

By W. D. Hallacre

The following address was given at a recent meeting of the Alumni Club by W. D. Hallacre, superintendent of the city school system, and is published at the request of several members of the club.

Bunyan's Pilgrim's progress is an immortal story of one who in the midst of trials and conflicts, struggled on toward the light.

As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold, I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain himself, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, "What shall I do?" I saw also that he looked this way and that way, as if he would run, yet stood still, because, as I perceived, he could not tell which way to go. Then said the Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field: "Do you see yonder wicket gate?" The man said, "No." Then said the other, "Do you see yonder shining light?" He said, "I think I do." Then said the Evangelist, "Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto, so shalt thou see the gate, at which when thou knockest, it shall be told that what thou shalt do."

Thus Bunyan describes the confusion of a world pilgrim burdened with care, with sensibilities dulled by the world's confusions, uncertain of his way, groping for the light.

Are we carrying the application too far to say that this is a graphic picture of the 20th century man or woman who has shouldered the responsibilities of citizenship?

Our domestic, social, industrial and political world presents to the careful or careless observer a situation that strains confidence and assurance to the breaking point.

In no place is this bewildering more acute than in the homes of our people in dealing with and rearing our children.

Landmarks that once availed us are largely obscured.

Many of the traditions and practices, in which we were trained, and have constituted well recognized conventions of home and social usage have suffered a set-back that some instances even deny their existence.

Take it by and large the situation that faces us is fraught with manifold difficulties and seemingly insoluble problems.

The home, the school, and the church were once regarded as the strong and indispensable pillars of our civilization.

We measured our growth by these standards, and our neighbors appraised us by the consistency with which we adhered to them.

The three R's of education were fundamental to all intellectual training and mental development.

The well conceived disciplines of an orderly home were the sure signs of domestic decency and a consistently observed Sunday with its quiet and reverence

was the image of responsibility, and the mark of a standardized well conceived method of character building.

Notice that these 3 pillars of civilization as I have called them affect youth.

The changes which a post-war age has effected in these three vital matters are beyond our power to measure or adequately appraise.

I am not pessimistic, nor if I had the power would I attempt to arrest the new and strong currents that like a swollen, rushing torrent are changing the shorelines of our civilization.

The very fact that men and women are giving more consideration to some of the deep-rattled ideas that have so long fixed our course is highly commendable, but the large and pertinent question is: Are they reckoning, in their desire for change and their search for variety, with those long-tested qualities, practices, methods, and virtues that have made our nation one of the strongest the modern world has ever known?

Confused times with the pilgrim straying and uncertain in his course, call for a kind of directing and commanding leadership that is not affected by the fickleness and shifting course of action.

Yield as we will and must do to the dictum "New occasions teach new ideas and duties," we must still hold to the conviction that in the orderly training of a future generation there are certain fixed stars that are indispensable to our safe sailing and that will insure our reaching the port or haven we seek to attain.

Almost daily we learn of new channels, and more direct no doubt, will continue to be found, they may make our course shorter, more comfortable, and perhaps safer, but if we are to gain and follow great ocean lanes, the well defined lanes that navigation in the open seas of human progress has long followed, we shall have to unroll afresh some of the old well-thumbed charts that experienced and successful mariners have used in time past.

Changing style of dress and new inventions for making the voyage of life easier and more comfortable do not affect these principles that have to do with the serenity of mind and the satisfaction that inevitably follows the knowledge of knowing that the world has been bettered by our having lived in it and we leave the world a generation of well trained young men and women who are capable of assuming the duties where we lay them down.

Never has there been a time in our generation when the demand was greater for sober, serious thinking as to the heritage we are rapidly bestowing upon youth who quickly pass the milestones of boyhood and girlhood and approach that period of responsibility known as adulthood.

I said a moment ago that our age was an age of rapid adjust-

ment in the moral world but there are certain principles for the training of youth that have not changed.

There are three principles that I have in mind that can be expressed in single words—honorable, decent, and upright.

Old words you will agree—so old that they have been worn smooth by past generations until they shine with the radiance of remote stars.

But words that are still up-to-date in the building of a character that is able to withstand against the wild, rushing, muddled, currents of a changing civilization.

If we would completely fulfill our obligations to youth, we must teach by precept and example the true meaning of these three virtues. We must dust off these words—give youth a new deal in their use.

We are told by the news items that the majority of our criminals are of the teen age.

We lament with wagging heads the fact that the morals of many of our young people are below accepted standards of decency.

We learn that our youth are imbued with intoxicants and we lament the fact.

We read of our youth as wayward and too far experienced for their age.

All of these indictments constitute a matter of common and too true report.

But in the name of fairness and justice I ask you, Who is responsible?

Youth has not made a single gambling device.

Youth does not make the devices used by the criminal class.

Youth may drink, but youth does not manufacture liquor.

Youth by its very nature is clean and uncontaminated until it observes our ways and devices for straying from the path of honor, decency, and uprightness.

In this day of new adventures, new deals, there are three principles, conventions, if you would call them that, that we dare not depart from if we would heed the challenge of the times and again restore to their prominent places those virtues of honorable, decent, and uprightness.

These bulwarks of our civilization are the school, the home, and the church.

In time past I have discussed with you the first, the school, so at this time suffice it for me to say that the woman who because of the love of her duties stands before her class of pupils daily—is one of the greatest influences for good in the lives of our children.

With this short inadequate tribute to the teacher let us affirm again that the home has no substitute in this matter of moral and religious training.

To homemakers has been entrusted the greatest degree of this task of character building.

There is no obligation that is weightier, there is no civic duty that is more insistent.

Neither education nor legal en-

forcement can substitute for the noble experiment in economic reconstruction that is so stupendous in its effects that the rest of the world is eagerly watching our results.

We are mobilizing and consolidating and co-ordinating our complex industrial machinery that the shadows of a nation wide calamity may be dispelled.

Without a corollary majority of our people are responding loyally.

Already there are undeniable evidences that the horizon is brightening with the fore-glimpsings of a new day.

God may speed the undertaking and give His guidance to our executive who has the vision of a better future!

In the midst of all this re-organization and re-construction of our economic structures, what are we doing to give strength and permanence to our homes and firesides?

Should there not be a struggle to regain the equilibrium in our homes by setting our houses in order and re-establishing those ways and practices that time has proven fundamental for the peace and happiness of youth?

Let us believe that our nation is not going to neglect her soul while she stabilizes her markets and repairs the breaches in her economic structure.

Last year proved to be the most momentous year of our history.

146 years ago our Constitution was adopted.

The men who wrought this incomparable document had a profound faith and trust in God.

They stood for the fine things of home and country and they erected a Republic whose dignity, resources, and power are the wonder and admiration of the modern world.

Have we of this later age the moral worth to preserve and secure it to the next generation?

The answer to this searching

We have, to our shame and confusion, attempted to make people virtuous, temperate, and self-respecting by these methods, and it has cost us dear.

There is not now and never will be conceived a substitute for the home as the conservator of all that makes for decency, uprightness, and honor.

In one of the ancient books of the Bible a great leader admonishes his people on the eve of his withdrawal from them.

They had passed thru strange and difficult times.

Repeatedly thru their folly they had jeopardized their very peace and happiness.

Reviewing their tragic experiences, Moses declared to them that whatever of success or fortune might attend them in the future, it would be secured only by their adherence to those certain principles of life. (A code if you will) that in time past had been their stay and security.

"Take heed to yourselves," he said, "that your heart be not deceived and ye turn aside and serve other gods and worship them."

That this basic rule of right might be made more conspicuously evident to them he adds "teach it to your children."

It was to be made vocal and compelling in the home.

It was to be so evident to stranger and friend alike that symbols of this loyalty were to adorn the houses in which they lived.

"Thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine houses and on thy gates."

This story is an old one but it has mighty lessons for our time.

We are strenuously and laboriously trying to dig ourselves out of the deep pit into which a world war with its attending disasters plunged us.

We along with other nations are trying to regain our sanity and poise, and those things we

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By virtue of the power contained in a deed of Trust C. W. Church to Claude Kiser, trustee, dated December 17, 1931, and recorded in Book 169, Page 282, in the office of the register of deeds of Wilkes County, North Carolina, default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness thereby secured and application having been made by the holder of the notes evidencing said indebtedness to the trustee to foreclose said deed of trust, the undersigned Claude Kiser, trustee, will on Saturday, April 21, 1934, at 12 o'clock noon, at the court house door in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash a tract of land located in Reddies River Township, North Carolina, which is described as follows:

Beginning on a stake near the mouth of a small branch, C. W. Church corner, N. 83 1-2 deg. W. up said branch, 19 poles to a poplar stump; thence N. 30 deg. W. with C. W. Church line 25 poles to a sourwood; near the head of a branch and running S. 3 1-2 deg. W. with Thomas Church and Vinson Bumgarner's line 44 poles to a stone, (the old Spanish Oak corner); thence S. 86 deg. E. with the old line known as the Rash line 44 1-2 poles to a chestnut; thence S. 2 1-2 deg. W. 16 poles to a stone, Q. E. Pearson's N. W. corner; thence S. 2 1-2 deg. E. 11 poles to a branch; thence in a northward direction with the meanderings of said branch to the beginning, containing 14 1-5 acres, more or less.

This being a portion of the tract of land deeded by Bell Caudill and wife, Adah Caudill, to the Elkin Box Company, Inc., the 19th day of December 1919, recorded in the office of Register of Deeds of Wilkes County, Wilkesboro, N. C., Book 110, Page 340.

Said tract of land will be sold subject to any and all taxes due thereon.

This 19th day of March, 1934.
CLAUDE KISER,
Trustee.
4-16-34.
Robert Moseley, Attorney.



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