

paraFANalia

#10

I HAVE THIS VAGUE FEELING
THAT SUBLIMINAL
ADVERTISING IS GOOD FOR ME.

more to the point more to the point more to the point

LESS OPEN SPACE
ON paraFANalia
COVERS

GET OUT!
YOU'RE CLUTTERING
UP MY SIMPLE
COVER!

This is paraFANalia #10, dated December,
1962, produced by Bruce Burn of 5 Kingdon
Road, London, N.W.6., England, for the
34th. Mailing of the OFF-TRAIL MAGAZINE
PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION.

EDITORIAL: paraFANalia #10

READER BINARY

Happy Christmas, dear reader! And welcome to another issue of this priceless fanzine....priceless? Well, sure, that's why you don't have to pay for it. As usual, fifty copies of paraFANalia are being distributed through the OFF-TRAIL MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION, and a further thirty are being sent to various kindly readers, just like you. Other copies may or may not be distributed on request, depending upon my supply of duplicating paper, the Margin of Error I have to allow while duplicating the magazine, and the requests. Further issues beyond this tenth one will be available on the usual terms: you have to be a friend, a trader (with another fanzine), a member of OMPA, a contributor, or a back-scratcher to be sure of receiving any copies.

READER READ ON

The Contents of this issue are varied from mere flippancy to earnest honesty. First, there was the cover, which is based on an idea expressed by Peter G. Taylor. Following this brief apology of an editorial is a story, HOT FANS DO WRITE, which I have reprinted from the first mailing of the IPSO in a last ditch attempt to explain why fanzine writers write so sloppily. In the pages that do or do not follow the story is or is not a surprise. It's so much of a surprise that even your beloved editor isn't too sure what it might be. However, if it 's there you may be surprised and delighted to read it and if it isn't there then I will be surprised in my turn.

THE EVANGELIST AND THE SINNERS, which comes next, is printed here in the hope that it might put a stop to some of the rumours that the Easter Monday gathering at Hyde Park, London, decided to expel your cherished editor from this fair land of Britain. They did not want to Ban the Burn. Even more serious is GODS LIKE GRASS, which is taken from a chapter, THE GODS OF CULTIVATION, OF a book called THE EVOLUTION OF THE IDEA OF GOD. Your adored editor recommends you to read the whole book.

After such a long-hair article, you'll be eager to read -FAN-, the letter column. Various quotations from letters are placed in various parts of the magazine because at first I decided not to include a letter column. But, I changed my mind and now you can read the few pitiful missives that cramp the tiny space of the letter column, and read of the amazing people of Wellington, NZ, and Los Angeles, USA, as recounted by Mervyn Barrett and Len Moffatt.

In each issue of paraFANalia your splendid editor tries to present a new short story. Well, thistime I didn't have time to write a story for you, so you'll have to make do with the three brief episodes that occupy the last pages of the issue.

READER FAREWELL

As you stumble through this issue, tripping over typos and toppling into split infinitives, I'd like you to think that paraFANalia #10 wishes you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. You won't and it can't but your honourable editor does.

how fans do write

by Bruce Burn.

Usually when I write I know pretty closely just what to say and when to say it. But not so today; Harry's not here. I used to discuss all of my writings with Harry, before I'd get down and write them. We'd chew the rag, argue a theme into existence for an article, thread the plot of a story, and then with the hard work done I'd write the article or story and some lucky fanzine would land it. A lot of my stuff was written like that, before Harry disappeared, and most of the material in my subscription fanzine grew from the talks we had. Harry even began to write a regular column in my zine, but somehow it never did quite catch the interest of the readers and he seemed to get little enjoyment out of churning it onto paper so that stopped after only a few columns had appeared. A pity, but I don't think gen-zine writing was quite Harry's line. Somehow he didn't seem comfortable in the strict format of a column, presenting a sort of complete statement or fully developed idea with each issue. It was then I had the brain-wave.

As you'd expect with a hyper-active fan, I was in touch with a large number of other fans. Most of them had something to do with my fanzine, of course: subscribers, letter-hacks, regular writers, a few even traded their own fanzines for mine. And one or two of these fans had suggested I join an apa, but I was too busy publishing my own fanzine to actually use up my few leisure moments publishing a special apazine and I'd declined all offers. But it occurred to me that an apa might be just the place for Harry, what with all the emphasis on Discussions and generally an informality of writing, and that's why I decided to tip him off about the then currently popular FLAP, or Fellowship of Lazy Amateur Publishers. I remember the evening I called on him to tell him about the apa....

I knocked on the front door of his house, hating the blunt sound of the archaic knocker. I waited a while, then began to retrace my steps down the garden path towards the hinge-less gate that kept Harry's dog in off the road. My thoughts had already turned towards the editorial of my next issue, when suddenly Harry's voice called out from behind me. I stopped and turned.

"Harry. I thought you must be out. Didn't you hear me knocking?"

"No..." he seemed bewildered and somehow surprised to see me. "I... I was just doing some work in my room. Didn't hear the knocker; you know how it is when you're writing. Come on in."

We went into the hall of the house. His mother and father were sitting in the dining room, watching television. She looked up and smiled at me, but her eyes were focused for the flickering screen and she squinted back to it. Harry's dad didn't even stir enough to look around at me. He was lost in the world of the teevee navel, sitting there in a battered armchair and sucking at a stringy cigarette. I muttered an inaudible 'hello' and we passed on, up the cramped stairs to the first floor, trading softly on the thin carpet that barely covered the stairs.

"Vera's out at the cinema." Harry muttered. Vera is his older sister by a couple of years, which makes her about eighteen, and a more typical older sister is hard to imagine. She can't understand Harry and she's never yet missed a chance to try to make him look silly. And with Harry being the garrulous sort of person that he is she gets lots of chances. To make the problem even more involved, though, Vera has a stupid idea that I'm somebody pretty important, which is of course a lot of rot. Oh sure, my dad's probably the big man around here with the Supermarket he owns in town, but I'm just a school-boy after all and the way things are going I'll never get qualified to do much but starve as a writer. Anyway, she's got this empty fixation on me and always tries to impress me. And most of the time she tries to do this by making Harry look stupid; thinking, I suppose, that that'll make me feel big. She's wrong of course. The reason I visited them was to talk with Harry and his sister only made me feel embarrassed.

We entered Harry's room, above the dining-room at the front of the house. It was tidy as usual, with the curtains pulled aside from the window to let in a shaft of sunlight that gave some colour to the well-worn carpet on the floor. But stacked in one corner of the room were a few reams of paper and a small hand-operated duplicator. One of those tedious rocker models that are used like a rubber stamp. I turned to Harry and grinned.

"Hey, you putting out your own fanzine?"

"Oh..." he smiled weakly. "I've just done a little work.. nothing much..."

"Well, where is it? What's it like - not a crudzine like mine?"

"Well, no; not a crudzine I suppose..." He seemed shy of telling me more, but I was interested. I pressed him for more detail. Finally, I pieced the whole story together. In essence it was that Harry had found out about apas from himself and had been invited to join one.

"What's it called?" I asked him.

"Oh, it's a new one. You won't know of it..."

"But, gee Harry, this is great! I came up here to tell you about an apa and here you are already joining one! Come on, which one is it? Is it FLAP?"

"No, it's not called FLAP, and I haven't joined yet. I'm still thinking about it. Anyway, why should I join an apa? I don't know anything about apas and I'm not a publishing fan: why should I join?"

"Well?" He knew the tone and the question. He was being unusually reticent about the whole deal and I was curious to know just which apa was going to get him.

"Oh, you won't know it. It's called CAPS, and that's how it's spelt. It's not a well-known one. It's a sort of mundane one and there aren't any fans in it at all."

"No, I've never heard of it. Wonder if it's a new one from Locke or some-one? Whoe's the OE? What does CAPS stand for, anyway?"

"Well," he squirmed a little restlessly in his chair by the desk. "Don't laugh but it's called the Cosmic Amateur Publishing Society...."

That rolled me up alright. "Mighod! Cosmic... Not Deglar is it?" I guffawed a bit but Harry still looked pained. "Well, of all the goshwow names.. I started."

"No, it's not a bit goshwow. As a matter of fact it's a pretty serious apa."

"Alright, alright, but it sounds like something out of a Gerber story. Who is the OE?"

"Look, I can't lie to you, so I'd better not tell you anything." I went to interrupt, but he talked on. "Hang on. Let me tell you. I can't give you the name of the OE, but it's not Gerber, or Locker, or even Deglar. Let's just leave it at CAPS, a Mundane Apa. When I was invited to join I had to promise to keep quiet about the whole deal."

"A cosy little in-group." I sneered.

"Call it that if you like. It's pretty selective and I'm probably the only member on... on the fannish side of things in this apa." Again, he squirmed un-comfortably.

"Well, okay. If you can't tell me about the CAPS, what are you going to do in the apa yourself? Comments on comments on comments I suppose?"

"That's not really what I'd expected of you."

"Well, what could you expect? You calmly tell me you're joining an apa but you won't tell me whose or where it is and now you'll just disappear from the fanzine field like most of fandom's writers! They pop up for a while then fade away into some cliquish apa, and the genzines can go to hell!"

"Alright, my fanzine can get along without one more writer I suppose, but why do fandom's best writers join the apas and use up all their time writing idle chitchat in some tiny little crudzine? Don't they want to write for proper fanzines?"

Harry grinned and leaned back. This was chewing the rag, this was his forte. "Fan writers simply want to write. They don't care much for having someone else publish their stuff for them; they write from a need to converse rather than convert. It's a gestalt they seek, not a public meeting. And their stories are more fragments of their devious imaginations than plotted fiction. But a publishing fan - like you - needs those constructed articles and guided stories as complete items in his fanzine." He rose suddenly and picked up some sheets of paper from the desk. "Look, read this. It's a copy of my first apa-zine. You wouldn't use this in your fanzine would you, but it shows I need to write."

I looked at the zine. It was just a typewritten piece of work, badly duplicated, but I couldn't really make out whether it was a story or an article. It was written like a stream-of-conscienceness story, but it was about Harry and his family. It rambled on about school, buses, thoughts on 'Mankind', a piece of self-analysis, lots of trivia of everyday life. It was called, in simple ostentation, "A Boy's Eyes, of Earth", and it had not real form or flow. Harry had made no effort to provide a beginning or end. It read just like someone talking; no plan, no plot, no emphasis except that of the subject itself.

"Oh I can see you revelling in Mailing Comments, Harry, you've got just the style. But where's the interest in stuff like this?"

"Well, I find it interesting." He grinned. "And, most important, I enjoyed writing it. As for other readers." He looked thoughtful. "From what I know of this particular apa, they'll love it."

I was exasperated at this. "But where's the discipline of writing stuff like this?" I cried. "Good - really good - writing takes work, hard work. This sort of thing isn't work - why it's not even complete. It's just like snatches of talk, switching from one conversation to another. What's the point?"

"A point? Oh, so now you want a Reason, a Purpose." He took the papers from me, tossed them onto the desk, and turned and pointed a finger at me. "Who's getting Deglerish now?"

"Mighod, when has there ever been a point to fandom or to fanzines, or for that matter to anything, except the object of personal enjoyment? Oh sure, some people enjoy working for an end, and in fandom these are the people who keep on writing for the gen-zines - perhaps they enjoy the work more than the end, which is some twist of thinking - but that sort of person is as out of date as the shambling apeman who had to be king of the tribe. Now, Man's capable of being the Big Boss of anything he likes, so where's the point to that?"

"But you've still got to master a thing! Otherwise how can you ever know it?"

"You can coexist with it." He spoke quietly.

That stopped me for a moment.

"But that's off the subject." I said. "What about writing? You've got to master a skill to put an idea or feeling across." I thought I had him there.

"Not if your means of communication is something so clear that you can transmit all of your impressions to someone at the same time."

"Telepathy?"

"Could be." He grinned. "But do n't get worried; I'm no Slan. And actually, that manuscript is my credential for membership, so who knows I may never join the CAPS."

"What if you do? Will you too disappear from general fandom?"

"If I join - rather, if I'm accepted - I won't have time for fanzines at all." He looked cagey again. "In fact, I won't be around very much at all."

And that was it. That was all I could get out of him. It was perhaps one of those pointless conversations that fans are apt to have, but it did form the basis of my rather vitriolic editorial against apas that appeared soon afterwards, and it's memorable if only as the last time I met and spoke with Harry, and I have a surreptitiously-sneaked copy of that apa credential to remind me of it. You see, soon after that Harry disappeared. No-one seems to be about to trace him. It became the mystery of the year in town. A school-boy

completely disappears, taking nothing with him. I was questioned, along with all sorts of other people, to see what wild guesses I could throw out about where Harry might be. But I wasn't much help. How could I help them; the only idea that I had was so wild as to be a piece of fantasy. It's drawn from our conversation that last day I saw him, and from that apa credential. At the end of it he typed his name, then added his address and the wrds 'Sol III delegate.' I wonder: how Cosmic can an apa get?

ooo=ooo
the end

MERVYN BARRETT: 17/10/60

1 Egan St., West Richmond,
Victoria, Australia.

...I knew that Wellington would start falling apart once I left it. I've had word - though not from the main source - that Richard Paris is married. Anna Hoffman is in goal up at Mount Eden for selling reefers to a cop. Ron Polson has moved up to Auckland. Keith Field got arrested for being in possession of reefers. Actually it was Polson that the cops were after. They got a warrant to search the Aro Street flat; found nothing in Ron's room but found a time with some pot in it in Keith's. Actually in this case they'd been planted there by a dame that was there the night before. That wasn't proved but that's the bit. Keith got off because there's no law against being in possession of Marijuana - only cocaine, opium, and heroin. Jack Harrison moved up to Auckland but came back after about three weeks because he and Maureen couldn't get along together. You remember Pat O'Neil? She the plum short dame with black hair who like Sonny Rollins and was usually drunk on Scotch. She leaves for Panama in about three weeks time. She was originally going to go to Jamaica because Rüm is so cheap there but she changed her mind.

and 17/12/61

People have been leaving New Zealand like anything and now in London are Raywin and Denzil Philp. Remember them? John Esam is over there now too. A hell of a lot of people have moved out of Wellington and gone to live in Auckland and the old place must be something of a ghost town at the moment. Alan Henderson is over here at the moment playing in the pit band of a show. ...Were you told of the death of James Clark? It came as quite a shock to us. Jill had been over here only a few weeks when we got a telegram from a girl that Jill shared a flat with in Wellington telling us of his death.. Jill had been seeing James quite a bit on the scene in Wellington before she came over here and she thinks that he was living pretty hard because he must have known that he didn't have much time left. ... Brian Bell got himself picked up in Hastings or somewhere like that a couple of months ago. The police mistook him for an escaped convict or something. Victor Smethurst is doing quite well as a cartoonist and is having a lot of his stuff in the listener. John Morgans is back from the United States apparently. .. Anna Hoffman has been getting herself arrested and acquitted with almost monotonous regularity. Ben Goffman is over here now living in Melbourne: He tells us about how well Ron Polson is doing in Auckland what with his £35 a week job with an ad agency plus the £8 a night that he's getting for singing. John Esam's brother Gordon is over here living in Sydney... and those girls he used to kick around with - the twins, Mona and Winifred - are now in England.

THE ANTHE Evangelist D Sinners

by Bruce Burn.

As I stood among the pigeons of Trafalgar Square, I reflected that at least I'd picked a good day for a walk. People were jostling around me, throwing crumbs to the birds, and over at the foot of Nelson's Column stood an earnest banner-wielder warning the casual onlooker of the Wrath to Come. A peaceful scene of sunshine and bright colours; not much traffic. A warm Easter Monday.

One of the cohorts of the banner-wielder weaved his way towards me.

"Be saved!" he cried, glancing at my well-worn duffle-coat and unshaven chin. "Believe and ye shall enter the Greater Glory!"

I smiled wistfully.

He waved a pamphlet under my nose. "Do you believe that life everlasting is before you?"

I looked at him, before me: greenish thin tweed jacket, light brown cord trousers, off-white shirt with rust-coloured squares, lined, hard face, thinning hair and a tie that matched his jacket. His fingers were thick and clean, as if he had just removed gardening gloves.

"No." I smiled, embarrassed.

"Ahhh!" he gasped, happily, "I used to be like you. I used to be blind to the really important things." He forced a pamphlet into my hand (green ink, printed, with headings like WHAT PRAYER DOES and WHO IS YOUR SAVIOR?) and looked at my left ear as I caught his gaze. "You need Jesus." he intoned.

"Look." I scratched my stubbled cheek. "I don't want to be rude but I'm sure there are more worthy people here who'd like to talk with you."

"Ahhhh!" he gasped again with relish. "Ahhhah! You're so smug!"

I gulped and shuffled my feet.

"Yes you are: you're smug." He wagged his finger before his eyes. "But you'll find out one day, just as I did. You'll find that everlasting life can only be gained by accepting the one who was sent to save you."

I forced his pamphlet back into his hands. "Thanks very much but I think I'll worry about that in my own way." My hands dug determinedly into my pockets.

He gazed a desperate look right into my eyes, looking for my soul. "Well, I've

told you haven't I?" he whined. "I've done my best; I've warned you. My conscience is clear. If you want Eternal Damnation it's your fault." He shook a tear from each eye. "Goodbye."

"Thankyou." I sighed, "See you in Heaven."

I looked around me once more. No vast crowds were apparent in the Square, and I had to walk a ways to find a policeman.

"Constable," I looked steeply upwards at the lofty heights of a guardian of the peace, "when will the CND marchers reach here?"

The policeman looked at me from his awesome altitude. "They won't, sir."

He sounded quite decided about the matter, and I thought I detected a certain stiffening of his upper lip.

I smiled. "Oh. Uh, where are they going then?"

"Are you one of them?"

"N-no. Why?"

"Well, if you were I wouldn't tell you where they are." He stepped back a pace. "But as you're not, they're meeting in Hyde Park."

"Oh." I grinned and chuckled. "Huhuh, I just want to take some photos of them." I indicated my camera, but the law had lost interest in me so I started walking.

Up to Piccadilly Circus first, then along Piccadilly itself to Hyde Park Corner, I reconed. A long walk, but it can be interesting sometimes. This time it was fascinating, for the streets were almost deserted. One of the clock on a Monday afternoon and the Hub of the Empah deserted! I looked in awe, and moved along the pavement to where some artists were offering their works on the railings of Green Park, which extends almost half the length of Piccadilly.

Various paintings there reflected the world the artists saw - or the world they hoped their tourist-customers think they should see - with a supremely nonchalant regard for the section of 'real' London wherein the canvases were hung. Against the solid and soft greens of the Park hung violent reds and harsh yellows of rain-dappled scenes of Soho. Weird blocks of solid colours flushed violently with the indignity of such close juxtaposition with the soft browns and greys of the railings and pavement. Fine oil details vied for clarity of conception with the late spring trees that showed the bare wood details of their tracings of the overlong winter. One or two bunches of pedestrians stood silently admiring one or two paintings of bunches of pedestrians with blurred lights and colours of London's West End all about them. Some soft winter views were hung there. Dreaming, with a warm spring sun heating my shoulders, I could almost see the snow banked in great billows by frozen ponds with patient trees waiting nearby for the cold to leave their starkly naked boughs. And there were strange varnish-slickened night-scapes of the awesome autumn sunsets.

At the end of the railing was a poster with a picture of a war-wrecked child and parent in a desolated street, and the poster bore the slogan: "This is what we want to prevent." The CND sign on the poster reminded me of my objective and I briskly walked the length of Green Park away from the quiet artists to Hyde

Park Corner.

The Park looked deserted from where I crossed Park Lane just north of the Duke of Wellington's Museum. Several people walked intently in different directions, all attending to their own business, but there was no large incredible crowd as I had expected to see, and there was no loud deafening noise as I had believed I would hear.

But as I moved nearer to the grass inside the fence I realised that the colours about a quarter of a mile inside the Park were those of many people in many coloured clothes. The slight haze in the air gave the scene a soundless dream-like appearance, which stayed with it while I approached. Nearer, I could see banners moving from left to right as a hidden body of marchers moved into the Park between an avenue of onlookers. Briefly, I joined the latter and took one or two photographs, but then I walked on to a place at which the marchers were gathering. I walked around there, aimlessly, wondering just what was supposed to happen. A stage had been erected between two trees, and a number of loud-speakers hung from the branches of the trees or bristled over the windscreens of parked vans. People were everywhere, walking it seemed as aimlessly as I. Most of them were clean and suitably dressed for a day spent in the Park. These surely weren't the marchers, I thought: Had I marched for three days I would be covered in grime and sweat, but these people looked fairly fresh. Later, in talking to marchers, I found that most of them had had the good sense to travel to their homesthe night before (when they had marched into the outskirts of London) in order to clean up.

I climbed a fence and took some photographs of the Park, which was beginning to fill with many thousand people. Then, I suddenly recalled an article in one of the weekend's papers in which the writer had mentioned that Deputations would be present to represent Japan, Australia, Fiji, and... New Zealand.

I clambered to the ground and dug my way through the teeming thousands to the dispersal point of the marchers. I waited, wondering if I might be lucky, and right on cue a banner for "New Zealand" bobbed and weaved along with the column. Nobody there I recognised, except.. Could it? Yes. Carl Freeman, a friend from Wellington days cheerfully shifted the banner he was holding ("Kiwis say No to Pacific Tests") and sauntered along with the mob.

I followed, and when the column stopped for a moment I joined them. It was good, though startling, to be back amongst Kiwi accents again after such a long time away from home. Carl and I hailed each other, spoke briefly, and then the column staggered on, eventually to come to a final halt on the grass, where we were asked to sit down.

For a while I felt out of place. After all, I hadn't been in the march, and I felt rather a cheat to sit with these people. True, some of them had marched only the one day, but they hadn't gone to the Park in the touristy, gawking, frame of mind that I had. I put on an expressions of polite, friendly, keen, wryly-astonished interest, however, and talked to some of the folk around me. Some looked vaguely familiar, and within a few minutes I found about six or eight people who had seen me on stage or who had friends in common with me or who had gone to the same school as myself. This is not an unusual thing with New Zealanders: everybody is somebody's cousin.

Gradually, I found more pluck, and decided to brazenly join the deputation. I

asked the people about me where the march was to end and was informed that they were expecting to march down Whitehall and disperse there. They spoke lightly of a rumour that there might be a sit-down in Trafalgar Square and - more likely - a silent assembly at the American Embassy in protest of the imminent explosion of the U.S.A. "Rainbow" bomb.

Talking and arguing with the CND members, I began to find out how wrong was the public image of their organisation. Mostly, the CND is tied in to the UN League in Britain, and its members are not all pacifists, unilateralists, or beatniks. They are not all despoilers of virgins and babies alike or even hopeless nihilists. They do not swallow bezedrine pills with every drop of the saliva that does not drip from their non-existent drooling lips. Their eyes do not burn with a craze for exhibitionistic fervour from cretinous filthy faces.

They are people, and they believe, simply, in banning the testing and stockpiling and threat of using nuclear weapons.

Anyway, I decided to join them in the final section of their march. For awhile then, I sat with them all on the grass of Hyde Park in the middle of London: one vagrant among more than 100,000 demonstrators.

After a while, I became aware that somewhere - probably on that stage between the trees - someone was speaking. I couldn't hear more than an occasional half-word borne by the slight Springtime breeze and I was too drowsy under the warm sun to worry about listening closely. But it did momentarily occur to me that it was a bit silly for all these people to have done so much and then not be able to hear speakers give voice to their own silent demonstration. But then I realised the strange strength behind such demonstrators. These people weren't particularly interested in hearing the declarations and suppositions that were being tossed about from the speakers' platforms: their interest was more personal. They know that simply by being in a large crowd they much attract attention. It mattered not at all that they received no individual egoboo, no private acclaim, no personal agreement. The importance of the occasion was that as individuals they could demonstrate their protest simply and quietly in this peaceful gathering and that because so many individuals had gathered together their belief might gain some recognition, some sympathy, and perhaps some support.

Soon, we left the Park and began to walk through the streets of Knightsbridge that lead to Victoria and thence to Whitehall. As we walked - oh a shambling rabble we were! - people on the pavements and in cars, buses, even in houses and shops, reacted to the sight in their own ways. Some made breast-feeding signs at us or pointed their middle fingers our way. Some raised a cheer and wagged their thumbs at us in the popular "Swiggin'" sign, big grins of astonishment on their faces. Others roared at us "Ban War - not the bomb" and we roared back "MacMillan - Out; Kennedy - Out; Krushchev - Out!" To complete the ludicrous impossibility of the chant I occasionally added "Shirt-tails - Out!" but this didn't catch on.

Most of the way I carried a banner (the one Carl Freeman had borne earlier) and for some time I helped keep the "NZ" banner aloft and well clear of the much larger "Australia" banner. The pace of the column was fast and I had time and breath for only a few sketchy and frantic conversations with various demonstrators. It was wonderful, that day, to meet people who were willing to go to a great deal of trouble of an ideal - who would put up with more than their share of personal discomfort for the sake of an ethic. Sneaking in breathless gasps

with so many people, I reassured my mind that the demonstrators were sincere in their belief. Though they may look scruffy, or may be clowning and guffawing with raucous laughter, or may be rapturously yelling a slogan in a sedate back-street, they were honest in the one thing they claimed to be honest in. They want to ban the bomb. Why shouldn't they enjoy the marching, why shouldn't they enjoy high spirited exuberance? Just because their intent is serious they need not forego an enjoyment in their method.

As we neared Victoria and the inevitable traffic snarl-up I stepped out of the column and viewed the whole affair from the kerbside. Healthy protestors marched and trotted past me. Banners briefly caught my eyes - in particular a banner borne by the Japanese contingent which was closely followed by a banner for those "unable to attend" - an obvious reference to the casualties of Atomic warfare.

The sound of tramping feet and of laughs and jokes was subdued by the chants that came bellowing from the hoarse voiced Cypriot delegation. And they in turn were drowned eventually by the throbbing of a West Indian Steel Band that beautifully weaved its way in the wake of the Commonwealth contingents.

I had no time to wait for all the contingents to pass me, but what I saw covered most of a mile of road and I believe the whole column was near to seven miles in length!

Along Whitehall we trudged and my feet began to ache from being pressed against hard tarmac - yet many of the people around me had marched over thirty miles on these roads in ill-prepared shoes. By the Cenotaph the whole column observed some silence in pity for the dead and bereaved of wars of other generations.

We turned off Whitehall into back-streets and eventually passed Canon Collins, who stood welcoming the contingents in a square near the Embankment of the Thames. And then the march was over.

People milled about in the square and in the streets around it. Some contingents continued to march, drunk on the euphoria of exercise and comradeship. Loudspeakers crackled harshly with the voices of organisers trying to tell everyone that we could all form up again in an hour to march in silent protest to the American Embassy. A van with a speaker crawled amongst the mob and exhorted the campaigners to stage a sit-down protest in Trafalgar Square. On the side of the van was a sticker identifying it as a "Committee of 100" vehicle. This was clear evidence to me of the split between the CND and the Committee of 100*.

There was noise like confetti in the air and everywhere people walked and crowds surged. I stood and watched and talked with my fellow Kiwis.

Later, we stood silent for ten minutes outside the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square. In the dark some thousands of people stood quietly, obedient to the unneeded police who kept the roadway clear for traffic. At the end of that astounding time a ripple of applause flowed around the Square as Canon Collins and others ascended the steps into the Embassy, delivered their letter of protest,

*The Committee of 100 was formed by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament to break the Conspiracy of Silence (during which CND activities were receiving no publicity in press, radio, or television). Having done so with spectacular protests, they have refused to disband and continue acting independently.

then left: dignified, quiet, earnest.

Later still a quiet and friendly NZ contingent - shrunk in numbers, but enlarged in spirit - found its way back to Hyde Park via the brightly lit Easter Oxford Street. Somehow, the threatened flash of nuclear explosions was not dimmed in our minds by the opulent lights; nor was the honesty of our faces made petty by the facade of enjoyment that lined the fancy street.

°the end°
°°°°°°°°°

MERVYN BARRITT: 17/12/61 (cont'd.)

1 Egan St., West Richmond,
Melbourne, Vic., Australia

...I'm told that Jack Richardson has completely fallen prey to TV and no one ever sees him these days. Maurice is living with Good Old Ken and Ray Lee in a flat over in Te Anau Rd. and Jill tells me that your old lover Merlene is going to marry Mark Young - I don't know if you remember him but he was a young, red-haired, neurotic bass player with the Varsity Jazz Club.

and 29/4/62

Ron Polson who moved up to Auckland soon after we left has married and is now in Sydney trying to make it as a singer. I'm sure he will but it takes time for people to get to know that one is around. John Esam is or was, last time I heard, living in Paris. If you get across there look around the Left Bank for him and if you find him then give him my regards. Do you remember Cushla Condon? She was the dame that John Morgans locked himself in the back with one night at one of the parties we had at No. 6 Doctors Commons. Anne Floplop tells me that she's in London now. Also in London - I can't remember whether I told you this are Winifred and Mona. They were those twins that used to kick around with Gordon Esam. He was in Sydney for a while but has now gone back to New Zealand. Ben Goffman also of the Polson/Esam circuit is now here in Melbourne and married. Fred Gebbie and some other guy up in Auckland have chartered a Japanese Liner and are going to run a passenger service between New Zealand and Japan with stops off at all the mail Easter Ports. Victor is doing quite well for himself on the cartoon bit and sends me clippings from the local papers. One of the concerned a "World Twist Competition" at the Sheridan (you remember it - near the Tete a Tete in Herbert St.) Ballroom which was being hostessed by - Anna Karina Hoffman. Since you left Anna has been on again off again with the police and has had one jail sentence and a couple of charges on which she was fined. Alan Henderson was over here with a show and when Jill and I were in Sydney at the beginning of the year we saw him quite a lot. Never an exactly solid looking cat he was looking thinner than ever. Keith Fields is supposed to be coming over here when Ron gets established. Anne tells me that Bryan Harman now has a car and has his friend Bridon to drive him around in it. You remember Raywin and Denzil Philips? He worked at Thompstones and she was a teacher. You were sort of smooching around her at the housewarming party at No. 8. They are in London now too.

and 12 /9/62

I forget whether I told you that the Vondruskas have two children now. Well, if I didn't, they have. So it looks as though the home front there is reasonably solid. Richard Paris is building a house at Paramatta. Jack Richardson has another child - a boy type. John Morgans has a desk job working for a shipping company. (§§Fascinated and bewildered readers alike are referred to the lettercol§§)

INTERROGATION

I was having a cup of tea in the canteen. I wasn't back on duty, understand, the doctors said they thought I'd be fit to commence in a couple of weeks. But not being married, and not having a home to go to, I was lonely, and I wanted to see the boys again. It was about half ten, I'd have to go soon, the canteen closed at eleven...but when you've been on the force as long as I have...28 years, you sort of feel an institution, and, I suppose it's rather selfish, but you feel that the others will think something is amiss if they don't see you around.

I'd chatted to a couple of the "E" squad men, then they were whipped away to a serious assault near the docks. I envied them, you know...I itched to get back again, to sample the battle of wits which a detective fought many times a day...the lightening change of plan to suit the demeanour of the person being questioned...knowing the exact time to offer a cigarette...when to sneer...when to give a sarcastic grin...when to play it off the cuff and threaten to arrest and charge, when you haven't any evidence...it all came by experience, I had a score years of it. Put me in a room, and I could tell whether a suspect was innocent or guilty by just having a few words with him.

"Hallelujah."

I drained the last lukewarm drop of tea, and looked up as a young cub sat next to me.

"How ya feeling, Mike?" he asked. He looked worried.

Nice lad. Probationer. Came on the Staff a couple months before I went sick.

"I feel great, son," I smiled. "What's wrong, girl not turn up?"

He lit a cigarette.

"No." He shook his head, screwed up his eyes.

"Tell me what's eating you?" I asked. Only too pleased to help...to have someone talk to me.

"Well...." he hesitated. "I've a chap in for a breaking. I picked him up a couple of hours ago. I know he did the job, because he left a couple of fingerprints. Unfortunately, the dabs were only fragmentary, and can't be produced as evidence. And he won't talk...just sits there laffing at me. I'll have to let him go."

I tried to hide the twitch that rippled across my lips.

"Look, son," I said. "I've over 20 years experience at breaking men. Let me have a go, will you....to sort of keep me in trim. Doc says I'll be starting soon....will you....please?"

I must have said the last word too pleadingly, as in fact I'd meant to.

"I'll have to learn sometime," he grumbled...

"You've just time for a cuppa...let me see, in exactly twelve minutes, come to the Interrogation Room, and say this....."

He blinked, looked at me strangely.

"I promise he'll be ready to write a statement," I grinned.

I felt triumphant...you know?

I looked at him across the desk top...the old familiar Interrogation Room desktop, with the brown cigarette stubs, the blots of ink...and red ink (not blood....!) and doodles and dates and the odd witty criminals legend 'Charlie did it'....I breathed in the fuggy air, and I felt I was living again.

I smiled at him politely.

"Name, son?"

"Smitten, dad," he sneered. "Red Smitten."

"On account of your hair," I grinned coyly.

"Yer a genius," he sneered. He ran a hand through the ginger hair which almost hung like a mane over the dirty Harris Tweed jacket.

"Now tell me about this job you did last night."

"Me ? A job ? Listen, pop, get lost."

I sat back, abashed. A tear came into each eye. Honest. I was superb. My training see.

"Give me a break, son," I whined. "Must be a couple years since I got a good case. I'm getting old...I used to be good, but, you know how it is."

He seemed to.

"Keerist," he jeered. "First of all a greenhorn babbles about a job, and now you come in. Where do they get 'em ? I ask ya. Lemme out of here, I've a popsie waiting at home...eh?"

He gave me a dirty wink

My hand trembled as I pulled out a packet of fags. I took one. Smitten leaned across, took one....and then, I never saw this before, he took the whole packet off me, and put it blatantly in the breast pocket of his jacket. He snapped his fingers for a light.

Hadn't lost my touch. I heard a symphony orchestra....strings shimmering higher and higher, until the climax almost hurt me...there was something almost primitive about it...like a sabre-toothed tiger allowing an antelope to drink from the stream, whilst settling himself for the spring ...it was exhilarating....

"Oh....er...here, Red."

I held the match to him. He took a deep breath, seemingly trying to get the smoke down as far as his toes.

He stood up, hands thrust into his jeans, balancing on the balls of his feet.

I turned back, shoulders bent... 'when' ..that was the whole point of my twenty years of experience...I knew 'when.'

I leapt on the desk.

I reached both hands upwards, reaching for the ceiling.

"HALLELUJAH" I screamed.

I ruffled my hair, and I looked down at him. I forced the bubbling saliva from between my lips. I never saw such terror and bewilderment in anyones eyes before. The cigarette dropped out of his mouth.

I was supreme.

I held my jacket tails, stretched them out like a bird, and leapt at him. He staggered backwards, he hands thrashing in front of him. I crossed over, and looked into his eyes...mine an inch from his.

"JUDAS" I screamed as loud as I could.

He looked over my shoulder towards the door, hope flickering in his eyes.

It was the cub.

"There's a squad car going past St. Leonard's, Mr. Johnston," he said, looking at me, saying his lines just as I'd told him.... "want a lift?"

Smitted sobbed...I turned the screw, see. St. Leonard's was a home for the insane...the violent types, you know?

"Get him outa here, quick," Smitted breathed. He actually gripped the cubs lapels.... "Sure I did the job...now get me into a cell, quick."

I winked at the cub. Twelve minutes flat, from a toughie who'd admit nothing to a babbling coward who'd admit blowing up Fort Knox.

The cub dragged Smitten away, and I tidied myself up. I combed my hair, had to be careful, not a lot left. I went back to the canteen, got a last cup before the girl pulled down the shutters. I took my time over the tea and the cigarette. I relived those precious moments. What a technique. Hadn't lost my touch, in fact, I prided myself that I'd improved with the layoff. I couldn't wait to resume again.

I put on my overcoat, pulled the collar up. I went down the stairs, through the billiards room, waved to a couple of the boys, along the corridor to the Sergeant's Desk.

"Hi, Sarge," I greeted

"Why, hello Mike. How's the form?"

"Starting in a coupla weeks. Doc said I'm almost well."

"Good...good...can't do without a good man...well..goodnight."

"Good night....er...say, Sarge, any chance of a Squad Car to run me to St. Leonard's?"

John Berry 1962.

BALL-BOY

My career as a footballer is rather unique (at least, was unique, because it's all a memory now - at least, competitive play is.)

To most footballers, ball play and positional skill come at an early age, but with me it was many years before I developed the necessary techniques, and then I was too old to play and had to retire. I remember my last game, a couple of years ago. For half an hour I was superb...I got the ball, sized up the situation, and with superb skill sent uncannily accurate cross-field passes to my wingers (I was centre forward) and was ready in front of goal for the return pass and the resultant kick or head into the corner of the net. In this half hour period I scored three goals; one glancing header...one knee-high volley from 25 yards, and, as a sort of unconventional piece de resistance, to show my superiority, the third went in off my backside, as I was tying up a bootlace.

Then, unhappily, my age began to assert itself. I knew what to do - where the unmarked players were, but when I tried to kick the ball, my muscles didn't respond, and my right boot grazed the grass where the ball

had been about fifteen seconds before. I became a physical wreck - after half time, the rest of my team had to turn me round to face in the new direction of play. It's a horrible feeling when you know what should be done, but you haven't got the requisite physical alertness and agility to do it.

So, on my retirement, I decided to pass on to my son the lessons it had taken me twenty years to learn...

I purchased a light plastic ball, the correct football size, and used the square of lawn at the back of my house as a practice ground.

A young man, Pete, who lives next door, came round at my suggestion (he actually leapt over the hedge), and stood in the goal I had knocked up from two brooms and a length of bamboo. This boy, Pete, is a superb goal-keeper, with a feline agility and a sort of extra-sensory perception, giving him a knack of knowing exactly in which direction the shot is coming from.

I planned to make Colin a centre forward, and I reasoned that with a first class goalie to face, and with my expert tuition behind him, goading him on, he'd be a cert.

"A centre forward must have a cannon-like shot," I said, "like this."

I stood a dozen yards from Pete, looked to the left of the goal, and kicked the ball hard with the outside of my right foot. The ball zoomed to the right of the goal like a bullet, and Pete, watching my preliminary gaze, had wrongly decided my shot would be to the left, as I had planned he should do. But, like a gazelle, he twisted in mid air, and tipped the ball past the broom.

"That was to test Pete," I gritted, " now I'll send in a hard shot."

It was most certainly a hard shot.

Pete's eyes grew wide, and he flung himself over the hedge. The ball passed where his head had been, through the goal, hit the back door, rebounded, and hit me on the nose.

"Moral, Colin, " I said, after the tourniquet had been applied round my neck (rather tightly, I thought)..." always keep your mouth closed."

Pete returned after his mother had thrown a bucket of cold water over him, to stop the hysterics.

"The cross from the wing, and resultant header," I explained. "Pete in goal, you as centre forward, I'll cross for you to head."

We took up our positions. I dribbled superbly amongst the lupins, hefted the inside of my right hobnail, and floated a perfect ball across the goal. Colin looked at it as it sailed past.

"Wonderful cross ball," he nodded in admiration.

"You were supposed to hit it in the goal with your head," I screamed.

"Colin, you get in goal, and I'll show you how. Pete, cross the ball from the lupins, will you ?"

Pete was a good wingman, too. His cross ball rose like a swallow, and I leapt forward like an over-sexed stallion, my head thrust forward aggressively.

They dragged me out of the dustbin, and plucked potato peelings off me,

"Saw an act like that on the circus on TV the other night," said Colin.

"Where did the ball go ?" gasped Pete, rising to his feet, and clutching his stomach.

"Flip the ball," I gritted....."Colin, there's a wonderful game called Poker, you play with cards...nip upstairs and get your money box...."

John Berry

1962

GODS LIKE GRASS

BY
GRANT
ALLEN

By far the most interesting in the curious group of artificially-made gods are those which are sacrificed in connection with agriculture. These deities appeal to us from several points of view. In the first place, they form, among agricultural races as a whole, the most important and venerated objects of worship. In the second place, it is largely through their influence or on their analogy, as I believe, that so many other artificial gods came to be renewed or sacrificed annually. In the third place, it is the gods of agriculture who are most of all slain sacramentally, whose bodies are eaten by their votaries in the shape of cakes of bread or other foodstuffs, and whose blood is drunk in the form of wine. The immediate connection of these sacramental ceremonies with the sacrifice of the mass, and the identification of the Christ with bread and wine, give to this branch of our enquiry a peculiar importance from the point of view of the evolution of Christianity. We must therefore enter at some little length into the genesis of these peculiar and departmental gods, who stand so directly in the main line of evolution of the central divine figure in the Christian religion.

All over the world, wherever cultivation exists, a special class of corn-gods or grain-gods is found, deities of the chief foodstuff, - be it maize, or dates, or plantain, or rice - and it is a common feature of all these gods that they are represented by human or quasi-human victims, who are annually slain at the time of sowing. These human gods are believed to reappear once more in the form of the crop that rises from their sacred bodies; their death and resurrection are celebrated in festivals; and they are eaten and drunk sacramentally by their votaries, in the shape of first-fruits, or of cakes and wine, or of some other embodiment of the divine being. We have therefore to enquire into the origin of this curious superstition, which involves, as it seems to me, the very origin of cultivation itself as a human custom. And I must accordingly bespeak my readers' indulgence if I diverge for a while into what may seem at first a purely botanical digression.

Most people must have been struck by the paradox of cultivation. A particular plant in a state of nature, let us say, grows and thrives only in water, or in some exceedingly moist and damp situation. You take up this waterside plant with a trowel one day, and transfer it incontinently to a dry bed in a sun-baked garden; when lo! the moisture-loving creature, instead of withering and

from "The Evolution of the Idea of God", and enquiry into the origins of religions, by Grant Allen, published by Grant Richards, in London, 1904. First printed October 1897. My copy is the 4th. Printing, dated July 1904.

dying, as one might naturally expect of it, begins to grow apace, and to thrive to all appearance even better and more lustily than in its native habitate. Or you remove some parched desert weed from its arid rock to a moist and rainy climate; and instead of dwindling, as one imagines it ought to do under the altered conditions, it spreads abroad in the deep rich mould of a shrubbery bed, and attains a stature impossible to its kind in its original surroundings. Our gardens, in fact, show us side by side plants which, in the wild state, demand the most varied and dissimilar habitats. Siberian squills blossom amicably in the same bed with Italian tulips; the alpine saxifrage spreads its purple rosettes in friendly rivalry with the bog-loving marsh-marigold or the dry Spanish iris. The question, therefore, sooner or later occurs to the enquiring mind: How can they all live together so well here in man's domain, when in the outside world each demands and exacts so extremely different and specialised a situation?

Of course it is only an inexperienced biologist who could long be puzzled by this apparent paradox. He must soon see the true solution of the riddle, if he has read and digested the teachings of Darwin. For the real fact is, in a garden or out of it, most of these plants could get on very well in a great variety of climates or situations - if only they were protected against outside competition. There we have the actual crux of the problem. It is not that the moisture-loving plants cannot live in dry situations, but that the dry-loving plants, specialised and adapted for the post, can compete with them there at an immense advantage, and so, in a very short time, live them down altogether. Every species in a state of nature is continually exposed to the ceaseless competition of every other; and each on its own ground can beat its competitors. But in a garden, the very thing we aim at is just the restrict and prevent competition; to give each species a fair chance for life, even in conditions where other and better-adapted species can usually outlive it. This, in fact, is really at bottom all that we ever mean by a garden - a space of ground cleared, and kept clear, of its natural vegetation (commonly called in this connection weeds), and deliberately stocked with other plants, most or all of which the weeds would live down if not artificially prevented.

We see the truth of this point of view the moment the garden is, as we say, abandoned - that is to say, left once more to the operation of unaided nature. The plants with which we have stocked it loiter on for a while in a feeble and uncertain fashion, but are ultimately choked out by the stronger and better-adapted weeds which compose the natural vegetation of the locality. The dock and nettle live down in time the larkspur and peony. The essential thing in the garden is, in short, the clearing of the ground from the weeds - that is, in other words, from the native vegetation. A few minor things may or may not be added, such as manuring, turning the soil, protecting with shelter, and so forth; but the clearing is itself the one thing needful.

Slight as this point seems at first sight, I believe it includes the whole secret of the origin of tillage, and therefore, by implication, of the gods of agriculture. For, looked at in essence, cultivation is weeding, and weeding is cultivation. When we say that a certain race cultivates a certain plant-staple, we mean no more in the last resort than that it sows or sets it in soil artificially cleared of competing species. Sowing without clearing is absolutely useless. So the question of the origin of cultivation resolves itself at last simply into this - how did certain men come first to know that by clearing ground of weeds and keeping it clear of them they could promote the growth of certain desirable human foodstuffs?

To begin with, it may be as well to premise that the problem of the origin of cultivation is a far more complex one than appears at first sight. For we have not only to ask, as might seem to the enquirer unaccustomed to such investigations, "How did the early savage first find out that seeds would grow better when planted in open soil, already freed from weeds or natural competitors?" but also the other and far more difficult question, "How did the early savage ever find out that plants would grow from seeds at all?" That, I take it, is the real riddle of the situation, and it is one which, so far as I know, has hitherto escaped all enquirers into the history and origin of human progress.

Fully to grasp the profound nature of this difficulty we must throw ourselves back mentally into the condition and position of primitive man. We ourselves have known so long and so familiarly the fact that plants grow from seeds - that the seed is the essential reproductive part of the vegetable organism - that we find it hard to unthink that piece of commonplace knowledge, and to realise that what to us is an almost self-evident truth is to the primitive savage a long and difficult inference. Our own common and certain acquaintance with the fact, indeed, is entirely derived from the practice of agriculture. We have seen seeds sown from our earliest childhood, but before agriculture grew up, the connection between seed and seedling could not possibly be known or even suspected by primitive man, who was by no means prone to make abstract investigations into the botanical nature or physiological object of the various organs in the herbs about him. That the seed is the reproductive part of the plant was a fact as little likely in itself to strike him as that the stamens were the male organs, or that the leaves were the assimilative and digestive surfaces. He could only have found out that plants grew from seeds by the experimental process of sowing and growing them. Such an experiment he was far from likely ever to try for its own sake. He must have been led to it by some other and accidental coincidence.

Now what was primitive man likely to know and observe about the plants around him? Primarily one thing only: that some of them were edible and some were not. There you have a distinction of immediate interest to all humanity. And what parts of plants were most likely to be useful to him in this respect as foodstuffs? Those parts which the plant had specially filled up with rich material for its own use or the use of its offspring. The first are the roots, stocks, bulbs, corms, or tubers in which it lays by foodstuffs for its future growth; the second are the seeds which it produces and enriches in order to continue its kind to succeeding generations.

Primitive man, then, knows the fruits, seeds, and tubers, just as the squirrel, the monkey, and the parrot know them, as so much good foodstuff, suitable to his purpose. But why should he ever dread of saving or preserving some of these fruits or seeds, when he has found them, and of burying them in the soil, on the bare off-chance that by pure magic, as it were, they might give rise to others? No idea could be more foreign to the nature and habits of early man. In the first place, he is far from provident; his way is to eat up at once what he has killed or picked; and in the second place, how could he ever come to conceive that seeds buried in the ground could possibly produce more seeds in future? Nay, even if he did know it - which is well-nigh impossible - would he be likely, feckless creature that he is, to save or spare a handful of seeds to-day in order that other seeds might spring from their burial-place in another twelvemonth? The difficulty is so enormous when one fairly faces it that it positively staggers one; we begin to wonder whether really, after all, the first steps in cultivation could ever have been taken.

The savage, when he has killed a deer or a game-bird, does not bury a part of it or an egg of it in the ground, in the expectation that it will grow into more deer or morebird hereafter. Why then should he, when he has picked a peck of fruits or wild cereals, bury some of them in the ground, and expect a harvest? The savage is a simple and superstitious person; but I do not think he is quite such a fool as this proceeding would make him out to be. He is not likely ever to have noticed that plants in the wild state grow from seeds - at least prior to the rise of agriculture, from which, as I believe, he first and slowly gained that useful knowledge. And he certainly is not likely ever to have tried deliberate experiments upon the properties of plants, as if he were a Fellow of the Royal Society. These two roads being thus effectually blocked to us, we have to enquire, "Was there ever any way in which primitive man could have blundered blindfold upon a knowledge of the truth, and could have discovered incidentally to some other function of his life the two essential facts that plants grow from seeds, and that the growth and supply of useful food-plants can be artificially increased by burying and sowing such seeds in ground cleared of weeds, that is to say of the natural competing vegetation?"

I believe there is one way, and one way only, in which primitive man was at all likely to become familiar with these facts. I shall try to show that all the operations of primitive agriculture very forcibly point to this strange and almost magical origin of cultivation; that all savage agriculture retains to the last many traces of its origin; and that the sowing of the seed itself is hardly considered so important and essential a part of the complex process as certain purely superstitious and bloodthirsty practices that long accompany it. In one word, ~~not~~ to keep the reader in doubt any longer, I am inclined to believe that cultivation and the sowing of seeds for crops had their beginning as an adjunct of the primitive burial system.

Up to the present time, so far as I know, only one origin for cultivation has ever been even conjecturally suggested; and that is a hard one. It has been said that the first hint of cultivation may have come from the observation that seeds accidentally cast out on the kitchen-middens, or on the cleared space about huts, caves, or other human dwelling-places, germinated and produced more seeds in succeeding seasons. Very probably many savages have observed the fact that food-plants frequently grow on such heaps of refuse. But that observation alone does not bring us much nearer to the origin of cultivation. For why should early man connect such a fact with the seeds more than with the bones, the shells, or the mere accident of proximity? We must rid our minds of all the preconceptions of inductive and experimental science, and throw ourselves mentally back into the position of the savage to whom nature is one vast field of unrelated events, without fixed sequence or physical causation. Moreover, a kitchen-midden is not a cleared space; on the contrary, it is a weed-bed of extraordinary luxuriance. It brings us no nearer the origin of clearing.

There is, however, one set of function in which primitive men do actually perform all the essential acts of agriculture, without in the least intending it; and that is the almost universal act of the burial of the dead. Burial is, so far as I can see, the only object for which early races, or, what comes to the same thing, very low savages, ever turn or dig the ground. We have seen already that the original idea of burial was to confine the ghost or corpse of the dead man by putting a weight of earth on top of him* and lest this should be insufficient to keep him from troublesome reappearances, a big stone was frequently rolled

*in an earlier chapter, the author showed conclusively how burial began as a fearful prevention against any inclination a 'dead' man might have to wander.BB

above his mound or tumulus, which is the origin of all our monuments, now diverted to the honour and commemoration of the deceased. But the point to which I wish just now to direct attention is this - that in the act of burial, and in that act alone, we get a first beginning of turning the soil, exposing fresh earth, and so incidentally eradicating the weeds. We have here, in short, the first necessary ~~pré~~lude to the evolution of agriculture.

The next step, of course, must be the sowing of the seed. And here, I venture to think, funeral customs supply us with the only conceivable way in which such sowing could ever have begun. For early men would certainly not waste the precious seeds which it took them so much time and trouble to collect from the wild plants around them, in mere otiose scientific experiments on vegetable development. But we have seen that it is the custom of all savages to offer at the tombs of their ancestors food and drink of the same kind as they themselves are in the habit of using. Now, with people in the hunting stage, such offerings would no doubt most frequently consist of meat, the flesh of the hunted beasts or game-birds; but they would also include fish, fruits, seeds, tubers, and berries, and in particular such rich grains as those of the native pulses and cereals. Evidence of such things offered at the graves of the dead has been collecting in such abundance by Dr. Tylor, Mr. Frazer, and Mr. Herbert Spencer, that I need not here adduce any further examples of so familiar a practice.

What must be the obvious result? Here, and here alone, the savage quite unconsciously sows seeds upon newly-turned ground, deprived of its weeds, and further manured by the blood and meat of the frequent sacrificial offerings. These seeds must often spring up and grow apace, with a rapidity and luxuriance which cannot fail to strike the imagination of the primitive hunter. Especially will this be the case with that class of plants which ultimately develop into the food-crops of civilised society. For the peculiarity of these plants is that they are one and all - maize, corn, or rice, pease, beans, or millet - annuals of rapid growth and portentous stature; plants which have thriven in the struggle for existence by laying up large stores of utilisable material in their seeds for the use of the seedling; and this peculiarity enables them to start in life in each generation exceptionally well endowed, and so to compete at an advantage with all their fellows. Seeds of such a sort would thrive exceedingly in the newly-turned and well-manured soil of a grave or barrow; and producing there a quantity of rich and edible grain, would certainly attract the attention of that practical and observant man, the savage. For though he is so incurious about what are non-essentials, your savage is a peculiarly long-headed person about all that concerns his own immediate advantage.

What conclusion would at once be forced upon him? That seeds planted in freshly-turned and richly-manured soil produce threefold and fourfold? Nothing of the sort. He knows naught of seeds and manures and soils; he would at once conclude, after his kind, that the dreaded and powerful ghost in the barrow, pleased with the gifts of meat and seeds offered to him, had repaid those gifts in kind by returning grain for grain a hundredfold out of his own body. This original connection of ideas seems to me fully to explain that curious identification of the ghost or spirit with the corn or other foodstuff which Mr. Frazer has so wonderfully and conclusively elaborated in "The Golden Bough".

Some little evidence is even forthcoming that vegetation actually does show exceptional luxuriance on graves and barrows. The Rev. Alexander Stewart of Ballachulish mentions that the milkmaids in Lochaber and elsewhere in the Scotch highlands used to pour a little milk daily from the pail on the "fairy knowes" or

prehistoric barrows; and the consequence was that "these fairy knolls were clothed with a more beautiful verdure than any other spot in the country." In Fiji, Mr. Fison remarks that yam-plants spring luxuriantly from the heaps of yam presented to ancestral spirits in the sacred stone enclosure or temenos; and two or three recent correspondents (since this chapter was first printed in a monthly review) have obligingly communicated to me analogous facts from Madagascar, Central Africa, and the Malay Archipelago. It is clear from their accounts that graves do often give rise to crops of foodstuffs, accidentally springing from the food laid upon them.

Just at first, under such circumstances, the savage would no doubt be content merely to pick and eat the seeds that thus grew casually, as it were, on the graves or barrows of his kings and kinsfolk. But in the process of time it would almost certainly come about that the area of cultivation would be widened somewhat. The first step toward such widening, I take it, would arise from the observation that cereals and other seeds only thrive exceptionally upon newly-made graves, not on graves in general. For as soon as the natural vegetation reasserted itself, the quickening power of the ghost would seem to be used up. Thus it might be found well to keep fresh ghosts always going for agricultural purposes. Hence might gradually arise a habit of making a new grave annually, at the most favourable sowing-time, which last would come to be recognised by half-unconscious experiment and observation. And this new grave, as I shall show reason for believing a little later, would be the grave, not of a person who happened to die then and there accidentally, but of a deliberate victim, slain in order to provide a spirit of vegetation - an artificial god - and to make the corn grow with vigour and luxuriance. Step by step, I believe, it would at length be discovered that if only you dug wide enough, the corn would grow well around as well as upon the actual grave of the divine victim. Thus slowly there would develop the cultivated field, the wider clearing, dug up or laboured by hand, and finally the ploughed field, which yet remains a grave in theory and in all essentials.

I have ventured to give this long and apparently un-essential preamble, because I wish to make it clear that the cultivated plot really dates back to the very origin of cultivation. Without a god, there would be no corn-field at all; and the corn-field, I believe, is long conceived merely as the embodiment of his vegetative spirit. Nay, the tilled field is often at our own day, and even in our own country, a grave in theory.

It is a mere commonplace at the present time to say that among early men and savages every act of life has a sacred significance; and agriculture especially is everywhere and always invested with a special sanctity. To us, it would seem natural that the act of sowing seed should be regarded as purely practical and physiological; that the seed should be looked upon merely as the part of the plant intended for reproduction, and that its germination should be accepted as a natural and normal process. Savages and early men, however, have no such conceptions. To them the whole thing is a piece of natural magic; you sow seeds, or, to be more accurate, you bury certain grains of foodstuffs in the freshly-turned soil, with certain magical rites and ceremonies; and then, after the lapse of a certain time, plants begin to grow upon this soil, from which you finally obtain a crop of maize or wheat or barley. The burial of the seeds or grains is only one part of the magical cycle, no more necessarily important for the realisation of the desired end than many others.

/§/ There follow numerous examples of religious immolation for practical agricultural purposes, for which we have not room enough. But...../§/

/§/The 'numerous examples' cover fourteen pages and most of the world, while the following passage sums up most of the argument./§/

The general conclusion I would incline to draw from all these instances is briefly this. Cultivation probably began with the accidental sowing of grains upon the tumuli of the dead. Gradually it was found that by extending the dug or tilled area and sowing it all over, a crop would grow upon it, provided always a corpse was buried in the centre. In process of time divine corpses were annually provided for the purpose, and buried with great ceremony in each field. By-and-bye it was found sufficient to offer a single victim for a whole tribe or village, and to divide his body piecemeal among the fields of the community. But the crops that grew in such fields were still regarded as the direct gifts of the dead and deified victims, whose soul was supposed to animate and fertilize them. As cultivation spread, men became familiarised at last with the conception of the seed and the ploughing as the really essential elements in the process; but they still continued to attach to the victim a religious importance, and to believe in the necessity of his presence for good luck in the harvest. With the gradual mitigation of savagery an animal sacrifice was often substituted for a human one; but the fragments of the animal were still distributed through the fields with a mimic or symbolical burial, just as the fragments of the man-god had formerly been distributed. Finally, under the influence of Christianity and other civilised religions, an effigy was substituted for a human victim, though an animal was often retained side by side with it, and a real human being was playfully killed in pantomime.

/§/The editor hopes that readers of this extract will realise that these are only the bare bones of the thesis covered by Grant Allen. Indeed, before the foregoing, there are 290 pages of illustration, argument, example, and convincing evidence that climaxes with this chapter on the "Gods of Cultivation". And following the chapter (only half of which has been reproduced here) are a further 150 pages of further examination, elaboration, and even more conclusive evidence of the way the author re-constructs the Evolution of the Idea of God.

As indicated earlier, another chapter of Grant Allen's book deals with the attitude a primitive man would have towards a Dead Man, and I would like to quote these earlier passages here. However, I have found a similar passage in another book which covers the same subject (though not so thoroughly) in rather more beautiful form. The author of the book is Winwood Reade, and the book's title "The Martyrdom of Man" appeared in the lists of Watts & Co., 1945. It was first published in 1872, three years before the death of its author./§/

...when through the operation of the law of growth the intellectual faculties of men become improved, they begin to observe their own nature, and in course of time a curious discovery is made. They ascertain that there is something which resides within them entirely independent and distinct from the body in which it is contained. They perceive that it is this mind, or soul, or genius, or spirit, which thinks and desires and decides. It commands the body as the chief commands the slave. While the body is asleep it is busy weaving thoughts in the sleeper's brain, or wanders into other lands and converses with people whom he, while awake, has never seen. They hear words of wisdom issuing from the toothless mouth of a decrepit old man. It is evident that this soul does not grow old, and therefore it does not die. The body, it is clear, is only a garment which is in time destroyed, and then where does its inmate go?

When a loved one has been taken she haunts the memory of him who weeps till the image imprinted on the heart is reflected on the curtain of the eye. Her vision appears not when he is quite asleep, as in an ordinary dream, but as he is passing into sleep. He meets her in the twilight land which divides the world of darkness from the world of day. He sees her form distinctly; he clasps it in his arms; he hears the accents of her sweet and gentle voice; he feels the pressure of her lips upon his own. He awakes, and the illusion is dispelled; yet with some it is so complete that they firmly believe it was a spirit whom they saw.

Among savages it is not love which can thus excite the imagination and deceive the sense, but reverence and fear. The great chief is dead. His vision appears in a half-waking dread: it threatens and it speaks. The dreamer believes that the form and the voice are real, and therefore he believes that the great chief still exists. It is thus that the grand idea is born. There is life after death. When the house or garment of the body is destroyed the soul wanders forth into the air. Like the wind it is unseen; like the wind it can be soft and kind; like the wind it can be terrible and cruel. The savage then believes that the pains of sickness are inflicted by the hand which so often inflicted pain upon him when it was in the flesh, and he also believes that in battle the departed warrior is still fighting with unseen weapons at the head of his own clan. In order to obtain the goodwill of the father-spirit, prayers are offered up to him and food is placed beside his grave.

/§/the end/§/

LEN MOFFATT: 9/5/61.

10202 Belcher, Downey,
California, U.S.A.

Had a Mad Hatter type party at LASFS Saturday before last. (Everybody was supposed to wear a crazy hat; most did, and prizes were awarded for Most Fannish Hat, Most Prosaic, etc.)

During a hot bongo drum session a character walks in, attired in cap, sport shirt, slacks, and sandals (no sox). No beard, but he gives general impression of being beat, or oddball, or wothavia. He talks to Bjo and me, tells us that he's a real Flying Saucer bug. Can't understand why the government wastes so much money on noisy old rockets when they could save time, money and effort by using the atmosphere to lift saucers instead of fighting the atmosphere with rocket blasts. He wants to know if he'd be welcome in the club, suspecting that most s-f fans do not go for the flying saucer bit. We agreed that this was true, but that anybody was welcome as long as he didn't become offensive about it, and was willing to take jibes and jeers when he brought up the subject of saucers. While we talked he was listening with one ear to the fast, steady beat of the bongo drums, and one of his handswandered idly over the key board of the piano we were leaning against. Suddenly he stopped talking, sat down at the piano, and began to play like crazy, picking up the bongo beat, and then taking the lead. The bongo beaters gathered around him, and a really jazzy concert ensued. Maybe I had had too much home brew, but it sounded Great to me. Some time later (half an hour? fifteen minutes? who knows, when you're drinking home brew and trying to forget your troubles), he stopped for a break, and asked for a cigarette and a beer, with which he was promptly supplied. He played some more after that - and then disappeared. Not into thin air, but someone said he simply left, mounted his bike parked outside - and rode away. (Yes, they said, it was a bike, they were sure, and not a saucer...). Haven't seen him since.

FAN

It's been a long time since -FAN- appeared in these hallowed pages. Mainly, of course, I haven't been in the mood or position to produce a larger issue of paraFANalia until recently. But also, I've dropped most of my correspondence to a bare minimum and so receive very little mail that could appear herein. Come on, gentle reader, send me a letter

of comment that I can publish in my next issue, due Real Soon Now.

LEN MOPFATT: 20/8/60

10202 Belcher, Downey,
California, U.S.A.

...The quotes from and commentary on your 'novel', Bruce, was prob'ly the most interesting thing for me in -FAN- 6, as I have suffered the same 'nostalgia' experience myself... that is, digging out stuff I wrote Seriously years ago, and chortling (and wincing) over it.....As I say, enjoyed everything in all 3 mages (-FAN- 6, KI IFAN 11, & SIZAR 3), even the poetry (I'm not much of a fan-poetry fan, but this was better than most.), and hope the Continued material IS continued somewhere, including Art Wilson's Judo for Ladies bit.**

JIM LINWOOD: 12/9/60

10 Meadow Cottages,
Netherfield, Notts., UK.

No sooner had I said farewell to you at Waterloo Station, I arrive home to find 3 of your mags had been delivered in my absense. Apart from Kiwifan, ParaFANalia, and Sizar, you'd enclosed: 1, quotecard concerning Napoleon; 2, a booklet on the art of thinking and speaking (for which taw; I've always wanted to think and speak, yuk, yuk...); and 3, a June '60 calendar page showing a leggy-femme saying "Let's go" as she opens the door of her sports car... reminiscent of my hitchhiking experiences. § I liked Lynette's self-portrait on the cover of paraFANalia 6: why did she ever get married, and not contemplate visiting England? "The Wandering Ghru" is of course my favourtie NZ fan-column, and for some reason or other I like fen writing about their typers...Yes Sir, I'm proud to say I carried Bruce Burn's Naumaan Trika through the streets of Southampton! § There is a recording of "Green Hills of Earth" out over here; it's from a radio series 'Journey Into Space', but I'm not sure if it contains the Heilein lyrics or not. § Again, another nice self-portrait of Lynette on page 26.

BILL TEMPLE: 10/10/61

7 Elm Road, Wembley,
Middlesex, UK.

Many thanx for sending me a copy of paraFFINALia #8, which is a delight to the nose. I enjoyed continuing to follow the odyssey of aroma, which brings him, I see, to the Garden of Aden. § Sometimes I got the impression that I was prying into somebody's private inter-family correspondence, but what of that? Like Ella, I'm one of those noseey Parkers. § I hope to be able to continue the saga, and I hope you get to London in the end.

**That "To Be Continued" material might yet materialise in the form of a one-shot called, appropriately, THE MAGIC STYLUS.

*The first draft of THE WANDERING GHU was a long letter home. It showed, eh?

ROGER HORROCKS: 14/11/61

18 Hazelmere Rd.,
Auckland S'l, N.Z.

Thank you for paraFANalia 8, which arrived this morning. I particularly enjoyed THE WANDERING GHU - you have a flair for writing about personal experience - and I hope that you are going to continue the chronicle in England. § Did you keep a diary, or are you remembering it all? When I look back over the two years or so since you left, I can hardly remember a thing. § There appear to be changes in the Burn style of writing - and personality! Even paraFANalia has a new, Britishy look.*

MERVYN BARRATT: 17/12/61

1 Egan St., West Richmond,
Vic., Australia.

Your fanzine (paraFANalia #8) arrived a couple of months back. Don't know if there is much that I can say about it. The only things that sort of stand out in my mind is that the drawing which accompanies the article on Colombo in your narrative and which I think is meant to look like some one standing on a cliff edge with his hands in his pockets gazing out to sea looks instead like a drawing of a guy urinating into the ocean.

DONSTUEBAKER: 23/2/62

c/o Miss E. Cullen, 7966
7. Beach Drive, W,
Washington 12 D.C., U.S.A.

I'm writing this the day after Project ~~Mercury~~ Mercury, was completed, and it's fantastic. The Human Race I mean. All over Washington, people walked with their ears glued to transistor radios. The only question the women in the stores asked was, "Is he Down?". A friend of mine, an English girl called Margaret, seven months pregnant, was making the rounds of various airlines when Colonel Glen was up there. She said that no one was going anywhere. They simply stood there waiting. When he re-entered the atmosphere, there was silence. Union Station had it's largest crowd since the War, all listening to the radio. When he landed there was silence. The only time in my life I remember Washington quiet. § I think Clarke once wrote about a man alone in a space capsule, in orbit. The whole World reached out to him. I think that maybe the World, or at least more people than ever before, reached out to Glenn in that way. Man reaching out to a man alone, to a little part of Himself, a part alone and cut off. I think that people, here at least, felt for the first time in a long time, and as a whole, the truth that "We are men, and as such, we are involved in Man". § I've often seen the World weep at the death of a great man. It is seldom I have seen people happy at a man's triumph, and never so many so happy over something that is so clearly a triumph for Humanity. The Russians missed a good thing when they did not give Gagarin the coverage and notoriety he deserved.

BETTY KUJAWA: 4/8/62

2819 Caroline, South
Bend, 14, Indiana, U.S.A.

I thank you for paraFANalia #9.....I do hope that if you DO proceed with your tale of Coming to Blighty that you'll include me in on the issues. I found this segment very interesting to read. § I'd love to see what you have to say about

*Britishy? Perish the thought! THE WANDERING GHU was written mainly from memory, but I was canny enough to jot down memoos to myself during the trip.

your landing in Southampton and all about the first staggering reactions to Britifens in the living flesh, so to speak. I recall well Jill Adams's letters of that era on how you were coming and how this one and that one was coming down there to meet and greet you and all. Love to see/read how they all struck you - provided it isn't all egobooney nicey-nicey stuff but the actual reactions and impressions...dig? § Jesus, the slang of your homeland - and the terminology!! I pride myself as being not too bad on knowing stange terms...but, Buster, you've got some straight out of this world! Like you wuz comin' here from Mars yet! 'Hiawathas'....loafer-mocassins?* 'haka'?? Sounds like an esoteric Japanese style of poetry.** § Your comments on Egypt...yeh, mate, yeh..reading in TIME that the lil gals who live in those little Nile-side villages marry at 14 and are on their death-beds before the age of 40.. and the townsfolk of all ages with bellies distended from all the many intestinal parasites that thrive there. § Howcome you didn't see none of them there belly-dancers?? Pity.***And a Doctorate in Egyptology is indeed a respectable degree to attain and means m-u-c-h in academic circles....specially thinking of having to be able to read and decipher the ancient writings and all... § I gotta feeling, doll, that at Pompeii you weren't shown all of the pornographic wall-pictures. My Dad and step-mother were there a year ago last winter - she wasn't allowed in (which grotched her considerably)...and during the War(2) a budy who was a sailor thoughtfully brought home to me as a sentimental(?) birthday gift a booklet of the reproductions...now Bruce, I feel these were intended as spoofs or satire a la MAD magazine..... cause many of the scenes I found bawdily hilarious (either that or I got a VERY kookie sense of humour, eh?)...designed more to cause merriment than to arouse the erotic urges...leastways I was laffing not panting.****

and a last little piece from
 mervyn barrett: 12/9/62

John Baxter has got himself married and is in Melbourne at the moment. He spurned my invitation and is staying with Leo Harding. These important pros must stick together. I've seen very little of him during his stay here. He came along on Saturday night to a party I gave here at which we showed feelthy slides (Ben Goffman still has his 'Khama Sutra' slides and those nudes he had; I have some that I brought back from Hong Kong and John brought some that Roger Dard got him in Hong Kong). I didn't get much chance to talk to John though and although he was going to ring he hasn't yet done so and could have for all I know shot back to Sydney. He didn't bring his wife to the party because she doesn't like crowds and lewd music and Public pornographic presentations.° § Two nights ago there came a loud bash at the door and upon opening whom should I find darkening my doorstep but Alan Perry and his partner Bill Eams. Bill is on his way to Japan for a holiday and is going via Hong Kong - lucky bastard. Alan came over with him and they have some business to do here. They left their old employers and started their own business and have been doing well at it too. Hence nine week holidays in Japan and all that jazz. § Did I tell you that Bart Cox had won £10000 in a lottery? Well, if you didn't, he did. § Ron Polson is living in Sydney now after having got married and is starting to make it as a single. His wife plays piano and is a great help to him. He came down here for a TV appearance and sang this song called "RAGS AND OLD IRON" by a new cat named Oscar Brown, and that's the thing that they've released.

*and** Lifetime subscription to first reader to answer Betty's problems.

***The belly-dancers were all down with intestinal diseases.

****In THE ANDRING GHU I was concerned with reporting what I was seeing and thinking: I had no room for details of what I thought I should have seen.

° paraFANalia does not support pornography, but does support slide-shows.

3

INSTEAD OF

1

THE ISLAND OF ETERNAL CONTENTMENT

Standing on the Island of Eternal Contentment, Jyorfel looked across the Swamp that ringed his home and gazed hungrily at the Treasure that seemed to be so near on the purple hills beyond the Swamp. All summer he had enjoyed his life in the Land of Plenty Beyond those hills and had happily consented to moving, as all young men had to some time or other, to this island. But now that Autumn had merged with winter his growing awareness of the Treasure had become a fully developed curiosity and his whistful thirst for knowledge had become a desperate hunger for a wealth of discovery.

Oh, how his fingers burned to gather together all the wonderful knowledge that lay waiting in those royal coloured hills beyond the inert bog! How his senses reeled when he thought of the secrets that should reside there, nestled by bosoming mountain slopes! His head! It was surely swelling with an anticipation of the appeasement of his appetite for knowledge.

But, he was far from home, far from the Treasure, far from the knowledge he had sought all Summer. Without instruments to record his thoughts, without the means of pursuing his investigations he was helpless and unable to seed his schemes about him. Now he could only stand on his barren Island of Eternal Contentment and contemplate the comforts of cold wisdom in place of the heated ecstasies of knowledge he had craved. He sat, thinking, reaching for that content that comes when goals and wants are recognised unreachable. He sat there, a criminal in his prison.

oo oooo

YOU THINK, THEREFORE I AM GOOD

He was a telepath, and he liked to be well thought of.

He liked to be well considered so much, in fact, that he'd moved into a circle of friends who all liked him. He squandered his interest upon them and wallowed in the resulting aura of good thinking. He would buy them just the things he knew they wanted, and they would favour him with a puzzled smile and a thought of what a good fellow he was. Or he would say the thing he knew they most wanted to hear and they would shake their heads with bafflement and think of what a sympathetic man he was. Or sometimes he would write to them when they were a long way from him and from the distance he would feel the thoughts of how considerate a friend he was and he would bathe in the glorious knowledge that he was well thought of.

But there is one trouble about being a receptive telepath. You see, when you take something from someone they no longer have that something and so it is with telepathy. Each time he feasted in the egoboo of being well thought of he robbed the good thinkers of the kind thoughts they had generated.

Pretty soon no-one thought much good of him and so they killed him.

The Commercial Traveller was sitting at his desk in his flat in a threadbare part of the City. He was, one might be astonished to see, at home. He had been at home all day, and most of the time he had been sitting just as he was at the end of the day. At his desk. You see, this Commercial Traveller was no ordinary Commercial Traveller who knocked on farmhouses when dusk was falling. This Commercial Traveller was a fan, was a member of OMPA, and was worried that the deadline of the last mailing of his current membership was close and soon to fall. His activity over the year had been non-existent and he - unless he could produce something before morning - was in peril of being Dropped.

He sweated, thinking in blurred shapes that refused to form themselves into words. No good. Nothing, but nothing, could he think of to write about. The clean stencil still looked wide-eyed at him as it had done all day long.

Suddenly, there was a knock at the door.

The Commercial Traveller started to rise, then sank once more onto his chair, determined to save his membership. Startled, his fingers found themselves upon the keys of the typewriter. One of these nervous digits tensed itself, about to hurl its miniscule strength at the indifferent typewriter key.

But the knocking at his door came again. Louder.

Frantic, he ran to the door and flung it open.

"'Ullow," said the straw-haired, bluff-faced, dung-perfumed, clay-pipped, grinning Farmer who stood with one wrinkled hand still raised just beyond the door. "Oi wunderred iv yew waz in."

"Tell I'm rather busy," said the miserable Commercial Traveller, preparing to close the door.

The Farmer stuck his booted foot against the door,

"'Ere now, 'old awn." He took his pipe and emptied it against the door-jam. "O 'Oi'm stuck in taown an' Oi can't just sleep awn th' raod." He sniffed and grinned ingratiatingly. "Oi thart yew moight put Oi up. Arfter awl, yew fellers get a good toin orv uz when yor in th' gountry."

Distracted with his own problems, the Commercial Traveller gave into the inexorable logic of the Farmer's appeal. Throwing wide the door he bade the Farmer enter. The latter cackled politely.

"Worl," he said, "there be only wun problem."

"Oh, what's that?" muttered the Commercial Traveller, sensing the tange of some familiarity in the flow of the conversation.

"Worl, Oi've brung me Darghter wif me."

Impatience washed through the Commercial Traveller in a furious flood. "Alright," he said. "The usual deal. Okay?"

The Farmer noddin ponderously. "Arr."

"Well you can have the spare room and your Daughter can get into my bed." He closed the door after his surprise guests had entered, barely glancing at the beautiful Daughter who shyly followed her farther. "I'm busy now so if you'll both just get to sleep, I'll..." he paused, suddenly lost in thought. "...I'll do what I'm doing..." he finished lamely.

The Commercial Traveller strode to his desk in decisive manner, re-seated himself before his clean-lined writing machine, placed his fingers on the keys determinedly and with the light of inspiration in his eyes he sat there, whirling thoughts in his head refusing to be battered into the shapes of words.

The Farmer and Daughter, un-noticed by the Commercial Traveller, went to their separate rooms to sleep.

In the silence, the Commercial Traveller struggled on. Frantically, he thought of all the words he knew, but in vain. Not one word seemed to want to start his mind on writing. He leafed through a thick dictionary, hoping there to find some magic word with which to begin. An encyclopedia followed it, then an evening paper.

And still the wide-eyed virgin stencil watched him.

Suddenly, a shattering noise filled the flat. The Commercial Traveller shuddered, threw the paper on the floor, and leapt to the door of the spare room. It opened swiftly and the noise increased in volume. Wild-eyed, the Commercial Traveller stared into the gloom.

The Farmer was asleep.

The Commercial Traveller then gave up all hope. OMPA was a Lost World for him; his membership would expire within two days if he still lacked activity by then. And surely he could never face fandom again. His shoulders drooped tiredly and he switched off the light on his desk. He walked slowly to the door of his own bedroom, feeling the sleepless wide-eyed stencil mocking him silently. He opened his door and with a last regretful look at his desk he entered his bedroom.

He removed his clothes and put on other garments and climbed into bed. Torment filled him and his head was filled with the dread of the empty future.

Deep in his misery, he became vaguely aware of a comforting hand that stroked his rippled brow. From deep despair he began to emerge to the lesser sorrow of numb anguish. He turned to face the Daughter, in the bed beside him, and she smiled shyly, yet surely, at his haggard features. Her hand gently smoothed the hair that matted his chest, and as she did this the Commercial Traveller felt some relief from his gloom. For suddenly an idea had occurred to him. A flash of inspiration so wild that he must surely give himself up to it. He reached for the Daughter.

He held her chin, and gently turned her face from him until he could see her small coyly curled ear. He moved to be closer to her, his mind a whirl of hopes and doubts. Could it do? Could he? Was she what was really wanted? Of course she is, he told himself, she's what any fan would want rather than OMPAazines. And she could come more frequently than at quarterly intervals.

He leaned closer to her fragrant young body, and pressed his lips to her ear. He whispered softly, "Are there forty-nine others at home like you?"



THE FLIGHT
OF SPRING.