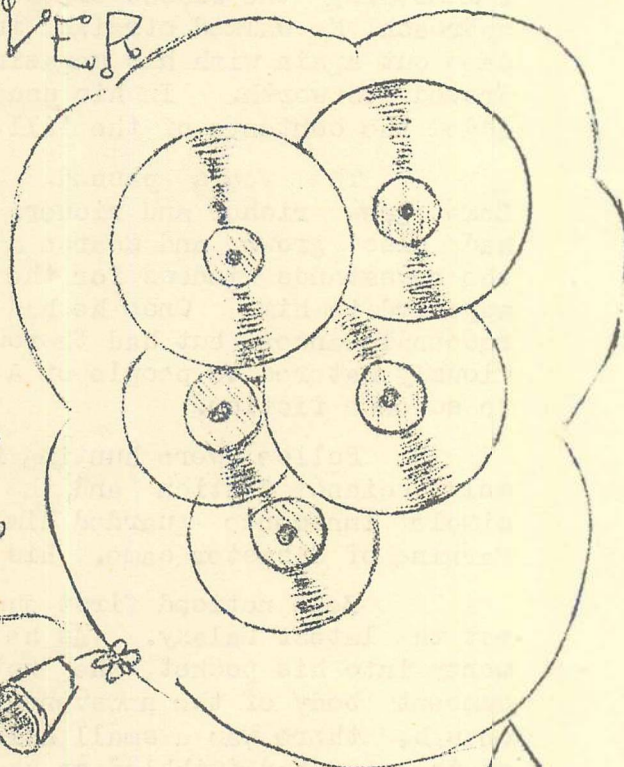
Half an hour later there came a thunderous knocking on the door and two large men in blue burst in. Zeke shot up in

(Cont'd. on p.9)

WHAT
EVER



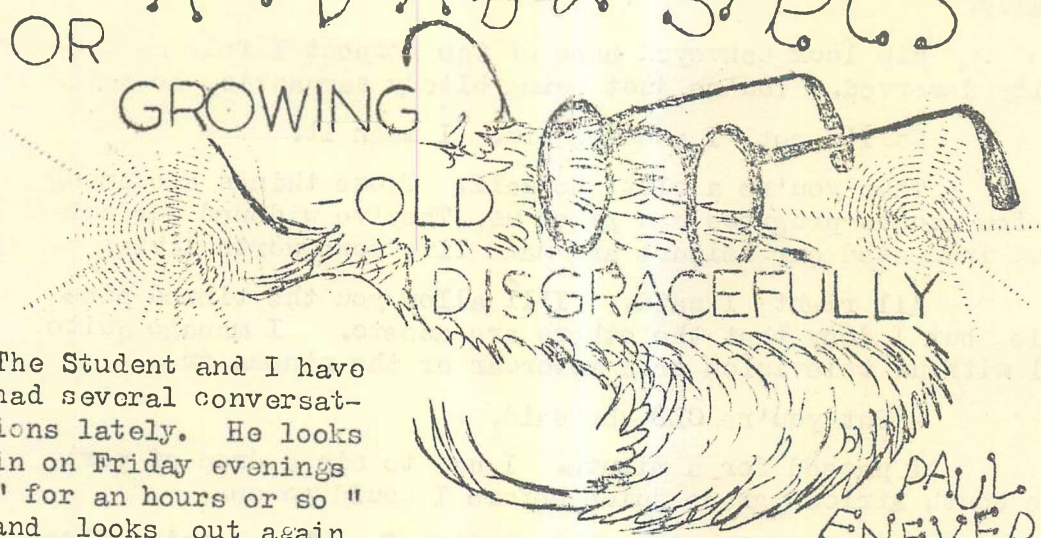
YOUR



FANDOM

THERE'S ROOM IN IT FOR
CONTACT

GREYBEARD & SPECS OR GROWING -OLD DISGRACEFULLY



The Student and I have had several conversations lately. He looks in on Friday evenings "for an hours or so" and looks out again

early on Saturday morning. In the interim we outline possible social systems, discuss art and literature, exchange bawdy jokes or reminisce about the Old School. At least, I reminisce. He is still a student there and as there is a difference of twenty years between us my recollections of masters and pupils as they were provide him with hours of relatively harmless amusement.

In turn he brings me up-to-date with snippets about the French master who had to marry the Head's secretary, the Physics bloke whose moustache burst into flames when he was demonstrating a Tessler coil to the Lower Third (Tessler coils in nineteenfiftysix!) and the new wing they are building just where the orchard used to be.

As long as our conversation is confined to these and kindred subjects we maintain a chummy atmosphere, but occasionally discord creeps in. Sometimes we share a bottle of wine, for instance, and then an alcohol-induced frankness becomes obtrusive.

On one such occasion we were discussing Richard Jeffries "Hodge And His Masters" which has always been one of my favourite books, and was included in the Student's reading for Economic History. How marvellous, he rhapsodised, it must have been if one was a successful farmer in those days. No rush and tear, no savage Income Tax or rationing or form filling or -

- television or radio or motorcars, cinemas, illustrated daily papers, tinned pineapple, I joined in enthusiastically.

His look conveyed none of the respect I felt my seniority deserved. You're just being bloody sarcastic, he said.

No I'm not, I assured him. I mean it.

Then you're a clot, he said. Those things are among the few assets progress has given us. They've widened our outlook, increased our leisure and made life more worth living.

All right, I said. I'll allow you the tinned pineapple but I deny that the others are assets. I manage quite well without television or a motorcar or the cinema or -

-- But you're OLD, he said.

I passed for a minute. I had to sip a drop of port-type South African grape juice before I could go on.

Old ? I echoed. At fortyfive ? Why, I said, I've had more experience of progress than any generation who ever lived before me. I grew up with radio and cinemas and illustrated papers..... and then I had to switch the conversation quickly because I suddenly realised how right he was.

Twenty years ago I thought radio was so wonderful that I cheerfully sat up half the night while my ears were being paralysed by a pair of headphones, just in the hope of getting some sound through them. I spent half my pocket money on visits to the cinema and when I read reports about the imminence of a nationwide television service my heart swelled with joy and I cut out another cardboard scanning disc.

But that was twenty^x years ago. Somehow, somewhere, my enthusiasms for all these technical miracles have leaked away. True, I have finally accepted radio as an adjunct to living ; I need it for the morning weather report and the Archers but the rest of the time I keep the speaker in my room switched off. I haven't been to the cinema six times since the war ended and probably won't go another three times before the next one starts and I find the newspaper comic strips awfully hard to follow.

I haven't got a television, a motorcar, an electric razor, a refrigerator, hi-fi or any of the dozen or so gadgets guaranteed to take the backache out of gardening. For years I let a rotary duper lie around sulking while I used an incredibly primitive flatbed and I even write fanletters with pen and ink.

^x All right, all right. Thirty.

Now please don't misunderstand me. I'm not boasting about all this. I'm just as horrified as you are ; in fact I'm more horrified than you because I know how remote is the possibility that I shall ever catch up with life. I just have not the time left.

It's all right for the Student to watch television when he ought to be working on his Marginal Theories. He can do them tomorrow. An evening at the cinema won't really disrupt his schedule because he can pick it up again next day or the day after. He's got more tomorrows than I have. I'm already ten years behind with my programme - ten years which I lost sitting up in front of crystal sets and silver screens, or riding about in motor cars.

The consequences have been disastrous. I've listened, looked and ridden my way into middle age without having achieved one of the ambitions I formed when I, too, was a Student. I haven't written the bestselling novel, discovered a second Shangri-la in Africa, invented the better mousetrap or even acquired the financial stability that I was so certain I was going to do, twenty or so years ago.

And it wasn't until a teenager called me 'old' that I suddenly became aware of all these omissions.

I'm a middle-aged stodge, I said to myself, and I'm what I am because progress has made me it. If wireless and the cinema and illustrated papers hadn't beguiled me into wasting ten years of my life I might be rich, a novelist, an explorer of distinction and an honoured inventor by now. Cursed be progress for what it has done to me, I said. Damn and blast all the labour-saving devices that I've wasted ten years over - the telephones I've hung onto, the typewriters that have seduced me into writing a thousand words where a quill pen would have got me out in ten, the electric light which has kept me up until early morning when I might have gone to bed at sundown and got up all the fresher for it.

Confound everything, I said, and in particular all those aspects of civilisation which, instead of giving me leisure, have shortened life for me and left me only long enough to sit and think about how badly they've treated me.....

When I had thought myself to a standstill I discovered that the Student had crept quietly away. Perhaps he had experienced some telepathic qualms and begun to figure how many tomorrows HE had left. Perhaps he felt that fruitless speculation would hasten him to the grave every bit as fast as

an evening at the Odeon.

Whatever the cause he hasn't been round the last two Fridays which is just as well. Tomorrow I want to start on the novel. It's a bit too late to go looking for another Shangri-la but I hope, someday, to find one inside me. As for the mousetrap, I should be able to slap that together any rainy afternoon and then I'll automatically be in the money.

I've plenty of time if I hurry.

THE ALL CONSUMING PASSION

(Continued from p.5)

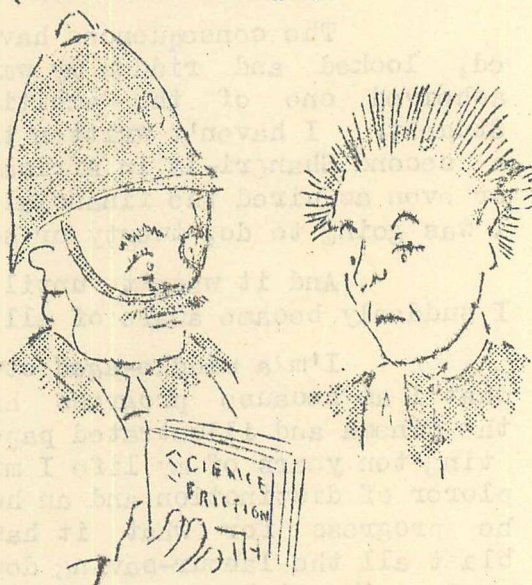
surprise. How had they found him ?

Suddenly, he saw. That simple sock of his had left a trail of sand all the way to his room.

One of the men stepped forward and glanced round the room.

"Got you at last, wise guy - and your own sock trapped ya !"

He looked round again and gaped at the pile of staples in one corner.



"What the hell are they doing there ?"

Poor Zeke explained that they came from the magazines he had taken.

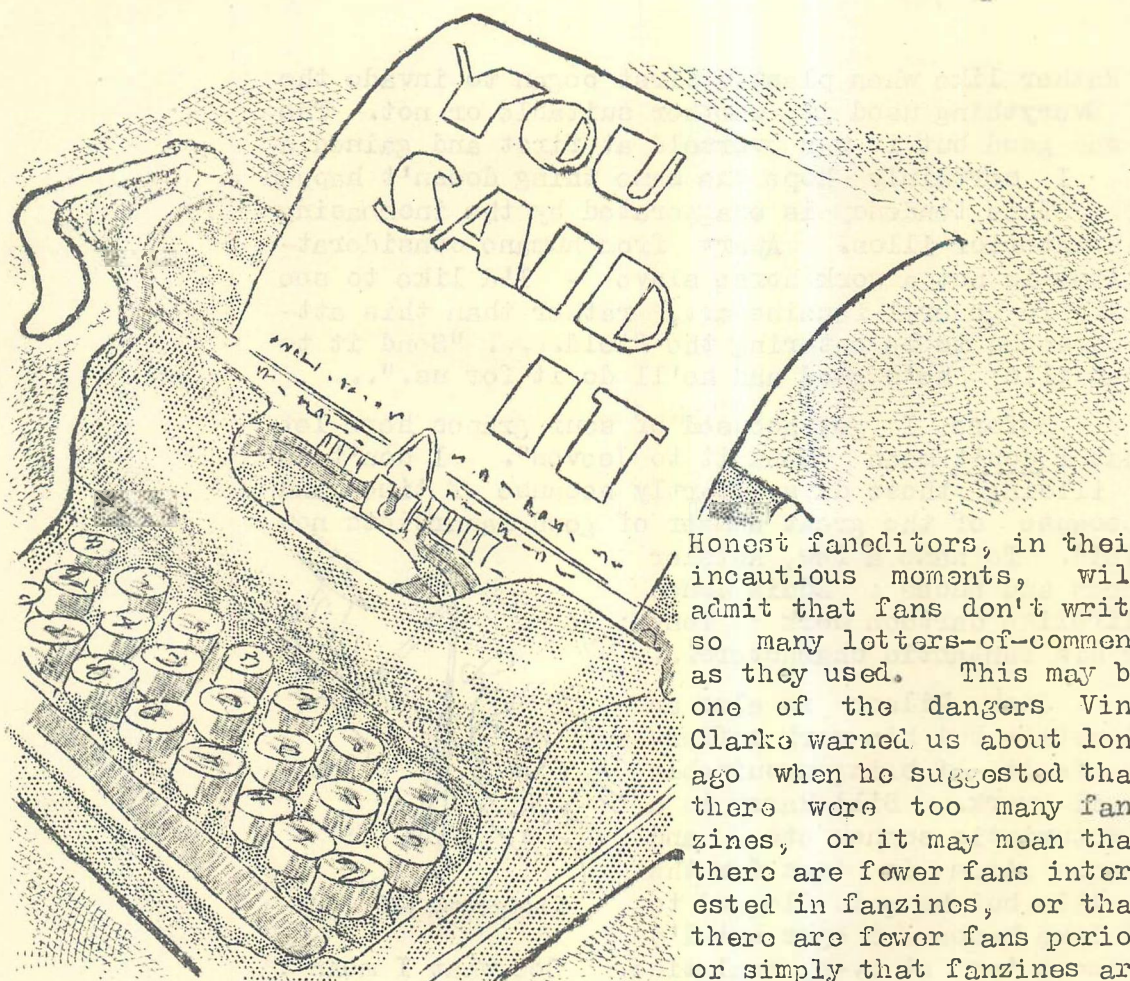
"Why you read that tripe I don't know," commented the other policeman.

Poor simple Zeke trembled. His secret must at last come out. "I don't read it. I can't read."

"Then what the hell DO you do with the stuff ?" the first policeman asked.

"I eat it," Zeke answered.

@@



Honest faneditors, in their incautious moments, will admit that fans don't write so many letters-of-comment as they used. This may be one of the dangers Vinø Clarke warned us about long ago when he suggested that there were too many fanzines, or it may mean that there are fewer fans interested in fanzines, or that there are fewer fans period or simply that fanzines are

less worthy of comment now-a-days. It may even be a symptom of the general blase attitude rife in to-day's fandom which shows itself also in a lost sense of wonder.

Or the faneditors concerned may be losing half their mail.

What a lot of possible reasons there are for smaller letter columns ! But there is no reason for a smaller YSI (said he, smugly) and it's a Good Life.

TERRY JEEVES, 58 Sharrard Grove, Sheffield, 12.

I liked the Atom cover - I've never yet seen him do a bad one, but this issue of Orion gave me a shock because of his cover. I don't know if you realise it but now that Atom is doing so much fanwork, especially in covers (all good ones I hasten to state) most British fanzines are looking more and more as if they come from the same stable. Hyphen, Ret, Ploy, Orion, to mention just a few, not only have covers by Atom but also their titling seems to use the same letter guides (Atom's ?). ~~(Most probably)~~ The point of this is that you can have too much of even a good

thing. Rather like when plastic first began to invade the market. Everything used it, whether suitable or not. The material was good but it was oversold at first and gained a bad name. I certainly hope the same thing doesn't happen to Arthur. This tendency is exaggerated by the increasing use of his interior illos. Apart from humane considerations - Atom is not a work horse slave - I'd like to see more variety in general fanzine art, rather than this attitude which seems to be entering the field..... "Send it to Atom for an illo; he's good and he'll do it for us."...

Before I get accused of sour grapes here let me say that I don't mean "Send it to Jeeves". I don't do much fanzine illoing these days, partly because of time and partly because of the great number of good fanartists now in the field. To name a few, Rotsler for his bems and nudes: Eddie Jones for his lifelike cartoon work: Tony Glynn for his fantastic characters...

Jack Wilson is also an excellent artist but his work suffers from the fault of being unsuitable for stencil work. Bill Harry is a whiz at futuristic scenes etc., and so we go on. Atom is tops for the humorous illo but he gets flogged to death. I like bacon and eggs but I'd hate to meet 'em at every meal time. See what I mean? (Dimly. You mean Atom is a glutton for work?)



Enough on art... let's get on with the mag itself. The justification and dummying of the pages must be a chore in itself and to my mind, if you have the patience (which I haven't), a job well worth doing. However, in Orion's case the increased neatness is wasted owing to the number of pages where the ink runs faint and offset ruins the neat margin. A great pity, as if these two faults were corrected you would have one of the best produced mags on the market. (D'you mean I could SHILL it?) However, I guess most of this was caused by your removal and consequent deadline rushing, and that when once back to normal Orion will hit a new high. (Nice of you to say so, Terry, but I fear it isn't only that. Truth is I'm but an indifferent typist and a rank rotten duplicator. Maybe things will improve from now on, though.)

.....Daphne Buckmaster's page was spoilt by a poor heading and that put me off to a bad start. However, granting for a moment the "sense of wonder", I enjoyed her arguments in favour, against, on and around the subject. But personally I feel that this "sense of wonder" is one of those things which first appear purely as a good line in a speech or written article but never really exist - like the fable of the Scotsman's thrift.

From then on you try to prove, disprove and explain something that never existed. Personally I rather fancy a better name for sense of wonder would be nostalgia.... a happy memory of a thing past, once all the bad points are lost from memory. I often long for (of all things) the good old pre-war Saturday, when the pace of life was more leisurely..... In actual fact, Saturdays are just the same but memory endows them with something extra...hence so much pining for the 'Good Old Days'.

Jam For The Sergeant was, as usual, a masterly piece of Berry work (no pun intended) ~~(None taken)~~, and the item does not lead me off into realms of speculation as did the others - thus saving paper.

Atom's cartoons were good but suffered from the fact that he was apparently trying to 'do X pages' of them and a few less would have improved the section....

Letter section was as good as ever, and though I like to see fanzine reviews at any time, I don't care for them in conversation style - takes up too much space with extra dialogue which could be devoted to the fanzines.....

Terry

If FANLIGHTS continues in its present form (though at the time of writing I don't even know if it will have any form at all) it is likely to become even less like a fanzine review column and more generally just a column period. Anyone object ?

GAUDEAMUS HIGGINBOTTOM, The Penthouse, Jericho Bldg, Scavengers Yard, London E.C.

Dear Mr Enever,

It has just been brought to my notice that you have publicly accused me of being nothing but a pseudonym of my friend and protege Mr. Mercer. Or, perhaps more strictly, you've accused him of using me as a pseudonym. I

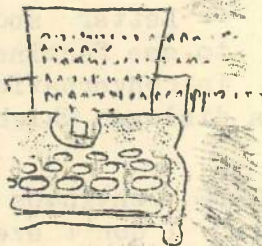
cannot, of course, speak for anybody but myself, but so far as I am aware I am not a pseudonym for anybody. Moreover, by taking me for nothing more than a pseudonym you mistake my entire purpose in existing in the first place, which is to be, not a pseudonym, but an imaginary character in my own right. Trusting you will now see reason I remain yours faithfully
(Gaudeamus Higginbottom)

I am so little intimidated by the awful threat implied in this letter that I cheerfully forged Gaudeamusesos' signature. I do, however, apologise to Mr. A. Mercer for ever suggesting that he was Jack Williams' Grandfather. A similarity of postmarks misled me.

ALAN BURNS, 10 Southfield Terrace, Scroggs Rd., Walker, Newcastle upon-Tyne 6.

You have my heartfelt sympathies. As you will see by the above address, I too have been moving and while I don't have a regiment of plants and whatnot to move, believe me, there was a van full to sort out; and what with having a new gas-stove and fridge fitted we were up to our necks in it. (The gas-stove or the fridge ?)

...Now for a comment on O. I will say nothing about the duplication of my copy, which was atrocious, because the whole thing was probably an emerg. ish. Glad to see you're on the fly bandwagon ; producing a fanzine more frequently turns pleasure into pain both for readers and editors, and racing against time is something the Gestalters are not good at ; after all, the uniqueness of GES is not achieved without pain.... But back to Orion. B & S is nice, but who can't ad lib and justify at the same time ? On most typers there is a measurement bar - you just think what you want to say, equate it against said bar and there you are..... theoretically.. Practically it is quite difficult. (What a masterpiece of understatement ! "You just think what you want to say" ! I never know what I've said until I've typed it.)



The Buckmaster Sense of Wonder..... I like my Slickly turned out by professional writers.. If Daphne likes the pre-war sort she can have a collection of AMAZINGS of the 30's which, in a moment of weakness, I allowed someone to unload on me. Berry is good, as usual. Is he actually

a cop ? It must be nice to be a policeman in the country. I agree with the Yank - Berry should try for LILLIPUT; a rural Charles Raven effort ought to be acceptable.

The rest was as usual, though I take exception to the way you dismiss GES as a young magazine. In age, maybe, but in no other way.....

I suppose you COULD call John Berry a sort of policeman. Fills the inkwells at the local station, I believe. Spends most of his time sat in an unoccupied cell, composing fanstuff.

WALT WILLIS, 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, N.I.

.....I was interested in Daphne's contribution and yours to this increasingly desperate search on the part of us all for the current Holy Grail, the Sense of Wonder. At the time we started all we had to worry about was where to get the sterling equivalent of the 15 cents of Wonder, and there's no doubt a great deal in what you say that the best sf is what you read when you were young- just as the tv programmes keep deteriorating the longer you have your set. But dammit, there is more to it than that. I defy anyone to get a sense of wonder out of the stories in the current Galaxy; the authors didn't even try to put it in in the first place. And it's not because of jaded palates on our parts either...it's just lack of imagination on the part of the authors. I firmly believe that no one has even come near to exploiting the potentialities of sf for exciting the unique mingling of awe excitement and adventurousness that we fans alone among readers know, and which keeps us ploughing through foot after cubic foot of trash in our almost hopeless search.

A few passages in van Vogt, a sentence or two in a Blish story describing a rift in the galaxy, and we know it's still there to be found. It hasn't changed and neither have we. It's the authors. They've been told they must write about people and they do their best. And it would be all very well if they'd write about people in sciencefictional situations, not just in sciencefictional surroundings.

As it is the basis of all their plots is nothing more than ordinary human reactions exhibited before a hastily sketched-in galactic backdrop. And since they are, let's face it, mostly second-rate authors they write secondrate stories. Instead of trying to ape the mundane writers at their own game, let them try to capitalize on the one great advantage they do have, the power to stimulate the reader's

imagination. Where, as in any true sf story, the environment is the principal protagonist, let the human interest stem from the reaction between it and the characters, not merely the reactions between the characters themselves with the environment dismissed with a walk-on part.

If people - not even professional writers -- can write best-selling books about sailing the Atlantic in a rowboat or the Pacific on a raft or climbing Everest or exploring caves, surely a professional author should be able to do something with all time and space and possibility to work on.... Walt

In a recent radio "discussion" programme one of the members of the panel was chided because he said that as he had heard most of Beethoven's symphonies at least eight times they no longer had the same emotional impact on him that they did at first hearing. The other members all seemed to think this was almost sacrilege. I didn't. The first, second and third hearings of certain music gave me an emotional uplift which subsequent hearings didn't, and I am firmly convinced that the same thing applies to reading s-f. Surely the people most likely to experience that Sense of Wonder which we have lost are the youngsters who are now reading their first sciencefiction. Has anyone thought of asking them?

Doesn't any early impression fade with repetition? Do we old fans still get the same kick out of egoboo, say, as we did long ago? Personally I don't look for a sense of wonder any more, or a sense of giddiness when I take a long pull of a cigarette, but I still enjoy smoking and reading science-fiction - even Galaxy.

I think, too, that you ask a lot of any author, Walt, in requiring him to develop a s-f story along the lines you suggest. Frankly, I believe the 'situation' angle in sciencefiction, just as in any other genre, is about played out. There are just so many situations and possible reactions to 'em, and in thirty-odd years busy-fingered hacks have surely exploited most of the exploitable ones. Before sciencefiction the fairy story writers came up against the same difficulty -- that the number of possible 'magic' plots is less than the number of possible real-life plots and that three wishes are only entertaining when one of them goes wrong, which is, in effect, a real-life angle. So with s-f, the time comes when even the most vivid imagination cannot create entertainment out of a new invention or a cosmic shake-up unless the characters involved behave in a rational, i.e. a real-life fashion. Which is what most of the better modern s-f characters

This I do know. If, thirty years ago, some magician had presented me with any 1956 Asf (or Galaxy) I would, assuming I could have understood more than half of it, have experienced an absolutely remarkable Sense Of Wonder.

HARRY TURNER, 10 Carlton Avenue, Romiley, Cheshire.

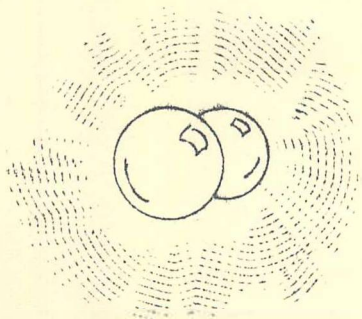
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In view of the notable lack of success we have met in growing grass on the bare patch that should be a lawn, it would be reasonable to assume that some form of growth inhibitor is at work - malignant radiation from some stray roots of our late vampire tree, perchance. On the other hand there is the possible effect of the aniseed balls to be considered. On his first visit to view the catch, Uncle Eric Needham fed aniseed balls to the tadpoles. We were gratified to see the slowly disintegrating balls being surrounded by hordes of ecstatically-wriggling tadpoles and the boys continued to supplement the diet of their pets with an occasional allocation of aniseed balls.

(If George sees this, he may substitute "sweetmeats" for "balls" so there can be no possible offence to his teen-age sons and daughters.)



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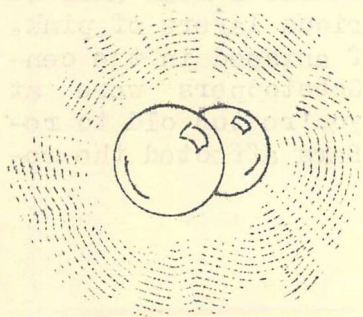
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lost my taste for them - and immediately grew up.

As a statistical check on this observation I carried out a survey on a typical sample of the Romiley population. In all cases the children were addicted in some degree to aniseed balls while no adults indulged. Which leads to an obvious conclusion.

However, at the risk of re opening the infamous "frog-spawn contains iodine" debate, we cannot idly dismiss the possibility of growth inhibition being a phenomenon peculiarly inherent in tadpoles. A correspondent informs me that great interest has been aroused in Chekiang province by the statement of a Chinese "traditional doctor" that eating a live tadpole is the one safe and reliable method by which women may avoid conception and that it is "without any reaction". I am unable to carry out experiments along this line of investigation; by a strange coincidence the tadpoles disappeared shortly after the arrival of this interesting intelligence. Marple Canal has been empty of tadpoles for months and months. In the absence of material for experimentation, we can only continue to speculate on the Mystery.

I forget what was in N & T 7 that could so have roused George's fervour to protect the young and innocent from our corrupting influence. I'm sure we weren't lowd if George wants Bowdlerised fanzines he must lead a singularly sheltered life. However, if it will console him in any way, we try to send the mag only to those who appreciate it - and by George's standards I suppose they are already corrupted.....

I suggested to Harry that he need look no further for an explanation of the undeveloping tadpoles than the fact that they were intelligent enough to appreciate that there would be no more aniseed balls forthcoming should they dare turn into frogs; I also queried his description of aniseed balls as changing colour. My aniseed balls never changed colour, I said. You sure you don't mean gob-stoppers? I asked. To which Harry replied:

You crazy mixed-up thing, you. Of course I mean aniseed balls: they changed from brown to various layers of pink, purple, white and sucklike with a pip of aniseed in the centre. Diameter about $\frac{1}{2}$ " - or maybe $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Gobstoppers were at least 1" in diameter. Gosh, d'you mean you're too old to remember that? I wonder if Chicago Bars affected the results?.....

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literary standard of SF, and there is no literature without personality. An older fan, like yourself, Paul, might consider my argument invalid as you were reared on the type of SF which I'm decrying. Of course, your experience of this type is greater than mine. What little I have read of Lovecraft, Stapledon, Weinbaum and Co. has not made me anything like enthusiastic to gobble up more; whereas with more modern writers - like Bradbury, Matheson, Sheckley and even Fredric Brown, who is after all little more than a hack - Yes!

Even so the Sense of Wonder remains elusive. I've recently been over this with Dave Cohen who finds, as I do, that the more one reads SF the more dissatisfied one becomes with the cycle of plots and the lack of originality therein. One picks up a magazine, reads a story and, discontented, says: "So-and-so worked out that theme much better in such-and-such a story." To my mind the only solution is to go over to Westerns.....

Do tell. Taking RANDOM ATOMS as Page 11a, is page 11d supposed to be blank or am I unlucky?..... Ron

Not unlucky, no Ron. There just weren't anymore RANDOMS, and I prefer to keep them as a 'supplement' rather than use the blank side for text.

ERIC BENTCLIFFE, 47 Alldis Street, Great Moor, Stockport, Chesh. It sort of pulls at one's heartstrings to see ORION going quarterly, but I suppose it can't be helped....

.....I think this 'sense of wonder' is something like beauty - in the eye of the beholder. Personally I still find this element in some stories just as I only found it in some stories in the past. As regards most of the early SF writers being scientists, I'm not too sure if this is true..... there were scientist-authors (as opposed to author-scientists) in the old days but I wouldn't say they were in predominance. Perhaps they got a little more publicity and better billing because they were scientists.. the editors' desire to convince readers that this 'ere SF was genuine type stuff... a while ago.

That's a very good cartoon of Atom's on page facing 11; the one at the bottom, I mean. Very succinct. Nice one on 14, too. Don't you think you'd better stop wearing plantpots on your bonce 'til this Egypt business

blows over ?.....

I'm in agreement with Archie on Justification. I just don't think it's worth the effort - as you'll no doubt have noticed from Triode. If you're going to have double columns then it is probably essential for neatness, but not for the pages you don't split down the middle....

.....Have you any idea where interlineations originated ? I was looking through an old Manchester University RAG RAG the other day and came across - interlineations ! This was the '49 issue ; they even used the delayed action line spread over more than one page. Is nothing new ?.....

I've a vague recollection of reading about the first instance of interlineation in a fanzine, but with my memory that's not very helpful. Anybody know for sure ? I imagine, though, that they did not originate with fandom. Little has done.

ARCHIE MERCER, 434/4 Newark Road, North Hykeham, Lincoln.

Now this ORION. By a coincidence I received this simultaneously with GRUE. A comparison would not, I think, be out of order at this point. GRUE's bigger, of course, but bulk for bulk I'd tend to rate it as ORION's superior in any case. That's not surprising really - GRUE, so far as I'm concerned is the World's Best Fanzine. (Me, too. That's why I was so insistent about quoting you, Archie.- And even if ORION looked as pluperfect as GRUE does, it still wouldn't be QUITE as good....

Take their relative appearance. GRUE's a beaut on looks alone. Even if the entire contents consisted of the lesser works of Vargo Statten translated into Latvian and printed in the Cree Syllabic Alphabet, GRUE would still be a joy to behold. And Dean NEVER tries to justify a margin. There ought to be a lesson here somewhere, I toenk. (Uh,huh, but have you seen SKYHOOK ?)

Fanzines are alike because they're produced on the same sort of paper by different editors making use of the same writers and artists - including each other. There aren't really all that many to choose from, anyway. The only fanzines that have individuality of their own are those that feature their editors rather than other people - such as RMT NAT, SCHNERDLITES. In fact any apazine can logically be expected to be that way inclined. HYPHEN has its own person-

ality by dint of featuring writers not often found in other British zines..... Amerizines, too, tend to look alike. Different from ours, but the twins of each other. I wonder, if any other French fen woke up and started pubbing, would their products be indistinguishable from MEUH/VINTKAT ???

This b. Sense of Wonder (SOW for short) again. Something meaty to chew on, certainly. The nearest thing I can pin it to is getting "lost" in a book - and I'm far less capable of that nowadays than I used to be when at school, say. Even with the same book. I've been lost in some of Chesterton's books and some of H. G. Wells'. I was lost, long ago, in Huckleberry Finn..... I lived that voyage down the Mississippi. A couple of years afterwards I tried to re-live it. Failed completely. Nowadays I can get lost easiof in well-chosen music than in literature.

..I'm not so keen on The Berry's non-fannish short stories as I am on his strictly fannish epics. Probably because in a non-fannish short you have to wait right till the end for the point, whereas a fannish epic can have points scattered around ad lib in every paragraph. Of course, there's no reason why a non-fannish story shouldn't be constructed similarly - just that it seems not to be as a rule. Pity....

Perhaps it's easier to raise laughs with fannish references than with gags of a general nature. I don't mean, of course, that half the 'fannish' jokes aren't really funny..... Or do I?

You're right about 'getting lost' in books ; I think it's a faculty we lose in adolescence. Perhaps, when very young we have so little experience of life behind us that it is easy to visualise ourselves as the hero of some novelist's dramatic situations. As we get older we appreciate that, no matter how much we admire Huckleberry Finn, say, we just ain't him and never could be. We've lived longer with ourselves, so to speak, and therefore are less able to identify ourselves with anyone else. Huh ?

GREG BENFORD, 10 Liliencron Strasse, Frankfurt/Main, Germany.

Before I start working over the contents there seems to be a minor grumble in the entire issue.. two grumbles, in fact... First, even though you have illos and headings by ATOM, you don't run them well. They're blotchy and don't hold to the cleanness of line Art usually has. It looks like an average mimeo mimeo job, which should never be used when you are running Thomson work. The other thing is general repro. It is lousy.

other thing is the repro altogether. It is, in a word, lousy. I made a great effort in most places to read it and in some just gave up. Maybe I got a bad copy or something, but if you can't do better than this either get a new typor or mimeo or something. This issue was definitely ECH in the repro dept.

I take violent exception to your editorial. British fanzines are alike but this doesn't mean they are all good. Hell, no. You smile knowingly and make remarks about how old and friendly and good British fanzines are. You snidely speak of the Mature and Oh-so-good Fanzines of Britain. You say they are the same and for that reason they are good. Only it isn't so. Hell, anybody can come along and repeat what the other fellow does. Sameness can be awful irritating and usually is with some fmz from England. Your all-knowing statements about American fandom being immature just reveal how fuggheaded you are. Sure, England has some damn fine sines, but look at the US - GRUE, A BAS, OBLIQUE SKYHOOK, INSIDE and lots more. I hate to go all Cosmic on you but a sameness of material indicates nothing more than a loss of curiosity. And America, if it is famous for anything, is known for engaging new ideas. And that's exactly what is nood if anything - whether it be a country, a man or a fanzine - is to improve.

What you're doing is remaining static... and I don't like to say this but anything that remains static is apt to die...

Buckmaster was interesting but I can't find anything to comment on. Seems to be just another article explaining generally known information.

Berry was as good as ever. The illos were especially poor in my copy because of weak mimeo work and blurred images. Random Atoms was the best thing in the issue. Art gets better the more I see of him. YSI was good, but again I could hardly read it.

Fanlights - once more I disagree... or rather, disagree on opinions. You say Raeburn... doesn't want anyone to tell him what to print and then remark: "in the very same paragraph, referring to his Lovecraftiana... 'Let me know what you think'.. Shall we ?" This is most fuggheaded. Hell, there's a lot of difference in telling an editor what he should and should not publish and merely commenting on the fanzine. Use more thought in your reviews and they'll be much better. Idle chatter about small incidents is not a review but a bit of conversation. And not very good conversation at that.

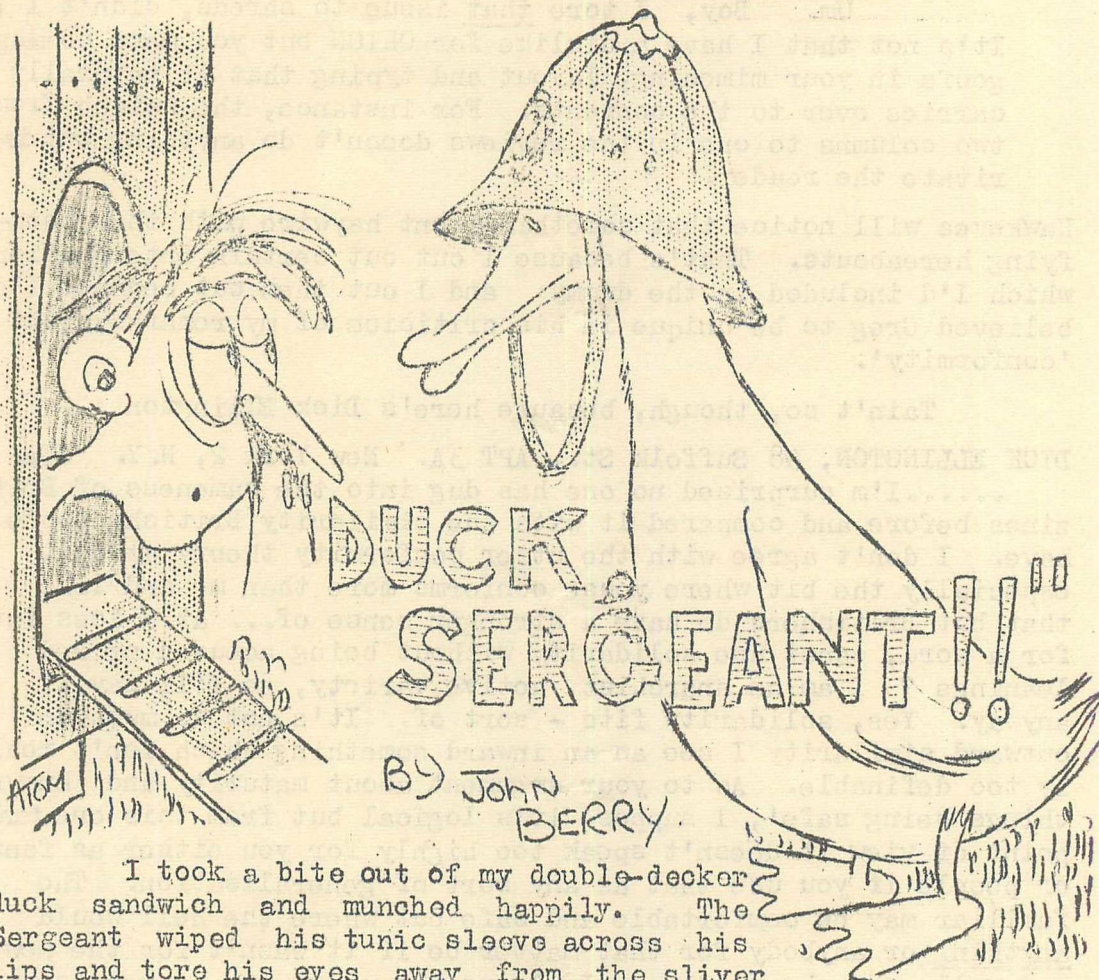
Hawkeyes will notice that something went haywire with the justifying hereabouts. That's because I cut out certain interjections which I'd included in the dummy; and I cut them out because I'd believed Greg to be unique in his criticism of my remarks about 'conformity'.

DICK ELLINGTON, 98 Suffolk St., APT 3A. New York 2, N.Y. USA.

• • • • •

Sure, progress and change are perforce synonymous, but though both are necessary they aren't always enjoyable.

[illegible]



I took a bite out of my double-decker duck sandwich and munched happily. The Sergeant wiped his tunic sleeve across his lips and tore his eyes away from the sliver of white meat that peered out from between the thick crusts of bread.

"D'you mean to say you sold all those day-old ducks you reared?" he asked, pensively.

I nodded. It had been an experiment, admittedly, but one of the few Berry-type experiments that had worked out on the credit side. Two months earlier I had purchased fifty day-old ducklings for half a crown each. I'd manufactured a miniature boiler at the bottom of the garden and bought half a ton of cheap potatoes - the kind the Ministry of Agriculture dye blue and sell for fodder. I had lavished a fatherly affection on those ducklings, studied their every need, comforted them, nurtured them, fed them regularly with boiled potatoes mixed with chicken meal until, as they grew, they resembled big white snowballs.

Those ducks knew me ; relied on me. It drew tears to my eyes to think that I'd soon have to part with them. I shuddered at the idea of their poor, de-feathered bodies decorating a marble slab in someone's shop. In my snetimental fashion I tried to convince myself that I could afford to keep the whole fifty of them permanently but a little mental arithmetic proved that I couldn't manage them and a wife. And, well, a duck's alright in its place, but.....

"And you actually made a profit ?" asked the Sergeant, edging closer as I picked the last tender morsel of duckmeat off a leg.

"I was lucky," I said modestly. I was, too. By the middle of the seventh week some of the bigger ones weighed several pounds and moreover the pound price quoted by our local poultry dealer went up every day. When I finally disposed of fortysix of them I had made a substantial profit. Enough, I felt, to be able to fatten the remaining four for our own table.

"Hamm...." mused the Sergeant. He sat back in his chair and scribbled. Then he smiled smugly and got up and said "Good-night."

.

I returned off a short spell of leave three days later and reported at the station. The Sergeant came into the office wearing an army surplus shirt and a very old beer-stained pair of police trousers. Both he and his clothes were liberally sprinkled with brown flecks of chick meal - the hallmark of an industrious duck rearer.

"You've started to keep ducks too ?" I asked him.

His gaunt features broke into a beatific smile.

"Come and look at my collection," he said ; and as he led me through his house and into his back garden he babbled away about how nice it was to keep ducks - "the pore little fluffy yellor critters... "

I mused. The Sergeant was inclined to overdo things. I'd fattened fifty ducklings as the market price improved. Now the pound price had begun to fall as much as threepence per week and the Sergeant's ducks had eight weeks to go before they would be ready.

We passed through the avenue of beehives where the bees, scattered in small groups, were earnestly discussing their owners sudden lack of enthusiasm. The Sergeant flung open a wicker gate

and swept his arm upwards in a gesture of pride.

I counted eight small huts with a thin electric cable disappearing into the roof of each.

My heart pounding, half with envy, half with sheer amazement, I peered into the first hut.

An infra-red bulb glowed over the backs of about fifty little ducklings as they huddled under the welcome warmth..... Fifty in one hut - and the Sergeant had eight huts !!!

"You..you've got four hundred ducks ?" I gasped.

He looked coyly at his toes and twiddled his thumbs behind his back. "Four hundred and twenty five to be exact" he beamed, "and say, they eat hardly anything. I've had 'em three days and they've only eaten about half a pound of chick meal between them. I stand to make as much as eight times the profit you did."

It was on the tip of my tongue to mention the rapidly falling price but I kept it there. I was due to go on patrol and the Sergeant could be mean if he was annoyed. Mean enough to make it a fifteen mile patrol. For much the same reason I didn't bother to explain that, right enough, ducklings don't eat a lot for the first few days but after that..... brother ! And he had four hundred and twenty five.

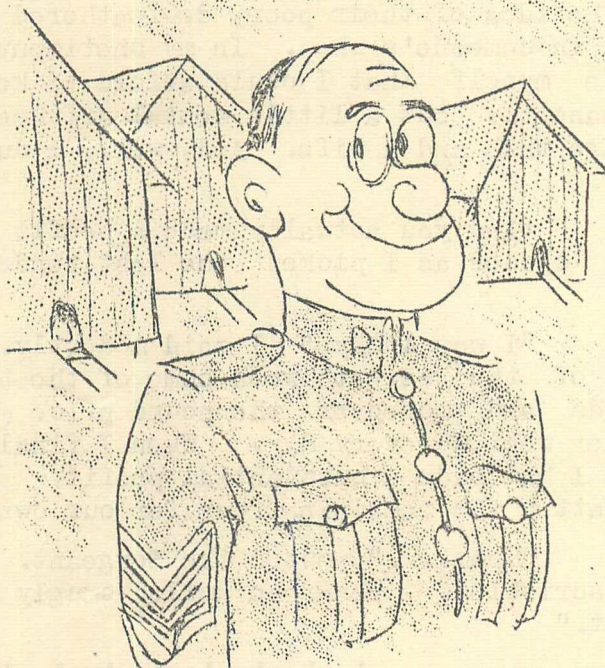
I began to have certain misgivings.

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"Come here, Berry," said the Sergeant, three weeks later, "and give me a hand to unload those twenty seven sacks of chick mash."

His eyes were sunk somewhere into the back of his head. He looked rather like a sack of chick meal himself. He gave me the impression of being.... perturbed.

"Ducks okay ?" I panted, flexing my shoulder muscles to let



them know I wouldn't be torturing them much longer.

"The ducks is okay," he growled, "but you didn't tell me they had such big appetites. This is the fourth lorry load of meal in a week and they've got five more weeks to go and they're getting bigger."

"Well, four hundred and twenty five is rather a lot to fatten," I suggested diplomatically.

"He tells me NOW ! " hissed the Sergeant to a passing bee. "Now he TELLS me !"

.

By the end of the seventh week it was an occupational hazard even to walk near the wire netting intended to keep the ducks within the confines of the Sergeant's garden. One of 'em grabbed my trouser leg as I passed by and I swear it would have eaten me alive if it had retained its grip.

The Sergeant now had a shuttle service of meal carriers (his three sons and their pals) between the corn merchant and his ducks. I passed them walking in line down the High Street, like coolies on a safari. Three lorries were drawn up outside the house waiting to carry away the empty sacks.

.

And noise ? Towards the end of the eighth week they were making so much of it that one night, when I was patrolling the far end of the village and a heavy fog descended I turned my ear to their quacks and traversed the miles to the station like a homing pigeon. The Sergeant had declared a safety area ten yards from the wire for the ducks, big White Aylesburys, were definitely in homicidal mood. They stood in a corner of their enclosure, heads held high, beaks rampant, quacking in the direction of the corn merchants' store.

Them ducks were mean.

.

"Take your hiking boots off, Berry," snapped the Sergeant. "I'm not sending you on patrol tonight. I want a discussion with you."

I laid my thermos flask of tea and my haversack full of sandwiches on the nearby table ; I hoped no one would pinch the tent off the back of my bike. I was used to long patrols but just now the Sergeant seemed so vindictive towards me that for all I knew I might be away for a week.

"I rang up the local fowl dealer today," growled the Sergeant : he was packing a bit more cotton wool into his ears in a hopeless effort to shut out the persistent quacking which was making the very building vibrate and he looked only a shadow of his usual corpulent self, " and he tells me the price he is prepared to give is sevenpence farthing a pound. How much did YOU get ?"

"Two shillings and sixpence" I admitted, cowering.

"Got me into a fine mess, didn't you ?" he cried, and brushed aside my stammered excuses. "I owe two hundred and thirty five pound for the huts, forty pounds for the ducklings , twenty eight pounds for the meal and over seventeen pounds for overheads, including wire netting and danger money to my sons for feeding 'em. If I sell at today's market price I'll make about a hundred and ten pounds. That puts me in debt. Never had this trouble with bees, I didn't."

"So ?" I said.

"So you got me into this mess, now you get me out of it damn quack -- I mean quick."

"Okay, Sergeant; we'll have a discussion," I panted, playing for time.



Two hours passed. The Sergeant and myself sheltered under a tree by the main road and every now and then the moon popped out and sneered at us. The headlights of a car swept over the hill towards us.

I tapped the Sergeant's shoulder. He coughed and waddled onto the roadway, holding up a red lantern. The car screeched to a stop.

"Evenin' sir," said the Sergeant pompously. "May I see your driving licence please ?"

"Certainly, officer." The occupant passed over a red

square of cardboard. The Sergeant examined it laboriously in the feeble light of his issue lamp.

"It's all in order," he whispered, disappointedly.

I sidled over to him. "Try his insurance," I whispered back.

He cleared his throat. "Your driving licence appears to be in order, sir. Could I see your insurance, please?"

"Yes," said the driver. A white document changed hands.

"Damn it all; this is in order too," the Sergeant breathed. He sounded frustrated.

"The tax disc," I breathed back.

"Your insurance is in order, sir," the Sergeant panted. "Just one moment, please." He flashed his lamp over the disc on the windscreen.

"Ye-ess, that's in order too," he said, fairly trembling with disappointment.

I walked round the back of the car. "Here, Sergeant," I shouted.

He leapt over the car's roof in his haste.

"The second letter of his rear number plate is plastered with mud," I pointed out. "There's a section to cover that."

The Sergeant grunted his relief and paced round to the front of the car.

"I have to inform you, sir," he announced, "that, contrary to section twentythree, subsection C of the Traffic Act, the letters on your rear number plate are obliterated."

"O lor ! I'm very sorry, officer," began the driver, "but it IS a very wet night and - "

The Sergeant coughed. Slowly and majestically he took out his notebook. "Nevertheless I'm afraid I'll - "

At that moment a duck peered out between the third and fourth buttons of his waterproof coat and leered hungrily at the driver.

"Get back," shouted the Sregeant. He looked suggestively at the driver. "Just as soon as I sell this duck I'm going home."

"Oh," said the driver. He looked at the Sergeant, at the

opened notebook, at the bulge in the waterproof coat denoting the duck.

"We-c-ll, I WAS going to buy a duck, anyway.." he began.

In a flash the duck was in the passenger seat beside him.

"Seven and sixpence, sir," beamed the Sergeant, "and we will forget about the other little matter."

.

We got rid of twenty three ducks that night. Then, gradually, word seemed to get round. Very few vehicles ventured into our district.

Of course, that didn't include long-distance lorry drivers who HAD to use the main road. They called at the station for their ducks.

So then we turned our attention to pedal cyclists without lights and when they disappeared we went round examining dog licences.

By such means the Sergeant cleared himself of potential debt and handed over the remaining ducks to the villagers. But what's worrying me is -

Suppose he decides his bees are running him into debt ?

JOHN BERRY

DUCKSERGEANTDUCKSERGEANTFLUCKSERGE

ough enough to keep fans in touch with fandom except CONTACT. I feel that a 7/- (\$1) sub for 24 issues to : Ron Bennett (p.19 for address) or Dick Ellington, 98 Suffolk St, Apt 3A, New York, is a sub well spent. I thangyou.

Elsewhere I've poked in full-page pling for

CONTACT

but I'm using this vacant column to explain that I wasn't asked to and haven't any financial interest in it at all.

I purposely stressed 'financial' because it would be wrong just to say I have no interest.

I have the keenest possible interest in

CONTACT

because I believe it is EXACTLY the kind of fan magazine fandom has been lacking ever since SFN died the death.

For that matter,

CONTACT

goes further, even, than SFN did. The latter was more concerned with news of sciencefiction and

there are still one or two other zines which cover that field, but NO fanzine (this side of the Atlantic, anyway) is frequent enough or thor-

"Waste no time, George. The mad dogs of fandom are at our heels and unless we act expeditiously they're liable to do a double back somersault and knee us in the groin."

"Meaning?"

"That we are accused of devoting too much space to valueless chit-chat and too little to the glorious pursuit of other people's ego-boo."

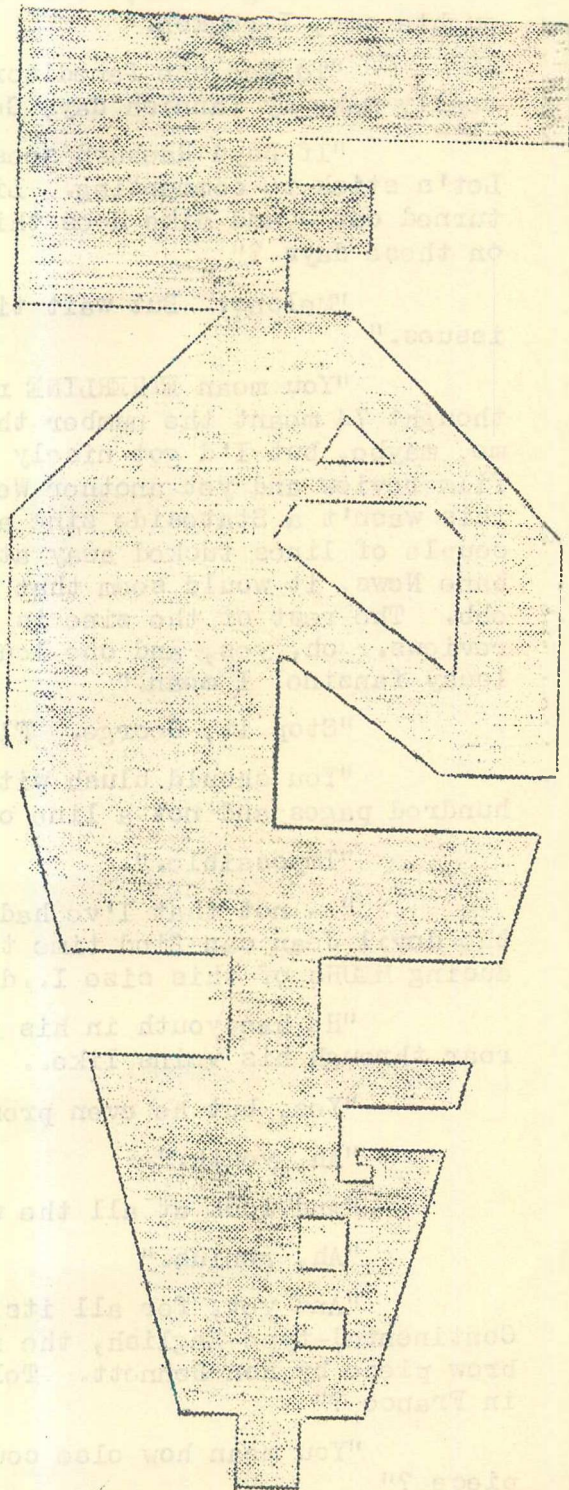
"Well, let's get on with it, then."

"Heaven's, George, how that dates you. You must be old enough to have read ERB when he was new."

"I am. Mind you, I also read Boy's Own and the Rainbow comic so maybe I'm not altogether competent to pass any judgement on Burroughs. On the whole, though, I thought his stuff was corny and so I can't get fanatic over Mike Moorcock's BURROUGHSIANA."

"Yet it's well-produced, ol' man."

"Very. I didn't say I didn't like it. In fact I enjoyed the lettercol and Atom's stuff - although the very next fanzine I get hold of which doesn't feature an Atom illo I'm going to frame as a fanish curio - but one point I didn't care for was the way in which Mike lets off steam in public over what appeared to me to be more of a private



matter. Strong words, too. Pete Ogden, ERBania's editor should oughta sue, I reckon."

"To see one faneditor suing another for plagiarism would really make my fannish day, Georgeo."

"If Boyd Raeburn soos this he'll be the first to start. Let's stick to commenting. Like I say, BURROUGHSIANA is nicely turned out - and Mike does this monthly ? Lord, what do they feed on these days ?"

"Melons. But wait till Mike has unfailingly produced 74 issues."

"You mean ETHERLINE really has lasted that long ? I thought 74 meant the number through the duper. Very careless of me, maybe, but I'd got nicely through the first two items - a film review and yet another Westercon report - before I realised this wasn't a Stateside zine after all. However, apart from a couple of lines tucked away at the back under the heading of Brisbane News, it would seem that fanac Down Under is at a very low ebb. The rest of the zine is book and author listings and prozine reviews.. oh, yes, and one lousy fanzine review. Reviewing a lousy fanzine, I mean."

"Stop it, George. Flattery makes me blush."

"You should blush with mortification over this one. One hundred pages and not a line of crud in it - "

"Impossible."

" - not that I've had time to read every line, yet. How the devil Joan can find time to eat, sleep and work in between producing MEUHS of this size I..do...not....know !"

"He has youth in his favour, George. The fires of fanac roar through his veins like.. er.. like.."

"Yes, but he even promises to answer all letters received."

"Ah, youth."

"And look at all the work he puts into the frontcover !"

"Ah, genius."

"And yet, for all its brilliance and Joan's fascinating Continental-type English, the item I liked the most was a low-brow piece by Ron Bonnett. Tell me, too, do they have longer staples in France ?"

"You mean how else could Joan keep all those pages in one piece ?"

"Uh, huh. 'Cos, it was a good idea, putting staples in both ways like that. I know one or two zines that could do with being stapled up all round, permanently, but - "

"Such as INSTANT 2 ?"

"You could say so. The paper was lousy, the paper-size was lousy, the repro was lousy, the one piece of fanfiction was lousy, the humour was - "

"Have you ever considered, George, that you might one day want to emigrate to Australia ?"

"Then I must be careful not to settle anywhere within a 500 mile radius of Sydney, huh ?"

"Too blcomin' true, cobber - otherwise Mossrs. Hubble and Baldwin will have your guts for garters. I wonder, though, what they've got against Leo Harding other than that he publishes a better fanzine ?"

"Let's not fret. Let's turn to PSYCHOTIC instead. I found Quote & Comment the most interesting part of a thoroughly interesting whole. 'Specially that stuff about Mr.86 and Mrs. 92."

"Yes. It seemed to have a streak of Back-To-Naturism running through it a yard and a half wide, though."

"That's just it. It seemed to me an unwarrantable slur on this so-called 'chemical age'. Supposing Mr. 86 had been born 20 years earlier, would he still have reached the age of 86 ? I doubt it. It may well have been his good fortune to hang on until the 'chemical age' came in because if it hadn't he'd probably have popped off at 70. Instead, antibiotics and other drugs have helped to keep him going, along with chemical fertilisers which not only saved him from starving to death but also cut down a lot of fly- and insect-borne diseases. Pasteurised milk has very likely saved him from diphtheria, typhoid or dysentery, TB and a few other milk-borne diseases. Not so long ago the old were considered 'past it' when they took sick, and all science could do was to ease their passing. Nowadays there's a whole new science - geriatrics - devoted to their well-being and a good many feeble oldsters owe their new leases of life to hospitalization and a few well-balanced meals of 'chemically fertilised' foods, pasteurised milk and even white bleached bread. It's marvellous, the invigorating effect THEY have."

"Maybe you're right, George. But we gardeners swear by muck for making things grow."

"Aye. It grows some wonderful flies and bacteria, too. As for Dick's last statement - "Why does the medical profession spend so much time CURING instead of PREVENTING disease" -- the answer is that they DO spend a lot of time, money and energy on prevention. Take all the research that goes on in carcinogenesis. Incidentally, it's generally recognised that there hasn't been any great increase in the incidence of cancer. It's just that modern diagnostic methods are better and moreover the public is gradually being educated into revealing suspicious symptoms earlier."

"Hear, hear, ol' man. When folks lead off about science's neglect of disease-prevention I often wonder if they think sanitation came about for aesthetic reasons."

"Pass on. I've got a grunch about "I" No.6. I never did like too many editorial comments interspersed in the readers' letters and now here's Vinç - or Joy - a-doing of it in "I" - or EYE. Too, the Editorial ramblings were more CONTACTual than GRUElike ... by the way what did Fanjan break; his clavicle or his femur? Hell of a lot of torso between the two! Somehow I didn't feel this was a typical EYE - or "I" and even the stapling wasn't up to standard.

"I hope Vinç - and Joy - can follow who's who in this dialogue, George. Y'see, Vinç, that's what comes of sitting up all night stencilling the red-hot stuff....he..he."

"I haven't finished yet. Joy - or Vinç - is pretty luke-warm about the new BIS venture 'SPACEFLIGHT'. I don't consider it at all poorly edited. It's aimed at the layman who's interested in spaceflight but gets lost halfway through the equations and it combines information with entertainment and doesn't treat its readers either as cretins or giant-IQs. I liked it."

"Almost the very words you could use about HYPHEN 17 !"

"Yes, information yet! A column for neofen, and me thinking all this time that trufandom couldn't care less about neos and was traditionally inclined to let the sanguinary neo find out for himself. Or is it all an IF ploy? The Atom cover and the Gafia cartoon inside are lovely, and I enjoyed W. A. Havolock Willis's article. Heck, what else can one say about Hyphen except that it's good and I can't see how it can ever be better?"

"Perhaps that's enough. Pretty soon someone's going to accuse us of conducting a fanzine review column and we couldn't live up to that. Still, we'd better say a few words about VERITAS 1, even though it is strictly speaking an OMPazine."

"Nothing would get me off this page before. VERITAS 1 is the smartest, cleanest looking zine I seen up to now and its main item - London Pride - is the best thing by Berry I've ever read. I enjoyed the photopage, too... I can see a photozine coming along yet... Viva La Veritas."

"There's another photopage in NEW FUTURIAN 6 that goes back to fandom's dinosaurage.. almost. I wonder what happened to some of those Great Names? The only ones I knew of were Mayer and Hanson - I believe we did exchange desultory letters - but that was at least six months before the Leeds Chapter was inaugurated. "My" BSFA, as Moscowitz offhandedly but truthfully records, was only a correspondence club and even though I was secretary I never met more than half-a-dozen of its huge membership."

"HUGE? Fandom could support a HUGE correspondence club twenty years ago?"

"On my honour as a faneditor. One time we listed over three hundred fans as members, including Australians, Germans, Netherlands and, believe it or not, someone from Czechoslovakia. Sciencefiction may have been primitive in those days but gosho-boyoboy, it got around. At least two hundred of those people had read about the BSFA either in WONDER or AMAZING. People like Gjeord Rienk Schaafsma, a Dutchman who shocked us rigid by ordergin by the tumblerful in a Piccadilly bar while we sipped manfully away at our light ales. And then there was John Someone-or-other who lived in St. John's Wood and constructed electric clocks as a spare-time job, but wouldn't make me one because he said if I couldn't afford type-metal to produce our long-threatened club zine I couldn't afford to pay him for his clock and - "

"Shuddup. Did you read Bob Pavlat's conrep in NUFU ? Change to get an INTERESTING conrep, ain't it ?"

"Sure is. Good for Nufu."

"We're on our last page, y'know."

"Mourn not, ol' man. No one else does. Who've we mentioned-in-passing so far ?"

"BURROUGHSIANA No. 10, M. J. Moorcock, 36 Semley Road, Norbury, London, S.W. 16 - a must for Burroughs fen.

ETHERLINE 74, L. J. Crozier, 6 Bramerton Road, Caulfield S. E. 8., Victoria, Australia - which says most of what there is to be said about Aussis fandom.

MEUH 1, Jean Linard, 24 Rue Potit, Vesoul, Haute Seine, France - the finest 'first' issue ever to weigh down a weary postman.

EXTANT 2, Michael Baldwin, 53 Shadforth Street, Mosman, Sydney, Australia - which can but improve.

PSYCHOTIC, Richard Geis, 1525 N. E. Ainsworth, Portland 11, Oregon, U. S. A - which can't improve.

"I" 6, Joy & Ving Clarke, 7 Inchmery Road, Catford, SE6, about which our opinions differ. Hang on a minute while I re-read BAWL POINT. Ah, yes !

HYPHEN 17, W. A. Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, N. I. - which we'd emulate if we knew how.

VERITAS 1, John Berry, 31 Campbell Park Ave, Belmont, Belfast, N. I. - we hope its only the first of many Veritaseses..

NEW FUTURIAN 6, J. M. Rosenblum, 7 Grosvenor Park, Leeds 7, Yorks - British fandom's most literate fanzine who's one drawback is its infrequency.

And thass all. "

"All ? Excuse me while I laugh hollowly. I got a pile here makes the pile we've read through look like chickenfeed. There's CAMBER 7, from Alan Dodd 77 Stanstead Rd. Hoddesdon, Herts, which is as neat and tidy as Veritas yet somehow not quite so satisfying - maybe because Alan is apparently more at home with usafandom than with angloditto. Usafandom is fine in usazines and

anglofandom's just right in anglozines but somehow when they reciprocate neither of 'em seem at their best. Must be something hovering over the Atlantic.

ABERRATION 1, Kent Moomaw, 6705 Bramble Avenue, Cincinnati 27, Ohio, USA., is a rather typical first issue in which the usual minor accidents of production aren't, unfortunately, disguised by the horrible granit-grey paper Kent chose. Terry Carr & Dave Rike make an interesting but not astoundingly novel contribution to the literature about the Why's of fandom and Mark Schulzinger and Bob Coulson arrive at similar conclusions by devious paths - that there are clots everywhere. Aberration promises greatly.

VOID Undated J & G Benford, 10 Liliencron Strasse, Frankfurt, Germany, has typically American multi-colored pages, a typically British cover (it's by Atom - who else ?), a typically international lettercol and conforms, in fact, to any typical fanzine. I like conformity.

RETRIBUTION 5, Arthur Thomson, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London, S.W.2 and John Berry whose address has already been given consists largely of some delightful goonery, sorry, Goonery, by Dick Ellington and some extremely useless information about disguises by Terry Jeoves, plus items by Art and the Other Goon. Noone can accuse RET of conformity. I like nonconformity.

A BAS 9, Boyd Raeburn, 9 Glenvalley Drive, Toronto 9, Canada; it is grossly unfair to dismiss this in a single paragraph. Even when I violently disagree with A BAS it is because it has impressed me, and an impressive fanzine deserves a proper review or none at all. Since FANLIGHT isn't a review column this is nothing at all. I hope we DO meet in London, Boyd.

And that leaves mostly only foreign-language zines which may well be all fanlit for aught I know to the contrary. It requires much more time to translate them than I have at present.

Put the typewriter away, George, and let us adjourn to the greenhouse.

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