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A DEHYDRATED FIG FOR YOUR BRAVE NEW WORLD!

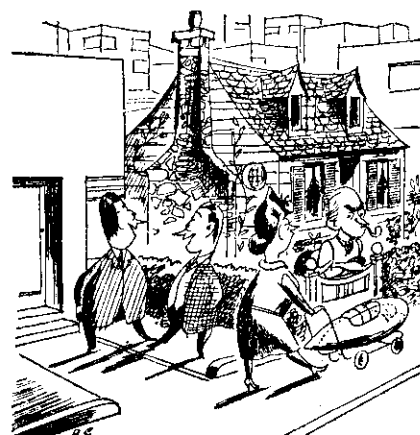
THOUGH someone has pointed out that there is no sense in a worm turning, since it is the same at both ends, I must protest, however hopelessly, against this Brave New World into which dumb humanity is being hustled by the embattled forces of radio, cinema, the Arts, the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and the "popular science" journals. Give me liberty or give me euthanasia! In short, this peace which has broken out like a rash all over the pitted face of our simple old-fashioned wartime world has turned me into a conscientious objector.

I have just read an article in one of our more pontifical weeklies telling me that my post-war home will be built of steel and asbestos. Since it appears very unlikely that I will get a house at all, I resent particularly being told that what I shall get, or do, will be thus and thus. I don't want a steel and asbestos house. I want a wooden house, with tiles on the roof and the bathroom wall, then, if the power system does short-circuit, I'm not likely to be grilled like a piece of bread in a toaster. As for asbestos—what pleasure or profit could there be in insuring an asbestos house? "The house is no eyesore, although the plain, functional design will at first puzzle the eye accustomed to chimneys, tiles, pseudo-Gothic and Byzantine porches and suchlike trimmings." Mark that word "functional"; it means that my new home (and yours) will have all the graceful contours of a bully-beef tin. And "the house can be painted any colour, but nigger brown will tone well with natural surroundings." In other words, we are to exchange the tyranny of one Brown House for that of another.

This Age of Plasticine

But the half has not been told. My new car—your new car, my friends—will be made of transparent plastic and will be fully streamlined. Or so the illustrated magazines tell me. It will be transparent so that you can see at a glance how the wheels go round (if you can get any petrol to make them go round). Conversely, you will be able to see if there is any petrol in the tank should the wheels refuse to turn for any other reason. And, of course, the passers-by will be able to see you, so that you won't be able to use it as a dressing shed at the beach, and should you manage to stall it on the tramlines at a busy intersection you will feel (and look) like a shrimp in aspic. The more so since you won't be able to push it to the kerbside, there being no corners to get a grip of in its fully streamlined body.

Again, as you value sanity, take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, etc. It doesn't bear thinking about. Someone has just invented a breakfast food made from wood-pulp. True, I have been eating one like it for years past but the manufacturers have so far bowed to convention as to claim that it is cereal in origin. Sops to Cerberus, no doubt. Indeed, every staple article of diet has



"I want a wooden house"

already been processed, "purified," synthesised or dehydrated out of all recognition. With the exception of beer—it hasn't occurred to anyone to dehydrate that back to something like normal strength.

True, there are still 10,000 (more or less) who have not bowed the knee to Baal. I had dealings with one the other day, a dear, old-world craftsman who still makes clothes from wool instead of glass fibres or aluminium filings. But his products are in the nature of antiques, and priced accordingly.

Remote Control

Nor can one regard the future of the cinema with equanimity. Even now, I understand, film producers are dallying with the idea of adding olfactory effects to the visual and aural sensations of the screen. "The smellies," in short, are on the way, and one can but pray that the soap trusts don't get wind of it.

But of all the change and decadence we see in everything around us, developments in radio are those which fill me with most apprehension. For I am told that the time is not far distant (with what unction do the fuglemen of industry mouth those syllables!) when individual receiving sets will be worn on the person as comfortably (and inevitably) as the wrist watches of to-day. Under such duress how the human puppet will jump at the voice of authority—marital or political.

Where'er You Walk

Where'er you walk you will find no peace. Indeed, I had a foretaste of the new freedom the other day.

I was crossing the street at lunchtime when a traffic officer yawped at me from the safety of a radio truck, "You, the man in the grey suit, don't jay-walk; use the pedestrian crossing!"

Now I am normally the most mild and inoffensive of men, but after having been bawled out by experts over several years it is irksome to find that the rucked sports coat and baggy flannels of the civilian are no protection against official-dom.

I drew myself up.

"I will not," I said, with emphasis, "I will not walk between your lousy white lines. No motorist has the colour of right to try and beat me to any particular point on the road, nor have you

(continued on next page)

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