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Our thanks to Craven's school superintendent, Hiram J. Mayo, for his use of our "Your Child" editorial, when he made his pre-school speech to the county's 400 teachers, and principals and supervisors.

Flattering recognition of this sort, which we didn't know was coming our way, makes a writer's lonely lot more bearable. All of us who pound a typewriter yearn to turn out meaningful words, and when it occasionally happens the feeling of reward knows no bounds.

A writer's lot really is lonely. Only those who travel the road from day to day are fully aware of how much it drains you mentally and physically to stare at a blank piece of paper, and grope for that opening paragraph.

Amateur scribblers, dreaming of quick fame and fortune, persist in the belief that once a writer breaks into print, and gets paid for it, there's smooth sailing from that point on. Take it from an old pro, it isn't so.

Actually, the professional works harder at his trade than he ever did as an amateur, because he demands himself whatever excellence he may be capable of. Just as important, he knows when he falls short of the mark, if not why.

In this respect, the pro differs from the amateur, who is apt to secretly believe that he has produced a masterpiece. The true professional is, or should be, his own severest critic, and he seldom mistakes mediocrity for great literature.

Newsmen, called upon to put words together hastily under adverse conditions, can excuse themselves for inferior material once in a while. However, some of the best stuff we've turned out, all too rarely, had to be written in circumstances you wouldn't wish on your worst enemy.

Hurricane coverage, at least the several major blows we've reported since 1933, presents special problems. You can forget about jotting down those all important notes. Minutes, or only seconds, after your venture into the storm, everything on your person is drenched, so finding a dry piece of paper to write on is dismissed from your mind.

You play it strictly from memory, hoping that the names and ages of victims, estimates of damage in various coastal communities, and other pertinent information will remain in your cranium until you can give a coherent account to the outside world.

Eventually, usually a matter of hours, you broadcast your stories from a short wave station. What you say had better be accurate. Not only will it be thrown on the air by the news media you're covering for, but other stations listening will tape it and send it out immediately, in the public's interest.

For reasons we make no pretense at comprehending, we've managed to do about as good a job of reporting during hurricanes as we have in more favorable situations. A few of the stories may have surpassed almost everything else we've ever done.

If a writer could determine for sure, why he does better at



HERE AT HOME — You've seen professionals perform The Wizard of Oz on screen and television, and delightfully so. Saturday afternoon and night, in spacious and comfortable NBHS Auditorium, the New Bern Civic Theater, relying on local amateur talent, presents the fantasy that has been a favorite of children and adults for generations. Sandra Mumford plays the role of Dorothy, immortalized by Judy Gar-

land, and Allen Toler is cast as the scarecrow, done so well on screen by aging but still spry Ray Bolger. Members of the theater group have worked hard on their latest offering, and have expressed privately the belief that this is their best production since organization. The matinee performance is at 2 p.m. and the evening curtain goes up at 8:15 p.m.—Photo by Billy Benners.