

Lots of Good Laughs for the Cartoon Fans

By Philip H. Love

LIKE automobiles, houses and apartments, men's suits and white shirts, meats and many other things long taken for granted, cartoon books have been comparatively scarce this year.

Last year, when I began my survey of cartoon volumes for The Star's Christmas Book Supplement, I had to work standing up, the piles on my desk were so high. This year, I'm sitting down—and could eat off the top of the tallest stack with less difficulty than I've experienced in some of Washington's best restaurants these last 12 months.

But eating has been no more of a problem in 1946 than finding—and keeping—a place to live. And that, I trust, is about as good a way as any to lead up to the statement that, in my opinion, the best cartoon of the year concerns the housing shortage.

Baker and Adams Rank High on the List

It's by Frank Adams, and you'll find it in "Laughs From the Saturday Review of Literature." It shows a minister completing a marriage ceremony with the words, "And heaven help you find a house!"

But this is not to say that I consider the SRL collection the best cartoon book of the year. As a matter of fact, I think that distinction belongs to "The New Sad Sack," by George Baker. Readers of The Star need no introduction to the Sack called Sad; he has been a feature of this newspaper's colored comic section for so long that every one knows him for what he is—just about the funniest little jerk to pop out of an ink bottle in many a year.

Take a look at "The Sad Sack" on the front page of today's comic section. . . . Does he make you laugh? Well, he'll do the same in this book. . . . If he doesn't—but, of course, that's impossible.

"There's Many a True Word," etc.

Two first-rate cartoon books of a different type are "The Little President," by Don Calhoun, and "The Bear That Wasn't," by Frank Tashlin. The first tells the story of a little boy who dreams up a plan for world peace. "Have all the wars you want," he advises, "but don't shoot anybody."

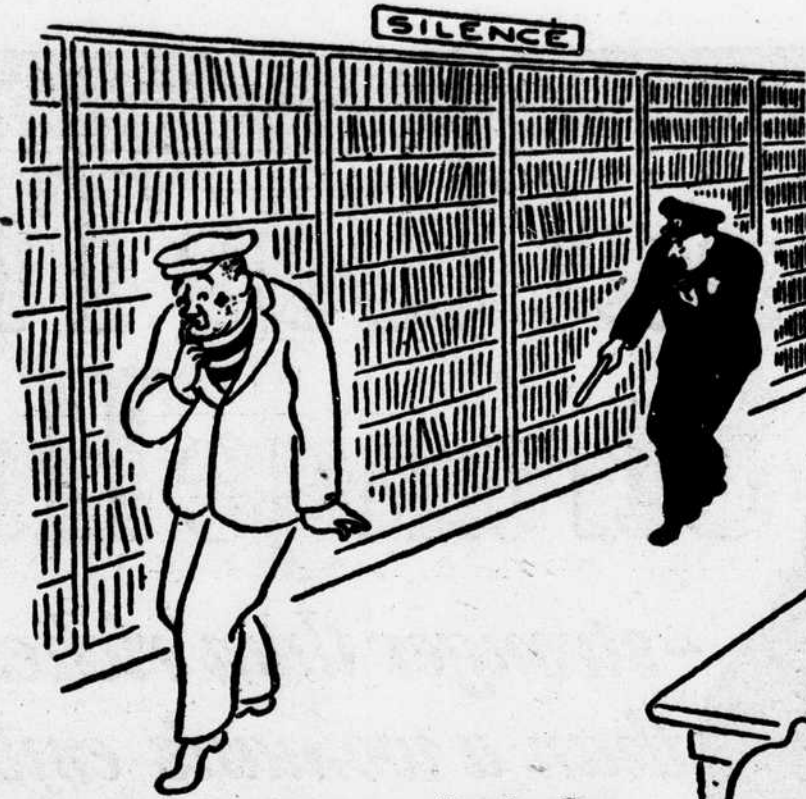
Well, who could quarrel with such an eminently sensible plan as that? As a matter of fact, everybody likes it so well that the little boy becomes President of the United States. "It's all so simple," he says, sliding down the White House banisters. "We'll have parades and bands, uniforms and speeches. Every one will play war—but no one will get hurt!"

That, as you can readily see, is about as sound a peace plan as has been advanced yet. The only trouble is that the little boy as little boys will, grows up, and—well, read "The Little President" and see for yourself how funny we grownups and some of our grandiose schemes really are.

You'll get pretty much the same reaction from Mr. Tashlin's cartoons and brief text, which poke fun at what the publishers describe as "the literal quality of the human Big Business mind." You'll laugh and laugh—you will, that is, if you're not one of those literal-minded persons who refuse to believe that the bear is really a bear.

Would-be cartoonists, as well as ordinary cartoon fans, will get their money's worth in "I Meet Such People," by Gurney Williams. The illustrated gags are some of the best from Collier's Weekly, of which Mr. Williams has been cartoon editor these last 10 years. For the aspiring artists, there is a dividend in the form of an accompanying text in which Mr. Williams explains how cartoons are created and sold.

"One Dozen Roses" is a selection of the best cartoons by Carl Rose from most of the leading magazines. Included are old gags as well as new ones, Mr. Rose having picked from all his published cartoons, rather than from just this year's output. One of the more ancient ones that still strikes me as being funny shows a little girl and her mother, obviously of the upper crust, seated at their dinner table. "It's broccoli, dear," the mother insists. "I say it's spinach," the child re-



"Laughs From the Saturday Review of Literature."

Recommended

The best cartoon books of 1946, in the opinion of the author of the accompanying article, are:

"THE NEW SAD SACK," by George Baker. (Simon & Schuster; \$2.)

"LAUGHS FROM THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE," by various cartoonists. (Vanguard; \$2.50.)

"THE LITTLE PRESIDENT," by Don Calhoun. (Crowell; \$1.50.)

"THE BEAR THAT WASN'T," by Frank Tashlin. (Dutton; \$1.25.)

"ONE DOZEN ROSES," by Carl Rose. (Random; \$2.50.)

torts, "and I say the hell with it!"

Another collection of magazine cartoons is "Hazel," by Ted Key. These drawings of a churlish housemaid appear regularly in the

Saturday Evening Post and, I suppose, have their following. Personally, I am not one of Hazel's admirers, the servant problem being what it is; but, to be as fair as possible under the circumstances, I'll toss in this sample:

Hazel's boss is going over his collection of postage stamps. The maid, seated nearby and licking the flap of an envelope, asks, "Got any uncanceled American threes?"

Oldtime newspaper readers may be glad to learn that a favorite comic of yesterday, "Krazy Kat," by the late George Herriman, is among the current crop of cartoon books. There's really no use commenting on this: Either you like Krazy and his playmates, Ignatz Mouse and Offissa Pupp, or you don't.

The same might be said of J. R.

Williams' "Kids Out Our Way." But, though I cleverly avoided committing myself on Mr. Herriman's work, I don't mind coming right out and saying that I, for one, consider Jim Williams one of the world's great cartoonists.

Another good volume is "Dogs," by Gene Byrnes, but I'm not too sure that it's eligible for mention in this article. It is, the publishers say, "A book of pictures, information, cartoons, advice and

the crop. A few more volumes remain on my desk, but, like the little girl in Mr. Rose's cartoon (see paragraph 12), I know they're not broccoli.

For Sportsmen

OLE MISS, by Nash Buckingham. (Putnam; \$2.75.) A book of hunting tales from the Mississippi country. Identical in format with Nash Buckingham's previous sports volumes.

GOLF BAWLS, by Richard Armour. Cartoons by Herb Middlecamp. (Beechurst; \$2.) Funny verses and pictures about the perils of the links.



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