

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST: 30

JOHN J. SYNON

They have laid away *The Saturday Evening Post*, I see, and if ever the saying fit, this is the time: Good riddance of bad rubbish.

It wasn't always so. When I was a boy, *The Saturday Evening Post* (it was always *The Saturday Evening Post* in my home, never *The Post*; that came later) was much a part of our household as the broom. Past issues were never discarded but rather, as I remember, they just wore out. And some wearing it took, too, so big and fat and heavy was each issue, loaded with good reading.

Contributors Edgar Allen Poe, Harriet Beecher Stowe (bad cess to her), Fennimore Cooper, Bret Harte, and Rudyard Kipling, such as these laid the base for greatness and it was from this base that George Horace Lorimer (and it was always George Horace Lorimer, too) built the book of wonders that lay each week before my opening eyes. I am not likely to forget how impressed with myself I was on reading an article by Herbert Hoover. I thought it leaden, but read it I did, manfully, and felt a cubit taller for having done so. And the wit of Edna Millay, she of the little poems. And the memory I have of Faulkner's pieces, as those, earlier, of Sinclair Lewis, and Scott Fitzgerald, of Dreiser — a fat fool, my mature judgment tells me — of Arnold Bennet, of Ring Lardner, he of the funny pen, and so many others. Indeed, *The Saturday Evening Post* was a world of weekly wonders.

Then, George Horace Lorimer died and the world changed. Whether one was the cause of the other I don't know. But sometime thereafter the financial underpinnings of *The Saturday Evening Post* began to rock. As rumors spread, I discounted them as of no moment; I had heard the same sort of thing of The British Empire and didn't believe that either.

But the rocking was there just the same — with Lorimer gone, circulation was falling — and the day came when the dirty people, the tinselled hucksters, took over the reins and attempted to restore a faded glory with sensationalism. Their vehicle was to be The South. The South, to read it week after week in *The Post*, was a land of rancid bigots, of narrow-minded, narrow-chested rednecks and no good word was said of us. That was *The Post's* mistake: The guttersnipes simply did not know their audience. A flood of Southern people sadly cancelled their subscription.

The publication got progressively worse until a football coach, whom *The Post* had called a fixer, sued and won an award so large it shook the nation. What Southern people had come to know, first hand, the rest of the country came to learn through the exposure of this bit of character assassination. From then on, for *The Post*, it was but a matter of time. As I say: Good riddance of bad rubbish.

As chance has it, my work takes me to the home office of The Curtis Publishing Company, the bereaved parent of this wayward child. I don't go there often, but on occasion. What a graceful, dignified, imposing

building it is, situated there on Philadelphia's Independence Square. Truly impressive — until one puts one's foot onto the marble floor of its foyer. Then one comes to know what is a mausoleum.

The death of this once-great publication should serve as a

warning to this nation, for *The Saturday Evening Post* is — or was — America in microcosm. Whereas, once, *The Saturday Evening Post* strove for and achieved excellence so, when put to the test and denied the character of its Founding Fathers, *The Post* sought the easy way, the unearned buck, and it foundered.

How much better had its presses stopped with the heart of George Horace Lorimer. Or, failing that, how much better to have spent its last years defending a proud banner than to have wriggled and writhed, gasping and sucking for sustenance in a gutter where only filth is found. I would think so.

SENATOR SAM ERVIN SAYS



WASHINGTON — Those who witnessed the inauguration of President Nixon saw one of the most meaningful affirmations of constitutional government. In a moment, two men exchanged their roles as citizens and President. Once more, we have demonstrated that our country is dedicated to a system of laws rather than of men. This is the system that has unified our country to meet its greatest challenges.

Even so, the realities of the day tell us that we have some difficult tasks ahead. Congress has returned to Washington in the knowledge that few are satisfied with things as they are. The vast achievements which we have made in education, technology, material wealth and

power have been matched by the most pressing problems we have ever had. There is division as to how we should go about our dealings at almost every level of policy.

One can look at the War, or crime, or the Budget which President Johnson submitted, and there is seldom agreement about how we should deal with any of these problems.

There is division as to whether we should channel funds, which we really do not have, to provide for a whole range of new spending for such items as the guaranteed annual income to everybody or for the rebuilding of cities, towns, and hamlets here and abroad. Even the fiscal experts are at a loss to explain

Continued on page 6

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WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

by Henry E. Garrett, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus, Psychology, Columbia University
Past President, American Psychological Association

Q: Dr. Garrett, have any efforts been made to reduce the discrepancy in learning among black students when placed in white schools?

A: A number of studies have tried to bring the black pupils up to white levels. An early and rather complete program called Higher Horizons was set

up in 1959 in New York. About 100,000 children in 76 grade and high schools were involved. Five years later, investigators found "no significant differences between students in the Higher Horizons program and similarly situated students in schools without the program". The program was abandoned.

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