

12TH HISTORICAL SERIES
INTERGALACTIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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EARTH MANUSCRIPT

Discovered by the 16th Cridor Expedition

for

Intergalactic Exploration

Edited by Tren Lun, Cridorian

Cridor
At the Press of the Society
3682

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INTERGLACIAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preface

The Society is particularly proud of the fact that this number has been produced entirely with ancient materials gathered on the planet Earth by members of the 16th Expedition. It also will be readily noted that the entire work is reproduced in the ENGLISH language, which was much in vogue when the Earthmen destroyed themselves. Because the number of Cridorians who are interested in this relatively unimportant planet is exceedingly small, we have "printed" only 90 copies, all of which are done on ancient papers made by the Earthmen. This peculiar method of preservation of thought was brought to a notable stage of development by later Earthmen, a few decades prior to the end of life on the planet Earth.

The manuscript is of interest as it indicates the proximity of Earthmen to higher knowledge at the end. Creatures living within the confinement of a single planet must learn how to build a non-destructive society if continuous existence is sought.

Tren Lun.

Cridor, 3682.

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It has to begin somewhere and it did begin somewhere, but you can't mark the place with the point of a sharp pin, with a bold black X in the margin. It didn't jump into being just all of a sudden. That would have been far too easy.

There was probably a lot of infiltration long before anyone knew it had got itself under the skin of things. Creeping into the tissues, prying into the darkest and most secret places, and attaching itself, with indestructible suckers and claws, in the most intimate and personal ways without any obvious evidence, without any sign.

The first widely noted instance of the thing was in the late fall of the second year of the third world war. The battle had settled back after the first months of savagery in which the British Isles were devastated, the population of the coastal areas of the United States was wiped out and the major industrial and population centers of Russia obliterated. The atom bomb had done its work well. Bacteriological warfare had come in its wake and cut the earth's population in half in a space of twenty days. The first year was the most successful period of destruction of human life of which I have any knowledge. Three fourths of the entire population of the globe was wiped out, and the bulk of the remainder permanently maimed or crippled in some way. The effect of the scores of new types of destructive weapons was inconceivably great; areas of over one hundred square miles were blown to dust and made uninhabitable with a single atomic explosion. The effect on the nervous system of the average human was terrifying, to say the least. Less powerful countries, with large populations, were used as testing areas. Millions of lives being sacrificed with the explosion of single bombs as part of wide scale tests which were conducted prior to attacks on the enemy's industrial areas.

The instances referred to above were most peculiar and startling, in that they more or less set off a 'chain reaction' among men and women at the same intellectual level. It is hard to imagine what was in Wilton Bamford's mind when he piloted his supersonic plane into a main intersection of Pittsburgh. The fact that the explosion of the solid fuel had brought death to several score of people meant very little when compared to the loss the United States suffered with the death of Bamford, the leading physicist of the decade, and the most ingenious designer of implements of destruction in centuries.

But the investigation proved that the plane had been guided to destruction by the pilot, and no one was able to give a rational explanation of the startling suicide. Bamford was serious, idealistic, and happily married. He had been in charge of a special experimentation plant and was responsible only to the President of the United States. His death was considered of such importance that the prosecution of the war was almost halted for a few hours so that an impressive state funeral could be held.

Bamford was the first, at least the first one to which attention was brought. It was not long before others followed him. John Dranol, the inventor of the ray screen which temporarily kept all unwanted planes from crossing boundaries, was the second case which came to public attention, stabbing himself to death with a steak knife at a dinner in the presence of ranking military men, industrialists, religious leaders and government officials. A nasty mess. His blood spurted all over the plump general who sat next to him.

Then the suicides followed in rapid succession. In public places, usually, but there were many which occurred in the quiet loneliness which great men often achieve. Scientists, generals, political leaders,

industrialists and prominent men in all fields, obeying the sudden impulse to destroy themselves. And as the number of suicides grew, it was learned that the same thing was happening in the land of the enemy. It was not the effect of a new weapon, as many argued. It was something much deeper than that. The clergy had one explanation and the medical men another. The commentators made their contributions, and the matter boiled on to a terrifying climax. To a thinking man, the situation was incredible. Leaders who were one moment staunch and inspiring, were the next moment dead at their own hands. The effect was disastrous as far as prosecuting the war was concerned. In fact, the war came almost to a standstill while the people holding secondary positions fought among themselves for the recently vacated posts of greater eminence. Funerals came back into vogue. The churches had a temporary resurgence, but after about a score of suicides had occurred in each of the larger population centers, the ugly incomprehensible horror of the thing began to be felt.

The mass was helpless and ill-tempered without the reassuring balm which its former leaders had carefully supplied at regular intervals. There was even a short time when the eager ones who tried to make public explanations of the cruel mess were lynched, or mutilated. The terror had set in enough so as to transmute fear into brutal violence, panic, and ultimately mad rioting.

When the rioting became widespread, certain groups of people, who seemed to have been less affected by the whole thing, began to migrate from the population centers to the extremes of climate, trying to get out of reach of the mob hysteria. Trying to salvage some of the aspects of the complex and highly frictional civilization which had been built up. It was in one of these small groups that I made my

escape, settling in north central Canada.

The world seemed to have gone raving mad. A group of men in the plant where I worked talked constantly of getting a plane to try an escape. The looting and rioting were hard to bear. All of us were fearful for our families. Three of the men were competent pilots, and after very few discussions we carefully laid our plans, collecting all we could in the way of tools, equipment, clothing, preserved foods and medicines. After weeks of accumulation of these things, all valuables, aside from watches and precision equipment, were converted to cash so that a plane could be had, and fuelled to capacity. The cold night of our departure will always live in my memory. Fifty worried people scattered in the waiting rooms of a large air terminal. Getting the plane brought out.... the bribed petty officials helping us aboard with our equipment. Everything was so impossibly lucky.

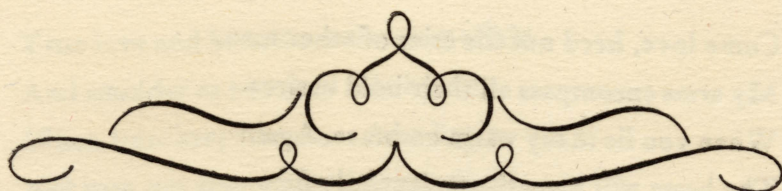
Our settlement was one of many. We did not attempt radio contacts for fear of being attacked by a force of some 'government'. The scouting and hunting parties brought in reports of the nearness and size of settlements. The cold was unbearable, and we suffered badly in the first winter. During the second, two families left us to return to civilization, as they could not stand the imprisonment away from society. Through our receiving radio we kept in touch with the course of events in the population centers, recording the progress of the decline, and the approach of barbarism. In the fourth year the broadcasts became very irregular. After the sixth year they stopped. The population of our colony remained at about thirty for half a dozen years and then began to drop off. Our diet became more and more restricted, and our health declined. After the tenth year I had read all of the books in our collective library, some of them many times.

It was in the twelfth year that we began to notice small groups of people traveling aimlessly through the woods. At first we tried to help them with food and clothing, but our supplies and creative energies were just barely enough to sustain us; we soon reached the point where we could not help these people. The majority of them were ill-clad, undernourished and diseased. These wandering groups were observed only for a period of about two years. It was from them that we learned that the plants in cities were all destroyed or inactive: no light or running water in the cities. The governments were only local in power; fuel was fast becoming impossible to obtain. No more was being manufactured. Everything I heard and read I recorded as best I could. I wrote in a small hand on some stout sheets of paper I had from the plant where I had worked. On those sheets I have written all that I have seen and heard since the strange madness began in the third World War. I cannot imagine that man will ever reach the point again where those sheets will become objects of intellectual interest. At this point, thirty-one years since I left 'civilization', it does not seem likely that man will recover what he has lost. I seldom see other men at all any more. Those I do see are little more than beasts, and many of them not as much. It seems strange to think back to the time when the second World War, amid hushing, was led into a mean obscurity. I seem to remember some sort of international organization of governments that chattered on like a bunch of insane monkeys, right up to the day the final war broke out.

INTERGALACTIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

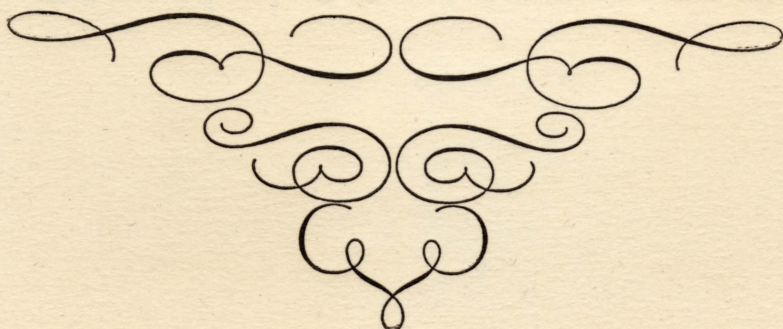
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THE FIRST SIGNATURE
SEVEN SONNETS

An occasional magazine devoted to the traditional sonnet. The editor has written the first seven sonnets. Contributions should be accompanied by a stamped, return envelope. As payment, poets will receive five copies of the issue in which their work appears.



Come love, heed not the cries of other men,
My arms encompass all their bold desires
When you lie in my warm embrace. Again
The beast will rage, the melancholy fires
Of ignorance and greed race from their den
To split apart poor lovers. How it tires
My aching soul to see it come, and then
Know well it cannot, as the hour transpires,
Survive. Lie still, the empires quickly fall
No matter what we do. Our warm embrace
Is far more perfect, true, and surely right
Than all the ravings of the mighty. Fall
They must. They run a futile, bloody race.
Love now! The future is a sickly sight.

True love and hatred are the next of kin
And smolder as two fires side by side.
When treachery its malice does begin
Not iron nor steel these fires can divide.
The warm caress, the vengeant blow, both win
Their moment's power, yet both reside
Your helpless, sighing body's soul within
And though the sun burn out, cannot abide
At peace in any man. The warm embrace
Has ended many times in augured pain.
Suspicion's blue-green spears emit in flight
The scattered fragments of an unwatched race.
Unwisely, wisdom heeds not, learns again—
Encountering the painful face of fright.

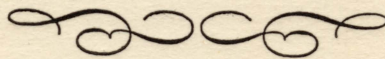
How then does man his inmost values find,
When all the arteries of love incite
The body to ignore the groping mind?
How will the arrows, aimless in their flight
Leave verdant death and agony behind
Yet have the force to speed through space in bright
Array? The heedless archer is not blind —
Deigns not employ the honesty of sight.
Time is the best physician for the poor.
When memory fails the pain cannot survive,
And envy shrivels to a petty hate,
Bold folly trips his lovely paramour
Into suspicion's hairy arms. We strive
As womb-wet babes against the cobra — fate.

And down will fall the cold green stars of fate
Into the small allotted spaces of the earth
Amid the unheard protests of the blind and late,
Amid the feeble sounds of anger. Mirth
Is but a screen for empty minds. The hate
Engendered by the truth reflects the dearth
Of sanity, of wisdom, and the rate
Of rot. Mankind valued far beyond its worth.
Deflect your grudges from the guiltless air;
Wrap mantle close; heed not the stillborn sound.
Cry havoc not to these unknowing, fair
Young children of the thoughtless who abound
In effortless arenas, unaware
As death's sure hand slips firmly 'round.

When on the western sea I cast my gaze,
I see afar the ships of other time.
Fat galleons wallow in the yellow haze
Of distance, and the sleek grey dolphins climb
The curving earthbound sea. The burning days
And starlit nights are filled with song and rhyme.
A pearl-clad mermaid with her tresses plays.
Pirates swagger, scarred and black with crime.
How laden is the world of old romance
With tales and thoughts of ancient golden lore!
So far removed from our destructive age.
Thus we, from mind's-eye world of chance
May yet pursue a twice removed shore
Before the ones who rule us burst their cage.

What shall I offer as a proof of love?
There is no single thing to signify
The endless attitudes. How does one prove
What the world does not allow? How fortify
Against the malcontents, who from above
Cast down dissension? How may we reply
To pleas of eagles strangled by the dove?
What sacrifice will demons pacify?
I'll give the walls of China, and of Rome,
An endless segment of the star-filled sky,
A golden helmet from the sands of Troy,
An island ringed with black and silver foam,
A castle carved from lapis lazuli,—
Will these trinkets your old doubts destroy?

Cry softly now, the treachery at last
Has bared its yellow head for all to see.
Now fades the splendid vision fast
Which stood secure in its own imagery.
Ideals, before this grim iconoclast,
Go down as wreckage to a swollen sea,
Swift borne, destroyed, and keenly lashed
Unto the farthest reach of misery.
Bells toll— birds fall— a condiment of air
Descends. The voices of ones distant friends
Voicing cool platitudes, just out of sight.
Then enter justice, tall and very fair,
Divining all beginnings, causes, ends.
Then enter mockery, astride black night.



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EVER NORMAL TURMOIL

"Consequences are pitiless," wrote George Eliot.

Also they are impossible to read beforehand, whether individuals or nations are involved.

The pitiless and inevitable consequences to follow this great war are harder to read beforehand than any previous war known to mankind because never before has a war involved such a variety of motives, people, causes, such vast armed forces and populations, such immense and diversified areas of conflict.

No fixed peace can be expected.

What peace comes will not be ever normal.

Those who seek peace arrangements not subject to change any day and any hour fail to reckon on the unpredictable.

This war came riding and roaring out of a series of unpredictable events.

Whatever international organization arises after this war will be run by unpredictable human beings like those who put over the unpredictable Munich four-power pact of 1938, like those who made the unpredictable invasion of Russia in 1941 and those who fought the unpredictable battle of Stalingrad in 1942-1943, like those who carried through the unpredictable seizure of the Normandy peninsula and the port of Cherbourg this summer of 1944 at a human cost below all prediction.

The shapes of revolution and the forms of government, law and order that are to march back and forth across Europe as the Nazi power shrinks and dwindles, will have plenty of good and bad beyond expectation, surprises and amazing sudden twists for us.

The Russian Revolutions of 1917 and 1918 were incredible until they happened.

The woodsawing Kaiser in Holland was preposterous till there he was. The little demoniac strutter who took over as Reichchancellor of Germany in 1933— who would deny that his rise to world power was made possible because so many in deadly danger from him refused to believe that so inconceivable a monster could be masked and shrouded behind so humpty-dumpty a figure and mustache?

Whatever forms of control against future wars arise after the present slaughter ends will depend on the will, vision and human lights of those who run the controls.

Any scheme of international order that looks good on paper will depend for its working well on the character and personality of the men entrusted to operate the scheme.

Transport and communications now are such that the peoples of the countries involved can better watch and know what goes on than in previous times.

Experiment, trial and error, expectation of constant change and modulation, an unrest and endless discussion as to whither we are drifting— this will be required.

The platitude well worn, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," has the same value as the platitude that for physical health we need fresh air.

Or we may study who and what Clemenceau could possibly have meant in telling the world: "Rest is not a word of free people — rest is a monarchical word."

Carl Sandburg

July 9, 1944

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