

Arthur Constance, whose article "Towards New Conceptions of the Cosmos" in our July-August issue attracted widespread attention, has agreed to contribute a column on "This Amazing Universe" regularly. We are giving him a free hand, and our readers can certainly expect a fascinating and factual running commentary on world affairs in the Fortean or "inexplicable by science" field from Mr. Constance's fully-informed and unusual viewpoint. T. Werner Laurie Ltd. are publishing a new book by Arthur Constance next year, which will deal comprehensively with all phases of sky phenomena from mirages to meteorites and forked lightning to "flying saucers." Mr. Constance takes his facts from his private library of 16,000 books and 2,000,000 news cuttings and from the u.f.o. literature of all countries—but his treatment of the facts is decidedly and distinctively his own.

live, move and have their beings. I have believed for years that cells have independent consciousnesses and (mark you) consciences. I believe in the capacity of a phagocyte to learn from its environment. I believe that there are policemen in our blood streams which regulate the traffic far more efficiently than our human policemen do, and with fewer instances, proportionately, of congestion. I may have more to say about the personalities in our capillaries in future articles.

It may be that I am one of the mad minority in a world of sane humans; or, conversely, it may be that I am one of the sane and that the majority of humans are mad. Whichever way it is, I am constrained by factual evidence to believe that this world is an asylum. It may well be that this

THIS AMAZING UNIVERSE

By Arthur Constance

IF there are—as I am factually convinced there are—beings in the Cosmos as vastly superior to ourselves as we are to spiders, and perhaps enjoying a *much greater* superiority over mankind than man has over the world's little creatures (for it is evident that size means nothing, and that spiders alone can do many things we cannot do), then this world and its affairs must truly be a "spectacle for angels." A spectacle of buffoonery, of bungling idiocy, of restricted vision in appalling senses. After all, a butterfly can wing the Atlantic, and butterfly legionaries carry "no thirst-alleviations, no medical equipment, no iron rations—nothing but their own iron resolutions."* Yet these tiny aeronauts have been winging the wastes for untold centuries.

I believe that those higher etheric beings—invisible to ourselves yet most logically and probably populating countless millions of galaxies in infinite space—are fully acquainted, not merely with the crazy affairs of these two-legged monsters that we call "men," but with the whole range of creation, sideways through teeming decillions of insects (note the "sideways") and downward through the multivarious forms of animal life to microbes. It may be that sentient life goes lower than the worlds in which microbes

fact determines the attitude of the u.f.o intelligences towards us. I cannot believe that they regard us as sane. I might concede that they regard us as drooling, inarticulate infants, suffering from intellectual rickets and diarrhoea—but I would stake all I have on the fact that they do not regard us as normal. Normality being the sanity of other solar systems.

If we took the word "ithers" or "others" in Burns' popular quotation, "Oh wad some Power the giftie gie us to see oursels as ithers see us!" to mean those etheric beings who control the u.f.o.s, I believe we should take a leap into knowledge of far greater significance than any we are likely to take into outer space as the result of interplanetary research.

But we are blinder than bats, moles and earth-worms (to whom I apologise individually and collectively for this comparison with humans, for none of them are actually blind, despite superficial indications of that state, and all of them are more skilful in the use of the sight they have than man in his own purblindness).

The most impossible task in this world is to convince a scientist of his own ignorance. There have been exceptions. There was Charles Darwin. Despite the colossal blunders he made in his *Origin of Species* (which had nothing whatever in it regarding its subject, how species origin-

*Arthur Constance here quotes from one of his own poems in his very unusual biographical work *The Glazier*, to be published next March by T. Werner Laurie Ltd.—Editor.

ated, and which has of course been discarded since by scientists in their triumphal progress in circles downwards to the ape), Darwin had a certain humility which is refreshing in biographical fields. It is recorded that he was at some social function and overheard two men discussing a third. They called this absent individual "a worm." Darwin butted in and they thought he was defending the man referred to. Darwin put them right—pointed out that they were slandering his little friend the earthworm. He said, "I have spent thirty years of my life studying the earthworm—and I know nothing about it yet."

Stars

If we want a recent incident of the crass stupidity of human beings, we find it easily enough in the production of *The Star Without a Name*, by the British Broadcasting Corporation on November 3. I have no criticism of the play, nor of the acting. The *motif* is all that concerns us, and this pivots upon that magnificent, timeless spectacle of the night-sky, so familiar to all of us in these latitudes, which we familiarly call "the Great Bear." Nona in the play, finely acted by Mai Zetterling, is again and again drawn to the constellation, in her imaginative idealism, as a symbol of something above and beyond this world's petty misunderstandings. One would have thought that any representation of Ursa Major in the play would have been conceived in this spirit. Yet we see the seven stars through a window, several times, represented as fading and flashing lights suggestive rather of the headlights of cars on a racing track than of celestial points of light. Not even remotely is there any conception of the Great Bear—yet the entire play is based on the constellation. I do not suggest that this is typical of the B.B.C.'s conception of the glory of the star-lit heavens: but it is all too typical of the way the stars are treated in stage productions, and in commercial advertisements. The very name "stars," as applied to Hollywood and other personalities, implies a crude and childish conception of the immensities of interstellar space.

With sincere appreciation of anything and everything the B.B.C. does to enlighten and elevate public opinion, one can only label one of its most recent contributions to the u.f.o. problem as absolute drivel. This was the radio play, produced in conjunction with the United Nations Radio Division, mark you, presented in October

under the title: "The Charter of the Saucer." It would be an understatement to call it the world's worst instance of imaginative imbecility.

Mr. Vuz is the name of the Martian who comes to earth in a flying saucer. He is described as quite small—under 4½ ft.—and with two rather widely-spaced and reddish eyes, together with a small mouth and a nose like the spout of a kettle. Such was the description of the Martian's physical appearance. For the rest, he was a creature of pitiful intellect, given to the expression of banal and even babyish sentences, while his speech was characterised by a defect which caused him to pronounce his "r's" as "w's." He says "wemarkable" and "twubbles" and "pweamble." He is a fool—but not in any interesting sense. He has no verisimilitude. Any pulp-fiction writer who has ever scribbled sensational rubbish has created better characters. This "Martian" discusses world problems with a character called Frabjoy. As he dies, at the end of the play, he shrinks to a golden stain, uttering the momentous words: "To the whole human wace, I wish pwospewrity and an endless peace and a long life. . . ."

Believe it or not, as Ripley would have said, the part of Frabjoy (which was as pitifully puerile as that of the Martian) was played by Sir Laurence Olivier.

Slavish Reverence

Was this thing an example of the B.B.C.'s conception of imaginative entertainment? We have seen one of the night-sky's greatest spectacles treated crudely and in amateur fashion in a play which cried aloud for a faithful presentation of that sign, in its majestic glory. Taking these incidents as typical of mankind's composite attitude to sky phenomena in a wider sense—that is, including the attitudes of editors, astronomers, conventional scientists, and all who influence the minds of the world's teeming millions—we are compelled to believe that humanity's mind-controllers are inspired by slavish reverence for the Authoritative, the Artificial, and the Accepted, rather than the real and the true. Man is so fashioned that he must worship someone or something. Wonderment and mysticism—which are but manifestations of man's need of someone or something nobler and finer than himself—are as much part of man's make-up as his nervous system and capillary networks. Science, so-called, with its arrogance and guess-work, has (from the

viewpoint of the average man) consigned God to the dustbin and assumed the sovereign power of God in its "mastery" of life and death. Yet man's worship of the ape and its scholarly high-priests and apostles provides man with no more than a synthetic and unsatisfying satisfaction for his wonderment. One can scarcely reverence a speck of protoplasm or give praise from one's heart to an H-bomb.

Superficial Data

The arch-destroyer of wonderment is superficiality. In all my thirty years' research into the Scientifically Inexplicable I have had to struggle through swamps, bogs and miasmas of superficiality in search of the Holy Grail of factual reality. Plenty of books are available in our public libraries which give the *superficial* data of Astronomy, Entomology, Physiology and the rest of man's purely arbitrary "sciences." In the great majority of such books there is no mention of God. We must, by implication, give homage to Man, who has learned so much, done so much, and who now stands with his feet astride on this spinning ball (having "conquered" it) and reaches out his hands to the stars. Presumably to drop them into test-tubes.

A scientist uses a mammoth telescope to "weigh" a distant sun. He knows pitifully little of the world he lives in. His own human eye, one of his many physical instruments, is infinitely more complicated than his telescope. It shows a thousand times more evidence of design than his telescope—yet he is so superficial in his outlook that he recognises the telescope as having been made by creative intelligence, yet ascribes the existence of his eyes to blind, callous, mechanistic chance.

Yet even as he removes his gaze from the star-sprinkled heavens and makes a note on some paper or other before him, miracles beyond his understanding are happening. A complex and ingenious system of minute muscles adjusts the lenses of his eyes to a new range of vision. Between 6 and 7 millions of microscopical cones and over 130 millions of minute rods operate instantaneously within the retina of each of his eyes, adapting themselves to the new light-pattern presented to his brain, to which, along his optic nerves, the picture of his moving fingers, his pen, and the notes he is making must be sent. Thousands of times a day the vastly complicated systems of rods and cones are operated, and

through thousands of days of his life-time. The cells which constitute the amazing dual-apparatus are continuously broken down and replaced—*always in the exact patterns required for the efficient working of his eyes.* We have only considered (and very crudely) the optical mechanisms which transmit the image to the brain. Within that absolutely dark chamber, into which no light can possibly enter, the image is "seen" by the astronomer. How is it "seen"? Let Science answer this before it ventures to "explain" anything seen *by* the eyes.

What Do We Know?

What do we know of this world, with its thousands of millions of insects to every square mile, its thousands of miles of unexplored earth (?) rock (?) or whatever it is between our own feet and the feet of humans pressed against the topsoil of Australia? What do we know of ocean deeps? But we need not take large areas of what we call "matter." Take a grain of sand, or a drop of water, or anything trivial—a human hair if you like. Magnify it enough—make it as big as a house. Within every minute space of the enlargement would be material for greater enlargement. Do you seriously imagine that Science has reached the limits of the Infinitely Little in its ponderous pronouncements regarding protons, neutrons, electrons—negative, positive or what-have-you? Will Science never learn from its blunders?

A century or so ago the basic, irreducible building-block of the universe was an atom. Anyone contradicting the High Priests of Science in that day would have been treated with contempt. Pride, arrogance, intolerance—these are the characteristics of superficiality.

Humility, wonderment, willingness to admit that one may be wrong—these are the characteristics of the truly scientific mind—the mind that hungers for knowledge, the mind inspired by wonderment and reverence.

I do not dogmatize—I am too deeply aware of my own appalling ignorance to show intolerance towards the beliefs of others. But if I might be permitted an opinion, as one of thousands of millions of living, suffering, dying human beings in this fantastically fascinating world, I would say that I am compelled to belief in God. I feel that any logical explanation of this amazing universe needs Him, even as He is necessary to me.