

UNDISMAYED by anything critics said of his first novel, "Hidden Faces," Salvador Dali is pounding away at another one, although even he will have to go some to surpass the paragraph in his last epic that told how the fair heroine Solange reminded the hero of a slice of cream cheese. "The slightly salt and tart taste," explained Mr. Dali, "evoking the animal femininity of the she-goat, went straight to his heart. With a faint but delightful anguish he continued to cut into the immaculate turgescence of his Homeric dish and as he finished his cheese he decided that the fanilial undulations of his silverware harmonized so well with Solange's mat and oxidized pallor that the thought of marrying her sprang into his mind for the first time." . . . In addition to writing a new novel, Mr. Dali is experimenting with a set of drawings for an Illustrated Modern Library edition of "Don Quixote." Dali's Don will be worth flowing quietly to see. . . . Stop-press news from Prentice-Hall: Antoine, the famous hair-dresser, will call his life story "Antoine by Antoine," having discarded "The Drape of the Lock." "There are many reminiscences," says the publicity note, "of visits to his salon of such celebrities as Queen Marie of Rumania, Elsa Maxwell, and the Duchess of Windsor. Among the il-

lustrations will be several showing Antoine's much-talked-of glass house in Paris and one of the coffin-shaped glass bed with the maestro of hair-sculpture at rest in it." . . . Of course, you can also go to a good movie. . . .

FARRAR AND RINEHART have lured John Selby from the AP and installed him as Associate Editor. Nick Wreden is now Vice-president of Dutton, and is in charge of the Editorial Department. . . . Doubleday will publish Carlos Romulo's new book, "My Brother Americans," on March 22. . . . Phil Stern tells me that Armed Services Editions have passed up a new Lippincott publication as just a trifle too special for their purposes. The title: "A Study of Endometriosis, Endosalpingiosis, Endocervicosis, and Peritoneo-Ovarian Sclerosis," by James R. Goodall. . . . A vice-president of the Chase National Bank swears to the authenticity of this incident. He gave a brand new secretary a one-hundred-dollar bill and asked her to go outside and get it changed. She didn't come back for a full hour, and then she still clutched the bill in her hand. "I've been to every store on the block," she reported. "Nobody would change it for me!" . . . An old Boni and Live-right minion, who later made a big name for himself at CBS, was sent to

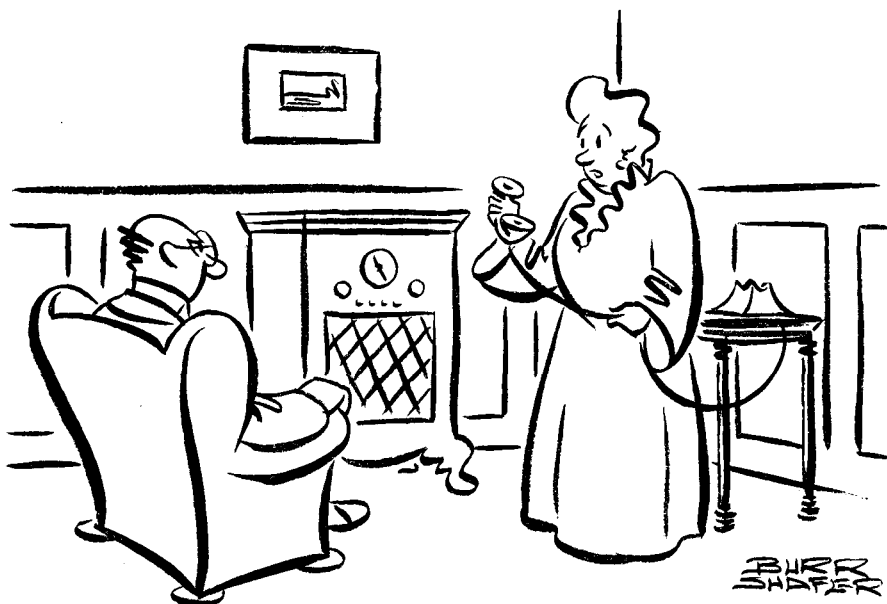
France to prepare radio propaganda beamed to Nazi Germany. When he gave the technicians his first script, he added, "Be sure to mention the name of this station." . . . "The Best Sermons of 1943-44," edited by G. Paul Butler, is a rewarding survey of contemporary religious thinking by all denominations. It has added significance at a time when united action by all faiths is so imperative. . . . Kees Van Hock has written the first complete biography of Pope Pius XII, the reigning Pontiff. It will be a Philosophical Library book. . . .

CAROLYN COGGINS is writing a sprightly literary gossip column every week for the *Atlanta Constitution*. Several scouts have reported favorably, and she will probably be drafted soon by a major league club. She is currently batting .360 and has such a good arm they're going to let her throw out the first author at the next *Tribune* luncheon. . . . The publication of Osa Johnson's "Bride in the Solomons" (Houghton Mifflin) reminds Bob Linscott that when her first book, "Cannibal Land," appeared, one trade magazine requested a special review copy on the ground that its subject would be of particular interest to its readers. The name of the magazine was *The Butchers' Advocate*. . . . John Meeker's little boy broke a record of some years' standing when he ended a sentence with five prepositions. John had been in a mood to read the youngster a few chapters from Bulfinch's "Mythology." The youngster had not been in a mood to listen. Result: banishment to bedroom without supper. Later John relented to the extent of a glass of milk and some cookies, but on the tray, firm disciplinarian that he fancied himself, he also placed the copy of Bulfinch. Meeker, Jr., yelled furiously, "Why are you bringing me that book I didn't want to be read to out of up for?" . . . The dusky Rochester (real name: Eddie Anderson) often gets the biggest laughs in Jack Benny's radio programs and pictures. In Harlem his name is featured above Benny's. "I never minded his stealing my pictures," says Benny, "until I heard that my next one might be 'The Life of Booker T. Washington.'" . . .

SHOLEM ASCH, author of "The Nazarene" and "The Apostle," is now at work on a novel of contemporary New York for Putnam's. The same publishers have commissioned Frank Graham to write a life of the late Al Smith. . . . David Stern reports that a woman entered a Philadelphia bookshop and asked for a reprint edition of "The Story of Dr. Wassell." She offered a quarter in payment. Informed that the price was one dollar,



"Couldn't you wait until after the war before asking your mother for a visit—you know how the government feels about travel!"



"It's Dunninger . . . he doesn't like what you're thinking about his program."

she said, "Hm-m-m! Dis doctor iss a *specialist*?" . . . When Clinton Balmer was in Lynchburg, he wanted to send a hospitalized and cantankerous native of eighty a book to read. When the local bookseller heard for whom the book was intended, he snorted and suggested, "Sinners Never Die." . . . MGM officials cast an incredulous eye over the profits on "See Here, Private Hargrove" and forthwith commissioned a sequel. It will be called "What Next, Corporal Hargrove," but for reasons not stated, Mr. H. himself will have no part in the scripting. That task has been assigned to Harry Kurnitz, who wrote several of the "Thin Man" scenarios that followed the memorable Hammett original. He also writes occasional mystery stories for Dodd, Mead under the pen-name of Marco Page. . . . A Reynal and Hitchcock executive has added his bit to the endless wise-cracking over Miss Winsor's bonanza. "What a girl!" he marveled. "She's built a single word of Lillian Smith's into a 900-page best-seller!" . . .

IF EDMUND WILSON gets the green light from the State Department, he will soon leave for a long European trek. Many *New Yorker* readers, who found his book reviews far too esoteric and patronizing for their tastes, will regard this as the neatest trek of the year. The authors they admire and the authors Mr. Wilson admires seldom recognize one another when they pass on the street. Hamilton Basso is in line for Wilson's old post. . . . Jack Kirkland, who made a fortune for everybody concerned with his dramatization of Erskine Caldwell's "Tobacco Road," is one of the people who believe lightning can strike twice in the same place: he is making a play of Caldwell's "Georgia Boy." . . . Jo-Car-

roll Dennison, now headed for Hollywood stardom, was "Miss America of 1942." The first time she appeared at a studio she was lined up with a dozen other girls in bathing suits for a forthcoming musical. The director would have none of her. "You may do in the dinner-party sequence," he told her, "but you're definitely not the bathing-suit type!" . . . A Chinese restaurant in Boston has been named after Carl Glick's "Shake Hands with the Dragon." Dorothy Hillyer ate fourteen Chinese dishes there the opening night, and then sent out for some Chinese bicarbonate of soda. . . .

EDWIN HOPKINS, of 255 West 43rd Street, New York, has sent me his new publication, "The Nightingale of Broadway," by Stanley Tocci. I opened at random to page 214, and now wild horses couldn't drag my copy away from me. It was the climax of a wonderful love scene between Cynthia and Robin. Cynthia had given him "a quick moist impulsive kiss on her own initiative, which made a fever of possession race through his veins. 'You must be mine, all mine,' he appealed to her with his heart suffocating and racing . . . 'I am yours forevermore,' she replied. 'Then let us go in the library and sit on the couch. You'll get all tired out standing here on the stairs,' said he." Cynthia, it developed at this point, was no babe in the woods. "Robin," she countered, "I am a decent girl and honor is dearer to me than life itself. I could die in your arms from love but not on a couch. Forgive me if I do you an injustice, but I am very suspicious of couches from the bad reputation of the couch in Ready's office." . . . I was interrupted at this point; I hope Cynthia can hold out until I get home this evening.

BENNETT CERF.

"From where I sit"



ALONG in Spring it will be balmy and, Lee Barker, above, assures us, you will be reading GERTRUDE LAWRENCE's autobiography, *A STAR DANCED*, which title was changed at her behest from *THAT REMINDS ME*. It seems she has a fond childhood memory of a day on the beach at Brighton when she put a penny in the fortune-telling machine and got a little card which said: "A star danced and under it you were born." And that reminds me of the sign on the astrology tent of a local circus I once passed. The sign was thirty feet long and it read, "What Star Was You Born Under?"

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IN HALLETT ABEND'S *TREATY PORTS* I came across an answer to the boys who still think quaint little China doesn't change. Today, with hundreds of thousands of coolies building airfields for American bombers, with American trucks winding their way through shimmering Chinese sunsets, it is startling to recall the Macao incident. "In the middle of the isthmus (at Macao) the Chinese for centuries maintained a high barrier wall built of brick and stone and extending into the sea at either end. The wall has always been guarded and patrolled day and night by Chinese soldiers in order to prevent foreigners from penetrating beyond the area rented to the Portuguese. So strict was the ban against foreigners only a little more than a century ago that when a Chinese named Paou-pang was found guilty of aiding them in interior exploration he was condemned to the death of one thousand cuts, his whole family was beheaded, his native village was destroyed by fire, and the whole countryside for a radius of twenty miles was laid waste."



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★ DOUBLEDAY, DORAN ★

JANUARY 13, 1945

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Seeing Things

VOX POPULI

ALL of New York's actors are not members of Equity. Take the Mayor, for example. Some people may find him hard to take. Indeed, every gangster, grafter, tinhorn, and tout in the town has found the task impossible. But let's forget politics for the moment. That's one way of saying, let's forget partisan politics. The two have a way of keeping company. They are apt to be Laocoöned. Yes, and also forgetting the chisellers upon whom the Mayor wages open warfare, let's consider the Little Flower merely as, each Sunday between one and one-thirty New York time, he blossoms on Station WNYC.

This means, of course, considering him as an actor. Because the act he puts on there is one of the highlights of Manhattan's radio. No broadcasting studio in New York houses a more tempestuous or amusing performer than does City Hall when in his office the Mayor is going to town over the ether.

Recently I have attended two of His Honor's broadcasts. The first was a Christmas program. Being such, it was scarcely typical. This seasonal side of the Mayor, one gathered—and he had hinted—came like Christmas itself but once a year. Spiritually, the Mayor was hidden under holly wreaths that day. He was more Tiny Tim than Little Flower. The program was musical, carol-studded and choral. The Mayor, between music cues, confined himself to reading the Nativity story. From which Gospel I was never quite certain. He did read it, however, as zealously as if Bethlehem were a new borough. At one point such was the fervor with which he attacked the mike that, watching him, I was for a moment or two afraid he might have mistaken one of the Kings for an artichoke king and the inhospitable owners of the inn for local landlords.

The second LaGuardia broadcast I attended was more secular. It was the Mayor's performance on New Year's Eve. Although fully aware of the day's wartime significance and eloquent on the subject, the Mayor had burned his Christmas trees by then. At this session he was giving one of his weekly "Talks to the People"; those talks which he has been conducting every Sunday since, on a certain dark and distant December 7, we were appalled as a nation by news of a harbor-full of "Maines." Instead of playing the

Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come, the Mayor was now once again providing the fire at one of his own chats. The Health Department, Rent Ceilings, the City's Meat Supply, Horse Racing, and the local newspapers, especially the august *New York Times*, were the lessons from which he then read.

Each of these supplied him with what theatrically is known as a "scene," no less than a theme. Let it be quickly stated that entertaining as the Mayor is when, on the air, he is heard and not seen, he is far more delightful when he is seen as well as heard. He at least is a radio performer who suffers because television has been slow in coming.

Not to see him is to miss a good part of the show. His is an extraordinary face. It is the perfect "actor's mask," flashing and sudden around the eyes, full of massive jawbone, and yet made of rubber so far as its emotional pliability is concerned. The mouth in particular is an instrument. It can protrude to Ubangi proportions at one moment, spread in an accordion's fashion at the next, then retrieve itself like a trombone, and close on a threat more ominously than a portcullis.

The Mayor's face is as much a seismograph as it is a countenance. It registers the incessant earthquake that is the spirit behind it. Whatever the opposite of a poker face is, that is the Little Flower's. Emotions assail it as swiftly as the sirens of police cars or fire engines, running up and down the city streets, assail the ears of New York's citizens. No old and dubious book on acting, in which the pictures showed the proper expressions for Hate, Love, Tenderness, Anger, and Despair, was ever as profusely illustrated as is the Mayor's own mask. No hurdy-gurdy can play as many tunes as his face can, or change them as rapidly.

When the Mayor is sitting down, his head looms above his desk, heroic in its mold. It is only when he stands up that you realize how short is the stem supporting a double chrysanthemum.

Visually, the Mayor is a performer of the race of Salvini and Grasso. One would add Caruso, too, if it were not for the Mayor's voice. The tunes he releases may fill the metropolitan area, but they would scarcely grace the Metropolitan. Even when his face is set for Jovian thunder, his vocal cords can produce high harmonies of



—SRL Wood Engraving by
Frances O'Brien Garfield

Hizzoner

which a boatswain's mate, standing by the gangplank, would be proud.

His voice is full of surprises. It is full of surprises because, bantam though he is, every half-inch of the Mayor is baritone in spirit. Emerging from such a head, the voice can startle the ears as much as the eyes would be surprised to see a soapbubble leave a howitzer. Usually his speech has more of the fife to it than the kettledrum. Even when it is supposedly all kettledrum, a fife keeps threatening to interrupt, although it may not actually play an obbligate.

THE truth is that, at his desk, His Honor is visually a King of the Forest fit to terrify Frank Buck. But vocally his lion can on occasion be no more ferocious than if it belonged to Snug the Joiner. No doubt the gentleness of his roar is, as Theseus would observe, only a proof of his "good conscience."

That his voice has so little relation to either the Toga or the Forum may explain why it is doubly effective by the fireside on the radio. The Mayor converses directly with his constituents. He does not talk over their heads, but above the heads of his departments.

He thinks fast, is a dynamo wired for sound, and is a master of pungent colloquialisms. His language might leave the Lord Mayor guessing, but it strikes home to every housewife in Brooklyn and the Bronx, and every richman, poorman, beggarman, thief who may be listening in Richmond, Queens, and Manhattan. If the City has a voice, it is the Mayor who supplies it when seated before the mike. Not since Al Smith's heyday have the sidewalks been so articulate.

He has a genius for public intimacy, for treating the many as the one, and