



## THE TALK OF THE TOWN

### Notes and Comment

THE man whose like is most missed in our time, we often think, is Mr. Dooley, that great Irishman who, fifty years or so ago, surveyed the American scene daily with the calm and irreverent eye of his creator, Finley Peter Dunne. Mr. Dooley Redivivus would discard the dialect. His grandchildren probably talk like John F. Kennedy and Bishop Sheen, and Dooley would be the first to understand that readers no longer care to struggle with a forgotten *Völkssprache*. It would be a relief to him, too; it must have been a strain to maintain the way he talked after twenty-five years of residence outside Ireland. But he would retain his ability to see to the essentials. As a saloonkeeper, Mr. Dooley in his former existence would have resented a civic proposal to open a sidewalk café across the street from his own store simply because the sidewalk stood at the edge of a park. But Dooley R. (for Redivivus) would quickly see the premise for the future in the Parks Commissioner's decision to accept Mr. Hartford's generous gift of \$862,500 with



which to build a two-story restaurant in glass and concrete at the northwest corner of Fifty-ninth and Fifth, across from the Plaza. Central Park is completely surrounded by sidewalks, maybe six miles of them, and the view from them into it is wasted entirely on trees. With a café instead of a vacuum every two hundred and forty feet, which is the length contemplated for this one, it would be possible to get in twenty saloons to the mile and still leave four hundred and eighty feet for fire exits from the Park, thus giving a ring of a hundred and twenty saloons—an unparalleled adornment to the Jool of the Atlantic, as Mr. Dooley might say, dropping back

for a moment into his old speech habits.

"I read in this morning's New York *Times*," the new Dooley would say, "that Bob Moses, who welcomed the contribution to the landscape, said no further action by any other city official was necessary—the Parks Commissioner's word was law, except when it was in conflict with the chairman of the Triborough Bridge Authority or the chairman of the Mayor's Committee on Slum Clearance or the president of the World's Fair, all of which is himself. Bob is a man of great taste—you can tell it by the looks of the Coliseum—and so is Newbold Morris, that's sitting in for him while he's running the Fair, but what do you suppose would happen if we got a Commissioner from the West Side? The voters on that side of the Park might want a few saloons on Central Park West that would be handier for them than walking all the way to Sherman's statue, and then the residents on Fifth Avenue in the Sixties and Seventies might ask for some, to make the Avenue a well-lighted street until four o'clock in the morning and safe for women walking their dogs and drinks getting out of taxicabs. Then there might be a Commissioner from Harlem (Parks Commissioner, except when it's Moses, is a lower office than Borough President, which Harlem has won already), and this fellow's constituents would want cafés on the north side of the Park. All a rich man in any of those districts that wanted to make a name for himself would have to do would be present the Parks Department with the price of the premises. And in time there will be a Puerto Rican Commissioner, wanting joints for the northwest and northeast borders of the Park, and maybe a Yorkville Commissioner that will take care of the East Eighties and Nineties with *Bierstuben* elbow to elbow down as far as the Metropolitan Museum, which has a temperance restaurant inside it already. All they will have to do to man them is find concessionaires that promise not to make

any money, and that is easy—to find ones that promise, I mean. At last, if things go right, there will be no need for anybody to go into the Park at all, and maybe get mugged. Everybody will just go to the edge and sit down and have a beer, or a Daiquiri, or some tomato juice spiked with a mixture of champagne and tequila, according to the neighborhood, and the children can eat potato chips. As soon as there is no further use for the Park except for express-thruway bypasses, so people can get away from it, the City can buy it from itself at a third of its value and cut it up into Title I projects and sell them to people who want to build apartment houses at fifteen hundred dollars a room, counting breakfast nooks."

Dooley's straight man, Mr. Hennessy, also R., might then ask, "Is it true, do you think, Dooley, that a Parks Commissioner can accept in the name of the city a gift to put on park land anything he has a liking to?"

"It is," Dooley would have to reply. "Moses is the one who said it. A pool hall, or a shooting gallery, or a museum full of porcelain pickles."

"Or a brewery?" Hennessy might ask.

"Or a brewery," Dooley would say. "As long as the concessionaire promised not to make any money out of it."

### Gourmet

JUST the other day, we were telling you about a process that the National Cash Register people have developed, by means of which liquids can be turned



into powder form, and cocktails (to cite one of the more lighthearted applications of the principle) can thus be eaten, not drunk; now we'd like to tell you about a process that the protean Henry