

transmitting across the Atlantic. And tell us more about the weather.

However, the Congress got a good press and it was reckoned a great success. A girl we know who went to Copenhagen just for the ride had a wonderful time.

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There is always some one to spoil the fun, whatever it is, and there were plenty of people ready on this occasion to scoff at the general idea of Astronautics (space flight in simple terms) and, in particular, the cost involved. The opposition mostly took the line that not a penny of public money should be sunk in satellites till the sewers had been sunk in Much Binding.

For this point of view we have a certain amount of sympathy. It is unfortunate, tragic one might say, that humanity progresses at an uneven rate; the advanced countries exist at the same moment in time as the so-called backward countries and a philosopher or cynic would find in this situation the paradox that some of the advanced countries are backward in certain matters and the backward countries are advanced in others.

With regard to space travel we venture not a prophecy, but a mere, tentative, personal opinion. Between many human concepts—dreams, aspirations, call them what you will—and their final achievement, there is often a record of seemingly hopeless struggle, alternate hope and disappointment, even catastrophe, before success is granted. In those cases where the project is eventually abandoned the idea—and the effort involved—remain as a tribute to human energy, intellectual and physical, which if it were to be discouraged in any degree would perhaps mark the end of our will to exist at all.

SMILE, PLEASE!

It has been said that science fiction lacks a sense of humour. Yet it is a well known fact that what puts a broad grin on one face will bring intense pain to another. Without committing

The current choice is

MORE THAN HUMAN

by Theodore Sturgeon

(*Gollancz*, 12s. 6d.; *SFBC*, 4s. 6d.)
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ourselves in any way we pass on the information that Fredric Brown's collection of short stories *Angels and Spaceships* (Gollancz, 10s. 6d.) provided a few "laffs," as the Americans say, to an otherwise inoffensive person who talks to us about s.f. now and then.

STAR GAZER'S DEPARTMENT

*"Two men looked out of prison bars,
One saw mud, the other stars."*

To illustrate our previous paragraph, and to show how irrelevant we are on occasion, we used to imagine in reading the lines by Richard Lovelace, the Cavalier poet, quoted above, that the stars had been produced by the unlucky cell occupant bumping his head on the restraining metal.

To those who take astronomy seriously we commend the B.B.C. programme of our distinguished colleague Dr. J. G. Porter entitled "Night Sky." Once a month, usually on a Tuesday evening, Dr. Porter tells us more in ten minutes than we have ever managed to grasp in an hour of undirected study.

A.C.C.

Arthur C. Clarke is away down under in Australia, on a mission the nature of which not even we know. But we are expecting a long letter soon and it will, unless we are very much mistaken, make good reading for the next issue of SF News.