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Our thanks to Eunice Wray for passing along the following. Written 25 years ago by Dan Valentine for North American Newspaper Alliance, and titled Teach Him . . . But Gently, If You Can, it remains as timely as ever.

"My young son starts in school Tuesday . . . It's all going to be strange and new to him for a while, and World, I wish you would sort of treat him gently.

You see, up to now, he's been king of the roost . . . He's been boss of the backyard . . . His mother has always been around to repair his wounds . . . and I've always been handy to soothe his feelings . . . But now things are going to be different.

Tuesday morning he's going to walk down the front steps, wave his hand, and start out on the great adventure . . . It's an adventure that might take him across continents . . . It's an adventure that will probably include wars and tragedy and sorrow.

To live his life in the world he has to live in will require faith and love and courage. So, World, I wish you would sort of take him by his young hand and teach him the things he will have to know.

Teach him . . . but gently, if you can. He will have to learn, I know, that all men are not just, that all men are not true.

But teach him also that for every scoundrel there is a hero . . . That for every crooked politician, there is a dedicated leader Teach him that for every enemy, there is a friend.

It will take time, World, I know, but teach him, if you can, that a nickel earned is of far more value than a dollar found . . . Teach him to learn to lose . . . And to enjoy winning.

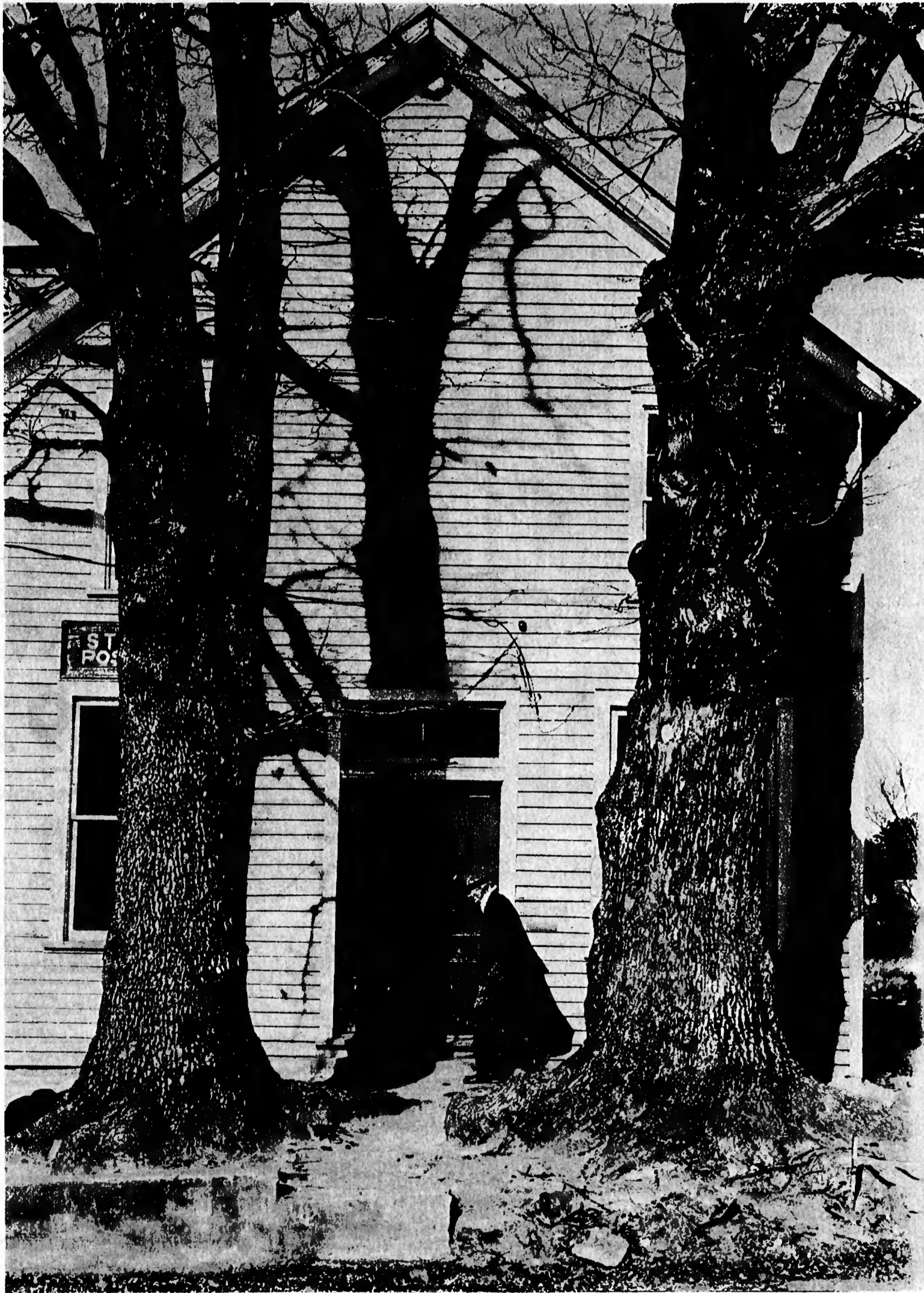
Steer him away from envy, if you can, and teach him the secret of quiet laughter . . . Let him learn early that bullies are the easiest people to lick Teach him, if you can, the wonder of books.

But also give him quiet time to ponder the eternal mystery of birds in the sky, bees in the sun, and flowers on a green hill . . . In school, World, teach him it is far more honorable to fail than to cheat . . . Teach him to have faith in his own ideas, even if everyone tells him they are wrong.

Teach him to be gentle with gentle people and tough with tough people. Try to give my son the strength not to follow the crowd when everyone else is getting on the bandwagon . . . Teach him to listen to all men, but teach him also to filter all he hears on a screen of truth and take only the good that comes through.

Teach him, if you can, how to laugh when he is sad . . . Teach him there is no shame in tears . . . Teach him there can be glory in failure and despair in success . . . Teach him to scoff at cynics and to beware of too much sweetness.

Teach him to sell his brawn and brains to the highest bidders but never to put a price tag on his heart and soul . . . Teach him to close his ears to a howling mob . . . And to stand and fight if he thinks he's right.



THE TEST OF TIME — Once again we are privileged to bring Mirror readers, through the courtesy of Dr. Bruce Schlein of Durham, a photograph of rare excellence. A pathologist by profession, he has achieved further distinction with his camera, and has won outstanding awards through this hobby. Dr. Schlein has the soul of a true artist. Who but an artist would have recognized the symbolic pathos of an old man, in a setting of still older trees, shuffling to the village

postoffice for his morning mail? The young, possessed of youthful daring, have their own brand of courage, but no less noble are the elderly among us who have weathered the storms of many seasons, and like the ancient trees seen here remain undaunted. Surely you share our hope that this old gentleman found a letter in his mail box, and that for him there will be many more mornings.