A REPORTER AT LARGE

HERE is more rubble in the city of Berlin than there is, or ever has been, in any other one city in the world. For more than three years, the German capital was bombed over and over again. In the final months of the war, the bombers came every few hours, day and night, night and dayat night the Royal Air Force, in the daytime the United States Air Forceand in the final weeks, during the Battle of Berlin, the city was shelled by the Red Army's artillery. At last, in a macabre climax, a substantial portion of Berlin was blown up by the Germans themselves, at the order of Adolf Hitler. Berlin's ruins are immense in both size and range. They make one think of the mountains of the moon, or the moraines of ancient glaciers. One can hardly believe that man alone could be responsible for such monstrous and concentrated destruction. Wandering through the stricken sections of the metropolis, one sometimes feels that it must have been nature that went on a rampage here, as it did long ago in Pompeii, or in 1923 in Tokyo, when an earthquake killed almost a hundred and fifty thousand people. Berlin's ruins

PHOENIX IN RUBBLE

are almost perfect in their imperfection; now, nearly seven years after the war, they have something of the timeless, changeless greatness of Egypt's Pyramids, China's Great Wall, or Athens' Acropolis. One evening not long ago, as I walked through the completely devastated area around the Tiergarten, the famous park in the center of Berlin, I felt dwarfed by the majesty of the desolation on all sides of me. I was reminded of a night some years back when I looked down while flying over the dead, white icecap of Greenland.

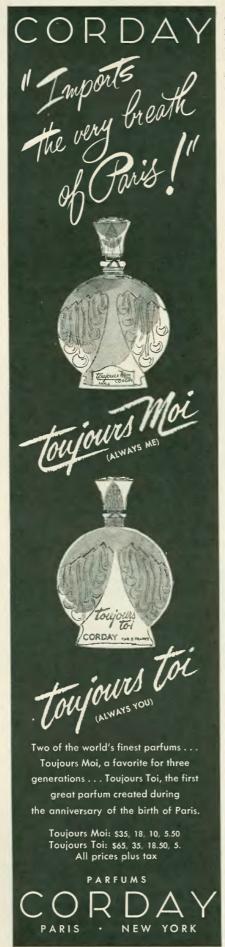
At the end of the war, ninety-eight million cubic yards of rubble were heaped up all over Berlin, covering the greater part of the city's three hundred and forty-four square miles. (The total amount of rubble throughout Germany came to four hundred and five million cubic yards; thus, the capital found itself with almost a quarter of all the rubble in the nation on its collective doorstep.) German statisticians have figured out that there was enough rubble in Berlin to build a wall sixteen feet high and a hundred and fifteen feet

wide from Berlin to Dortmund (roughly the distance from Boston to Philadelphia); spread out evenly over the city, the rubble would have raised its level nearly ten feet. It would have made seven million freight-car loadsas much as Berlin's entire freight traffic during the prosperous year of 1929. Of the ninety-eight million cubic yards of rubble, only twenty-nine million, or not quite a third, have been removed so far. The rubble-removal experts of the West Berlin City Council estimate that in the light of foreseeable social and economic conditions, it will be twenty-five years before the last of the rubble is disposed of.

On the night of my stroll, Berlin was a haunting sight. The city's weird skyline of jagged ruins stood out sharply against a moonlit sky. Mountains of rubble, heaped up in perversely meticulous order, bordered streets that were clean, well paved, and well lighted; the Berliners, who are a painstaking, trafficconscious people, have carefully cleared all the main thoroughfares in the destroyed areas, even though the remains of countless victims still lie beneath the acres of shattered masonry on either side. Here and there amid the devastation, I could see the almost undamaged façade of a house standing out like a piece of scenery left on an empty stage at the end of a show. A few tall buildings with gaping black window holes reached toward the sky like warning fingers. Large white numbers had been painted on slabs of concrete or on the sidewalk, to indicate the street numbers of the houses that had once stood there. Every now and then, the gleam of an electric-light bulb showed through a crack in the wall of some cave or cellar out in the middle of the ghostly nothingness. A German proverb says, "One gets used to hanging on the gallows." Perhaps one also gets used to living in a graveyard.

THE morning after I wandered through the chaos, I went to see the city commissioner in charge of removing West Berlin's rubble, a graduate engineer named Karl Thomasius, whose office is in a former apartment house on the Kaiserdamm. (When the war ended, many of the city's municipal offices were set up in what had once been apartment buildings or private homes—temporarily, it was at first assumed, but perhaps permanently, since there are no funds to put up new public buildings.) Thomasius and his staff oc-





cupy one of the apartments. His desk is in a small room facing a courtyard. From his windows, he has a typical Berlin view-the wall of a bombed house. His assistants work in the kitchen of the apartment, where a big, old-fashioned coal range has been turned into a filing cabinet, and use the tub in the bathroom to store additional documents. Thomasius is a tall, wiry, leathery East Prussian who used to work for Siemens & Halske, which might be called the General Electric of Germany. He takes an engineer's detached attitude toward the rubble-removal problem; he considers it just another major engineering project. "Certainly it's a big job," he said when I remarked that his assignment seemed staggering to me. "So was your Hoover Dam. So was Magnitogorsk. So were our Reichsautobahnen." After a short pause, he went on, "You know, man is a creature of habit. The Berliners have become as accustomed to the sight of rubble as New Yorkers are to the sight of tall buildings. Most of the people have long ago forgotten the nightmare days of early May, 1945, when the war was just over and the entire city was a gutted shell, still burning fiercely in many spots. Nearly all the streets were blocked by anti-tank defenses, overturned vehicles, or buildings that had collapsed. The Soviet soldiers blew up the defenses, which created more rubble, and then rounded up all the available citizens and told them to clear the streets. Most of those citizens were women, since nearly all the able-bodied men were either dead or in prisoner-ofwar camps. There were no tools, no hammers, no pickaxes, no buckets—nothing. Throughout the hot, dusty summer of '45, straggling chains of Berliners were kept busy passing bricks and rocks from hand to hand."

It wasn't long, Thomasius said, before the German talent for organization again became apparent. Whole bricks were separated from broken ones and girders were put aside for the repair of roofs. Rubble trucks, half-ton jobs, appeared on the streets, and the municipal authorities scared up some wooden buckets for the workers, so that, instead of single pieces of rubble, bucketfuls of the stuff could be passed from hand to hand. Late in 1945, British engineer troops brought in bulldozers to move some of the bigger chunks. Groups of German women with brooms would follow the bulldozers, sweeping. A longrange removal program was mapped out by the municipal authorities. Large-scale maps of the blighted areas were



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prepared on which the condition of every building that had been standing at the outbreak of the war was indicated by one of four colors. Buildings colored red were "nonexistent;" blue meant "almost total damage," green "reparable," and yellow "usable." Of Berlin's apartment buildings, forty-three per cent had been completely destroyed, and thirty per cent of the rest were damaged.

"We soon realized what we were up against," Thomasius told me, looking out at the ruined wall across the courtyard. "The rubble from one ordinary four-story building, like this one we're in, would fill two hundred good-sized trucks, and we had no such trucks. We had no loading cranes, either. All we had was trouble. People were stealing like magpies. Boilers, pipes, plumbing fixtures, radiators—everything—disappeared. No day went by without accidents. Scores of people were killed by falling debris, despite the fact that we put markers on all the danger spots-over ten thousand of them. People talked about the 'restless ruins,' meaning the walls or whole houses that would sway and maybe collapse in a strong wind. The city administration spent eighteen million marks [four and a half million dollars] removing these hazards. A good many buildings were under constant watch. Before a storm, the local Meteorological Institute would send out warnings over the radio, cautioning people to keep away from shaky buildings. Then winter came and it started to snow, and the weight of the snow brought more collapses. And, as if all this weren't enough, the police made things hard for us. We wanted to rope off danger areas, so pedestrians would have to walk in the street. But the police objected, saying the streets had to be kept free for Allied military

"We had our hands full in those days, but our problems were insignificant compared to the ones we're having today. For one thing, we had no difficulty finding places to dump rubble then. We dumped it into cellar holes and on empty lots, and in ponds in the suburban districts. Certain spots were designated rubble-disposal groundsthe big air-raid shelters in Friedrichshain, Humboldthain, and Hasenheide Parks, and the southern part of the Schöneberg district, for instance. For a while, our workers pushed loaded wagons by hand to the nearest dumping place. But transportation became an increasingly grave problem. Berlin is

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the east and west city limits is thirtyeight kilometres at the widest point, and between the north and south limits it's forty-five kilometres. Sometimes you'd have to go fifteen or twenty kilometres to unload the rubble where it wouldn't bother anybody. We tried using barges on the Spree River, which runs right through the heart of the city, but it took a lot of coal to operate them, and, besides, the operation was altogether too complicated. You had to get your rubble to the bank of the river and dump it into the barges, and then, out in the suburbs, unload the barges by hand. All this cost money, and we were getting increasingly budget-conscious. I remember the day we had to remove the wreck of a big Russian tank from the Krummestrasse, in the Charlottenburg district. It cost us over a thousand marks to cut the damn thing into pieces with acetylene torches and carry it off. It was dangerous work, too, because the tank contained a lot of ammunition, which kept going off like firecrackers. Well, early in 1946, we began setting up narrow-gauge field railroad all over the city. We laid tracks everywherethrough side streets, through bombed courtyards, even through bombed houses. You'd see trains enter one side of a house and come out on the other. Our narrow-gauge system got to be known as the Berlin Rubble Railroad. At one time, we had three hundred and forty kilometres [two hundred and eleven miles] of track, a hundred and twenty diesel or steam engines, and forty-five hundred dump cars. The little railroad was a blessing. Later on, when trucks in something at least approaching adequate numbers became available, we dismantled it. I really believe that people were sorry to see it

There was no lack of man-or, rather, woman-power in those days, Thomasius told me. Rubble-removal jobs were practically the only jobs to be had in Berlin. For a while, forty thousand people were working on the project, two-thirds of them women. The women were an independent lot. They sometimes got tired of pushing dump carts filled with rubble and dumped their carts wherever they happened to be. Some of them printed signs on their trucks-such as "No Time for Love"-to distinguish themselves pointedly from the girls who found it more agreeable to comfort the soldiers of the victorious armies than to go around collecting rubble. The rubble women, as they became known, were paid seventy-two pfennigs (eighteen cents) an

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hour at a time when one American cigarette on the black market cost ten times that sum. They were, however, permitted to take home at night all the wood they came upon in the ruins, and this meant a great deal to them, for there was a terrible shortage of firewood in the grim winter of 1946. (The Berliners love their trees dearly, but large numbers of fine old trees were cut down in the city that winter.) Like many other Berliners, the rubble women lived on little but bread, tomatoes, and carrots. Notwithstanding their strenuous occupation, their food-ration cards entitled them to only nineteen hundred calories a day-six hundred calories less than the ration enjoyed by the so-called "heavy workers," a category that included not only bricklayers and stevedores but university professors and other intellectuals. The women lost weight, and their slim figures impressed the Russians, one of whom wrote in a letter to an East Berlin paper that he had at first thought most of the rubble women were girls in their twenties and had been astonished to learn that many were in their thirties or forties, and had children at home to care for.

The rubble women, Thomasius said, were the heroines of Berlin. Günter Neumann, a well-known parodist and songwriter, composed a song about them, and all at once everybody was singing the refrain:

Today the weaker sex is saying, "So what? Somebody's got to do it."

Among the rubble men, there were few who were working voluntarily. Almost all of them were former Nazi Party members who were obliged to take up picks and shovels. A number had been bankers, doctors, government officials, and teachers, and these sought to preserve the amenities of their former lives under the new conditions. It was not rare, I was told, to hear one laborer say, "Please pass me the pick, Herr





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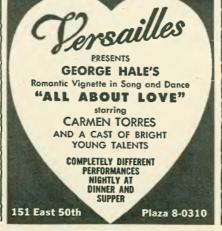
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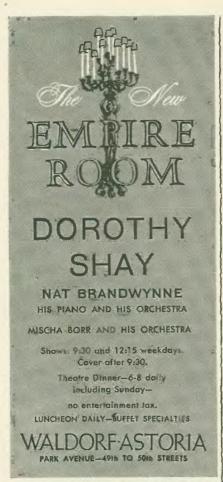
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"You haven't always swept streets, have you?" asked the bystander.

"Of course not," was the reply. "I have to work here because I was a Nazi."

At this, the bystander shook his head and said, "And I lost my job as street sweeper because I was a Nazi."

As time went on, the city officials became more and more worried about where to dispose of the rubble. "The answer came to us slowly, but it came," Thomasius said. "We began to notice that people were getting more optimistic about the future and that there was more talk of reconstruction than of rubble removal. A cry went up for building material. Well, during the last months of the war, we had had some experience with making an ersatz building material out of rubble-grinding pieces of brick into sand and mixing it with cement to form concrete. So now we tried to enlarge on that sort of thing. The biggest need was for beams, rafters, and steel girders. People wanted to rebuild their bombed roofs before the next winter set in-1947, that is. Certain repair shops began to specialize in straightening bent girders. Building firms bought large amounts of whole bricks from us. But still the stuff kept piling up.

"Most of what we called the 'easy' ruins had been torn down, but lots of obstinate house walls were still standing, and each of these represented a special engineering problem and a dangerous job. I spent many days out in the field with one or another of our demolition crews. The men wanted to use dynamite, but dynamite was too expensive. The most important member of each crew was its Alpinist [mountain climber]. Practically all the ruins we were working on had no stairways and no fire escapes-nothing but broken walls, just the way the bombs and the wind and rain had left them. Each crew had a small winch engine and a steel cable, and the Alpinist would climb up, carrying the loose end of the cable, and bind it around one section of a wall. It may sound simple enough, but there were moments when we were all holding our breath and praying for that fellow up there. After he got down, the engine would start pulling on the cable. If everything went well, the wall would collapse, but sometimes it didn't. Once, I remember, they hitched a block and tackle to a big tree to get purchase. The



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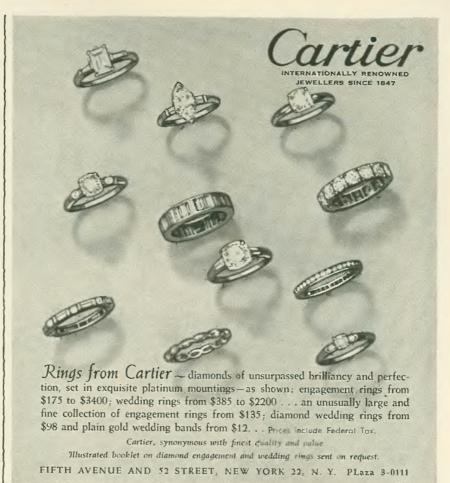


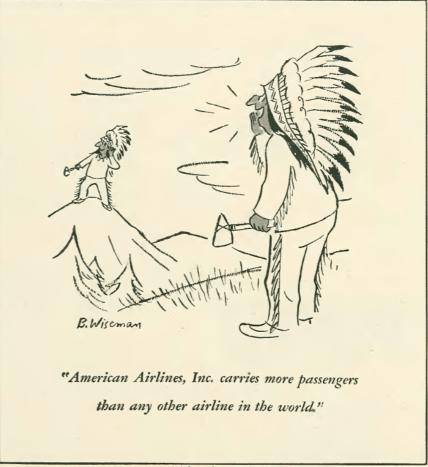


wall stood like the Rock of Gibraltar and the tree was pulled out by the roots. Next, they hitched the gear to an undamaged house across the street. This time, they almost pulled the good house down and the ruin still refused to budge. Then I suggested that we lift the cover of a manhole in the street, lower a double-T girder into it, swing the girder into a horizontal position, and bind the tackle to its middle. That finally did it. The ruin came crashing down.

"But problems like that were merely technical, and could be worked out somehow or other. It was when the blockade came, and the split of Berlin, that we found ourselves in a real dilemma. Most of the rubble had accumulated in the densely built central sections of the city, a long way from our disposal places. Suddenly, we West Berliners realized that we were still stuck with millions of cubic metres of rubble and had no practical way of getting rid of it. Many of our best dumping places were either inside the Soviet sector of the city or in the Soviet Zone outside it. The Russians and the East Berlin police stopped West Berlin trucks that were setting out to take their loads of rubble to those dumping places. The Russians had no such problem in their sector, which contained twenty million cubic metres of rubbleless than one-third of Berlin's total. Since Berlin is completely surrounded by the Soviet Zone, the Russians could dispose of all the East Berlin rubble in their Zone. But we West Berlin rubble people were stuck. Well, in the end we used about a million cubic metres of rubble to enlarge the runways at the Tempelhof and Gatow airports, and to build a new airport at Tegel, in the British sector.

"For a while, we tried dumping rubble on some low-lying land in one of the suburbs. But we had to stop when huge cracks appeared in the surface and the people in the neighborhood became panicky and accused us of causing an earthquake. Another time, we tried using rubble to reinforce an embankment along the Tegelersee. Unfortunately, the whole thing collapsed one day and changed the contour of the lake." Thomasius smiled. "That was the end of that. The Water Police were after us in no time. But we didn't want to give up, so we proposed to dump a million cubic metres of rubble into the middle of the lake, and build an artificial island. The fishermen were outraged. 'You can't dump rubble into the lake,' they said. 'After all, the lake's not a garbage pail.' And the Society for the Protection of Fish Life claimed that the









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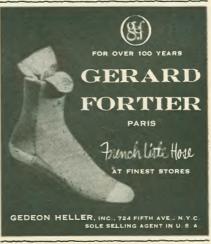
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island we planned would do away with the deep, warm spots in the lake where the fish congregate in wintertime.

"At last, we hit upon an area near the Teufelssee, in Grunewald, where we figured we could dump twelve million cubic metres of rubble and create a scenic slope. The municipal landscape planners O.K.'d the idea, and we went ahead with it. It's worked out pretty well so far. Part of the slope is completed, and last winter people were able to ski and toboggan on it. They call it the Berlin Alps. Even so, the Health Department has been constantly after us about it. They're afraid the Alps may put the Tiefenwerder and Grunewald water-pumping stations out of commission. Berlin's water is unusually soft, considerably more so than the water in many German cities. Water that's too hard can't be used for industrial purposes, because it forms deposits in boilers and pipes. Then, too, the health people are worried that rain seeping through all that rubble will, in time, change the composition of the city's water supply. There's lots of lime and sulfur in those Alps, and when water filters slowly through the lime, it creates carbonic acid, sulfuric acid, and other compounds. The health people are very concerned about the experience of a city in the Rhineland where a pumping station had to be abandoned because rubble that was dumped in the vicinity made the water so hard. Some beer drinkers have also expressed extravagant fears for the future. Actually, the breweries have their own private, extra-deep wells. I guess about all we can do is keep our fingers crossed."

HOMASIUS glanced at his watch and said he had some business to look after at a rubble-conversion plant near the Zoo. "Why don't you come along?" he suggested. "We'll show you what can be made out of rubble." I said that would be fine. He picked up a sheaf of blueprints and other papers, and we drove off in his car. On our way, we stopped near a large ruin in Charlottenburg where a rubble-removal gang was at work, the women stacking bricks in neat piles and the men shovelling and sifting the debris. A husky-looking woman in dusty overalls with a kerchief over her head came over and greeted Thomasius, who introduced her to me as Frau Krause, a rubble woman since 1946 and now a foreman. "I used to be a beauty-parlor operator, but I'll never go back," Frau Krause said to me in the voice of a Wagnerian baritone. "Surprises you, doesn't it? People can't





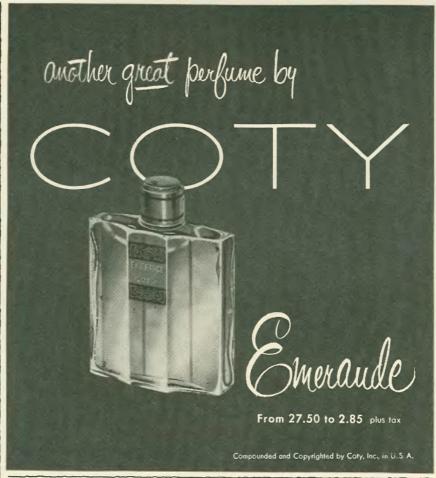


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believe it when I tell them I've grown fond of these ruins. We have guite a crowd here-a former Lufthansa pilot, a dancer, a tenor, a gardener, a telephone operator, a conductor of operettas, a masseuse, a photographer, and I don't know what else. I started to work on rubble removal back when everything had to be done by hand. At night, I'd fall into bed exhausted and dream that I was riding on a bulldozer. I remember one day in 1947 when three Americans arrived at the big rubble heap between the Bismarckstrasse and the Ringstrasse, in Steglitz. They had a steam shovel, a rock-crusher, and a truck. The Steglitz people laughed-only three men, imagine! But they stopped laughing when the Americans went to work. One fed rubble into the crusher with the steam shovel; another worked the crusher, which ground the rubble to bits and loaded it on the truck; and the third drove the ground-up bricks away. Today, we also have some machines of that sort, so things are looking up. The pay doesn't seem fair, though. You get one mark eight pfennigs an hour. My takehome pay is thirty-eight marks a week. If I went on relief, I'd get between twenty-eight and thirty-four marks a week. And three hundred thousand people are on relief, when there's still all this rubble to be cleaned up. Something must be wrong."

Thomasius looked uncomfortable. "Naturally, there will always be people who would rather do no work and go on relief," he said. "We have eight thousand people working for us now and we're paying them every pfennig we can afford with the funds at our disposal. Some fifty-five million marks have been put aside from E.R.P. and Government and Relief in Occupied Areas funds for rubble removal. At present, we're spending six hundred and twenty thousand marks of our own money every month and seven hundred and eighty thousand out of G.A.R.I.O.A. funds on







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this work. But to clean up all the eleven thousand remaining rubble heaps in West Berlin, we would need at least two hundred million marks-and where are the two hundred million marks coming from?"

Frau Krause diplomatically changed the subject. "In the beginning, people went out into the ruins on treasure hunts," she said. "Millions in valuables were stolen from cellars that had not suffered direct hits or been burned out. Some people started a regular business. They'd remove rubble from the sites of property owners who wanted to get their sites cleared quickly, charge them for the job, and then sift the stuff. I remember a Dutchman, Martinus Brom, a plumber from Rotterdam. He charged twelve marks for every cubic metre of rubble he removed from a house. He found silverware, clocks, and, in one building, a complete set of dentist's equipment. Once, he even found a vault with a fortune in stocks in it. Or, rather, he thought it was a fortune, but they turned out to be in altmarks and no longer any good."

Thomasius and I left Frau Krause and her gang, and continued on our way to the conversion plant. Presently, near the beginning of the Kurfürstendamm, we passed the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, which was badly bombed but even as a ruin is a distinctive landmark. "Two or three years ago, it was decided to tear down what's left of that church," Thomasius said. "Then the pastor started a campaign to keep it standing, and got so many people interested that it was spared. Now some American organizations have offered to finance its reconstruction. Last year, on the anniversary of the bombing, the ringing of bells sounded from the bell tower, although everyone knew that the tower was badly damaged and there were no longer any bells there. It was a recording of the old bells being played over loudspeakers rigged up inside."

HE rubble-conversion plant near the Zoo was built in 1949 and is one of three such installations now operating in Berlin. It proved to be a conglomeration of silos and shacks centered around a high wooden tower. A rattling steel conveyor belt was carrying broken bricks up into the tower, and a sand-colored cloud of dust hovered over the area. All about us were large dunes of ground-up brick, called Splitt. The manager of the plant, a municipal engineer named Grosemann, was standing in front of a shack, which



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constituted his office, consulting a list of figures. He was a stocky, energetic-looking man and he seemed disgusted by the dunes of *Splitt*. "Business is had these days," he said to me after Thomasius had introduced us. "There is not enough building going on in Berlin. We used to sell every cubic metre of *Splitt* we produced. Now we are lucky if we can sell fifty per cent."

"There are two hundred and seventeen million whole bricks stacked up in the city," Thomasius said. "This would be a good time to build, but who can afford to build?"

Grosemann explained to me that all rubble is sorted into three categorieswhole bricks, which are sold as is; useless debris, which is dumped; and broken stones and bricks, which are ground and sifted into five varieties of Splitt, of varying degrees of coarseness. The coarser varieties are used in making wall tiles, and the finer ones are mixed with concrete and pressed into hollow bricks that are sturdy enough to use in building a two-story house. "Last year, we sold a lot of our coarsest Splitt for road building, but there is no money for that any more," Grosemann said. "At best, Splitt is only a substitute for gravel, and no builder likes to make concrete out of it if he can get gravel, because gravel is much harder. I wish we could sell our Splitt in Western Germany, where the people have plenty of money and a lot of building is going on, but there would certainly be trouble with the Russians if we tried to send our trucks through."

"Some people seem to think the city is getting rich out of the rubble-conversion business," Thomasius said. "It's true that about fifty per cent of the rubble can be used again, in one way or another, but only ten per cent can be sold."

I asked Grosemann how many men it took to run the plant. "Fifteen here and five in the repair shops," he said, and then, gazing up at the top of the tower, barely visible through the cloud of dust, he added, "The two men working up there get an extra fifteen pfennigs an hour, as a dust bonus. It's too early yet to say whether the fine dust will harm their lungs, but when they come off duty, we always give them a glass of milk, as a precaution. Believe it or not, everybody wants to be up there, because of those fifteen extra pfennigs."

The conversion operation, as Grosemann described it to me, starts at the receiving end of the conveyor belt. On either side of it were platforms onto which men were unloading rubble from







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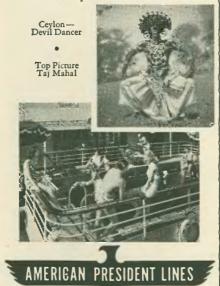


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trucks. Bricks that were intact were set aside. Useless rubbish was thrown down into a truck stationed beneath the platforms. The men also culled out all metal scrap. Thomasius said that until 1948 there were tons of scrap lying around all over the city and no one wanted any part of it, but that since the blockade, and especially since the beginning of the Korean war, scrap has become valuable in Berlin. Now eighty thousand tons of scrap leave West Berlin every month. There are forty-two big scrap dealers and more than a hundred small ones in West Berlin. Much scrap is smuggled in from East Berlin, even though this is punishable by a long prison term.

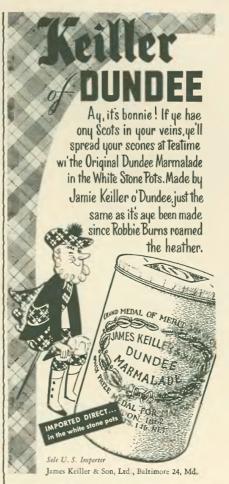
What was left after the culling process consisted of pieces of broken brick, stone, and concrete, and these were carried up on the conveyor belt to a grinding and pulverizing machine, from which the finished Splitt emerged. This was then carried on another belt to the top of the tower, where it was sorted in a series of oscillating steel strainers, much as grades of coal are sorted, and dropped into bins below. Thomasius said it took ten minutes for a piece of rubble to make the journey from truck to bin. He added that the three converting plants are now taking in sixteen hundred cubic metres of rubble a day and turning out eight hundred cubic metres of Splitt.

"What about the stuff that can't be used for anything?" I asked.

"I was coming to that," Thomasius said. "How about taking a walk with me to that hill over there in the Tiergarten and having a look around?" Both he and Grosemann chuckled over what was evidently an old joke to them.

HOMASIUS and I walked through an underpass beneath some railroad tracks and climbed the hill, which rose to a height of more than a hundred feet. The grass was thin and fragile, as though it had been sown only recently, but the trees at the foot of the hill were old and solidly rooted. The hill resembled a good many other hills I've seen, until we reached the top. Then I could see that the side of the hill facing the Zoo was open, like the entrance to a cave. "Our artificial mountain," Thomasius said proudly. "It contains nine hundred thousand cubic metres of rubble. In the open side there you can see some of the shattered walls of what was once the biggest air-raid shelter in Germany. Soon we will have a waterfall in operation to cover that side, too. Let's sit down."

A huge building of reinforced con-





crete, the Zoo air-raid shelter was built by Hitler in 1943. Its walls were thirteen feet thick and were impervious to even direct bomb hits. During air raids, more than ten thousand people took refuge in it at a time. After the war, it was turned into a hospital, but in 1948, right at the time of the Russian blockade, it was ordered demolished. This was in line with an agreement the four conquering powers made to blow up all the air-raid shelters in the city-one of the few agreements that were adhered to after the Four-Power Kommandatura had ceased to function. (Some of the explosives used for the demolition of the shelter were flown in by the airlift.) "It would have been much too expensive for us to remove the wreckage of the shelter," Thomasius said to me, looking over the contours of his handiwork with evident pleasure. "It cost a fortune to build, and we figured it would cost us a hundred and forty marks-then about ten dollars-a cubic metre to break it up into pieces small enough to dispose of. So it was decided to dump rubble around it and into it and build an artificial hill, killing two birds with one stone-or, if I may say so, with a lot of stones. We did the same thing with the two shelters in Humboldthain and the one in Friedrichshain. Of course, we didn't want to make Berlin look like a coal-mining city in the Ruhr, with heaps of refuse lying all over the place, like slag. Each of these projects had to be approved by numberless commissions of municipal planners before we could go ahead. Landscape people had to be consulted, and garden people, park specialists, water and canal men, and I don't know how many others. The canal authorities, for instance, wanted to be sure we wouldn't change the course of the Landwehr-



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kanal, while the park people insisted that the old trees down there near the base of our hill be left intact. Sometimes I got the feeling that in the end the stack of papers and memoranda relating to this hill would be almost as high as the hill itself."

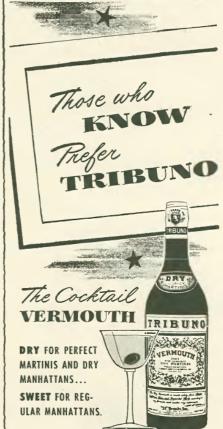
Thomasius looked through the papers he had brought with him and drew out a blueprint. "The big problem was to cover the remains of the shelter and create a hill that would blend harmoniously with the surrounding landscape. The first thing we did was draw a crosssection of what our hill would look like. It isn't easy to imitate nature. For one thing, nature never had to worry about routes for rubble trucks to drive up and others for them to drive down after dumping their loads. We got under way in the fall of 1950, with nine hundred big trailer trucks working for us. The drivers were told by engineers exactly where to dump their loads. Then they would drive up, dump, and drive down the other side. The entire job was completed in five months."

Thomasius handed me some photographs. The first showed the shelter with its towers tilted by dynamite blasts and a fringe of rubble around its base. In the next picture, half the shelter was engulfed in a sea of rubble. The third picture showed only the tops of the towers jutting out, like the funnels of a sinking ocean liner. In the last picture, no trace of the shelter could be seen.

"After the rubble job was finished, we covered the surface with a layer of soil and the garden people sowed grass there," Thomasius said. "After we have installed the waterfall, the Zoo people plan to make their side of the hill a bird paradise, with a swimming pool, a small café, and a playground. In a few years, people will come up here on Sunday afternoons to look down at Berlin and listen to music. No one will remember what is hidden inside the hill or what the hill is made of."

Thomasius stared meditatively about him. "There are still so many obstacles to overcome," he said. "Think of the legal complications the destruction has caused! Is a property owner obliged to allow narrow-gauge tracks to be laid across his property so that the rubble from an adjacent ruin can be cleared away? May the owner of a half-destroyed house refuse to allow the remains of the building to be broken up and carted off? And what about the costs of such operations? As a matter of public safety, we've had to remove dangerous ruins without taking the time to consult the owners, and then when





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we've tried to charge the owners for the work, which sometimes amounted to thousands of marks, they've refused to pay it. Future generations of law students will have to study a brand-new subject—rubble law."

X/E stood up. The afternoon sun was low. From the top of the hill, we could look out over the immense destruction in the Tiergarten, with its now headless statues of Germany's former rulers and other famous people; back in 1945, the victorious Soviet soldiers, in a playful mood, knocked off the heads. Beyond the borders of the Tiergarten were vast stretches of darkgray burned-out ruins, which hadn't been touched, and stretches of lighter gray, where the rubble had been sorted and dumped in large piles to await carting away, and greenish-gray stretches that had been entirely cleared and were now covered with weeds. As we turned back toward the conversion plant, four trucks were dumping their loads on the conveyor belt. Behind them were four more trucks, loaded with rubble, wait--Joseph Wechsberg

RESPONSES WE DOUBT EVER GOT RESPONDED TO GALILEO

[From an article by Joyce Cary in Harper's]

This belief [that people are becoming more and more standardized] is now so completely accepted that it underlies half the writing and the thinking of the time, like chalk under the downs. You don't see it but it gives shape to what you do see. If you deny it you will get exactly the same response as Galileo when he said that the earth moved through the sky. You will be told, "Use your eyes. And don't talk nonsense. Look at the crowds in the street or at any football match. Go to the films, read the newspapers. Consider the disappearance of national dress all over the world—the immense development of laws restricting individual liberty, standardizing our lives. Go on a tour to famous sights—year by year there will be bigger crowds of morons gaping at them and listening to the spiel of some bored guide—a piece nicely designed to satisfy the mass mind."

Washington, March 15 (A.P.)—The Navajos' Washington attorney has given his approval to the present Indian Bureau regime, headed by Commissioner Dillon S. Muer

S. Myer.

"I welcome the break of the grip of the Collier forces in the Indian Bureau by the advent of Dillon Myer," the lawyer, Norman Littell, told a Senate Interior subcommittee yesterday. It is looking into contrast between Indians and attorneys.

—The Times.

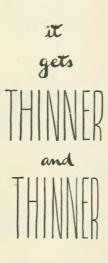
Indians say "How." Attorneys say "And/or how."

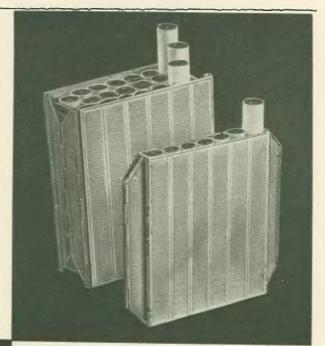


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