



HENRY BLACKMAN SELL, the maker of Sell's Liver Pâté, Sell's Corned Pork Hash, and several other tinned products, a line known collectively as Sell's Specialties, is a man of letters turned meat packer. History offers no parallel to this remarkable evolution. Many men, of course, have done it the other way. Shakespeare was a butcher boy who became a great writer. H. G. Wells served a brief and reluctant apprenticeship behind a meat counter. George Horace Lorimer went from the Armour packing houses to the editorship of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Sell, however, is unique in having gone from prose and poetry to beef and pork. Now a trim, dapper, rapid-speaking man of fifty-eight, he was the literary editor of the *Chicago Daily News* back in the days when H. L. Mencken was calling Chicago the literary capital of the world. While Chicago was the capital, the Daily News Building was the royal palace, and Sell sat on a mighty throne. With the merest flourish of the sceptre, he could make or break a literary reputation. Some authorities still regard him as a pivotal figure in American criticism. "Sell?" one veteran of the literary wars, a still erect and ruddy old soldier, said recently. "Why, Henry Sell is the fellow who took criticism away from the *North American Review* and gave it back to the people." Sell has long since put all that behind him. Now he lives for meat, or, more properly, for his work as a canner of meat. Ordinarily blithe in manner and a bit on the arch and skittish side in conversation, he becomes grave and metaphysical when he talks about meat. "I only hope," he sometimes says, "that when I die, people will remember me for the excellence of my meat products."

Meat, though substantial as a food,

PROFILES

SPECIALTIES

I-REVISING MEAT

offers frail hope for immortality. The world has a short and ungrateful memory of the men who have kept it supplied with edible flesh. School children learn the names and dates of important figures in such lines as gunpowder, wheat harvesting, printing, and sewing machines. They are taught nothing about the great men of meat. The city of Springfield, Massachusetts, has honored its leading founder, William Pynchon, by naming a handsome history museum after him and in many other ways, but, though everyone pays tribute to his exploits as a pioneer settler in the Agawam country, the fact that he was the father of the meat-packing industry is always politely overlooked. As far as posterity is concerned, Sell, a native of Whitewater, Wisconsin, would be better off if he had stuck with literature and attached his name to books rather than to minced chicken and braised beef in gravy. After all, people everywhere know that the writing Swift's first name was Jonathan, but who knows or even cares to know that the meat-packing Swift was Gustavus? Sell, though, is not the sort of man who believes that because it was ever thus, thus it will ever be. He feels that he has a revolutionary program for meat and that the world will someday thank him for it. "What I want to do," he says, "is reexamine the whole structure of meat from top to bottom. I want to forget everything we've ever done with meat and start right in from scratch. I want to treat meat as though it were an entirely new problem, as though it were some precious raw material that had just been discovered."

Our attitude toward meat, Sell says, is largely conditioned by tradition, complacency, superstition, and bigotry, and in some respects we have made no progress since the Stone Age. It is true, to be sure, that there have recently been great advances in the breeding and feeding of meat animals, but these, according to Sell, have been of benefit principally to the producers of meat, not to the eaters of it. As to what we actually put into our mouths, we aren't much better off than we ever were. We just pull the meat off the animals and cook it as is. "Oh, sure," he says, with the impatience of a man anticipating a stock argument, "I know that we salt it down a bit and treat it with a few chemi-

cals now and then, but that's just to make it keep a little longer and chew a little easier. What we do is terribly superficial, really. The fact is that we just go along being smug and satisfied about the kind of meat Nature has given us. There's a lot of good in meat and a lot of bad. I want to see if we can get rid of the bad and make the good better. I think science can do things with meat the world has never even dared to dream of, and I won't rest till I've proved it." Sell believes that the whole business of packing meat needs overhauling and a new approach. "I think we can have better meat," he says, "and pack it better, sell it better, cook it better, and eat it better. I want to tear meat apart and put it back together again—a damn sight better, I hope, than it's ever been put together before. I was trained as an editor, and I plan to edit meat. It can stand a lot of revision."

Sell got into the meat business, just seven years ago, after compiling a spectacular record as a trail blazer in other fields. Writing and packing are merely the opposite poles of his experience. He was once an influential figure in interior decoration. It has been said that the genteel tradition that dominated the art showed its first signs of grogginess after the publication, in 1916, of "Good Taste in Home Furnishing," a book that he and his wife, Maud Ann Sell, wrote. He eased gradually away from belles-lettres by becoming, in 1920, the editor of *Harper's Bazaar*, and then, in 1927, assistant to the chairman of the board of the Butterick Publishing Company. In ladies'-dress circles, some people have gone as far as to claim that Sell is the inventor of the fashion magazine as we now know it. He is also hailed for his vigorous crusade in behalf of the mannish tailored suit, the cloche hat, and the Grecian drape. While still working for Butterick, Sell bought the Blaker Advertising Agency, which he made into one of the prominent firms of the period. In the early thirties, he abandoned journalism to concentrate on advertising. In some respects, his career from then on resembles that of the late William Wrigley. Wrigley was a soap manufacturer who gave away clocks, insurance policies, and whatnot—to encourage his soap sales. Sometimes he got so excited about one of his sidelines

that it became his chief interest. He worked through all of these things and several others, among them lamps and baking powder. He ended up in the chewing-gum business. One day, Sell picked off for his agency the account of a firm making vitamin pills. He got so engrossed in vitamins that he became a manufacturer himself of a line called Vitamins Plus. Vitamin men agree that Sell's campaign to put over Vitamins Plus helped enormously to make the taking of vitamin capsules, up to then the ritual of a few health faddists, a national pastime. "It would be interesting to know," a man who gets around a lot in the B-complex world said recently, "exactly how many extra planes we produced for the war as a result of Henry Sell getting the idea of putting vitamins on cosmetics counters." From the vitamin business, it was only a step to the meat, or protein, business. He took the step in 1940, selling Vitamins Plus to the Vick Chemical Company and putting the proceeds into meat. He still has the advertising agency, but he himself now handles only one large account—that of Elizabeth Arden, an old friend.

In addition to all his careers, Sell has had a number of sub-careers. Several of these have been involved with the entertainment industry. In 1912, he was a theatrical press agent, representing the Abbey Theatre, the Irish Players, Morris Gest, and several others. In the early days of the movies, he was part owner of an open-air theatre in Dayton, Ohio. For a while, when the last depression was at its worst, he was a doctor for ailing hotels and night clubs. His chief contribution in this field was the idea of using *Social Register* girls as café singers. This was considered a brilliant innovation, not from the standpoint of music but from the standpoint of night-club earnings. The theory, amply confirmed in practice, was that if rich girls performed in night clubs, their rich friends would come to see them and leave part of their riches behind. Then, after his fashion-magazine days, Sell was the American public-relations representative of a half dozen of the large Parisian dressmakers. For his work in behalf of French couture, he wears the red ribbon of a chevalier in the Legion of Honor. Chevalier Sell was also, briefly, the American representative of the winegrowers of the lower Rhine Valley, and in 1939 he served a short hitch as a Brain Trustee, being a special consultant to the Secretary of Agriculture. Since he got into the meat business, he has twice branched out, trying his hand once as a soap manufacturer and

once as the producer of a cereal food called Extendo. He quietly abandoned both these projects.

SELL, who feels that he is only now on the threshold of his great adventure with meat, has already enjoyed some notable triumphs. For example, by devising Sell's Liver Pâté, the first and the most successful of his specialties, he has come as close as any man in history to actually making a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Messing around in a laboratory with a lot of pig muscle, lard, wheat germ, soya beans, defatted milk, and other substances of a wholly unappetizing nature, he and some associates finally concocted what many gourmets feel is the perfect appetizer, a canapé paste of unusual taste and delicate bouquet, as well as an ideal accompaniment for truffles, aspics, and squab on

pedestal. "We were digging for coal when we came upon gold," Sell says. Sell's Liver Pâté is a result of its inventor's tour of duty in the Department of Agriculture. He had dinner one night at the home of Secretary Claude R. Wickard. Among the guests was Dr. Robert S. Harris, head of the National Biochemical Laboratories at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who got to talking about the coming protein shortage in Europe. He expounded the theory that it would be possible, after a little experimenting, to turn out a compact, concentrated food that would not take up valuable space in ocean freighters and that could be shipped without refrigeration. It should be of high caloric and protein value and provide everything else required for a well-balanced diet. Sell was momentarily out of challenges, and he found this one to his



"His talent isn't taking exactly the direction we'd hoped."

liking. He rounded up some of his vitamin researchers and set them up in a laboratory in Brooklyn to dope out a formula. He worked right along with them. Dressed in white duck butcher aprons and high rubber boots, he and his men slopped around in animal blood, soup stocks, skimmed milk, and grease for almost a year. In that time, stirring these elements up into various combinations and permutations, they made five hundred and six mixtures, in batches of two hundred and fifty pounds apiece, which they tried out on the laboratory's white rats. Finally, using pig liver as the base, they came through with a formula on which the rats grew exceptionally powerful and acquired I.Q.s that qualified them for Princeton. The stuff bulged with protein, exuded carbohydrates, and bristled with calories. Its riboflavin, pantothenic acid, biotin, calcium, iron, and pyridoxine made it, compared to natural foods, a Triton among the minnows, a blockbuster among cap pistols. The Red Cross took a million tins a month and put one in every prisoner-of-war package. Reports began to come in about escaped Allied prisoners who had lived for weeks in jungles, in deserts, and in lifeboats on nothing but Sell's Liver Pâté and had got through their experiences as fit as if they had been eating three square meals a day back home in East Orange. Reports are now coming in to the Sell offices of people who, when the meat strike started last week, stocked up with a few cans of Liver Pâté on the theory that these would see them through the crisis. Sell's plants, incidentally, were not struck, the workers being A.F.L. CARE and most of the other agencies that send food to Europe and Asia use Liver Pâté as as one of their staples. All this, of course, is exactly what the preparation was intended for. What was unexpected was that a foodstuff supercharged with niacin and thiamine, and selling for the price of a can of beans, should turn out to be a menace to the foie-gras and caviar interests. "It was just our good fortune," Sell says. "When you're looking for something to keep people alive and healthy, you don't think first of all about their taste buds. We wanted our product to be palatable, so that people could get it down, but we weren't exactly looking for a filling for calla-lily sandwiches." Not since the ancients

found that sick whales could be useful in the production of the headiest of perfumes has there been anything to match Sell's discovery that hog liver combined with hydrolyzed plant protein could be used to advantage in assembling *gnocchi*, cheese dreams, and mousses. Never before, it is safe to say, has a multipurpose food achieved so wide a range. A couple of years back, Alfred Knopf, a gourmet of great repute and an ardent consumer of Sell's Specialties, published a book by June Platt, the former food editor of *House & Garden*, called "Serve It and Sing: Forty-four Simply Delicious Ways of Serving Sell's Liver Pâté." This is probably the only book ever devoted, without a tieup of any kind, to a single commercial product. Mrs. Platt's recipes are grouped under six headings: Sandwiches; Canapés, Appetizers, and Hors-d'Œuvre; Soups; Luncheon Dishes; For Dinner Time; Cold and in Aspic. She did not suggest any ways of using the Liver Pâté as a dessert, but there are people who like to daub a little of it on a salted biscuit to eat along with their after-dinner coffee.

Sell now markets two million tins of his Liver Pâté a month, but he worked out the formula in a spirit of philanthropy, never anticipating that he would be making the stuff himself. As soon as he was satisfied with the formula, he asked some of the established packers if they would undertake the preparation and canning of it. The defense boom was getting under way then, and the established packers were so busy with their established meats that they couldn't be bothered with anything new. As it

turned out, this circumstance made Sell a very happy man. He rented some vacant corners in packing houses here and there and went into the pâté business for himself. The foreign and Red Cross orders provided an excellent backlog, but he decided that he also wanted to tackle the domestic market, which meant that he had to have a merchandising organization. A merchandising organization, like a train, can carry several passengers as easily as one, and the more passengers it carries, the less the overhead per passenger. Sell therefore branched out as soon as he could. He determined to put out several pâtés. His first experiment was leaving the liver out of the Liver Pâté and putting in chicken meat. He called the result Minced Chicken. He followed that with Corned Beef Loaf, Beef Stew, Braised Beef in Gravy, Corned Pork Hash, and Beef Steak & Kidney in Gravy. All these have been hugely successful. He plans soon to add two pâtés, one with ham and one with tongue as the base, and a Chicken & Rice. In terms of finance, Sell is not a giant of the industry. His business grosses between five and six million dollars a year, and he ranks well down the scale in size. In terms of five-star ratings, blue ribbons, and gold seals of approval, he may rank first. *Gourmet* has described his work as "inspired canning." *Woman's Home Companion*, *Mademoiselle*, *Town & Country*, the Food Research Laboratories, Inc., Department of Agriculture officials, and several consumer-research organizations have used up all their superlatives on his foods. Clementine

Paddleford, of the *Herald Tribune* Home Institute, has come right out and called Sell's Corned Pork Hash a "heavenly hash," saying that she liked not only the meat in the hash but the potatoes. "They have texture," Miss Paddleford said, "and are not a mashed mess." Sell feels that his Corned Pork Hash is a stunning example of what can be done with meat if one refuses to be intimidated by precedent. "Of course, the conventional thing for us to have done," he says, "would have been to see if we couldn't make a better corned-beef hash. But we started right in at the beginning. We didn't say, 'How can we make a better corned-beef hash?' We said, 'Is corned beef really the stuff



for hash, anyway? Why does it have to be corned-beef hash? Maybe some other meat would be better.' We took the whole problem into the laboratory and reexamined it. By the time we were through, the whole idea of corned-beef hash seemed pretty droll. Beef is fine for braising and stewing, but in a hash it hasn't got half the distinction pork has. We found that what you want in a hash is tender fibres and a succulence that survives the processing. There's just no question about it—pork was made for hashing."

The market for meat being what it is these days, it takes a man with a will of forged iron to prevent a five-million-dollar business from becoming several times that large. Sell is determined to keep his concern small because he feels that otherwise he and his co-workers might forget their high ideals and slip into the old, easy, mass-production way of doing things. "I want to be a pacemaker in meat," he says, "and for that you've got to stay lean and supple." He can't think of a happier, more useful life than being a pacemaker in meat, and he declares that he enjoys this work more than anything else he has ever done. His friends take a tolerant but skeptical view of this enthusiasm. They have heard him talk the same way about his other careers. "I give Henry another two or three years of this sausage grinding," a friend of twenty-five years' standing says. "Then—who knows? Maybe he'll move in on plastics or plywood or something like that. Maybe he'll revolutionize undertaking. Maybe he'll buy a race track. He's been showing a lot of interest in horses lately. I've been a bit suspicious about that, but I guess it's really the racing he likes." Sell insists that he's in meat for the rest of his life. It fascinates him and gives him scope, and has provided him, he says, with his pleasantest personal relationships. He has spent most of the last thirty-five or forty years moving among the celebrated and the accomplished in many spheres. The range of his friendships is enormous. The dowager Duchess of Sutherland and Philadelphia Jack O'Brien both have been his friends. He is probably the only living man who admires and is admired by both William Randolph Hearst and Henry Agard Wallace. His literary acquaintanceship has run all the way from William Butler Yeats to O. O. McIntyre. Among his Continental friends have been the Duchess de Gramont and the Three Flying Codonas, the great Spanish aerialists. Others he has known intimately are Carl Sandburg, Lucien Lelong, Gene



"It certainly looks harmless."

Tunney, Rabindranath Tagore, Theodore Tietze, T. Suffern Tailer, and the Black Brothers, self-proclaimed kings of the Hungarian fiddler gypsies. Sell enjoys this vast assortment of friends, but he maintains that there is some special excellence, some real, though perhaps intangible, distinction that sets the meat crowd apart from the rest.

As a rule, Sell is a highly articulate man, but he gropes awkwardly for words when he tries to describe the brotherhood of meat. "I don't know just how to put it," he says, "but there's something there—a particular richness and tanginess of character, a lovely live-and-let-live spirit—that you just don't find anywhere else. Maybe it's because of the way they have to look at things. Maybe that's it. Meat people can't afford to take the short view, you know. They're always two or three years ahead of the rest of the world. When they look at a calf, they're not thinking about the calf today; they see it two or three years from now, when it'll be a full-grown steer. Anyway, in the meat industry I've

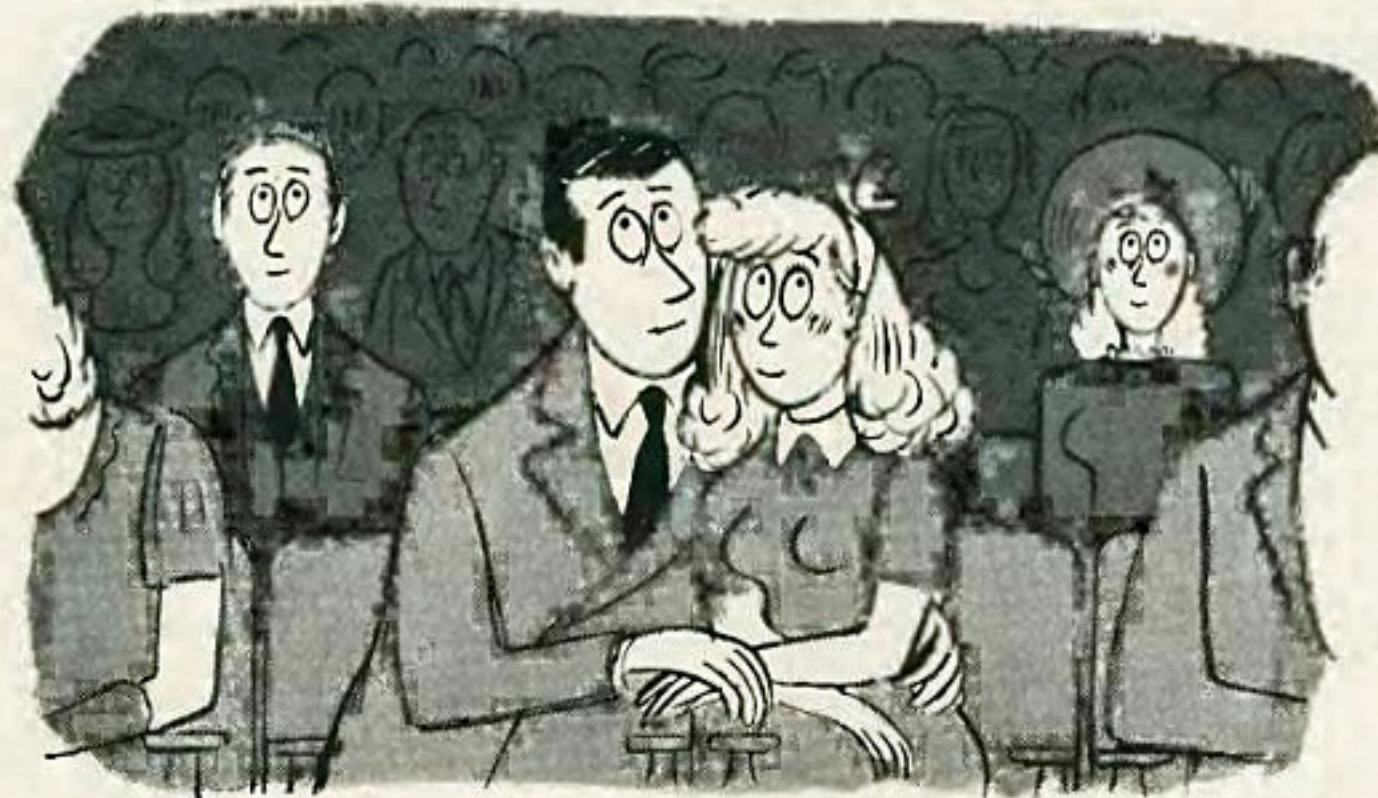
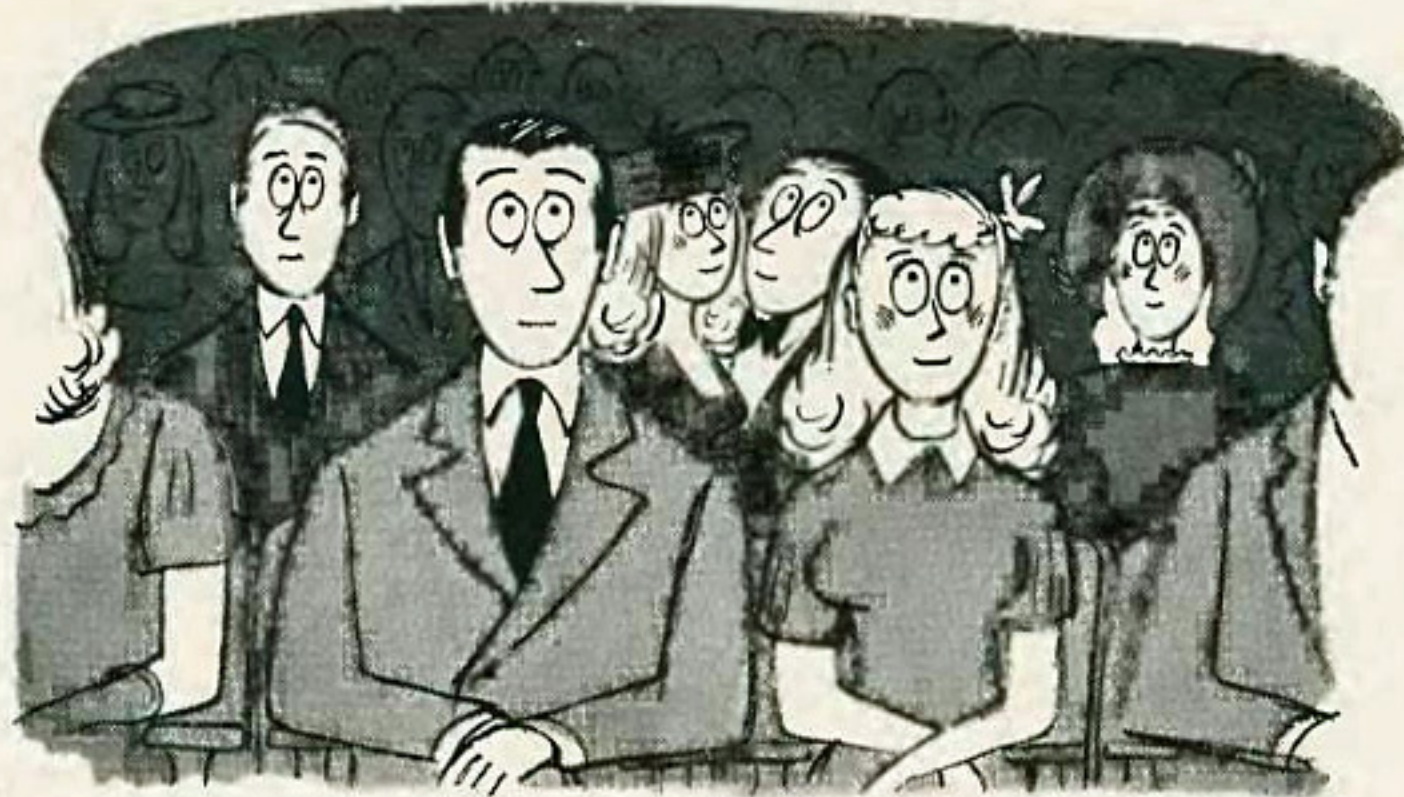
met the most urbane, cultivated, and outspoken people in my experience. The only other people who even begin to come up to them are writers and French vintners. You take Ernie Sweringen, of Swift. Why, he speaks a half-dozen languages as well as I speak English. He's travelled everywhere, he's as tough as the old Dutch pirates he's descended from, and he'll keep his word as scrupulously as any man I've ever known. And George A. Schmidt, Sr., chairman of the board of the American Meat Institute. When you hear that title, you don't expect much, do you? Just a butcher who knows his way around politically? Well, George is as shrewd as Bernie Baruch and as witty as Carl Van Vechten." Sell, a tenderhearted man and an animal-lover, used to be disturbed by the slaughtering aspects of the meat business. He has been gratified to learn that in some recent studies of the correlation between crime and occupation the slaughterhouse workers come off exceedingly well. In fact, there are, according to the study, practically no

known instances of murder or assault among men who spend their days killing animals for human consumption. "They live with blood and violence all the time, but they hate it," Sell says. "Now that I know them, I can see that they're the gentlest lot of men on earth."

Of the twelve tinned meats that now carry the Sell colors, the pâtés are the most striking tributes to Sell's program for bringing together meat packing and laboratory science. Science has helped in the development of the others, but only marginally. The beef that goes into the Beef Stew and into the Braised Beef in Gravy is not beef that has been taken apart and reassembled according to scientific principles. It is pretty much the same sort of beef our fathers ate and our grandfathers before them. Even the pork in the Corned Pork Hash is merely a superior grade of hog meat, something Sell hopes someday to improve upon. It is true that he has jacked up the nutritive value of his Corned Beef Loaf by adding milk powder and powdered yeast, but, aside from that, the meat is otherwise unfortified, is undefatted, and is generally untampered with. Most of the contributions he has made so far have to do with the cooking and canning processes. "What we're trying to do is get control over our meat," he says. "Control is the essence of the scientific method. It's also the home method. But it hasn't been easy in canning, because once the product is in the can there isn't much you can do about it—and many canners do cook in the can." In his Braised Beef, he feels that he has produced a superior and more homelike taste by braising the beef before canning it. This sly maneuver, which no one

else has bothered with, apparently because of its tediousness, gives the man who takes it a chance to sear the juices in. According to Sell, who is getting to be something of a historian of meat packing, the principal reason for the tastelessness of most canned foods is to be found in the canner's fear that the cans will suddenly start to go off on the pantry shelves like Chinese firecrackers. If a can of food is not cooked long enough to be sterilized, the contents will ferment, producing gases that may eventually rip the can open. This happened quite often in the early days of the in-

dustry. Doctors were frequently called to attend to housewives lacerated by flying tin or temporarily blinded by spraying pepper pot. To avoid these disasters, most canners took to cooking tinned foods longer than was necessary for safety and, Sell says, longer than was desirable for good eating. By consulting three or four laws of thermodynamics, Sell has found that it is possible, by some complicated fussing around with temperatures and timing, to put up food that will not explode and at the same time to make it possible for the palate to distinguish between his pork, his beef, his chicken, and his liver.



Coleman

SELL looks astonishingly like Charlie Chaplin, who, as it happens, is only a few months older. Sell is five feet nine, which is quite a bit taller than Chaplin, but the men are of approximately the same build. They both have full, slightly pouting mouths and broad foreheads of medium height. Sell's hair is as thick as Chaplin's and as wavy, and it has grayed at the same pace. All in all, the resemblance is remarkable, and it has been fooling people ever since the days when Sell was working for the *Chicago Daily News* and Chaplin was just a few blocks away, in the old Essanay Studios. Sell is well known to headwaiters in New York, where Chaplin is often mistaken for him, but elsewhere he is constantly being mistaken for the actor, which is all right with him, since Chaplin is a high-priority man in hotels and night clubs. Seventeen years ago, when Sell was in Moscow on business, word leaked out through the Hotel Metropol busboys and charwomen that Charlie Chaplin had arrived in town. Within a half hour, there was a mass of admiring peasants and

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workers in the streets around the hotel. The place became a forest of Stalin banners. They were about to call the tanks and the girl athletes out by the time it was learned that the newcomer was not Chaplin but an American who looked like him. One of Sell's sub-careers had taken him to Moscow. He was in the midst of his hotel phase then, and the Russians wanted to discuss his helping them run their travel bureau, Intourist. After some unpromising talks, he declined the offer.

The resemblance between Sell and Chaplin is purely physical. Chaplin, outside his films, is a melancholy fellow. Melancholy and disenchantment are states of mind with which Sell has no acquaintance. Except when he is being earnest about one of his enthusiasms, his manner is unvaryingly brisk, suave, and cheerful. He talks crisply, elliptically—rather like a Noel Coward character. "I like to have a lot of fire escapes in my life," he often says, meaning, it would seem, that business isn't everything and that if melancholy ever threatens, he will head for the nearest exit. "The first law of my life is to keep my shoes shined," he says, meaning, evidently, that he believes in the importance of putting a good face on things.

If Sell were less obvious about his mannerisms, less conscious of them, it would be possible to say that he is essentially a stylized character. He is constantly saying that this is exactly what he is. "Whatever I do," he says, "and wherever I go, I do my best to fit myself right into things. When I'm in London, I always try to out-English the English. Suits and topcoat from Savile Row. Boots from Great Portland Street. Cravats and a hat from Burlington Arcade." Sell remakes himself not only when he travels but when he changes careers. Thirty years ago, when he lived for art, he wore a Windsor tie. Later, for a while, he affected a literary bagginess. While he was a fashion-magazine editor, his dress took on Gallic tones and aspects. He hasn't gone as far as blue serges since he became an industrial magnate, but he has moved in that direction, to the point of wearing flannels and worsteds that are a happy compromise between *Harper's Bazaar* and the Meat Institute.

The virtuosity of Sell's careers baffles his friends. Whenever a few of them get together, there is sure to be a lot of talk about what his basic talent is, what quality makes it possible for him to achieve success in fields as far apart as vitamins and interior decoration, as literary criticism and meat. Some of

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them contend that he is primarily a promoter, others that he is an organizer, others that he is a salesman. The truth is that Sell is an artist. Only a snob would insist today that the creative impulse must express itself in words, in line, or in music. Sell is an artist who projects his vision of life in meat. There is as much of Sell in Sell's Specialties as there is of Petrarch in Petrarch's sonnets or of Dickens in Dickens' novels. The Liver Pâté may seem to be a discovery made only after painstaking experiment, yet it is quite possible that it was actually the result of an inspiration of the sort that lifts men above themselves and leads them to express all kinds of sublime things they never knew they had in them.

Sell's life is governed by two principles, and the Liver Pâté is an expression of both of them. One is high living; the other is healthy living. He is simultaneously a sybarite and a health crank, a lounge lizard and a physical culturist. He is an ascetic worldling. One of his standard luncheons is two champagne cocktails, followed by boiled lobster, served hot or cold (with lemon and olive oil), and ending with a snow-capped mountain called Palm Beach Cake, which is always on the menu at the Waldorf-Astoria, where he often eats. He has this kind of food four days out of five. On the fifth day, he fasts. He has nothing but a little fruit juice and perhaps a wafer or two to keep his stomach from wrinkling. Sometimes the Braised Beef man will taxi perilously downtown through snow and sleet, if need be, for zucchini fried with olive oil and garlic, and his eyes will brighten at the thought of an hors-d'œuvre collation of artichoke, sardines, Greek olives, and cold beans. Each morning, however, he forces down six whole yeast cakes; setting his teeth and putting all thoughts of zucchini from his mind, he also gets down some wheat-germ oil, and then six more yeast cakes before going to bed. In a way, he is, like hip flasks in the attic and Warwick Deeping on the library shelves, a survival from the twenties. So few people bother with raw yeast cakes nowadays that the only way Sell can be sure of his twelve a day is by having a Fleischmann truck deliver them to his office once a week. Besides all this, he takes, every day, vitamin concentrates amounting to fifty times the quantity recommended by the American Medical Association.

These extremes are characteristic. The sybaritic Sell is strictly an eider-down-cushion man, and the eider down had better be the real stuff from Iceland,

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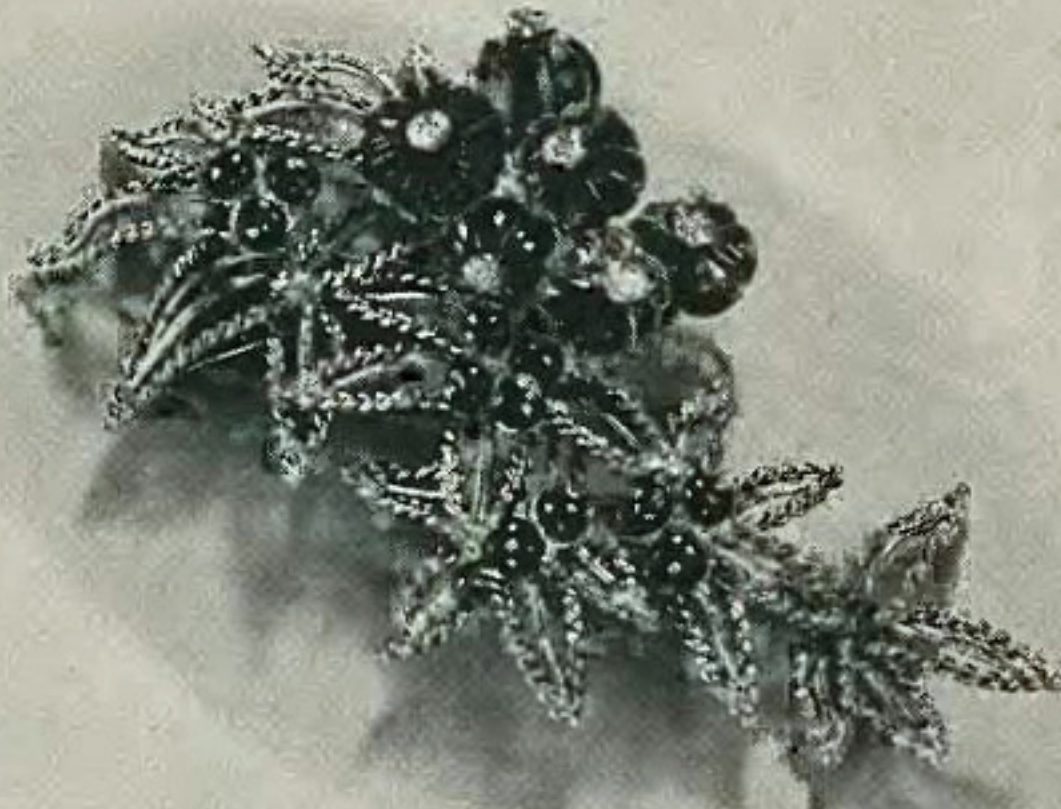
plucked in the spring by the birds for their nests, or he will have none of it. His apartment, on East Fifty-seventh Street, and his office, on Madison Avenue, are furnished with some of the most yielding and relaxing mediums of repose that the upholstery world can contrive. The apartment, though, also contains a wooden inclining board, as rigid as hundred-gauge steel, on which Sell lies for fifteen or twenty minutes a day while he goes through some masochistic yoga exercises for the improvement of body tone. Once, in the twenties, when Sell was the chief party-giver for the Hearst organization and was considered one of the greatest men in the field since Lucullus, he borrowed the Ile-de-France for a night and gave a huge dinner party aboard her. While planning the function, he was suddenly horrified by the thought that he would be inflicting cruel and unusual punishment on his guests by asking them to walk from their cabs and limousines all the way down Pier 57 to the main salon of the boat. He imported twenty wheel chairs and twenty wheel-chair pushers from the Atlantic City boardwalk. "It was a wonderful idea," he says. "Everyone was so wide-awake and ready for fun when they got there. They weren't all tuckered out from the walk." That is the sybaritic Sell talking. The Bernarr Macfadden Sell is a hiker who is proud of his calf development and always wears a pedometer. He checks the pedometer every week, and if it shows that he has walked less than twenty miles, he hits the road right away and stays there until his pedometer has registered the proper mileage.

The two Sells do not exist on equal terms. The health crank takes orders from the party boy. Sell does not absorb vitamins, down yeast cakes, or tie himself into yoga knots because he feels that doing these things is virtuous. He does them so that the lobster-and-champagne enthusiast can continue to function without developing digestive disturbances and a bad conscience. If he could get the right amount of intestinal peristalsis out of Palm Beach Cake, he would not have to bother with yeast cakes. The Liver Pâté is an almost perfect work of art because, by making it possible to take aboard vitamins, minerals, and amino acids at a cocktail party, it goes a long way toward resolving the conflict in Sell's life. It is, like most works of art, a synthesis.

Sell hopes eventually to create an even greater monument to himself. Now that the Liver Pâté is firmly established, he wants to develop a super-

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food that will take advantage of the latest findings in geriatrics, the branch of medical science that deals with the problems of old age. For quite a while, gerontologists have believed that it is possible to develop in the laboratory a synthetic food, high in all nutritive elements except calories, that will enable persons of merely normal organic soundness to retain in their latter years the mobility and resiliency of early middle age. It is questionable, the gerontologists say, whether the substance, if it can be fabricated, will increase the human life span, but it will certainly postpone decrepitude and make old age a much pleasanter stage of life. The materials that are being experimented with sound even more unpalatable than the elements that go into the Liver Pâté. Among them are horse blood, the lining of pigs' stomachs, and so on. Sell is determined to arrive at the proper combination of ingredients and get it on the market. He is subsidizing some of the university research now being done on such a food, and he and several of his employees are making experiments themselves. There are a number of thorny problems. For one thing, the cost to the consumer may be prohibitive. For another, the food must taste good. So far, the stuff that has been turned out in the laboratory tastes almost as disagreeable as it sounds. Sell once lived for two weeks on it. He claims that he never felt better in his life, but he is a man with a cause, and also a man who has been eating yeast cakes and wheat-germ oil for years. He is sanguine, however, about the possibility of producing a palatable concoction. "We've been trying it with a chicken base lately," he says, "and we've been making headway, I think. What I look forward to is the day when an eighty-year-old man can fish it out of the icebox, spread it on a cracker, wash it down with a Martini, dance his wife around the living room a few times, and then go out to a lobster dinner. As a matter of fact, I figure on doing just about that myself when I'm eighty." —RICHARD H. ROVERE

(This is the first of a series of three articles.)

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