



Our Ethereal Hades

By Jack Binns

THE Federal Radio Commission was deluged with a half-million letters from radio fans in one day's mail. The writers of this unprecedented mass of missives were concerned over the fate of one broadcast station only. Vast numbers of letters from other sections of the country dealt with other stations whose wave lengths and times of operation have been tossed into the hodgepodge of reallocation.

The volume of correspondence and the resentment it represents is the commission's reward for the vacillating policy it exhibited during its first year of office—a policy that has culminated in the rearrangement which leaves a few cleared channels for some fans and complete confusion for the majority.

An examination of the new allocations clearly shows that at least 500 of the broadcast stations might as well close up entirely as they will be of no earthly use to their listeners or themselves after dark—and everyone knows that the majority of people listen to radio in the evenings. The howls, squeals, grunts and crosstalk that will fill more than half of the wave channels will defy description. Even Dante might pause speechless at the horror.

For the life of me I cannot see how a station in Philadelphia using 500 watts and another in Kansas City using 1000 watts can occupy the same wave length of 491.5 meters simultaneously and still be intelligible to listeners. Just imagine the hullabaloo on the 299.9-meter wave length where 51 American stations have equal rights with the Canadian stations using that channel, even though they do not all operate simultaneously. These are but two examples of the confusion which the commission has created because it lacked courage to order unnecessary stations off the air.

For those fortunate fans who have super-selective sets with great sensitivity there are only 40 stations in the country. The rest is Hades let loose in the ether.

Mobile Parasitics

The next time you meet your worst enemy tell him right to his face that he is a "mobile parasitic antenna." He may get sore, but you will be right. Here are the facts:

C. R. Englund, one of the Bell Laboratory scientists, has been experiment-

ing with ultra-short waves. According to reports, he started in at wave lengths of four meters and then got down by easy stages to one meter. Everything went fine until he tuned his transmitter to 3.66 meters. At that wave length he could get no radiation at all. Checking and rechecking with the aid of assistants failed to change the results.

Then it was the truth dawned upon him. He had accidentally discovered the fundamental wave length of human beings. His own body and the bodies of his assistants, being in exact resonance with the transmitter, were absorbing all the energy radiated by it. Fortunately for him the transmitter was only rated a few watts in power output. Otherwise we might never have known this vital fact. In describing the phenomenon he said that he was "a mobile parasitic antenna seriously interfering with radiation experiments."

Hidden Elements

There are two elements that have so far defied the concentrated skill of science in its effort to isolate them in their pure state. In a recent address before the American Chemical Society Institute, Professor B. S. Hopkins, in describing them, said:

"Elements 85 and 87 are still unknown. The first should resemble iodine and the latter should be like the metals caesium, rubidium, potassium and sodium."

All of the metals named have the remarkable photo-electric property that is necessary to television—the new art that enables us to see distant objects by means of electricity. It is just possible that the missing element 87 may prove to be the vital key to future successful television.

Professor Hopkins declared that both elements 85 and 87 should be radioactive in character, and therefore they should be of vital importance to mankind. He indicates the difficulty of utilizing them by adding:

"Both should be short-lived—that is, they should disappear soon after their isolation."

Once they have been isolated we can look forward with assurance that the combined skill of modern chemistry will, in the due course of time, devise a method of utilizing them even though it be necessary to combine them with other elements.

Master of Sinister House

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was seated in the secretary's office at the Blue Skies, who talked to you over the telephone, and, whether you believe it or not, he led the Wolves tonight. He led them from table to table just where the women were wearing the most wonderful jewels. He had them all marked down. His fighting was a sham. When he fired his gun he used dummy cartridges, and the men got up again in less than a minute. I picked some of the cartridges up. I have two or three in my pocket now."

"Show me one."

I thrust my hand into my pocket. They were gone. Bloor edged away toward the table. It was obvious that he had not a vestige of belief in my story.

"I think you're wrong, Major," he told me frankly. "Come and have that drink."

"But he talked to me tonight," I insisted. "We've spoken of Miss Essiter."

The heavy lids had descended. I knew that I was speaking against a rock of incredulity. Nevertheless he let me down lightly.

"I tell you what I'll do, Major," he promised. "I'll have him watched. He's staying here. I'll send two of our best men up within half an hour."

I THINK that, apart from purely personal experience, the most poignant seconds of my life were those immediately after I had passed across my treasure into the trembling hands of Martin Hews. Those terrible eyes of his, as he gazed upon the statuette, became soft and positively beautiful. His lips were parted not in a snarl but in an absolutely beatific smile. Real tears stood in his eyes. His fingers wandered lovingly over that exquisite surface.

"Well done, Owston," he acclaimed. "Well done! When the news came through of the raid, I trembled. You have brought me the last great desire of my life. Now tell me the story."

"It's a pretty serious one, I fear, sir," I warned him. "The beginning of it was all right. Isaacs wanted to bargain, but I handed across the check. Tul-kak parted all right, poor fellow! He saved my life, but they got him this morning. He was found dead in bed, as I dare say you read."

My employer nodded.

"Joseph kept his word, as usual. He swore that if he dealt with me instead of him he should die before he could cash the check."

"He had three men to guard him, and locked doors. No good! Joseph's men got at him somehow during the raid. They could never believe that I had fought through to the office, and they imagined that I had hidden it in one of the rooms on Tul-kak's floor. Every one of them was ransacked last night and torn to pieces."

"They pressed you hard for it?" he muttered, with a sparkle in his eyes.

"We had a bit of a scrap in the corridor of the Milan," I told him. "Afterward we rather fooled them. Isaacs went off with the coffer, which they took from him at the corner of the street, and I reached the office vault safe with the statuette in my trousers pocket. Isaacs is all right, by the bye. I rang him up this morning. They just took the coffer from him, and let him go."

"You are a man, Major," my employer acknowledged tremblingly. "I did well when I engaged you. Now what about the raid? I have the newspapers. They speak of you as making a heroic resistance, and a Mr. Ruben Sams. Who is Ruben Sams?"

"Joseph."

Mr. Martin Hews stared at me from behind the desk.

"You're laughing, Major."

I was weary of unbelief, but I told the story as I had told it to Bloor.

"That's a strange story, Major," Martin Hews commented quietly.

"Strange, but it's hellishly true," I answered, with some of the weariness which I felt in my tone.

"You say that he spoke of my niece?"

"I asked him where she was. He refused to disclose what he called 'the secret of his happiness.'"

My employer grinned, and if there was any time when I hated him it was when he indulged in that horrible grimace.

"I think, Major," he said, "you have run foul of a man with a sense of humor, and he amuses himself at your expense."

He pressed a button, and Minchin presently appeared.

"A bottle of wine," he ordered. "Two glasses. I get tired these days," he went on, speaking as though to himself.

"Why don't you chuck it all now, sir?" I asked him. "It has been a great game, I have no doubt, but is it worth it after a certain point?"

He leaned across the table. Again it was the frightened child who spoke.

"I shouldn't be safe while Joseph was alive. You know his oath? If I got Donkin away and kept the girl here, he swore to steal my treasures, one by one, and then my life. Beatrice is the beginning, I suppose. My Madonna of Deptford followed. I know that I am in danger, but where else in the world could I protect myself as I can here?"

"That's all very well, sir," I expostulated, "but the man isn't superhuman. He's beginning to get it in the neck and to get it badly. There are fifty-three men of his gang under arrest, some in the hospital, the remainder in prison. Eleven are dead. His organization must be completely shattered. The police have combed every house for miles around their old headquarters. Don't you think one of these fifty-three is likely to squeal?"

"I don't believe one of them knows," my employer confided. "They catch a glimpse of the Joseph who comes stealing down into their midst once or twice a year, from some hidden place in another quarter of the world, perhaps, but I don't believe there's one of them—even among his most trusted lieutenants—who could put his hand upon him at a given moment. Joseph knows all about them and what they are doing. They know nothing about him."

"HOW about last night?" I demanded. "They recognized him then, and obeyed him."

Martin Hews smiled cryptically.

"If your theory as to Ruben Sams and Joseph being the same man is correct," he said, "I can quite understand his being willing to disclose himself. Presently I will explain why."

There was a tinkle of the bell, and Minchin brought in a long-necked, dusty bottle, with a faded yellow label, and two exquisite Venetian glasses faintly tinted. He opened the bottle with meticulous care, and after he had served his master he filled a glass and handed it to me.

"This is Berncastler Doctor, forty years old," my employer told me, holding his glass reverently to the light. "Wines of this character have their beauty, almost like the visible objects d'art."

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Cutting Down the Waste Line

A PARTY PLANNED! A delicious dessert put into the oven! Then, away with a smile to other tasks too numerous to mention! Minutes fly like seconds! Time to dress! When—a burning odor from the kitchen proclaims complete failure of otherwise well-laid plans. Nerves on edge! Doorbell rings! A guest arrives! Who could help shedding a half-angry tear?

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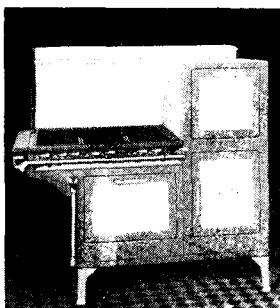
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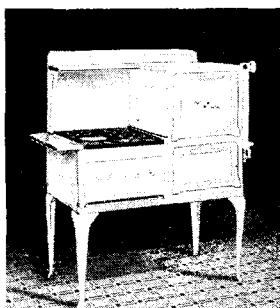
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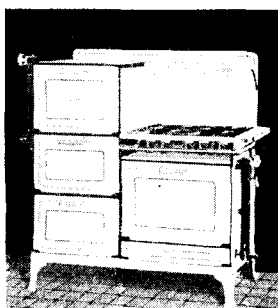
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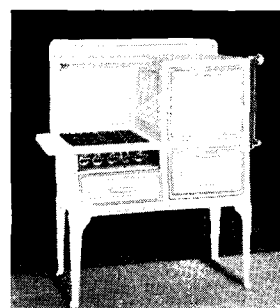
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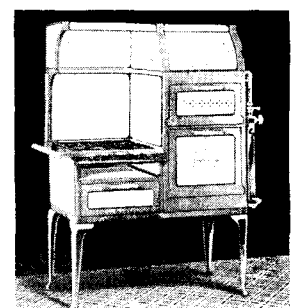
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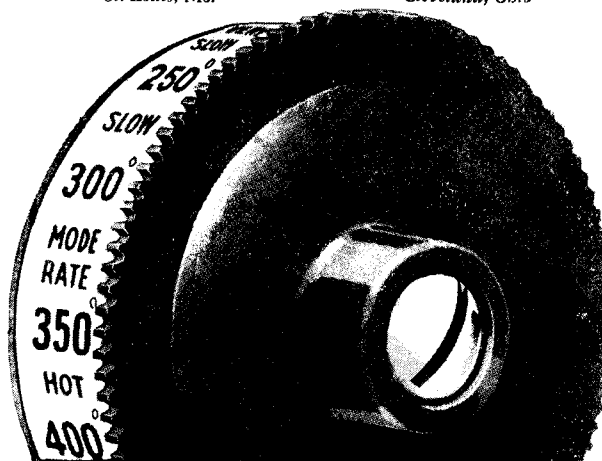


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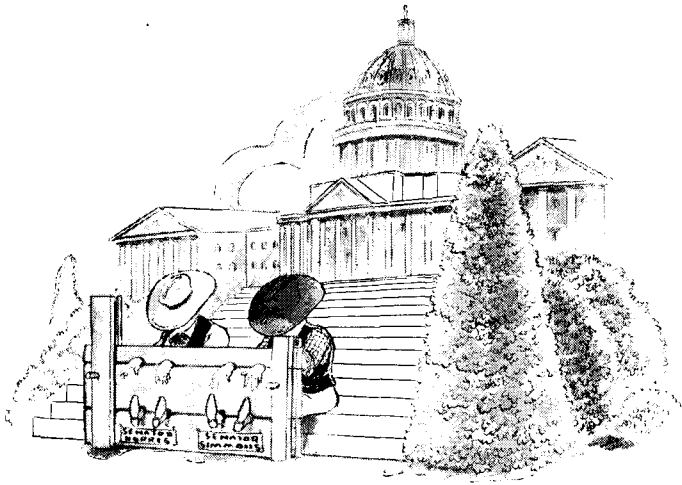


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To Fit the Crime

By THE GENTLEMAN
AT THE KEYHOLE

WHEN the United States Senate organizes after March 4th, it will have an opportunity to demonstrate how much party discipline there is left in American politics, both parties having their renegades.

Senator Norris of Nebraska among the Republicans and Senator Simmons of North Carolina and Senator Heflin of Alabama among the Democrats, all threw discretion to the winds and incurred the anger of their parties by bolting their party's candidate for President—Mr. Heflin not so openly and unmistakably as the other three.

Senators Norris and Blaine openly advocated Governor Smith's election.

Senator Simmons openly advocated the election of Secretary Hoover.

Senator Heflin, after conducting a fight against Governor Smith's nomination, contented himself with working undividedly for his defeat after he was nominated, by continuing to attack the Catholic Church.

Senator Norris and Senator Simmons are both important members of the Senate, occupying important posts in it. Neither Senator Blaine nor Senator Heflin is so highly placed in the Senate organization.

Precedent for discipline was established in 1925, when Senator LaFollette and all of the Republican senators who supported him—Senators Frazier, Brookhart and Ladd—were all read out of the Republican party. Mr. Brookhart was later declared not elected to the Senate, the Democratic contestant against him, Mr. Steck, being seated in his place.

But two years later the Republican majority in the Senate read the surviving rebels—Senator Brookhart, who had meantime been elected again, and Senator Frazier—back into the party.

Will It Swallow Its Wrath?

The reason for the change of heart on the part of the Republican regulars was simple. In 1925 the Republicans had the votes to organize the Senate without the aid of the LaFollette bolters. In 1927 they needed votes to organize and so forgot their earlier wrath.

And discipline this time will depend upon a counting of noses. If the majority in the Senate can organize without the aid of its renegade members it will, with a great show of righteous indignation, purge the rolls of those who refused to accept its candidate for President. If it cannot, it will swallow its wrath.

The vote of the other progressive Republican senators who did not bolt may be the decisive factor in disciplining

Norris and Blaine. If Senators LaFollette, Howell, Brookhart, Frazier, Nye, Norbeck and McMaster refuse to vote for an organization of the Senate which deprives Senator Norris of his place as the highest ranking Republican on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, and Senator Blaine of his Republican committee places, then the Republicans will forget all about the bolt of Norris and Blaine; and as Senator Norris is the leader of this group in the Senate, and as he has campaigned for several of its members this year, he is likely to command a good deal of support among them.

The Democrats do not face quite the same difficulty in enforcing discipline against their two bolters, for they have no such large group of dissenters among them as the Republicans have, though it is possible that some of the Southern senators who listen to the voice of the Ku Klux Klan may be unwilling to see Senator Simmons deprived of the highest ranking Democratic position on the Senate Finance Committee.

Forget and Forgive

Personal relations, the personal ambitions of the senators who have remained regular and the position senators have taken in the past on the question of reading bolters out of their party will figure very largely in determining whether discipline shall be enforced. One party may punish its renegades and the other party may not. The new President will be a factor.

A party will forget and forgive bolting if, by doing so, it can have votes to organize the Senate. Organizing the Senate means having all the committee chairmanships, having charge of legislation and last, but not least, having such patronage as goes with ability to organize the Senate. No senator is going to forego a chairmanship of an important committee just for the satisfaction of seeing that Senator Norris and Senator Blaine or Senator Simmons and Senator Heflin get their deserts. If he can get or keep his chairmanship and lay the lash where it belongs, he will do so, but not at any cost to himself in prestige and position.

Neither party, moreover, will help the other to discipline the bolters. It is the custom of the Senate to let each side settle its own difficulties.

So, until the influence of the Klan on one side and the influence of the progressives on the other and the effect of personal friendship on both sides is carefully canvassed, it will be impossible to guess whether the sinners will be punished or not.

Master of Sinister House

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He sipped from his glass daintily, with the deliberation of the true connoisseur. I followed his example as well as I was able. The wine was the color of pale amber, but richer and softer, more delicately perfumed than any wine I had ever drunk before. As he poured out his second glass the color returned to Martin Hews' cheeks, and his eyes grew brighter again.

"Owston," he said, "you were right. I said that I should finish with the Buddha, and I shall keep my word. This is my one great final success," he went on, caressing the statuette. "There is nothing in the world more beautiful than this. No single object of gold or porphyry or silver or bronze or jade or ivory, to compare with it. Stop! Your messenger's fee!"

He opened a drawer and flung across a bundle of notes, held together by a rubber band.

"You needn't mind taking them, Owston," he went on, almost pleasantly. "A gentleman of fortune who risks his life has been paid with good gold since the days of the Crusaders. There was never a thousand pounds better earned. Put it in your pocket."

I AM afraid I did not stop to consider the ethical point of view. After all, I had done my job and risked my life. I pocketed the money.

"You may hear from Joseph, even though it is for the last time, as soon as he discovers that he hasn't the Buddha," I warned him.

"It has cost me something like five thousand pounds," Martin Hews said, "to make this room impregnable. It is impregnable. No man could possibly enter while I sit at this desk."

"But there are two other doors," I pointed out.

He nodded gravely.

"You are thinking of that previous occasion. Quite right. Now, then, about those two other doors. There is only one that need count. The door into my treasure house is of solid iron. It opens only from this side, and it would take half a ton of dynamite to blow it up. As for the second—"

He must have touched a button somewhere, for it rolled slowly open. Upon the threshold stood Huntley, his flat automatic in his hand.

"Quite all right, thank you," his master said, with a nod. "I was only testing the connections."

The man stepped back, and the door closed.

"Supposing," Martin Hews went on, "that man had been overpowered from outside, the first step across the threshold by anyone who did not know where to set his foot would land him somewhere very near eternity. I think I am safe here, Major. I am not relying upon man or man's fidelity. I have made this a mechanical fortress operated by myself. Science, at any rate, cannot play me false."

A smile of placid conceit parted his lips, and I rose to my feet with some alacrity.

"Then, if I may, I will go back to town, sir," I proposed.

"Just as you please," Martin Hews assented. "Joseph may have a try for me, but this is one of my courageous days. I can imagine no more complete joy," he went on gloatingly, "than to sit here and have my signals work, and for him to come. I know how to deal with him."

"Send me news when you have any, Major. Mr. Ruben Sams, for instance. Ah, I have not shown you this. Look here."

He stretched a copy of the Times out before him, and touched a little paragraph with his fingers:

"Mr. Ruben Sams, the Argentine millionaire, is arriving at Liverpool this morning on the Orinoco from Buenos Aires, and will be staying at the Ritz Hotel."

"Came a little before his time, I fancy," Martin Hews remarked, with a chuckle. "That is why I think that Joseph's star is setting."

The papers that evening were flooded with news. There were several very mysterious paragraphs with reference to the reported arrival in London of the celebrated Argentine millionaire, who had already been in the country, and engaged in extensive financial operations for about a month, but the whole interest of the general public was focused upon last night's amazing raid.

Toward six o'clock Bloor came to see me.

"And I thought you a good fellow and a brave man," he groaned, as he took my hand, "but a bit of a simpleton. My Lord, Major, it's I who was the simpleton. I deserve to be kicked out of the force. You gave me the chance of my life, and I threw it away."

"You know now, then, that we had Joseph in our hands?"

"I'm just as sure of it as that the real Ruben Sams only landed at Liverpool this morning. Joseph has been playing at a higher game than ordinary jewel robberies. He has taken three or four hundred thousand pounds in cash away from a little group of our financiers who won't believe even now that they weren't dealing with the real man."

"This must be the end of it, anyhow," I remarked. "He can't go on after this."

"Frankly, I don't think he can," Bloor agreed. "He is the most amazing person we've been up against for many years. He left the Milan Hotel at six o'clock this morning. I have just come from searching his rooms. Not a paper, not an address, not a single thing there to help us. And to think," he deplored, "a note almost of passionate regret in that pleasant, even tone of his, 'he was my man last night—the greatest capture of my life. I hadn't the sense to believe you, Major. It seemed so damnably far-fetched.'"

"IT CAN'T be helped," I sighed. "We shall get him before many hours have passed."

"Why do you think so?" he asked eagerly.

"Because," I explained, "I don't believe that under any circumstances would he leave the country without going down to Breezeley. He's got an account—an account of hate, I suppose you'd call it—to settle with Martin Hews."

"It's quite possible," Bloor admitted. "I'll send three men down there tonight. I must be off now. I've got reports coming in every half hour. I felt I couldn't rest until I had owned up to you, Major. I'm sorry—I can't say more."

"Shake hands on it," I begged. "And listen, Bloor, there's something else. If Ruben Sams of last night was Joseph—and we pretty well know he was—what about Leopold?"

"I have a man sitting in his rooms waiting for him to come back from the country, if he ever does come back," Bloor confided. "Good night, Major. Better get to bed early. You had all

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