

The Saturday Review



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The Six Ages of Travel

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following guest editorial is excerpted from a speech by Paul G. Hoffman, board chairman of Studebaker Corporation and former chief of the Marshall Plan-European Recovery Program, made before the European Travel Commission in New York City on May 6.

A REMARKABLE young Frenchman came to the United States as an ordinary traveler in 1831, when he was twenty-six years old. He belonged to the nobility by birth; yet he came to America with an open mind, because he wanted to see how democracy looked in action. He was Alexis de Tocqueville. From May of 1831 until February 1832 De Tocqueville and his friend Beaumont traveled over 7,000 miles of the young republic from Boston to Green Bay, Wisconsin, and as far south as New Orleans.

What he did in his travels inside the United States was of great interest to him at the time, but what he did after he returned to Europe proved to be of great importance to America and to Europe for generations. For De Tocqueville went home to tell his countrymen, and all of Europe, not only what he had seen but the significance of what he had seen in America. His observations were so intensely interesting they were translated into virtually every language in Europe. And they brought about a tremendous increase in understanding of America.

I have cited De Tocqueville to illustrate the profound influence a single traveler has had, and can have, on the basic attitude of a whole continent toward the peoples of what would otherwise be looked upon as a strange and distant land.

The story of travel is the story of

the progress of mankind. There have been six great ages of travel, and all of them have produced measurable benefits, all have lessened ignorance, and all have helped build a richer, more productive life for human beings. The first, which has amazed archeologists as they have catalogued more and more tangible evidence, is older than history—older than the written word. In the Stone Age there were trade routes across Europe, east and west, north and south, and ideas as well as beads came from Egypt and Asia to Scandinavia and to Britain.

The highlight of the second age arrived with the great Crusades, of tremendous influence in helping to bring Europe out of the Dark Ages. The centuries following the fall of Rome were dreary and dark because travel became so dangerous that it was sharply restricted. The Crusades changed all this. The Holy Land was not freed, but the mind and spirit of the men who engaged in this high adventure were again set free and began to soar. The Crusaders unleashed a world-searching wanderlust of a whole new kind and scope.

So intense was it that, when the Turks blocked the overland trade routes to China, the travelers took to water, and thus began the third great age—the age of travel by sea. The Portuguese sailed around Africa, Columbus discovered America, and the ships of Magellan made the first real trip around the globe. We today, all of us in the Free World, are still benefiting tonight from that third great age of travel which began over five centuries ago.

Whereas travel in those earlier ages was almost altogether military or commercial in nature, the fourth age was largely cultural and educa-

tional in purpose. It came in the nineteenth century, and has been described as the age of the "Grand Tour." It was marked especially by the excursions of thousands of Englishmen to Europe to tour Paris, Naples, Florence, Rome, Venice, and Switzerland.

This fourth age concerns us most importantly because it led directly to an age which is solely American—the fifth great age of travel—the twentieth-century American discovering Europe. This movement began in the latter part of the previous century, and by the turn into the 1900's it was a necessity for any American who claimed to be cultivated to spend some time in Europe. But aside from the show of cultivation, it was soon found that such visits truly meant a much broader and more enlightened life.

The United States had been a nation for 125 years, but the American generally approached Europe with considerable humbleness. He was not seeking adventure; he was seeking knowledge and enlightenment for himself and his family.

All in all, it could be said that 20 million Americans today are in position—through earnings and savings—to make a trip abroad, whereas no more than five million at the most could have done so in 1908. In this sixth age of travel today I can think of nothing more important than to have, not 450,000 (as last year), but two million or more Americans going to Europe each year to meet their fellow free-worlders face to face.

If we want to live in freedom from confusion and fear—as all good Americans do—we must lessen misunderstanding by travel. We must look deeper into the heart of that man elsewhere in the free world who will turn out to be a friendly neighbor if we but look deeply enough.

I DON'T know how many potential De Tocquevilles we have in the United States at the moment, but we know from his story how much might be accomplished by a single American man or woman visiting Europe. Statistically speaking, the more Americans who go abroad, the shorter the odds on the fact that many of these travelers will come home with interpretations that will widen the vision and sharpen respect for others across the sea among millions of us here at home. Over 500 years ago St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, said: "The world is a great book—of which those who never stir from home read only a page." I do not know any material object which the citizens of the richest country in the world can buy so valuable as that understanding.

—PAUL G. HOFFMAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ISOP'S FABLE

I WOULD LIKE TO ANNOUNCE the formation of a new literary club. Its name is ISOP—which stands for "I'm Sick of Princeton."

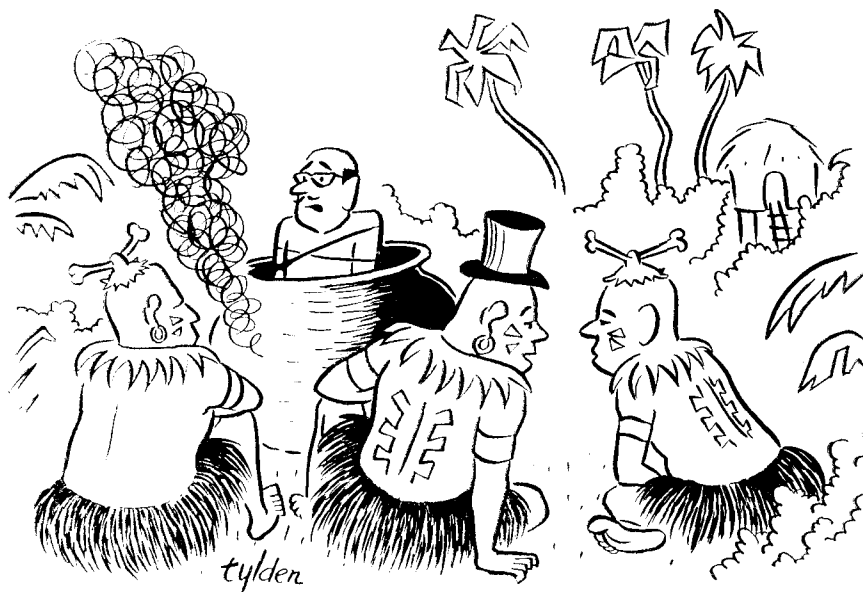
My reason for organizing this club stems out of my activities last Sunday, when I spent the day reading John Brooks's latest novel, "A Pride of Lions." The single aspect of this book which annoyed me to such an extent as to prompt me to write this letter was that once more the hero went to Princeton.

Now, gentlemen, although my years are not too many, I have read a decent amount of twentieth-century American novels, and it is my opinion that in far too many of these books the heroes have gone or are going to Princeton.

Good God, doesn't anything happen or significance to persons who attended good old Padooka?

JAMES BEIZER.

(Address Unknown.)



"I'm just a bit squeamish about this—never had *Manhattan Critic* before!"

JUSTICE TO GEORGE GREY BERNARD

WHILE I HAVE no desire to detract in any way from that praise which Mr. Rockefeller Jr. so richly deserves for his preservation and restoration of the historic, the spectacular, and the beautiful, I do feel that Bernard Kalb ["Millions for the Millions," *SR* April 17] has been a little less than fair in summing up all the dreams and labor of a great artist, George Grey Bernard, in the words "gentleman . . . collector."

As nearly as I can recall the history of the Cloisters collection, Mr. Bernard had visited Europe after World War I and found that thrifty French and Belgian farmers had taken parts of ancient monasteries destroyed either in ancient religious wars or, by more modern "Teutonic fury" and built them into walls, cisterns, and even pig-sties. Mr. Bernard, with the consent of the governments concerned, accumulated quite a collection.

At Fort Tryon, Mr. Bernard built a studio. He also arranged to sell to the Metropolitan Museum of Art his collections, and I believe it was at his suggestion that these pieces were built within a tapestry of brick so that instead of being isolated pieces of stone and marble they would become structural parts of a church-like building. Before this time Mr. Bernard had been working for several years, in a nearby unused trolley barn, on a colossal arch dedicated to peace. This arch (like peace) never came to fruition, and Mr. Bernard having abandoned all other work soon became pressed for funds. He could have sold his collection to a "collector" like Hearst for several times what he sold it to the Museum, but he desired that the people should reap the cultural enjoyment of studying the architecture of the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

What Mr. Rockefeller (and the Museum) then did was to carry out through their combined wealth and experience

the dream of Mr. Bernard: to relocate it within a beautiful park (which had previously been the estate of some tycoon who had erected a horrid looking gingerbread castle there) and through Mr. Rockefeller's further generosity to erect it within a worthy (\$2,500,000 worthy!) fabric.

In front of our capitol here in Harrisburg are two beautiful sculptural groups by Mr. Bernard. What four or five hundred years of weathering could not do to Mr. Bernard's collection at the Cloisters, a few decades of industrial smoke has done here. If Mr. Rockefeller could perhaps initiate some research on restoring and protecting our Bernard sculptures, it would only be—let us say—artistic justice!

GEORGE B. SHIRE.

Harrisburg, Pa.

PAPERBACKED SAINT BERNARD

AS ONE OF your supposedly hypothetical "host of truck-drivers, factory hands, and office workers who [have taken] to literature and philosophy as a steady diet" may I say that the tone and content of Harrison Smith's editorial "Culture in Soft Covers" [*SR* April 24] pained me deeply. As a matter of fact, the attitude of the entire "legitimate" publishing world is a ruddy pain. Can the fact that there are now available more and better books, in wider distribution, and at a lower price than ever before really be a source of worried concern to any reader, writer, bookseller, or conscientious publisher?

The only one likely to suffer is the hardback hardhead whose intellectual myopia prevents his seeing the bookmaking revolution bursting around him. And while I sympathize deeply with "the older, long-established firms," I feel the

choice is theirs to build me a better mousetrap or else beat a path away from my door. If some of these old salts, instead of trying to "ride through the storm of paperbacks," would set sail and come about with the fresh breeze they might find that it can carry them a long way. They might even find—to mix metaphors still further—that "the wolf that is howling" at their doors is in reality an eagerly awaited Saint Bernard with a cask of revivifying brandy.

A publisher, at any rate, should have better things to do with his time than spending it in prematurely bemoaning his own demise.

PAUL T. CHASE.

Chapel Hill, N.C.

A CHARLIE, NOT AN AUGUSTE

I MUST AT LAST break down and write a mild complaint to you, for you have inadvertently mistreated something close to my heart—the circus. The actual error is bad enough. The ramifications of it are world-shattering—to the circus devotee.

In *SR* April 3 you have printed a picture of Lou Jacobs (an estimable clown in his own right) and led your readers to believe it to be Emmett Kelly. In doing so you have, of course, revealed yourselves as people who don't know the circus. You have also published what amounts to the downright sinful suggestion that Mr. Kelley is what is known as an *auguste*. He is not. His realm is, to my mind, much higher. He is that type of clown called a *charlie*.

I beg you to remedy this error, which puts so great a clown on the level of a white-faced fool.

HERBERT CLEMENT,
Ringling Bros. Circus.

Boston, Mass.