

WEIMAR JONES Editor BOB S. SLOAN Advertising Manager J. P. BRADY News Editor-Photographer MRS. ALLEN SILER Society Editor-Office Manager MRS. MARION BRYSON Proofreader CARL P. CABE Operator-Machinist FRANK A. STARRETT Compositor G. E. CRAWFORD Stereotyper CHARLES E. WHITTINGTON Pressman DAVID H. SUTTON Commercial Printer

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Table with 4 columns: Rate Type, Outside Macon County, Inside Macon County, and Price. Includes rates for One Year, Six Months, Three Months, Two Years, and Three Years.

SEPTEMBER 27, 1956

Dear Teacher

(Reprinted From The Press Of Oct. 1, 1953)

Dear Teacher:

The other day our six-year old Billy trotted off to school.

His mother and I watched until he was out of sight. We had thought he would turn and wave, at the corner, and give us that quick, easy smile of his. But he was too intent, too eager for this new experience; he rounded the corner without even hesitating. . . .

For his mother, that was a bit too much. She had known all the time, of course, that this would end his babyhood. But she wasn't prepared for the break to come so abruptly, and with such finality—least of all, for him to be the one to make it.

There was pain for me, too—but for a different reason. Mine was caused by a heart fairly bursting with pride. To me, this marked the beginning of the growth of a man; and the fact the boy didn't think to stop and bid us that final goodbye was evidence he'd be a man who could and would stand alone.

But though our reactions were so different, his mother and I are in complete agreement about what we hope he will learn. We do not expect you to perform miracles. We realize that, at most, you can develop the material that comes to you; that what you are able to do will depend upon what we already have done—or failed to do.

We know, too, that our responsibilities are not over—far from it! But we believe we, and you, should face the facts: from here on out, our influence on him will become less and less strong, while yours will grow greater and greater.

And so, as you begin to take over, it seems an appropriate time to tell you what we should like to have him taught.

* * *

We hope you can teach him to read.

"That is easy", some persons might say. You who teach know better; you realize, as perhaps no one else does, how many boys and girls are graduated from high school without ever having learned to read, in the full sense of that word.

First of all, of course, we want him to learn to read accurately; to see and to take note of the "nots" and the "buts" and the "ifs" that make all the difference in the meaning of what is on the printed page. We hope, too, that he can learn to read aloud, with ease and grace.

But reading, it seems to us, is more than just seeing all the words, and being able to pronounce them. The good reader reads with his mind, the eyes serving simply as a tool; the words on the printed page come alive as they send ideas to his brain. And the really good reader screens those ideas; examines them, tests them, and accepts some as true, rejects others as false, and puts still others in the doubtful category. In short, when he reads, he thinks.

Words can convey pictures, too; pictures far more vivid than any photograph or drawing, because they are mental images, pictures painted on his mind by his own experiences. As Billy learns really to read, not simply to parrot words, such simple words as "moonlight" and "water" and "wind" will bring back to him a night of inexpressible beauty, the lulling sound of a stream rushing over rocks, the sense of safety and comfort he has felt as he slipped off to sleep in his warm bed, while the winter wind howled outside.

From these simple emotions, he can go on, as he learns to read even better, to laughter and tears, love and hate, admiration and contempt, sympathy and courage—and the awakening of aspiration.

And so reading can become not only a source of comfort in time of loneliness—it can feed mind and

heart and character; it is a way to acquire those inner resources and strengths that are the only real armor against life's buffetings.

* * *

We hope you can teach him to write.

We hope, of course, he will learn to write more legibly than most of us of an older generation; but writing, it seems to us, is more than just putting on paper alphabetical symbols that are recognizable.

Its purpose is to express ideas and emotions; and it is useless unless they are so expressed that what is written will mean something to others. And so we hope Billy will learn not merely to write legibly and grammatically, but learn to have something to say, and to know how to use words to say it.

If reading has stirred his mind and his imagination and his feelings, he will have something he wants to say, but he can say it only as he learns about words—that they have exact meanings, each a little different from all the others; and that, in addition, words have backgrounds and personalities and atmosphere like places and people.

So, if he is to write, he must learn the habit of studying words, his tool for saying what he has to say. He must learn, too, that all good writing is clear and simple, like all good people.

Finally, if he is to write so that what he writes will be accepted and welcomed by others, he must learn to say it with the warmth of human sympathy and with the tolerance that comes from a recognition that his experiences and those of the one he is writing to have been different.

* * *

Last, but far from least, we hope you can teach him to figure.

He needs to learn to add and subtract and multiply, of course; and to do those things accurately. But figuring, it seems to us, is more than just addition and subtraction and multiplication.

Life is hard, at best; it will be very hard for the youngsters who are growing up in today's confused and confusing world. And they can take the beatings it will give them—and the even-harder-to-take ease and good fortune — with an unbroken spirit only if they have learned this hard but simple lesson:

Two and two make four.

They never make three or five, but always four. In short, figuring can make him wise enough to know that some things cannot be changed, and honest enough with himself to see things as they are, not as he might wish them to be.

If you can teach him these three—what it really means to read and to write and to figure—we think he will be educated; because if he learns how really to do these things, he will be a man.

Respectfully,

BILLY'S DAD.

What we want is an active class who will insist in season and out of season that we shall have a country whose greatness is measured not by its square miles, its number of yards woven, or hogs packed, or bushels of wheat raised, not only by its skill to feed and clothe the body, but also by its power to feed and clothe the soul—a country which shall be as great morally as it is materially; a country whose very name shall call out all that is best within us.—James Russell Lowell.

HERE'S YARDSTICK . . .

What Is Freedom? 10 Tests Of A Free Society

. . . DO YOUR OWN MEASURING!

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Adapted from an address by Dr. Commager, noted historian, this article is reprinted from North Carolina Education.)

By HENRY STEELE COMMAGER

What is freedom? What is a free society? What are the tests of a free society?

It is freedom in society, freedom under law, with which we are concerned. It is freedom not only for the individual but for the society itself, for the commonwealth. It is freedom not as an abstraction but as a living and functioning reality; not as a static concept but as a dynamic one; not as a passive symbol but as an active and creative symbol.

What, then, are some of the tests of a free society? . . . A free society is a society where men are not afraid and where society is not afraid. Franklin Roosevelt was very wise when he named as one of the four freedoms the Freedom from Fear. A free society is a society where men and women are not afraid to speak their minds; to go to the church of their choice, or the assembly or meeting of their choice; to join such organizations as they fancy; to

make their own friends and associates; to insist on their rights, even against officials; to read what they please and to write what they please; to travel where they will and work at what interests them.

But freedom from fear is not only an individual felicity. It is, or it should be, social. It is not only the individual who is not afraid in a free society; but society itself is not afraid. Government is not afraid. Government is not afraid of the people. It is not afraid of revolution or conspiracy, for it has confidence in the virtue and intelligence of the people. It is not afraid of ideas, not afraid of organizations or of assemblies or of parties. It is not afraid of what is thought or of what is said. . . . It does not regard political differences as evidence of treason. It does not fear scientists who have views different from the official views, or diplomats whose advice does not accord with official policy. It is not afraid of scholars, of intellectuals, of scientists; it is not afraid of the people. . . . A free society is not afraid of ideas at home, and it is not afraid of ideas abroad. It seeks to cast down barriers, not to

erect them. It seeks to penetrate curtains, not to hang new curtains. It believes in free trade in ideas and free trade in persons. It does not bar prospective visitors because it may not like what they have to say, nor does it require its own citizens to stay home because it does not approve of what they have said or is doubtful about what they may say. It attempts at all times to mitigate the ravages of competitive nationalism, not to magnify them. . . . It does not cast great countries and tens of millions of men and women into the outer darkness or consign them to the lower depths of the international inferno, but seeks rather to understand them and to expose them to freedom. It is too proud to be afraid of competition and afraid of contamination.

A free society must be a society that is based upon enlightenment, that is, upon education. This is in truth the most striking characteristic of a free society. . . . We must cease harassing our teachers and our educators, exposing them to contumely and to suspicion. We must cease meddling in their intellectual and private

affairs. We must abandon the indignity of teachers' loyalty oaths and legislative investigations to discover subversives, and inquiries into the curriculum and the libraries and the textbooks to discover dangerous ideas — knowing as all sensible men and women do that all ideas are dangerous, and that the only alternative to dangerous ideas is no ideas!

We must somehow reverse the attitude, now so widespread, that most teachers and most scholars have an affinity for subversion. There is great to-do in our day about attracting this type of work attractive first-rate people to the crucially important field of teaching. Much has been done to make financially, but financial inducements cannot alone attract first-rate minds. They will not attract first-rate minds if we maintain an atmosphere which deprives teachers' self-respect. If we are going to get good teaching for the young or for the old, we must attract teachers who respect their students and who respect themselves; just as, if we are to get justice, we must surround the judge in the courtroom with respect. All

Continued On Page Seven—

Letters

From Mud Ruts To Paved Roads

Editor, The Press:

These days of paved roads and modern conveniences make one wonder if there will be as much progress made in the next thirty years as there has in the last. Will something more modern replace the trucks for hauling, like the trucks replaced the teams of horses and mules?

Back before the blight swept over the Appalachian Mountains and wiped out the chestnut timber, the wagon team was in great demand to haul telephone poles to Franklin. Now a trip can be made to town and back in less than an hour. Then it took starting before daylight and returning after dark, especially in the winter months, on the muddy roads that were in places rutted axle deep. I suppose, too, it was easier to cross Main street then than now (especially on Saturday.)

B. M. SWEATMAN

Franklin, Route 1.

Others' Opinions

(Opinions expressed in this space are not necessarily those of The Press. Editorials selected for reprinting here, in fact, are chosen with a view to presenting a variety of viewpoints. They are, that is, just what the caption says — OTHERS' Opinions.)

Highest Ambitions

(Campbellsville, Ky., News)

Most people's highest ambitions nowadays are to be able to afford what they are spending.

Peeling Of The Belles

(Plattsmouth, Neb., Journal)

Some towns rely on a carillon, but here in Plattsmouth all we need is this hot weather for peeling of the belles.

Smell

(Greeley, Colo., Booster)

Americans spend \$70,000,000 a year on squeeze bottles, sticks, creams and liquids so they won't smell and then turn around and spend \$91,000,000 a year on perfumes, colognes, bath salts and oils so they will.

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

In this newspaper business, how the Negroes' proportion of taxable wealth compares with the total for the county. But, I'm referring now to that first thing all good newspapermen strive for, complete accuracy.

The perfect illustration of how true it is that "to err is human"—and of how pitifully human all of us are in this respect—was in last week's Press. While I was working up figures for last week's stories on tax evaluations here, I learned something I'd never known before — that the county officials keep the tax figures for whites and Negroes separately.

I immediately started studying the figures on taxable wealth owned by Negroes. The first thing that struck me was the fact that all this Negro-owned taxable wealth is in three of the county's townships. Then I was struck with how encouragingly high the total seemed for Franklin township, something over \$45,000.

It occurred to me to wonder how the Negroes' proportion of taxable wealth compares with the total for the county. But, I thought, that would mean little without a comparison, also, of the proportion of Negro population to the county's population total. I went to the census figures on file at The Press, but found we had everything in the way of census reports for this county — except a break-down by races. I went to the Public Library and every other local source I could think of. Many people thought they knew about how many Negroes there are in Macon County, but nobody was sure. So I called the Pack Memorial Library in Asheville and got the official census figures, by races, for Macon. Then I figured out the percentage of Negro population and the percentage of Negro-owned taxable wealth.

Now I learned, a long time Continued on Page Three—

VIEWES

By

BOB SLOAN



"We shall never engage in the cynical type of compromise or appeasement which might bring peace for ourselves but which would assure war or surrender for our children."

The above statement was made by Dick Nixon in a recent campaign speech.

Leave out the word "never" from the above statement and you have one of the most complete and concise statements of the Republican foreign policy that I have seen to date.

Proof of the surrenders to Communism that have been made can be found in the giveaway of two islands off the coast of Formosa to the Chinese Communists, the surrender of more than half of French Indo-China to the Communists, and the almost complete subjugation of Burma by the Chinese Communists.

I have seen much of the horrors of war, and were this country to go to war my two brothers would certainly be in the thick of it, as they are professional soldiers.

However, I feel with all my heart, that there are prices which are too dear to pay for peace.

I cannot, with a clear conscience, say that I had rather have peace if it means that my children may grow up under a Communist government directed from Moscow. That seems to me to be the direction that this peace-at-any-price policy of our government today is taking us.

When the Communists advanced into Korea to add to their sphere of influence, they were met by the troops of the United Nations and stopped. Harry Truman can be blamed or credited for this to a large degree.

If it is right to be willing to fight to stop the Kremlin goal of world domination, then it is to Mr. Truman's credit that he ordered our troops to fight.

If it is better to say that it will be many years before they reach American soil so our children can worry about that, then Mr. Truman was wrong and the Republicans today are right.

However, if Mr. Truman was wrong, so was Washington at Valley Forge and Capt. James Lawrence in the War of 1812.

Washington fought for democracy; Lawrence for freedom of the seas, but our present administration doesn't seem to think we should be willing to fight for either.

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Mr. J. F. Ray's son, Geronimo, met with the misfortune to get a fractured arm at the public school play grounds last Wednesday.

Rev. G. A. Bartlett, of Douglas, Ga., is on a week's vacation here. He formerly lived here, but has been away for a number of years.

Joint services will be held at the Methodist Church next Sunday by the Methodists and Presbyterians in the interest of the American Bible Society. The Rev. V. B. Starbuck will preach.

25 YEARS AGO

Miss Velma Peek left last Monday for Asheville where she will take a business course at Cecil Business College.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wooten of New York are here visiting Mr. Wooten's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Wooten, at Clark's Chapel.

Miss Leona Rickman represented the Franklin chapter at the Red Cross conference at Bryson City Monday of last week.

The continued dry weather has damaged the cabbage crop, the farmers say, to the extent of fifty per cent.

10 YEARS AGO

Miss Mary Alice Rickman, of West's Mill community, has returned to Bessie Tift College, Forsyth, Ga. Miss Rickman is the daughter of Robert C. Rickman, and the late Mrs. Rickman.

Mr. and Mrs. John C. Blanchard celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on Thursday of last week at "Snug Harbor", their home.—Highlands Item.