

MARCH 1960

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SCIENCE FACT & FICTION

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MARCH 1960

BEGINNING THIS MONTH -
THE MIND THING

AN EXCITING
NEW NOVEL
by

FREDRIC BROWN

STORIES BY
ROBERT F. YOUNG
JORGE-LUIS BORGES
WENZEL BROWN
ROBERT GLOCH

**SKIES
OF INFAMY**
A New Article
by
LESTER DEL REY



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THE ABOMINABLE COALMAN

by IVAN T. SANDERSON

After my last article in the series on the Abominable Snowman had gone to press, a paper appeared in a much respected but, to the layman, obscure technical journal named "*Antiquity*" that set at nought a paragraph of editorializing on my part. So thundering was the information released in that scientific paper that the world press gave it considerable column space and in particular leading dailies like the *N.Y. Times*. This, however, reaffirmed, and in a most curious manner, my paragraph particularized above. Readers of *F.U.* are due a word of explanation.

On page 22, of your last issue the paragraph in question is headed *Oreopithecus* and concerns the small primate with many purely human characteristics, the fossil bones of which were found in Miocene strata (estimated to have been deposited 12,000,000 years ago) in a coal mine in Italy in 1880. I told there how these bones had been ignored till the swiss Anthropologist, Huezeler, reexamined them in 1956, and then went to the coalmine which is still being worked, found more bones, and announced his discoveries. I then went on to say that not one word had subsequently been heard about this and observed that the reason for this silence was probably that, if the existence of manlike creatures twelve *million* years ago was admitted, all the textbooks would have to be rewritten and almost every physical anthropologist would have to recant almost everything he or she has ever said.

This article in *Antiquity* written by none other than Dr. J.C. Trevor of the department of Anthropology of Cambridge University, England, now states categorically that the bones of this *Oreopithecus* (which incidentally means "Mountain-Monkey", nor "the ape with the hillocky cusps to its

teeth" as reported by the press) do indeed display many purely humanoid as opposed to anthropoid or ape-like features and that therefore the *man*-branch of the primate stock is over twelve million years old. This has caused just the recantations and textbook redundancies that I predicted, but what Charles Fort called a "wipe" is already under way.

Confronted with an unpleasantness of such a very advanced order, the recanters immediately came up with a lulu. Terrified that what they call "the Darwinian theory" might be questioned, and to deflect scrutiny from their own earlier statements, they dredged up a splendid herring glowing redder than a neon sign. This is (and I quote) "It merely shifts the neutral stock of man and apes farther back in time. Charles Darwin himself thought the common ancestor of both might be found back in the Eocene period of 40 (sic) million years ago." Darwin did so state in his "Descent of Man" though the age of the Eocene is 60 not 40-millions of years ago, but nobody had dared say so before. In fact Drs. Dart and Broom in South Africa, Weidenreich and von Koenigswald in Indonesia, and other distinguished field workers were clobbered for mentioning *one* million!

If we turn up a Subman in California I suppose we will be told that that old buffoon Cuvier predicted it in 1850. Look him up some time. You may get a nasty shock.



THE MIND THING (continued from p. 77)

"Yes. Stamps too. Going to write Dr. Staunton?"

He went to the desk. "Might as well. It'll just be a short note telling him to look for me late Saturday evening. And if I write it here and mail it at the main p.o. on my way home, he'll probably get it tomorrow."

At the desk he found paper and took out his fountain pen, then turned. "Last chance," he said. "Do I tell him I'm coming alone?"

"Dave, be sensible. By November we'll have enough saved to get us off

to a good start. If you were willing for me to work a while after we're married, it might be different. But you're adamant about that so I'm going to be adamant about the date. Besides there still *is* my mother."

"To hell with your mother," Dave said. But the sudden sizzling of a steak being put on a hot skillet probably drowned him out.

The letter and the steaks ran a dead heat and were both done at the same time.

(To be continued)