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exceptional. As for the Sitwells' magnificent example, it is being wasted. Edith abhorred all sports "except reviewer-baiting." Osbert, still recording that he was educated "during the holidays from Eton," used to divert himself with "regretting the Bourbons, and repartee." Today he enjoys "listening to the sound of his own voice, preferably on gramophone records, and not answering letters." Sacheverell, once devoted to bullfighting and *plats regionaux*, now limits himself to "Westerns"—a weakness former President Eisenhower doesn't admit.

Statesmen, as a rule, are unforthcoming. Ike mentions golf (as does Harold Wilson), but Lyndon B. Johnson is one of the many who evade the question entirely. The Soviet upper echelon are equally unathletic, to judge from their entries, but it is impossible to avoid the suspicion that these have been compiled from official sources, and that they never see a questionnaire themselves. The late Bobby Kennedy was cooperative in listing skiing, sailing, touch football, and riding, but Neville Chamberlain never referred to the fishing that occupied him so memorably in 1938.

Somewhere in this fat compilation there may be someone whose diversions include "browsing through *Who's Who*," but it isn't likely. They're the kind who don't get in. —FRANK LITTLER.

## The Snowstorm

THE LATE GREAT SNOWSTORM in New York City and environs resulted in a number of human incidents which escaped proper notice by the press. We are pleased to repair the omissions.

There was a run on the Family Service Association by East Side couples who, having spent three days together, discovered that they had nothing in common and didn't particularly like their children.

Mr. A. Egan of the Bronx wrenched his back while attempting to dig himself out of a cul-de-sac. He has brought a personal injury suit against Mayor Lindsay.

Although roads in Hartsdale were cleared by Tuesday morning, no mail deliveries were made until Wednesday. The Hartsdale postmaster explained that his men had been deterred by gloom of night.

Snow plows were blocked for several hours on the Upper West Side by a group of housewives who were protesting over the city's failure to clear their streets.

A Red Cross airlift has been organized for the homeowner on F Street in Forest Hills who neglected to tip the snow plow operator.

—WALTER GOODMAN.



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A customer who is disappointed at the counter will be bitter for five minutes.

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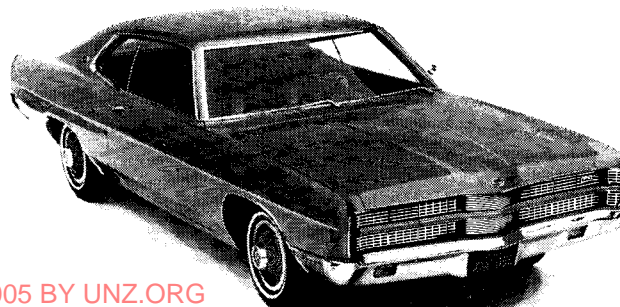
This simple device is a last-ditch reminder to Hertz employees that nothing drives away good customers like cars that don't drive so good.

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But we thought it might give you a warm and secure feeling to know that given the choice, we'd rather give you the benefit of the lesser of the two disappointments.

**The biggest should do more.  
It's only right.**



# Top of My Head

Goodman Ace

## Green Power

THE STRANGER phoned and identified himself. He said he is a lawyer, second on the list of six names on their office door, and he has a daughter in college who has been sending him copies of essays she has written in her creative writing course, and he wants my professional opinion as to their merit, which he hopes I will give him if I will be his guest at lunch at his club.

As he spoke I was looking over my list of a dozen cop-outs that I keep handy for such gala occasions, a list that runs from "going on a trip around the world" to "what number are you calling?" As I was about to choose No. 4 (Hong Kong flu), I heard him say:

"And my daughter and I read your column every week in the *Saturday Review* and we value your opinion highly."

"Is tomorrow too soon?" I asked.

The dining room of his exclusive club turned out to be one of those brown,

leathery upholstered jobs, and had diners with faces to match. They all looked like Herbert Hoover. My host seemed to be acquainted with all the members. As he nodded to various men he gave me a short biography.

"You know who that is?" he whispered. "He's the head of one of the biggest oil companies in the world. . . . That man is president of one of the richest brokerage houses on Wall Street. . . . That's the owner of one of the largest shipbuilding companies in the United States."

"Tell me only success stories" is the order of our time. This is a throwback to the days at mother's knee when a child was fascinated by stories of the triumph of good over evil, the handsome hero over the ugly villain: the poor boy who shined shoes to pay the greedy landlord with the mortgage, who is about to evict the boy's mother, when the shoeshine boy returns in time to foil the landlord, having become wealthy enough to buy

the landlord's sumptuous home and to evict him.

I listened to my host's success stories in quiet amusement until one man passed and he nodded. I asked who that was. "He's a writer," he said. No biographical superlatives. No "head of the biggest," "president of the richest," or "owner of the largest." How he got into this class of the long green was that it's the fashion these days for every club to have its token minority member.

During the Presidential campaign, all candidates acknowledged that there were other classes besides rich and poor. How often did we hear "Justice for all—rich and poor, black and white, young and old"? And even that grouping seemed to disenfranchise millions of uneasy citizens who were unable to identify with those classes. The in-betweens will have to be reckoned with in the next campaign.

"I believe," the campaigner will say, "in justice for all, the rich and the poor, the blacks and the whites, the young and the old, the haves and the hads, the tall and the short, the middle-aged and the he-doesn't-look-that-olds, the birth controllers and the take-a-chancers, the *Ladies' Home Journals* and the *Looks*, the making-both-ends-meet and the credit-card holders, the long-haired and the girls, the childless and the bachelors, and corn-on-the-cob eaters and the dentured, the pepped and the pooped, the oilmen and the income tax payers." Applause, applause, applause.

While I was eating lunch, my host busied himself pointing out several hundred million dollars worth of other celebrities in the room. I didn't catch their names. He didn't throw any. The status was money flow. Even the salad began to have a mint green flavor. I had ordered oysters. They were a disappointment. I thought in a club like this there would have been at least one pearl.

Oh yes, his daughter's essays. They were unusually amusing. Her rhetoric is impeccable, her language picturesque. Turned on as she is against the Establishment, she thankfully manages a delicately biting satire, leaving only tiny teeth marks. I got the feeling that she was surprised at the illogical logic which emerged from the concentric circles by which she reached her zany perceptive conclusions. And best of all, her fingers, flying busily over her typewriter keys, never left her heart.

Of course, that was not the report I sent her father. Syntax, to him, would be a misspelled stock on the Big Board. I simply wrote him: "Your daughter bids fair to become the head of a rich magazine, and I predict one day she will be owner and president of the largest publishing house in America. The world will be her oyster. With a rearl in it."

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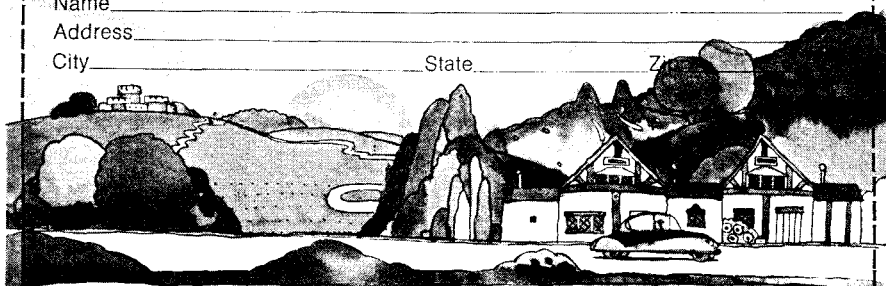
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-the publisher Ricourt,  
to the young artist,  
Honoré Daumier

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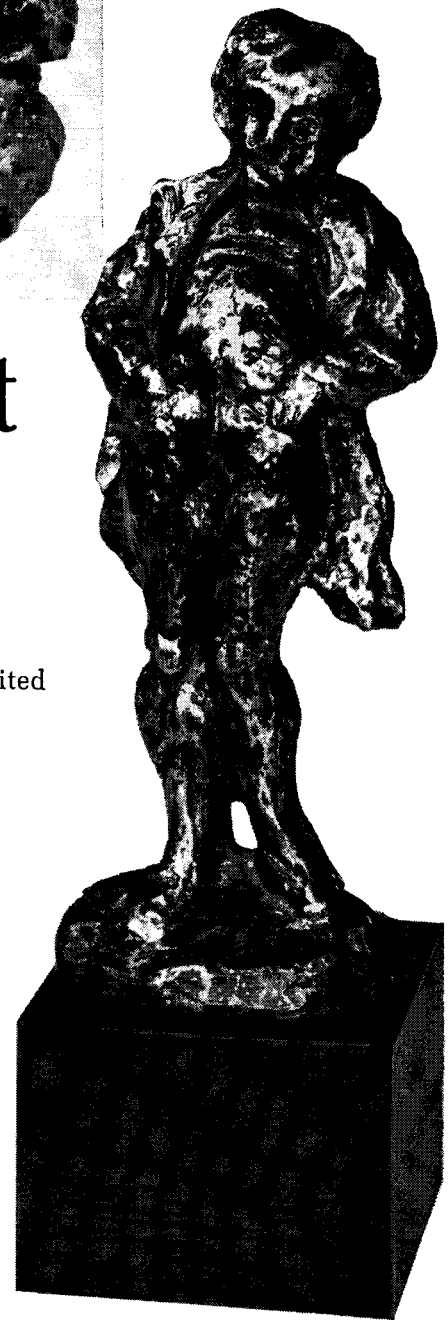
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# Gulliver's Travels

By KENNETH REXROTH

THE critical literature on *Gulliver's Travels* is immense, contradictory, and exhausting. It is as though Swift had written an additional "Voyage to the Land of Pihlsralohcs," a land governed by the iron rule of Publish or Die. In all this vast mass of paper to which beautiful trees have been sacrificed, there is scarcely a mention of the greatest mystery attending *Gulliver's Travels*. Why has it been for more than two hundred years one of the most popular of all children's books? If the critics are right, especially about the fourth book, it is an obscene and immoral rejection of the weak but striving, falling but trying human race, the work of a psychotic who hated all men, especially women, who was impotent, paranoid, and fixed in a clinging and cloying anal eroticism. This, it would seem, is reading matter for adults only. Even if the critics are wrong, the fact that they can make such

deductions would make the book dangerous or incomprehensible, or both, to children. Yet children love it, quite innocently, and see nothing bad or even nasty about it. So likewise do very common people. A good measure of this was the immense popularity among peasants and simple workers of the classic Russian motion picture made of *Gulliver's Travels* long years ago.

On his voyage to the continent of Balnibarbi and the flying island of Laputa, Gulliver learned, long before they were ever seen by real astronomers, that Mars had two moons. Swift describes them with considerable accuracy. This has fascinated many a science fiction writer. There are stories that describe Swift's visit to Mars or the Martians' visit to him, but the best is one based on the hypothesis that Swift himself was a Martian—an engineer who had planned to put two large satellites in orbit about Mars (the moons were not discovered until later because they were not there),

but had been swept away in his space ship, and forced to land on Earth. The science fiction writers are sounder critics than the scholars. Like the children who love *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift is an Outsider, one of the first and greatest. He was horrified by the condition of humanity and dumbfounded that he was a human being.

Superficially, there is nothing extraordinary about the satire of *Gulliver's Travels*. Swift uses the standard classical formula that goes back to Aristophanes, Menander, and Plautus, and survives to this day in all plays based on the Italian Comedy. In his own day, in Molière or Aphra Behn or the disciples of Ben Jonson, the formula dominated the popular stage. Each character in the classic comedy is assigned one of the vices or follies of mankind and acts out its consequences in absurdities or incongruities that follow logically from a given situation. What Swift did was simply use whole peoples, instead of individuals, as personifications. Starting with an assumption—men six inches or 60 feet high, the roles of horses and humans reversed, literal physical immortality—he deduced all the consequences he could think of, with relentless logic and realism, from an initial absurdity. But the absurdity is the only vesture of a vice or folly or major defect of ordinary people. The Lilliputians are petty; the Brobdingnagians are gross; the Struldbrugs are senile; the Houyhnhnms are endowed only with rationality; the Yahoos lack it. Taken altogether, the nations of *Gulliver's Travels* make up a well-rounded human character—seen from the outside.

So children, like Martians, see the adult world. Who did not dream as a child that some day, after he was grown up, he would meet the real adults—so unlike those he saw about him—who would be rational, just, and large of vision and who would keep the world from collapsing? Somewhere they must exist, a little conspiratorial committee of the sane in ice caves in Tibet or in the undersea palaces in Atlantis or the Land of Oz. Certainly the world a child sees about him and judges by the simple values of innocence, or the equally simple ones he has been taught—"Don't do as I do, do as I say"—could not endure overnight unless somewhere the responsables were keeping it going. The perspective of Swift is no different. His "savage indignation" is just outraged innocence. The point of view assumed by all satirists was not with him an assumption or a pose; it was congenital and incorrigible.

It is his innocence that distinguishes Swift from Franz Kafka and those who have come after him in the Theater of the Absurd or the novels of the blackest

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