

Dale County Memorial Hospital

Scribble

NO

11

DeGru

SPRING 1963



Man

"Fred, about that bottle of cough-mixture
you made up for Mr Smith...."

802 3348174



It isn't that anyone has made an actual complaint, or anything else that I can really lay my finger on. It's just that in recent letters from USA readers there has been that slight undertone of reproach. I admit that rather a large proportion of the previous issue of Scribble was devoted to poking fun at various

American institutions, but this was incidental rather than deliberate. I take a childish delight in firing verbal missiles at the Aunt Sallys of government and bureaucracy, no matter what nationality. Why is the United States so often my target? Well, it's much easier to shoot at an elephant than at a mouse. I feel that they are strong enough to take it without flinching; especially as my armament is more in the nature of a pea-shooter than a howitzer. There was certainly no intention of scurrility on my part and I should hate to offend any of my American friends. So to all U.S. readers I now proffer the hand of peace. Peace be unto thy households; peace be unto thy camels; peace be unto thy families; and, above all, peace be unto thy water-holes.

Besides, there's been enough Anglo-American tension recently without me making matters worse. What, with dear old Dean Acheson telling us we're finished; and our Mr. Macmillan sobbing that if they didn't say they were sorry we wouldn't play with them any more, and then dear old Mr. Kennedy blurting out that they were only kidding, and they'll let us continue being sheriff's deputies.

Well, if you've all put away your handkerchiefs I'll continue with the editorial. I have received definite complaints about our puns. Apparently some people find them painful. I have certainly no intention of apologizing for the puns I print. After all, Scribble is intended as a punitive publication.

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Many people would give their right arm for one -----
----- if they had an extra right arm.

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Let's return to politics - we should find it less punfull-----er, painful. I feel that Mr. Macmillan has made a grave mistake in placing so much confidence in the Polaris submarines. Reg Rook was out fishing in his boat off the south coast when his line suddenly tautened with a catch. After towing him along for 45 minutes his catch surfaced. It was a submarine - his hook neatly caught in the conning tower. If a local fisherman finds it so simple what chance have we got against the Russians?

Perhaps our politicians should seek advice from Salvador Dali. He recently produced a painting called "Derosiribunucle Acid Bottle" which, he states, reveals the secrets of biology, the history of genetics and heredity, and kindred mysteries of life. It's hardly surprising that art thieves in America are now finding it profitable to cut out the picture, throw it away, and steal only the frame. This occurred in New York's Hotel Stanhope where a Rembrandt reproduction was worth only £4½ but the surrounding frame was valued at £250.

You know, I don't see how we can possibly find a solution to all the world's problems while we continue ignoring fate as we do. A magistrate in Cheshire has urged that courts of law should study the 'stars' before passing sentence on an offender. He suggests that astrology be introduced as part of the training curriculum for probation officers. Of course, this ingenious idea must be adopted immediately - and not only for courts of law. Politicians and statesmen must not be allowed to make a move or voice an opinion until the horoscopes of all concerned have been consulted. And maybe when Mars and Uranus are on winking terms with each other we will finally get an agreement on world disarmament.

Christmas and the old year have once more slipped away with the usual standard selection of silly seasonal stories portraying the true spirit of Christmas. In South Africa Mrs. Doris Hudson received a charming gift from her aunt - a grave in a Dublin cemetery. Explained Mrs. Hudson, "She thought it would be suitable as I am living alone and there will be nobody to take care of my remains when I die." I bet she can hardly wait to enjoy her gift.

In Stockholm a riot broke out in Lovoe church when students were told that the early Christmas Day service had been cancelled. They smashed nine of the church's ten windows and tore away the lighted candles and flowers from graves. - "Give us our seasonal peace and goodwill service or we'll bust the joint."

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Aren't we all perfect to a certain extent?

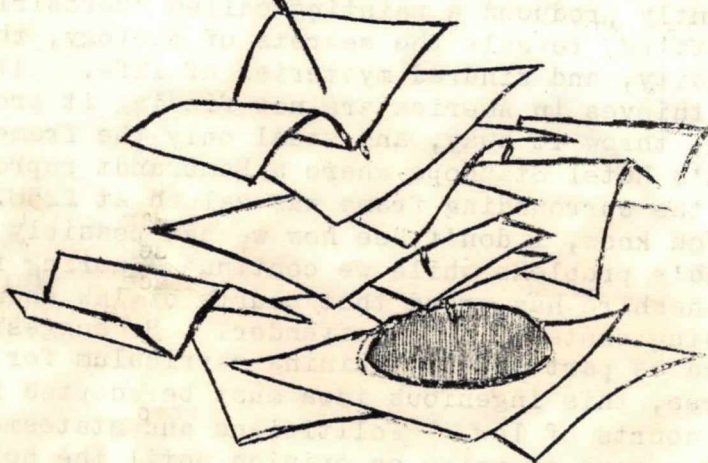
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I think that some small explanation is due to the few non-fans still remaining on my mailing list. Scribble is now being published as a fanzine. That is, for the benefit of science fiction fandom. Yes, I said 'benefit'. Let's not quibble over words. Some of the references may be esoteric and incomprehensible to you. Also, I will not be so fussy in future about keeping the contents fit for children. That does not mean to say we are going to go all pornographic of course. Scribble should be absurd, but not obzine. If you find that it is no longer your cup of tea, just drop me a line and I will refund your subscription. Or alternatively, I will donate it to any charity you care to name. (TAFF?)

I was a male war bride ----- Robert Sheckley.

Scribbles

letters



KRIS CAREY: WASCO, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.

Just what is the main objective of SCRIBBLE anyhoo.... to crack up on the US, or to perpetrate puns in a manner unbecoming an English gentleman. I might as well relate the double pun and pride-an-joy of my collection. A certain inn in England was quite notorious as a hangout for a pair of wild chess enthusiasts. One night, as the guests were conversing quietly in the Great Hall, a commotion arose in the adjoining room. As the inn-keeper went to kick the chess addicts out of the room, his helper calmly explained to the guests that, "He was just removing his chess-nuts from the foyer."

(((-I don't understand how readers can complain about my puns and then have the nerve to send me real groaners such as the one above. The others you sent were too horrible to print Kris. You want my Scribble circulation to disappear altogether?-C.F.)))

FRED HUNTER: LERWICK, SHETLAND ISLANDS, SCOTLAND.

It is no mean achievement to produce a fanzine which isn't a fanzine really, but is still fannish in essence yet with a flavour all its own. Not "MAD" exactly and not wholly fannish, just.....uh.....um.....er.....zany?....crazy?....wacky?.....tell me, mate, do all your correspondents have this problem of identification?

(((-No mate. They usually have no trouble at all thinking of suitable adjectives.-C.F.)))

ETHEL LINDSAY: SURBITON, SURREY.

It was good to see SCRIBBLE again though you are still up to the lark not signing your name to the editorial.

(((-I am always hopeful that somebody else will get the blame for writing it.-C.F.)))

DONALD A. WOLLHEIM: NEW YORK, U.S.A.

SCRIBBLE dribbled in here to my delight as always. The British sense of humor is very delightful in its own understated way...I always like.

You swing a wicked pen about us world-conquering Norteamericanos. But you surely owe us a debt -- we have saved the world from the Cuban Horde, hundreds of millions strong, all smoking dreadful black cigars. Now you got to admit that's a great victory. The cigars alone constitute a military atrocity compared to which mere H-bombs are nothing....

Item in the papers here says that a popular poster in Havana carries the slogan: "If the Yankees cannot live ninety miles away from a Socialist country, let them move." An idea worthy of Scribble.

ARCHIE MERCER: BRISTOL.

It looks as if by the time another ten SCRIBBLES have gone by (or even come out) that Bill Temple will have run out of things to say about it. (((-optimist! -C.F.))) About No.10 anyway. I don't know what I'll have to say about it, of course - that'll depend on what I'm feeling like, what SCRIBBLE's feeling like, what's inside it, whether we're in the Common Market yet (the Common Market'll make a lot of difference to SCRIBBLE, naturally). Instead of sending a copy to the British Museum you'll have to send one to the Palace of Versailles or the Berne Convention or something. (((Berne Convention? And I didn't even know they'd put in a bid. -C.F.))) You'll only be allowed to have an ATOM cartoon on every seventh (or whatever) issue. On the other hand, you'll be allowed to run a picture of Brigitte Bardot in every seventh (or still whatever) issue. (((And maybe Scribble will have been taken over by Paris Match.-C.F.)))

BILL TEMPLE: WEMBLEY, MIDDLESEX.

At the time of writing the world is full of flashpoints: Cuba, Berlin, the Tibet-India border, and SCRIBBLE.

SCRIBBLE is, I think, the most likely to start a war. If only because of its puns which are pure sadism. Again, it parades its opinion that the human race is a gang of fools, criminals, robots, lunatics, clowns and apes. This is a dangerous opinion.

Speaking as a fool (I like Mac), criminal (I omitted to pay a three-penny bus fare yesterday), robot (Compact is my favourite TV programme), lunatic (I read SCRIBBLE), clown (I'm the sole member of the Exclusive Exclusive Brethren, which excludes all other members), and ape (who's dis guy Tarzan?), I warn you: lay off us human beings. Otherwise we shall have to suppress you in the name of freedom.

BUCK COULSON: WABASH, INDIANA, U.S.A.

Another SCRIBBLE and again I can't find anything much to comment on. At least, this time I can't think of anything unfavourable to say, either. (((You're just about the only reader who can't. Maybe you're not trying hard enough.-C.F.)))

BILL DANNER: KENNERDELL, PENNSYLVANIA, U.S.A.

The Atom cover this time is wonderful and I can't understand why the guy gives them away. Surely he could sell something like this without even trying.

(((Of course he could, and I don't understand it myself, but I'm not grumbling.-C.F.)))

ELLA PARKER LONDON

Yes, I received the latest SCRIBBLE. Naturally, I haven't read it yet, (((Naturally.-C.F.))) Well, not all of it. (((500 or so pages does take a bit of reading, doesn't it?-C.F.))) I particularly liked page 5 "It's a Wreckord", that title was inspired, yours? (((Yes, thank you.-C.F.))) I like very much that touch of astringent humour you manage so well. Much better than those corny old gags about which I was always complaining. Bitchy, ain't I? (((Yes. And you think you've seen the last of those corny old gags, do you?-C.F.))) You can tell Bennett the dupering isn't too bad either. (((I don't need to. Bennett told me that the dupering wasn't too bad.-C.F.)))

HARRY WARNER: HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND, U.S.A.

This issue was worth waiting for, because it contains an unusual ability to remind me of something in almost every paragraph. Your Heinlein quotation, for example - I originally heard that one in a different form from an allegedly different source. It was supposed to be the motto of one of these schools that operate on the latest educational and psychological fundamentals: Children should be obscene but not hurt. Then there are your remarks on the national pet mania, which caused me to wonder if you've heard about SINA, the recently organized body, whose purpose is to dress in decent clothing all animals over a specified size--that of a large cat, I believe. Apparently the group is founded on the old scriptural text that says that animals would be born naked, if God meant them to run around that way.

And your friend who likes to chatter through music. I think it was Oscar Wilde who said that Wagner's music is preferable because it is so difficult to hear what is being said by the person sitting next to you, and you, in turn, need not worry about boring your seat mate with your chatter. I might warn you that even the professional people are not much better when it comes to paying attention to music. During World War Two when the lp record was still a science fiction item, RCA Victor released this very Tchaikovsky concerto in a new recording, and through some technical blooper one of the ten 78 rpm sides was one-half tone flat in comparison with the rest of the set. None of the record reviewers, and apparently none of the listeners noticed the trouble because the firm got no complaints. Just remember, the next time you really listen to a famous piece of music, you may be the very first human ear to hear it as the composer meant it to be heard. I appreciate you choosing the bits of United States news that put this nation in a comparatively good light in comparison with the majority of the events it contains. Of course, the newspapers don't publish everything that occurs just as it happened. Some time I must tell you about the feat I accomplished just the other day, when I wrote an extensive story about a court case based on Sodomy, without mentioning once anything about sex.

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We've had reports that you've been renting rooms to crooked boarders, or were those only false roomers? -----Frederic Brown.

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HARRIETT KOLCHAK: Thanks a lot for the Philcon report.

SID BIRCHBY: MANCHESTER.

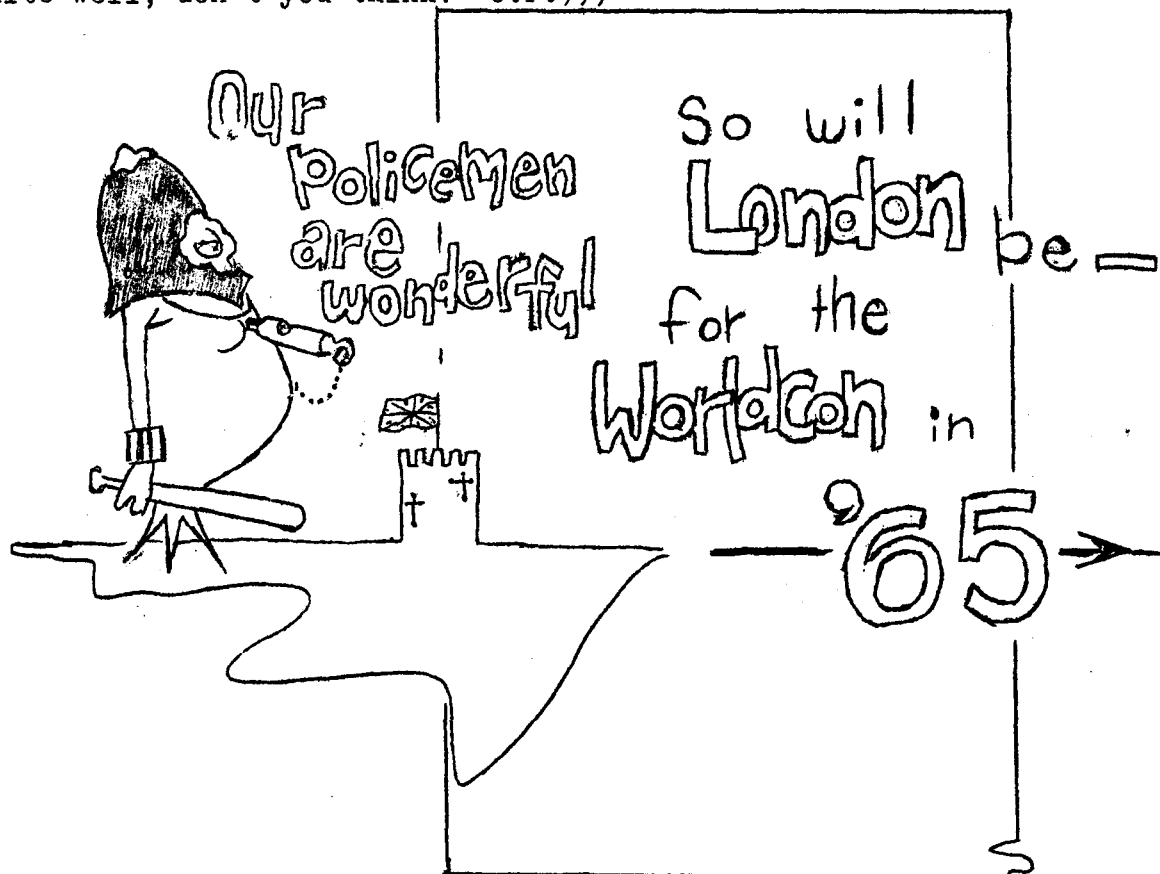
Whatever happened to the crew of zany characters we used to know? Pensioned off? Changing your image? Short of ideas? (((Yes, all three. You clairvoyant or something? C.F.))) I would never have thought you would pass the chance to make a pun about 'Do you like your Yogi bare?' or some such. (((I leave all that for the letterhacks nowadays. C.F.)))

Well, talking about animals, as you were ('How Beastly') did you hear about the man who walked into a bar carrying a crocodile, and asked the barman if he served niggers?

"Certainly," replied the barman, "We pride ourselves that we have absolutely no colour bar here."

"In that case," said the customer, "Let's have a whisky for me and a nigger for the crocodile."

((Did you hear about the man who walked into a bar carrying a crocodile and asked the barman if he served Manchester science-fiction fans?..... Gee! I don't know what's happening round here. Over three pages of letters. Hi there Archie Mercer and Bill Temple. Looks as though the lettercol is no longer your own exclusive property - we've got some company for you at last. Come to think of it I seem to be losing control of the whole zine, which is perhaps a good thing. Take the artwork for instance. Doesn't one normally have an article illoed afterwards? Not so with Scribble. Atom sends me these wonderful illos and headings and I find or write the material to accompany them. Colin Freeman - editor. That's a laugh. Just about the only job I have to do nowadays is to stencil the numbers on the bottom of the pages. Still, I've done it quite well, don't you think? C.F.)))



Scribblings

by Colin Freeman.

I have found a new world record to add to my collection of 'ice-cube-tossers', 'non-stop hand-clappers', and 'roller-coaster riders'. Church sexton Enrico Tonati was ringing the bell for morning Mass when the bell-rope got tangled round his legs and he found himself swinging 15 feet from the ground. He has now claimed a world record - three hours hanging upside down by one leg. Beat that one!

Another musical mishap occurred when Polish solo pianist Wladyslaw Kedra was playing a quiet Rachmaninoff passage at a Nottingham concert. A sizeable chunk of the piano broke away with a clatter. After hasty repairs the performance continued, but soon another piece of the piano crashed onto the stage. It has been suggested that the incident was an act of sabotage by Polish exiles living in Nottingham with the intention of bringing disrepute onto the Communist regime.

A rather more successful concert was conducted at the White House, Washington. The recorded cry of a distressed starling was broadcast over outside loudspeakers in an attempt to frighten away the thousands of birds that infested the area. The result - Every starling from miles around flew in to listen to the concert. I wonder if the cost of the experiment will come out of President Kennedy's entertainments fund.

Apparently the Americans have had better success in their communications with other species of the animal world, as is evident by a sign in a Montana park - "Bears are absolutely forbidden to molest tourists." Gee! And over here in Britain we haven't even taught all the people to read yet, let alone the animals.

It is not only to their animals that the Americans give such enlightening instructions. U.S. Air Force men training in Malaya have been advised on how to survive in the jungle if they crash. Tip No.1, "Try to crash in June, July, or August when there is more edible fruit about."

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I was quite good at Anatomy, but I fell down on my Botany.

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If you do crash it is of primary importance to have a good excuse ready. Not like the van driver in Wigan, who told magistrates, "I don't know whether the brakes stopped me or the other car."

I have just read a report from America that Vice-Admiral William Raborn is planning a research programme to see if the weather can be turned into a weapon of war.

Now this strikes me as a truly brilliant idea, but of course the research must be extended to cover the whole of nature, and not just the weather. Like shifting the moon over a bit so that we cause an unusually high tide in the Black Sea just as Mr. Krushchev is taking a dip during his summer vacation. Or how about a nice little eclipse of the sun just as the Russians are celebrating their May Day parade in Red Square? That should demoralize them.

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She smelt of fresh flowers and wind.

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CHOPIN BLOCK

by John Berry.

Colin, I quite agree with your comments in SOAPBOX that 'an addiction' to classical music is considered a necessity to some people who consider that their social and cultural activities suffer if the said addiction is not broadcast to all their friends, associates and passing acquaintances.

Take the girl you mention, for example. She must have been an idiot and tone deaf to boot, mixing up a piano on one track with the lack of it on another, and thinking that both were Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto. Fie on you, also, Colin, for having a young woman visit you, and just talking about classical music.

But I have suffered for the cause.

Now, for many years, I have been an avid classical music enthusiast. Almost twenty years ago, in the army, I held my own music circle, but it is only recently, in this last year or two, that I've been able to purchase a record player and compile my own collection. But word has gotten round that I like classical music, and some Phillistines have said that I suffer from 'affectation'...I'm a 'show-off'...etc. The stigma, you see, has struck in reverse. I admit that I have let it out in general conversation that I like classical music (that general term is inaccurate, anyway, isn't it?)...but, in my blind way, trusting implicitly in human nature, I've done so in order to try and contact some other soul with similar tastes, so as to be able to discover new music, and talk over my favourite items. This, I promise, has been my sole reason. But it has become current rumour that I'm anxious to let everyone know of my cultural taste in order to derive egoboo. I was able to effectively stifle this rumour just today.

You see, current with the rumour about my music tastes is also the rumour that I am mean...thriftly...a refugee from Israel, in fact. I cannot for the life of me understand how this latter fable originated. True, I'm not a lavish spender, but when out with the boys I always stand my share. Many's the time I've rapped on the counter with my handkerchief when it's been my turn, to attract the barman. Anyway...there is a canteen in my office, and sometimes I don't go, I bring the old thermos along with me, and have a cup of hot sweet brew when the others go along for their mid-morning fare. Why, one day last week, when I forgot to bring the thermos, I went to the canteen, and, as I opened the door, a sudden chilly silence ensued. Suddenly, a raucous voice bellowed from the general direction of the tea urn :-

"Hey, Solly, where's yer flask?"

Stifling a reply which I would have issued but for the innocent young civil servants supping tea daintily, I rallied my grey matter, and came out with the superb quip..."No, anyone got two halfpennies for a penny, there's a girl collecting for the R.S.P.C.A." This satisfied my burning anger at being labelled a meanie, but it did nothing to stop the appellation becoming even more concrete in peoples minds.

So this chap in the office verbally attacked me again today for saying that I like classical music. He lifted the score of Brahms 2nd Piano Concerto (it was displayed so as to remind me to return it to the library) and said that I'd purposely left it in a prominent position on my desk so that people would know that I can read musical scores. I decided I'd had enough. I chose logic.

"Look here," I said. "You know I'm mean, don't you?"

He grinned broadly in mute confirmation.

"Well, this last couple of years I've spent well over one hundred pounds getting together a collection of classical music."

A look of frightening shock crossed his bewildered visage.

"You....you haven't?" he breathed. The whole staff became silent too. They rushed to shake my hand. "So sorry for calling you a meanie," he breathed. "That's good enough for me. I freely admit that you must love classical music. You must be crazy over it. I apologize."

"Accepted," I grinned triumphantly, sharpening a pencil and collecting up the little slivers of wood in a packet, to help light the fire at home in the mornings," all that remains for me to do now is to convince you all that I'm not a miser."

But nowhere better than the orchestral concert can the full spectacle of pseudo classical music snobbery be found. I wouldn't go so far as to say that the City of Belfast Orchestra is a second Halle, but I could use up pages describing the antics of concert-goers whose sole reason for the visitation is to flaunt their presence to their friends on the morrow. It irritates me beyond description to see these musical snobs in action...and a high percentage of them are middle aged spinsters. One sat next to me recently when Gillian Sanson performed the violin solo to Max Bruch's Violin Concerto.

As Gillian Sanson was brought on to the stage by Maurice Miles, the conductor, this woman, who deserves to be called Miss Witherspoon, gave me some tit-bits of information about Max Bruch, all of which she'd gleaned (and repeated verbatim) from the programme notes.

"Very profound knowledge of Max Bruch, madam" I said politely, "I'm seriously thinking of suggesting that Mr. Miles play's Bruch's Tuning Fork Obligato at the concert next month."

"Wonderful passages in it, eh?" she said warily.

"Quite," I hissed, " especially the 25 consecutive 'boings' with the tuning fork as the climax."

"Enchanting," she sniffed, looking furtively at the notes.

Miss Witherspoon paid attention remarkably well to the first movement, and then, as it slid into the second movement via the connecting bars, she surreptitiously commenced to attempt to remove the wrapper off a toffee-a presumably sticky toffee which wasn't too keen to part with its plastic mac. She even offered me one....she fluffed her hair, adjusted her unmentionables...she hummed a rough melody which came from the 1812 overture by Tchaikovsky...she fidgeted and looked apprehensively towards the 'Ladies', then (thank GHod) thought better of it...and yet at the conclusion of the concerto she clapped like mad. Sure, Miss Sanson was a good performer, and was quite content with her three curtain calls, but Miss Witherspoon, flogging together support from the surrounding rows, clapped so vigorously that I swear sparks flew from her fingers like St. Malo's Lights.

I mean, quite honestly, this is the sort of concert-goer which gives us ardent types a bad name...we are all tarred with the same brush of affectation.

Really, it is strange to me how ones appreciation of music is supposed to be an indication of ones character...it is usual to think of jazz enthusiasts as long-haired beatniks, and, strange to say, as a jazz session a remarkably high percentage of the fans are dressed in such a manner.

This, I feel, really is affectation !!!

John Berry
1962.

The Age Of Built-In Satire

By MICHE MERCER

Supposing they made a film satirising the pop music business, and the way in which an unknown performer can by the right publicity be elevated to star status overnight. Supposing they give him songs to sing that are intended as devastating parodies of the sort of thing that such hit parade stars do sing. And then suppose that the part of the new star is taken by an existing star of the same general type. The perfect result, that could only happen (one would suppose) in fiction, would be that the real star's public accept the parodies as perfectly normal specimens of their idol's repertoire, in no way different from what he was singing before he made the film.

That story would make a beautiful satire, wouldn't it?

The only trouble is that, if I understand aright, it's actually happened. The film (taken from a stage musical) was "Expresso Bongo", and the songs that Cliff Richard sang therein were taken by his fans not as satires, but as genuine emotion in their own right. This is just one instance of something that I've been noticing a lot recently - that satire's having a harder and harder job to keep abreast of reality. Reality, when it tries, can out-satire satire almost every time. I don't know how long this has been going on, but by the look of things it's certainly here to stay.

For instance, just before Christmas I saw an advertisement in the local evening paper for dancing classes. This finished, by way of extra inducement, with a blurb reading, if I remember aright "Learn the latest novelty - the Hokey-Cokey Twist".

The Hokey-Cokey Twist. If ever two dances were mutually incompatible, I would have thought, it would be the Hokey-Cokey and the Twist. Just in case anybody isn't quite sure what I'm talking about, I'll give a brief description of each. The Hokey-Cokey is a jolly party dance that goes to a jolly party tune. Everybody gets in a circle, facing inwards, and suits the actions to the words as they sing them. A typical verse goes like this (verse in capital letters):

YOU PUT YOUR LEFT ARM IN (the verses deal with the different mentionable - sometimes barely that - parts of the body in turn. I'm taking the left arm as a specimen but it could equally well have been the right leg, the backside, and so on)

YOU PULL YOUR LEFT ARM OUT (thereby restoring, if briefly, the status quo)

YOU PUT YOUR LEFT ARM IN (same as the first time)

AND YOU SHAKE IT ALL ABOUT (as close as you can to everybody else's noses, natch)

YOU DO THE HOKEY-COKEY (authorities are by no means unanimous as to how this particular movement is performed. Anyway, whatever it means, you do it. It's in the book)

AND YOU TURN AROUND (right around, three hundred and sixty degrees, plus or minus half a dozen or so, so that you're facing inwards again.

Incidentally, if at this point you happen to hear anybody sing "You turn inside out", it's probably me, and entirely unauthorised)

THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT (so now you know)

That was a typical verse. There is also a chorus, but I'll spare you that. I think you have the gist of things by now. The Twist, on the other hand, is an ultra-modern dance indulged in mainly by the younger set to fast hit-parade-type music, wherein the couple stand opposite each other and slowly bend and straighten their knees, rapidly switching their hips back and forth the while. Indulging in Hokey-Cokey movements simultaneously with the Twist would appear to call for contortionistic abilities above and beyond the call of the Master of Ceremonies.

Of course, the advertisement may have just been kidding. I don't think it was - the presentation was entirely serious, and in equally serious surroundings. But the fact that one can't tell for sure whether they're kidding or not is surely bad enough.

My last example, though, is undoubtedly genuine, no kidding. I've seen the advertisement posted up in the London Underground and subsequently seen it referred to in the press in somewhat surprised tones. It refers to an electric cooker with built-in transistor radio, costing in all (I think it said) 70 guineas.

Now there are two points of view regarding transistor radios, and personally I tend to incline to the one that condemns them as major public nuisances. But for the sake of argument, let's consider them from the other viewpoint, as boons and blessings. One wants to listen to the B.B.C. or (more probably) Luxemburg all the time, whatever one may be doing. So one gets this electric cooker with built-in transistor radio, and one is then in a position to indulge one's eardrums whenever one happens to be in the kitchen. However, the whole point of a transistor radio is surely its portability. Build it into the cooker, and it becomes a fixture - one might just as well have it working off the mains same as the cooker itself does. Of course, one might borrow a wheel-barrow or something, and cart the cooker around to wherever one wants to go. But if one did that, one would no longer have an electric cooker with built-in transistor radio. One would have a transistor radio with built-in electric cooker, which would probably come under a higher scale of purchase tax.

The obvious answer, of course, is to get an ordinary electric cooker and an ordinary transistor radio, separate and distinct. That way, one can have music wherever one goes, like it says in the old song - whether one happens to be in the kitchen, the bathroom, the garden shed, the attic, or anywhere else. I wonder just how many people have actually bought the combined seventy-guineasworth?

It'd be interesting to meet one of these people. But not, I think, for longer than a minute or two.

ARCHIE MERCER.

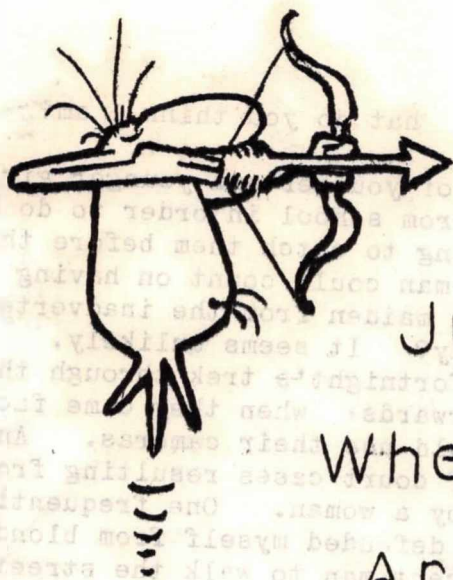
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"At heart she's just an old-fashioned girl who's got a diploma for nuclear physics from Washington University."

(From an article on Dorothy Provine)

-o-oOo-o-

I rushed to the barrier with my ticket in my hand and my heart in my mouth. A man punched a hole in it. I thanked him wholeheartedly.





# Juliet! Wherefore Art Thou?

By Colin Freeman

One of the saddest events of recent years has been the entire extinction of various species of animal from the face of the earth. The most tragic of all however, is the apparent disappearance of the female Homo Sapiens.

I remember the time (not so very long ago) when Woman - as distinct from her mate, Man - could be found in abundance. However, the process of evolution is now accelerating at such a rate that an entirely new genus is emerging, and woman, as we remember her, is little more than a cherished memory of the past.

The metamorphosis began with the suffragette movement and emancipation. Women discarded the reins of inequality, and still not satisfied they commenced to discard their morals, clothing and femininity. Previously adorned from neck to toe in garments which concealed the mysteries of their bodies, they were exciting, seductive and very, very feminine. Then, over the years, they performed a defiant striptease, and the few square inches of flesh that were not shown on the beaches and in public were soon revealed in corset and bra advertisements. The female form was a mystery no longer, and about as common as cornflakes.

Even this performance did not satiate their ambition. Nothing short of complete equality will be contemplated. Short hair styles and urchin cuts become the rage. Duffel-coats, jeans and sweaters are the fashion. Coloured jokes, swearing, and smoking cigarettes in public are no longer taboo. It is not an unusual incident for girls to wolf-whistle at men in the street.

Women retain one very feminine trait however. Illogicality. They constantly bemoan the passing of the age of chivalry, and profess bewilderment and dismay that men no longer offer them their seats on buses and trains. And on the rare occasion that a little gentlemanly courtesy is shown to them they are as likely as not to resent it as an expression of masculine superiority. A friend of mine offered his seat to a woman



on a bus the other day, only to be rebuked, "hat do you think I am?---A cripple?"

One reads almost daily in the newspapers of younger and younger girls eloping to get married, often running away from school in order to do so. The poor, confused males are obviously trying to catch them before they peel off their femininity. At one time a man could count on having to rescue (every now and again) a terrified maiden from the inadvertent company of a mouse. Could this happen today? It seems unlikely. Recently seventeen WRAFs volunteered for a fortnight's trek through the Malayan jungle. Their only complaint afterwards: when they came face to face with a tiger it fled before they could use their cameras. Another innovation is the increasing number of court cases resulting from episodes in which a man has been beaten up by a woman. One frequently reads in the paper such headlines as:- "I defended myself from blonde, says man". It is no longer safe for a decent man to walk the streets alone.

I am reminded of a painful experience of my own when my masculine self-respect was severely undermined. I was at the local fair some years ago with my girl-friend, when she espied the rifle range. Out of thirty-six shots she scored thirty-five bulls-eyes. After that performance I hadn't the stomach to attempt a shot myself. I managed to keep her at the bingo stall for the remainder of the evening, but it left a permanent wound in my pride.

Even the sanctity of men-only clubs is being violated. Not long ago a young girl entered such a club in Carlisle, placed her only sixpence in the club's one-armed bandit machine and won the jackpot, a feat that members had been trying to achieve for some considerable time. The public conveniences are apparently our last remaining refuge. For how much longer, I wonder?

The fair sex were once referred to as; charming, pretty, bewitching, and adorable. One rarely hears these terms of reference today. The most used "compliment" is perhaps - SMASHING. Very appropriate, I think. Our nurses and models are fast becoming outnumbered by taxi drivers, mechanics and petrol station attendants. Is it surprising that there is a brisk sale of large size hot-water bottles in the shape of WOMEN? Is it surprising that magazines are continually publishing articles entitled "Advice For Frigid Women" and "How to Get On With Your Husband"?

Once upon a time our most beautiful flowers, our sweetest fruits, and our finest ships were given the names of our womenfolk. Nowadays this honour is given to tornados and hurricanes. Once upon a time women provided the inspiration for such works of art as the Venus de Milo and the Mona Lisa. Have you seen any of Moore's recent sculptures or Picasso's recent paintings?

I don't really begrudge women their new-found freedom and happiness, but it would be nice if we could once more have an opposite sex, as we did in the good old days.

Colin Freeman.

Quote from widower after being left only £100 in his wife's £4,700 will:  
"It was just a little oversight on her part."



# More Scribblings

By Colin Freeman

Until a few weeks ago I would have been willing to lay odds of 10 to 1 that the expression "Tell it to the Marines" was an Americanism. Not so. I was browsing through the dictionary when I came across the Latin phrase "Credat Judeaus" which roughly translated means "Tell it to the Jews" and was used by the Romans a couple of thousand years ago to convey the same cynicism as the modern version.

I was watching TV the other night (I'm not particular from where I scrounge these useless bits of information) when I learnt that a bounty of 10/- is given for bodies found in the Thames. The reward has gone up since a few years ago, when 2/6d was given for corpses discovered on the Surrey side of the river, but 5/- for those turned in on the Middlesex side. Wise guys finding a body near the Surrey bank used to take it over to the other side in order to claim the greater reward. The Middlesex people got a bit browned off with all the trouble and expense of burying the corpses, so they reduced the bounty to 2/6d. From then on trade was spread fairly evenly throughout the market.

There's been much discussion in the fanzines of late regarding the uselessness of IQ tests, and I'd like to join in with a supposedly true anecdote I heard the other day. It concerns a children's test in which one question was - London, Leeds, Birmingham and Yorkshire: which is the odd one out?

"Yorkshire," replied one little boy.

"Why?" he was asked.

"Because London, Leeds and Birmingham are cities," was the reply, "And Yorkshire is a pudding." All of which goes to prove something I suppose.

At the time of writing (middle of January) it doesn't look as though Britain is going to succeed in her negotiations for entry into the European Common Market, which must be a great relief to the kangaroos. You see, it's like this. The Commission had granted concessions on the import of kangaroo meat from Australia, while refusing similar concessions on most other Commonwealth imports. It was a certainty that all other kinds of meat would have risen in price after our entry into Europe, and it therefore seems reasonable to assume that the consumption of kangaroo meat would have increased enormously. Yet already the slaughter of kangaroos in Aussieland has resulted in the threatened extinction of the species. If Britain had joined the Common Market the memorial stone to the kangaroo would have weighed as an eternal burden of guilt upon the shoulders of the British people.

When writing the article on the previous page it put me in mind of a news item I read concerning the distribution of an official handbook to Washington sixth-formers. It contained advice on how to get ahead in the United States. One tip suggested that they dab perfume behind the ears, and they were also informed that girdles for men would give them the slim, athletic look. They were finally advised to make up with masculine cosmetics if they had the sort of face that required it. Maybe the women of today are not the females they used to be, but I do not think that a policy of male conversion and substitution is really the answer. And before any female reader uses the above-mentioned fact as an argument to demonstrate that men are also not quite as they used to be, I would like to point out that the author of the handbook is a woman.

This was Scribble No.11 - duplicated by Ron Bennett - and I've got a theory that Ron Bennett is really a hoax (perpetrated by his mother).

The John Berry article on pages 9 and 10 was kindly dupered by John himself.

The cover and all interior illos and artwork are by  
Arthur (ATOM) Thomson.

SCRIBBLE - Price 6d. - is edited and published irregularly by:-

10¢ in U.S.A. to:-  
Bob Pavlat,  
6001, 43rd Ave.,  
HYATTSVILLE,  
Md.

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ETHEL LINDSAY - I've plastered my name all over the zine this time.  
Do you still accuse me of false modesty?

ELLA PARKER and BUCK COULSON - Thanks for all the advice. Hope this  
is more along the lines of what you meant. I hardly recognise my  
own zine now.

ROY TACKETT - Yep. I guess it was rather like blasphemy sticking the  
words "science fiction" in an issue of Scribble, but you may be in  
for more shocks like that in future. We never did pretend to be a  
fanzine before, but the other SCRIBBLERS have now left the hospital  
here (they weren't fans anyway) and things are sort of changing.  
Besides, I reckon past ishes were worth pubbing for the ATOM covers  
alone.

"P and the GIRLS at the office" - I haven't a clue who you are, or which  
office you are at (Foreign Office?) but presumably you somehow get  
hold of Scribble. Thanks muchly for the headed writing paper. It  
was a terrific idea and a great gift, and I certainly can use it.  
Thanks, whoever you are.

Listed below are some of the many reasons why you should read SCRIBBLE.