



"You'd be sunk unless they had a category like 'Bar-and-Grills.'"

day gift. The five other friends had thanked her, so it was evident that her initials had been correctly transmitted to all of them.

We would have taken you to Bronxville before now, but neither we nor the Curtis Publishing Company nor Miss Barnes found out what had been going on up there until the business machines sent Miss Barnes seven handsome green-and-red *renewal* gift-subscription cards a few days ago. Miss Barnes thumbed through them. Across the top they said "YES, please renew this HOLIDAY gift for — years." Or did they? Well, every one of the seven did, she discovered, except the one for Mrs. Firmage. It was shaped the same, had similar perforations, and generally looked exactly like all the others except that it said across the top, "YES, please renew this JACK AND JILL gift for — years." Mrs. Firmage and Miss Barnes are on good terms once more, God's in his Heaven, and all's right with the magazine-publishing world.

INCIDENTAL INTELLIGENCE (Ivy League Division): The New Haven Railroad's engines are being painted orange and black.

Poppy and Lentil

AN unconscionable number of happy surprises befall us from week to week, and even from day to day. A fair sample is an encounter we had last week, in a field of art that up to then we hadn't even known existed. The encounter was with a young artist named Karl Mann, who makes mosaics

out of seeds. When we got up that morning, we hadn't the slightest reason to suppose that by nightfall we would be learnedly discussing the aesthetic properties of barley seed, caraway seed, poppy seed, lentils, and wild rice, but so it was to happen. These seeds and a dozen others, dipped in glue and stuck to a board, end up looking as pretty as a— well, as a picture. More durable than a picture, too, with nothing to be feared from damp and heat but the possibility of the mosaic's germinating. Seeds being extremely tough and practically imperishable, this unexpected problem has arisen more than once. The artist has solved it by sending his works out to be fumigated for several days.

Mr. Mann, who is twenty-five and could be taken for seventeen, is not only a creator but a thinker. He follows Henry George on property, Hemingway on sex, and Frank Lloyd Wright on the soul. He lives in New York much as Thoreau lived at Walden, and nearly as economically. We interviewed him in an apartment he rents for twenty-five dollars a month at the top floor rear of an ancient cold-water tenement on Second Avenue, near Forty-sixth Street. Along one wall of the apartment were hung fifteen or twenty of his mosaics—cheerful moonfaces and spindly-legged animals in smoothly laid-on strokes of pink, white, brown, and black, which, examined at close range, proved to be row upon row of chili beans, lentils, rice, coffee beans, watermelon seeds, and the like. Also in the apartment were two shelves of paperback books, a couch, three straight chairs, a sink, and a gas range. Except for the gas range, there was no

means of heating the apartment, and Mann had a heavy sweater on. "I like New York because it's so cheap," he told us. "I can live here on a thousand a year and be close to my market. I've done about fifty of these seed mosaics so far, and they're just beginning to sell. Raymond Loewy has bought a couple, and so has Stanley Marcus. Brenda Frazier has one, too. As soon as I get up into the two-thousand-a-year bracket, I'll probably move to the country. I've got nothing against money. I call going on being poor for the sake of being poor an evasion."

Mann was born in Chicago, and graduated from the University of Chicago at nineteen. Once, he hitchhiked from Chicago to New York and back at a total cost of a dollar. "That was during my romantic period, when I believed in poverty," he said. "I still hitchhike wherever I go, but it's strictly because I need to. There are only two rules for hitchhiking—always wait near a stop light and always be shaved. I spent last summer in Mexico. Three and a half months, and the whole thing cost me a hundred and forty bucks. First I hitchhiked to Chicago, then I got a Chevy dealer there to let me deliver a new car to a dealer in Corpus Christi, then I hitchhiked on to Mexico City. I work about ten hours a day on my mosaics. I don't fool myself that they're anything big. They're just me, whoever I am, as far as I've gone. Not me last year, or me next year, but me 1955."

How did Mann come to use seeds to make pictures? "It all goes back to my vegetarian period," he said. "I'm a meat eater now, but in those days I was living off herbs and nuts and things, and one

day, instead of eating them, I started fooling around with them on the table, making designs. I don't know whether other artists are making seed mosaics, or whether primitive people make them, or what they stand for symbolically, or any of that stuff. I begin by painting a scene on a piece of plywood, then I fix each seed onto the painted scene with glue. It takes weeks to make a mosaic a couple of feet square. I'd hate to try and figure out how many thousands of seeds go into one mosaic. I buy my supplies by the pound. When I went to Mexico, I let a friend take this apartment, and when I got back, I couldn't find my seeds. Turned out he'd been so broke he'd had to cook them and eat them. Then I was glad for his sake I wasn't a painter."

Self-Sufficiency

A YOUNG actress we know, the mother of a six-year-old, has been working lately and, inclined to sleep late, was told that the boy didn't mind in the least getting his own breakfast. "You're sure?" she asked him doubtfully. "I like to eat alone," he said reassuringly. "I can just sit and think, and read my cereal boxes."

Spiral Wing

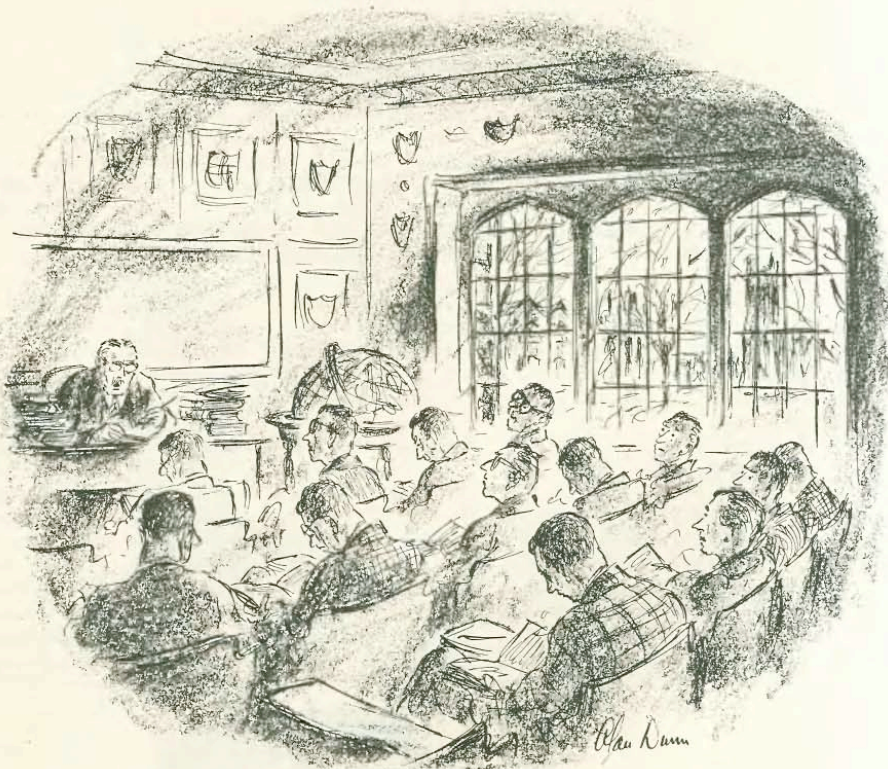
THE helicopter is such a common sight these days, taxiing people between airports, giving policemen a beat in the sky, whisking Cabinet officers to and from Camp David, rescuing soldiers and sailors in time of war and civilians in time of hurricane, flood, and fire, that we tend to forget how recently it has become of practical use. The fact is the first rescues by helicopter were made in the middle nineteen-forties, and the first scheduled passenger helicopter flights began hereabouts in 1953. Wingless, rotor-driven aircraft, which can fly slowly, move either forward or backward, and hover hummingbird-like over a fixed point, have always been more attractive in

principle than winged and propelled aircraft, which depend on high speeds to keep them aloft, but they have been the very devil to construct on a scale big enough to make economic sense. Hundreds of years ago, the Chinese invented a top along helicopter lines, and in the Occident, da Vinci designed and built models of helicopters for human use. By the nineteenth century, we were having a veritable helicopter boom. (The word "helicopter," by the way, comes from the Greek "*helix*," meaning "spiral," and "*pteron*," meaning "wing.") In 1843, an Englishman designed a helicopter powered by steam; in 1861 an American took out a patent on a helicopter that he called an "aerial car;" and in 1868, in France, one of those cautious tinkerers who believe in oversolving problems designed a "steam-airliner" with a hull like a boat's, two wings, a propeller, two masts bearing a total of eight rotors, a parachute attached to the top of each mast, and a lifeboat slung under the hull. None of these got built, though.

It was in 1907 that the first piloted helicopter actually got off the ground,

with the famous French inventor Louis Bréguet at the controls. How far off the ground? Five feet. From then on, helicopter affairs moved helicopter fashion—not very fast and as often backward as forward. The United States Air Service produced an experimental helicopter in 1923 (the year the late Juan de la Cierva built the first successful Autogiro, which differs from a helicopter in having wings and propellers as well as rotors), and in 1937 Heinrich Focke, in Germany, devised a helicopter that climbed to eleven thousand feet and travelled at a top speed of seventy-six miles an hour. In 1939, Igor Sikorsky, who had experimented with helicopters in his native Russia nearly thirty years before, and who had settled in this country in 1919, produced the first completely wingless helicopter, with two small rotors mounted on its tail and a large, three-bladed rotor above the fuselage. Shortly thereafter, he became the first helicopter pilot in the country. The armed forces embraced Mr. Sikorsky and have yet to let him go.

Now, what can a helicopter do be-



"Now, in amplification and clarification of the international situation confronting the United States in July, 1945, I refer to the following passage—page 340—which starts, 'Dear Mama and Mary.'"