

gent tendencies of various European peoples. Reading that book, we may only lament that Pettigrew did not live to write his projected history of the Moors in Spain for which he, a talented linguist, had prepared himself by adding Arabic and Hebrew to his knowledge of French, German, Italian, and Spanish, as well as Greek and Latin. In the end, Wilson's account of *Spain and the Spaniards* provides, as does the book itself, a picture of a man and a Southern people who saw themselves as the heirs of a great Western Christian civilization, and yet who found themselves in opposition to the "progressive," secular, industrializing, and philosophically and politically radical turn it was taking.

On one issue I must part company with Wilson. I refer to a big quarrel not only with him but with an outstanding coterie of Southern conservative interpreters of the Old South—with Allen Tate, Richard Weaver, and M.E. Bradford, to name only some of the most illustrious. Wilson is here defending the Southern Tradition in politics and social theory: its critique of egalitarianism and radical democracy; its defense of family-based social order; its commitment to a classical republican polity. His account of Pettigrew's biting criticism of industrial capitalism and devotion to Southern—and southern European—traditionalism makes especially thought-provoking reading.

But Wilson, like his fellow Southern conservatives, pays dearly for his philosophical idealism. Hostile to slavery and racism, he seeks to root the positive qualities he finds in the life of the Old South in an older Christian civilization and trans-Atlantic republicanism. Too good a historian to treat slavery as a *bagatelle*, he nonetheless underestimates its effect on the formation of Southern culture, ideals, and character.

Lurking beneath the surface is an interpretation that stresses the yeomanry and that thereby implicitly treats the slaveholders as, as it were, wealthy and privileged extensions of yeomen and as men for whom slaveholding proved a disagreeable necessity. This will not do. Europeans spread the kind of Christian culture and conservative values that Wilson champions to all parts of North America, but they sank deep

roots only in the South and at the very moment when they were, on Wilson's own showing, striking bedrock in the North. How, then, could we explain the dogged resistance to the kind of modernity that the trans-Atlantic bourgeoisie was vigorously promoting if we discount the organic, rather than the cash-nexus, basis of Southern social relations? I do not believe that we

could, and, if I read Pettigrew and his compeers correctly, they did not, either.

This is a big subject for another day, properly pursued in a full discussion of what is living and what is dead in the Southern Tradition. For the moment, however disconcerting Wilson's questionable judgment on this matter, it detracts little from an admirable book. ◊

BRIEF MENTIONS

WOMEN AND LAW IN CLASSICAL GREECE by Raphael Sealey
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press; 202 pp., \$24.95 (cloth), \$10.95 (paper)

"Feminist indignation is out of place in the study of ancient Greece," comments Raphael Sealey at the end of an appendix to his very sensible book. Rather than give way to his own indignation, Sealey, professor of history at Berkeley, has wisely chosen to omit from his bibliography nearly the whole of recent feminist scholarship. Avoiding polemics, he has concentrated on the legal position of women in ancient Greece. By comparing what is known of Athens, Gortyn, Sparta, and a sampling of Hellenistic law codes, Sealey concludes that underlying the variety of legal terms and customs was a set of common assumptions.

Specifically, a Greek woman was subject to the power of a *kurios*, a master, usually her father or, if he were dead, her nearest male relative. Upon marriage, she was given with her dowry to her husband, who became her master; the dowry, however, while passing out of her control, remained in an important sense hers and, if the marriage were dissolved, went with the wife. Greek law was also particularly concerned with two other questions concerning women: first, what to do about an heiress, i.e., an unmarried woman without father or brothers; and second, what to do in cases of intestate succession, that is, when a man dies without leaving descendants. Both were concerned primarily with preserving the integrity and existence of a family from which both men and women drew their identity.

These are thorny subjects that cannot be easily explained even to scholars, if they lack the requisite background. Sealey has done, however, a superb job of clarifying these issues, and anyone interested in questions of family history will benefit from a close reading of his book. His discussions of Athenian law and the laws of Gortyn are particularly illuminating. He is less successful in discussing Homer—his chapter reads like an outline of 20th-century Homeric scholarship—the Roman parallels, where he does not avail himself of the abundant evidence on Roman social life, and in his treatment of Aristotle.

More than once Sealey claims that "Aristotle thought that women were children who never grew up." He deduces this from a famous passage in the *Politics*, where the philosopher distinguishes among types of rule: of a free man over a slave, of a husband over a wife, and of a father over his children. Slaves, in his view, are too irrational to be independent, while children are only potentially rational. Women, on the other hand, obviously possess reason but not in a decisive form, that is, they are like Euripides' Phaedra, who knew what was right but surrendered to passion. But weakness is not identical with immaturity, and it is important to note that Aristotle said that while a man ruled as a king over his children, a husband's regime was constitutional. It is something like the difference between absolutism and representative government—a key distinction for any interpretation of Aristotle's view of sex roles.

As Sealey elsewhere observes, Athens tended to be less doctrinaire in its patriarchy than Republican Rome, and Aristotle continues to be the best source for our understanding of Greek political life as well as the best guide for improving our own. Despite these shortcomings, *Women and Law* is one of the best contributions made to women's studies and is sure to outrage the "women's caucus" of the American Philological Association.

—Thomas Fleming

A Niagara of Print

by Theodore Pappas

"It used to be one of our proudest boasts that we welcomed the downtrodden, the oppressed, the poverty-stricken, the fit and the unfit to a land of freedom, of plenty, of boundless opportunity. Our hindsight tells us that this boast was fatuous."

—George Horace Lorimer

Creating America: George Horace Lorimer and the *Saturday Evening Post*
by Jan Cohn
Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press; 326 pp., \$24.95

Believe it or not, *Chronicles* was not the first magazine in American history to question the virtue of unrestricted immigration. During the heady days of the early 1920's, while F. Scott Fitzgerald was recording the "the greatest, gaudiest spree in history," the *Saturday Evening Post* sought to concentrate serious attention on the social, political, and cultural consequences of welcoming everyone and anyone into this country. "We've got to hammer at immigration until Washington and the country at large wake up to what's happening," it declared in 1920. The *Post* even went so far as to encourage posterity to mark and hail the sailing of a little-known ship, the *Buford*. "Two ships, the *Mayflower* and the *Buford*, mark epochs in the history of America," announced the *Post*. "The *Mayflower* brought the first builders to this country; the *Buford* [which carried America's first lot of deported aliens in December 1919] has taken away the first destroyers."

No national publication fought more passionately for immigration reform, and the astonishing success of the *Post*'s crusade is the best evidence of the extraordinary influence that this magazine exerted during its prime. According to W.W. Husband, commissioner-general of immigration in the 1920's, the passage of the restrictive Immigration Act of 1924—America's first permanent quota law, which set the stage for the national origins plan of 1929—was directly

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Anna Mycek-Wodecki

attributable to the influence of George Horace Lorimer's *Saturday Evening Post*.

Jan Cohn, dean of the faculty and a professor of English at Trinity College, has written a superb account of Lorimer's nearly forty-year reign as editor of the *Post*. This book is not biography; the author only discusses Lorimer's public life as editor and allots a scant two paragraphs to his parentage (his father was a famous Baptist minister), upbringing (in Chicago and Boston), and years as an unsuccessful businessman before becoming editor of the *Post* at the age of 31. Nor is it corporate or institutional history; the *Post* is analyzed only in relation to Lorimer's editorship, and only tangentially does Cohn attempt to elucidate the larger

role that magazines such as the *Post*, *McClure's*, the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *World's Work* played in signaling the demise of the "gentle reader" of the Victorian Age and the commencement of the age of news and information. This book is, however, an intriguing hybrid of the two forms, for during the years of Lorimer's editorship, 1899 through 1936, the shadow of the *Post* was exclusively that of its editor. Lorimer dominated every aspect of the magazine, and the magazine in turn dominated Lorimer's life.

When Lorimer became editor the *Post* was a small, struggling, non-descript publication that had just recently been saved from bankruptcy by *Ladies' Home Journal* publisher Cyrus H.K. Curtis. Curtis is often remembered as one of the early masters of magazine marketing, and his ingenious use of a highly tenuous tie between the *Post* and Benjamin Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*—suddenly changing the magazine's founding year from 1821 to 1728, making Franklin the "founding editor" of the *Saturday Evening Post*—was indeed a coup worthy of Barnum. But Curtis's true genius lay in matching editor to format, and his hiring of Lorimer for the *Post* quickly paid dividends. Lorimer made two policy changes that revolutionized the magazine industry and placed the *Post* in the literary limelight: he promised to take no longer than 72 hours to decide a manuscript's fate, and to pay for manuscripts immediately upon acceptance. With policies such as these, and with a determined demeanor and a power to persuade, Lorimer needed no more than a year to transform the *Post* from a publisher of unknown authors and undistinguished fiction to a publication that ran articles by Grover Cleveland, Albert Beveridge, and William Jennings Bryan, and stories by Bret Harte, Hamlin Garland, and Joel Chandler Harris.