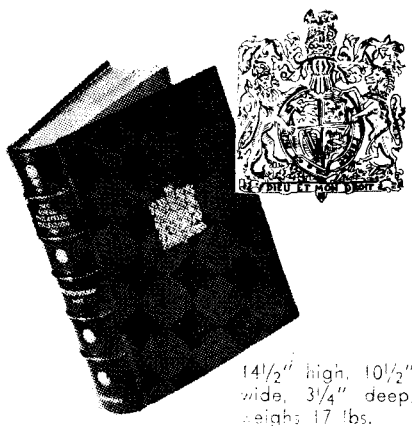


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## TRADE

## Winds

**AFTER THIRTY-FOUR YEARS** of covering the Broadway stage for metropolitan newspapers, and meeting every celebrity the world of make-believe can boast, Ward Morehouse still loves—in fact, adores—journalism, the theatre, and New York City itself. Since I share his enthusiasm to the full, I find his disarming book of memoirs, "Just the Other Day" (McGraw-Hill \$4), just about the most beguiling reading of the spring season. Ward has been my personal friend for most of those thirty-four years he's been away from his yellow pines in Georgia, and in all that time I've never known him to betray one ideal or be false for even an instant to the elaborate code of Southern courtesy and gallantry he inherited. His book is a reflection of all the things in which he believes.

**WARD'S FIRST JOURNALISTIC CHORES** were performed for the *Savannah Press*. For the princely wage of nine dollars a week, he did city-news odds and ends and wrote a sports column under the pseudonym of "J. Alexander Finn." One day he picked an all-Savannah scholastic football team, and was rash enough to omit the name of a stalwart named Bubber Bryson. Bubber did not take kindly to this discrimination. In fact, he sent a member of his retinue down to the *Press* office to beat the bejabbers out of young Morehouse. The editor-in-chief surveyed the damage to Ward's cherubic countenance and beamed, "This is a mighty fine thing to happen, boy! Shows your column's being read!"

"Legit" was still thriving in the sticks in those days, and when Billie Burke, Will Rogers, Raymond Hitchcock, and Margaret Anglin in turn played Savannah cub-reporter Morehouse got his first heady taste of foot-light glamor. Moving up a peg, he landed a job on the *Atlanta Journal*,

battercakes." There were two other members of that staff whose names will be familiar to you: Lawrence Stallings and Margaret Mitchell, even then making preliminary notes for "Gone With the Wind." In fact, the *Journal's* editor, John Paschall, complained, "How are we going to get out a newspaper around here? We've got nothing but authors!"

**WHAT WARD WAS BUSTIN'** to accomplish, of course, was that long, long jump to New York. He made it in 1919, and landed with the *Tribune*. One of his first assignments was to sound out Professor Jacoby at Columbia University on the Einstein Theory. Ward didn't tell the assistant man-



aging editor, whom he describes as slim, dark, brilliant, and sardonic," and whose name was Lester Markel, that down Georgia way he never had even heard of the Einstein Theory. Up to Columbia he subways, and soon discovered that Professor Jacoby was disinclined to be interviewed unless he jolly well got paid for it. Ward phoned Markel, who, deeply impressed, exclaimed, "Good God! I didn't know there was a businessman on Morningside Heights! Give him fifty dollars!" Ward has considered himself an expert on relativity ever since.

**THE NAME OF WARD MOREHOUSE** was already familiar to patrons of the drama in New York when another youngster from Georgia came up to court success on the Great White Way. This one was a girl—blonde, lovely, talented, and irrepressible. Her name was Miriam Hopkins, and Ward and I both conceived a boundless appreciation of her many gifts (of which silence was not one). My boss at the moment, publisher Horace Liveright, was persuaded to give Miriam her first big opportunity in the dramatization of Dreiser's "An American Tragedy," and it earned her stardom. Pat Kearney, the wild-eyed Irishman who authored the stage version, showed his gratitude for her efforts by bursting into her Waverly



where another fellow named Ward had the only good typewriter. This was Ward Greene, now high nabob of King Features, and his copy was so good, the editor enthused, "When Jimmy Greene writes it's like butter on

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# Miss Douglas of New York

by ANGUS DAVIDSON

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Place house one night when Ward and I were in attendance and announcing his intention of carving his initials on her torso with a butcher knife. The idea did not particularly



appeal to Missy Hopkins, and the rest of that night took on the aspect of an Alfred Hitchcock chase picture.

**THERE ARE TWO CHAPTERS** in "Just the Other Day" that stand out in particular. One is a revealing study of the late Gertrude Lawrence, the other a moving account of the day the *New York Sun* went to press for the last time. The book concludes with a nostalgic sigh for the Georgia backwoods, and a hint that Ward will soon go back there with his lovely bride, Becky, to end his days. Personally, I don't believe he's got a prayer. New York—and in particular the wonderful part of it centering about Sardi's and Shubert Alley—is too deeply ingrained in his soul!

**EDNA FERBER**, back from a holiday in Europe aboard the *Queen Elizabeth*, took a quick look at New York and failed to find in it the beauties that won Ward Morehouse's heart. "Disgustingly filthy," were the words, in fact, that ship news reporters quoted her as using. Then she added that the streets were "covered with garbage," the buildings were "gray and dirty," and that even on Park Avenue "windows cannot be opened because of the soot and dirt in the air." Central Park she pronounced "unfit for a self-respecting goat." In short, the whole of New York, she concluded, is "a scab on the face of the country." What our town obviously needs is a new mayor who has brains, determination, guts, know-how, and the ability to achieve results in the face of any odds. Nominations are now in order for the 1953 campaign, and we hereby make ours. For Mayor of New York: Edna Ferber.

**THE NEWSPAPER EDITORS** of America, gathered for their annual conclave at the Waldorf, had plenty to say, too, about the bogged-down condition of Manhattan, and the hopelessly snarled traffic situation. While other cities have been making valiant efforts to keep the trucks and taxis rolling, New York's do-nothing administration has made nary a move... Three

—BENNETT CERF.

—G. McDUFFLE.



by

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