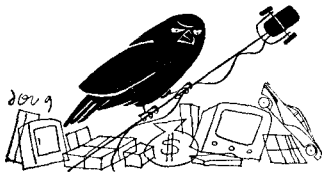


TRADE

Winds

IT WAS AN UNHAPPY moment for other participants in our TV show, "What's My Line?" when Steve Allen, reeling under the pressure of his own nightly two-hour show and rehearsals for "spectaculars" in which he has become involved, had to withdraw from the panel. But when Fred Allen turned up one Sunday evening in Steve's place I experienced a genuine thrill.

Fred Allen always has been a great favorite in our house—a comedian with rare wit and even rarer good taste. Working with him on a show is my idea of a fine time! It is apparent, however, that Fred's humor, while still abundant, has become tinged with bitterness and disillusionment. Television, giveaway shows (which he calls "the buzzards of radio"), vice presidents of advertising agencies, and the grind of a one-hour radio show every week for eight



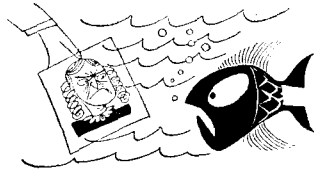
solid years have left an indelible mark on him.

THIS IMPRESSION is borne out by Fred Allen's new book, pointedly entitled "Treadmill to Oblivion" (Little, Brown). In it he observes that show business is a place where more chorus girls are kept than promises. "All a comedian has to show for his years of work and aggravation," he concludes sadly, "is the echo of forgotten laughter."

I think Fred is overstating his case. I, for one, will never forget the hilarious characters who populated Allen's Alley, nor such occasional ten-strikes as the "Mr. and Mrs." routine he did with Talullah Bankhead. Allen wrote a great deal of his material himself, with the assistance of such experts as Arnold Auerbach (responsible for "Call Me Mister" and other Broadway revues) and Herman Wouk, subsequent author of a little number called "The Caine Mutiny."

ALLEN'S INSPIRED creations included the only armless sculptor in the world (he put the chisel in his mouth and his wife hit him on the back of the head with a mallet); Professor Gulpo, who swallowed umbrellas (he was

putting something away for a rainy day); and an uncle who brought his goldfish to the aquarium every year for a two-week romp. One day, however, Uncle fell into the tank himself, and they couldn't tell him from



the other fish. Finally, they threw a picture of Allen's aunt into the water—and when one of the fish recognized it and tried to escape from the tank they grabbed him. For twenty years, claims Fred, his mother in Boston kept a light burning in the window for him. When he came home she gave him a royal welcome and a gas bill for \$729.

Referring to the famous Fred Allen-Jack Benny "feud," Fred makes it clear that this was strictly for laughs. "I don't think," he notes, "that Jack Benny has an enemy in the world. He is the best-liked actor in show business. He is the only comedian I know who dies laughing at all the other comedians. He is my favorite comedian and I hope to be his friend until he is forty. That will be forever."

I'd like to echo Fred Allen's sentiments about Jack Benny. Danny Kaye and George Burns need only enter a room to make him start slapping his sides. He is as generous with his time as he is with his enthusiasm. And that tightwad character he plays on stage couldn't be farther from his real self. The proximity of Jack Benny and his wife, Mary, is one reason why the Cerf family loves to vacation at La Quinta, in the California desert, every winter.

CRITICS TOSSED THEIR hats in the air and gave out with justified huzzas for Hamilton Basso's "The View from Pompey's Head" (Doubleday). Not one of them, however, cared to go out on a limb and identify the real-life models Basso had in mind while he was delineating the great American novelist and his wife. They all knew the facts, ma'am. Basso's rich, Marquandian book, a trifle overpacked perhaps, is a highlight of the fall season, and along with Faulkner's "A Fable" gives best-seller lists the mark of distinction so conspicuously

NOTES from CALIFORNIA

▶ To people of this generation there are two words that hold a world of meaning—the Wilhelmstrasse and the Kremlin. The Kremlin still stands; the Wilhelmstrasse is a mass of ruins. What it once represented may be found in the records available by the total defeat of Nazi Germany. Those of the Foreign Office reveal the careers and activities of German diplomats to a degree seldom encountered in the study of the diplomatic service of a modern great power.

▶ Because of these documents Paul Seabury in *The Wilhelmstrasse* (\$3.00) is able to analyze the behavior of the traditional, conservative German foreign service in the politically violent Nazi period with a candor and documentation not usually possible in a work of this kind. He shows the reactions of the bureaucracy to a totalitarian regime, and the techniques used by that regime to control its inherited civil service. He also deals with a wider problem: the behavior and moral responsibility of the bureaucratic technician in modern society—a problem not unique to Germany.

▶ In *The Moscow Kremlin* (\$10.00) Arthur Voyce reminds us that the Kremlin is more than a symbol of a modern political system. It is a symbol of the history and cultural life of an ancient country. This book is the first in English to give a full-length description of the history, physical setting, architecture, and art treasures of the Kremlin buildings. The author has based his text on personal observations before the revolution and on past and present Russian sources. The 136 illustrations include plans, sections, elevations, and interiors of buildings within the Kremlin area; as well as photographs of the great number of art objects in the Kremlin museums and churches. Most of these art treasures are entirely unknown to the West.

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Introduction by Allan Nevins

Says Virginia Kirkus: "Proof that 'it can happen here' in some ten portraits of men who have achieved commanding roles in American politics . . . Vignettes of careers, the majority of the principal men 'of the people' who used that as part of their ammunition to persuade voters they were also 'for the people' these analyses bring to light many basic similarities. Most of the demagogues have exploited race and religion, most have played up emotional appeal, all have been talented exhibitionists..."

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lacking heretofore. The publishing house described in "Pompey's Head," incidentally, is a clever blend of Doubledays and Scribner's. . . . Erskine Caldwell's new novel, "Love and Money" (Duell, Sloan, & Pearce), has a book-trade background, too, but if ever there was a publisher or an agent who talked like Mr. Caldwell's characters they certainly never crossed my path.

THE HANDSOMEST and most rewarding gift book of the season to date is "Profile of America," edited by Emily Davie (Crowell)—a perfect gift for teenagers—not to mention their parents! . . . Runner-up: "The Second Treasury of American Homes" (Hawthorn). Beautiful pictures—particularly the ones taken in Nantucket. . . . I lean over backwards when it comes to touting books from my own Random House in this column, but I must tell you that, in my opinion, Mac Hyman's "No Time for Sergeants" is the most hilarious novel I've encountered in a long, long time. Anybody who's served a hitch in the armed forces should be particularly enthralled. . . . And don't go thinking that Elsa Maxwell's "R.S.V.P." (Little, Brown) is too high and mighty for you. By her own admission the greatest gold digger since Lorelei Lee, Elsa, whom heartless Clip Amory accuses of the seventy-year-itch, drops names and old gags with equal abandon, and drools over parties more boring in the telling than the unending flashes about the love life of those nice but overpublicized kids Debbie Reynolds and Eddie Fisher. But when Elsa takes down her hair and really dishes she provides a full measure of entertainment. Maybe she's just been hanging around with the wrong crowd!

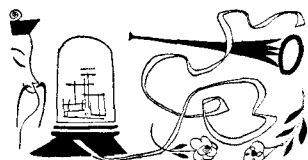
"RED" SMITH, in "Views of Sport" (Knopf), suggests some new collective nouns to add to already familiar ones like a "pack" of wolves, a "pride" of lions, a "shoal" of fish, and a "bevy" of beauties. Mr. Smith's additions, all calculated to help poor, struggling sports reporters, include: a "yammer" of radio announcers, a "gangle" of basketball players, a "grouse" of baseball players, a "doze" of racetrack stewards, a "quiescence" of prizefighters, and a "prevarication" of golfers.

THE BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB'S new promotion, "Music Appreciation Records," is piling up subscriptions faster than its original book plan ever did in its palmiest days. Sixty-five thousand members in a matter of weeks spell bonanza in any language. The club's common stock, listed on New York's big board, and selling today

on a high-yield basis, is coming in for some sharp reappraisal by Wall Street experts.

The new records feature the very best music, played by world-famous orchestras, on one side, and a lucid and comprehensive analysis of the various themes, and their interplay and development, on the other. The analysis is written and narrated by conductor Thomas Scherman, who, in a few minutes, made me understand more about Beethoven's Fifth Symphony than I learned in a month in a course at Columbia. For further details of the plan, write to the BOMC at 345 Hudson Street, New York.

REVERTING TO THE subject of Wall Street experts, they are, of course, the geniuses who can explain to you at four P.M. exactly why the stocks they touted before the opening declined ten points instead. Wall Street is the one place where an expert need never be right at all. I know one of the most self-assured of the lot who's been consistently wrong for four straight years. "A crash is coming," he's been croaking steadily.



while blue chips have doubled and redoubled in value. "What makes him still qualify as an expert?" I asked one misled customer. "If he weren't so expert," was the rueful explanation, "he'd have been shot in the pants by somebody who took his advice fully three years ago!"

BERNARD BARUCH WAS asked a short time ago for an opinion on the stock market. He refused to single out any one stock, but did vouchsafe two rules he's observed scrupulously himself: 1. Never pay any attention to what a president of a company ever tells you about his own stock. 2. When the market's gyrations on the up side hit the front page of *The New York Times*, sell! . . . Broker Washington Dodge remembers a Japanese trader who picked the very bottom of the market in 1932, and advised his customers to go in and buy (how right he was!) in a message unique among documents of its kind: "Here is good omen: the elevator which seemed impatiently has now hit bottom and will quickly express without its hat and coat. All traders must not miss boat, now that castor oil season is over, and beautiful flowers and bugles will be blowing heartbreak for damfool amateur bearish."

—BENNETT CERF.

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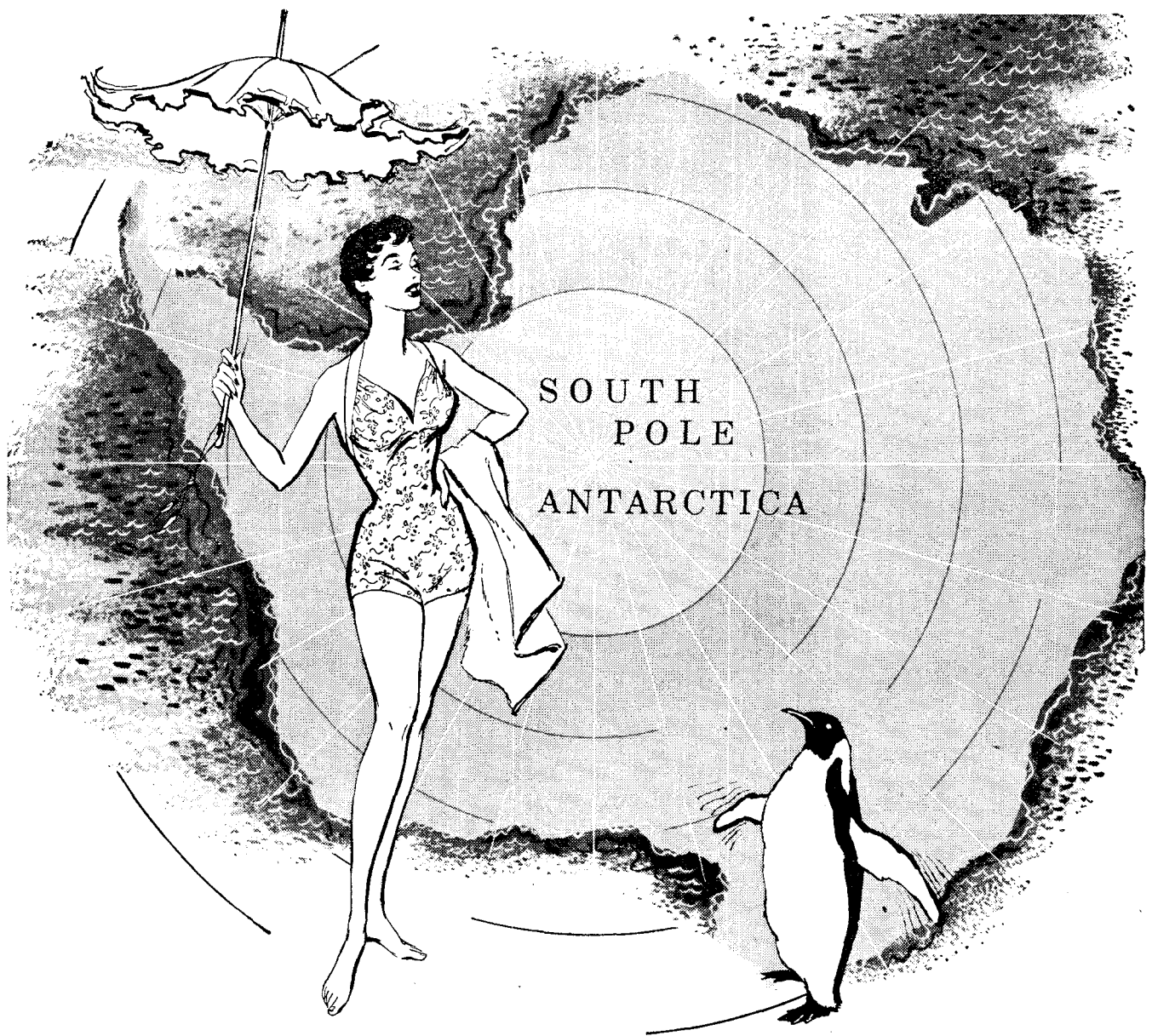
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The Saturday Review

NOVEMBER 13, 1954

THEY'RE SELLING YOUR UNCONSCIOUS



By LYDIA STRONG

Perhaps you don't know why your breakfast food crunches, and why you are encouraged to drink beer with your coat off, but chances are that a Motivational Researcher has probed your unconscious mind and informed the manufacturer that cereal must have crunch, and beer the common touch. In this article Lydia Strong describes the barrels of psychology in every modern package.

REMEMBER the old chestnut about the store that advertised: "We stand behind every bed we sell?"

The advertiser is not just standing behind the bed today; he's wired it for sound. Your dreams, your desires, and the rumblings of your subconscious, formerly sacred to you and your analyst, have been charted by advertising psychologists, eager to learn how you buy and why you buy, and therefore how they can sell you many, many more products.

Why do you smoke cigarettes, and is your favorite brand male or female? How do you really feel toward your

breakfast cereal? What kinds of occasion make you think of beer? What does your new car tell about your personality?

Don't try to answer these questions. The true answers, say the motivational researchers, lie buried deep in your subconscious mind. And the psychologists mining that area certainly have struck pay dirt. Motivational research is the hottest trend on Madison Avenue. The fatter the advertising budget, the greater the probability that Freud helped write the copy. Firms pay huge fees to psychological consultants for what *Business Week* has called bluntly "an

effort to pry off the top of the consumer's head" and to "find out what makes him tick."

Social Research, Inc., an M.R. agency in Chicago, made a study of attitudes toward cigarette smoking for *Chicago Tribune* advertisers. Psychiatric techniques were used to break through the "impersonal and objective attitudes" of the men and women tested. They were shown pictures of people smoking and asked to make up stories about them. They played the parts of total strangers and talked as they thought these people would talk about situations involving cigarettes. Such tests are standard psychiatric procedure for pinpointing the emotional problems of individuals; here they were used, perhaps for the first time, to solve the merchandising problems of cigarette manufacturers.

One finding was that, although in blindfold tests most smokers could not tell brands apart, they nonetheless felt definite preferences based on unconsciously determined brand reputations. Cigarettes were felt to be masculine or feminine, strong or mild,