

THE ENTERPRISE

Published Every Tuesday and Friday by the ENTERPRISE PUBLISHING CO. WILLIAMSTON, NORTH CAROLINA



W. C. MANNING Editor - 1908-1938

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (Strictly Cash in Advance)

IN MARTIN COUNTY	
One year	\$1.75
Six months	1.00
OUTSIDE MARTIN COUNTY	
One year	\$2.25
Six months	1.25
No Subscription Received Under 6 Months	

Advertising Rate Card Furnished Upon Request

Entered at the post office in Williamston, N. C., as second-class matter under the act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Address all communications to The Enterprise and not individual members of the firm.

Friday, December 9, 1938.

Utah Wreck Has A Meaning Here

It is not at all pleasant to have a gruesome event spur one to action, and it is not necessary to harp on the stimuli such as a wreck that claims the lives of 26 school children. Spurred to action by such a tragedy, operators of school buses everywhere should work to the end to head off such catastrophes and lesser ones, too.

Bus operating conditions in Martin County and in nearly every one of the other 99 counties in the State are far from perfect. The public should demand that conditions be improved. Insufficient funds for the relieving of crowded conditions on busses can be accepted as no excuse when human life is at stake.

Some valuable facts could be gathered were those who direct the operation of school busses to ride the busses occasionally, and stop so much of this direction on paper from an office far removed from the cold journeys along the muddy and almost impassable routes throughout the state.

The Utah wreck that claimed the lives of 26 little children has a meaning right here in Martin County. It should create a greater interest in the welfare of the thousands of little folks who ride the busses. It should start a drive to make as nearly perfect as possible a school transportation system.

Theft in Prison

The larceny of \$164.53 worth of supplies from the North Carolina State Prison a few weeks ago was to be expected of the men who make up the great delinquent family, but it was not expected of officials to allow such a practice right under their noses.

The size of the theft matters little. What the people would like to know is the cost of the audit, inventories and investigations carried on to determine the loss. One has no idea how much money was paid to the jobholders for determining the exact loss, and one will likely never know for it has been and still is the policy of North Carolina's Highway and Public Works Commission to hold facts from the people.

Word comes from unofficial sources that more money is being wasted in the operation of a single branch of the penal system of this State to operate the entire outfit. Apparently something is wrong somewhere, and that something is not the petty theft of sums of \$164.53. The people, however, have to go on believing that the ever-present deficit is traceable to such minor thefts because they do not know and can not learn the main reasons for the need of so much red ink in the operation of the penal system.

Faltering Civilization

Twenty-six killed in school bus-train collision. Five lose lives in fires in a small country city in less than a week. Automobiles claim scores of lives each week in the nation.

These gruesome facts mean that this civilization is crumbling under its own feet in its mad way of living, in its hurried travel.

All the facts are not at hand, but in 99 per cent of the cases loss of life was preventable.

We record the speed of travel, our money in the bank, we measure our progress in almost meaningless terms while we falter in the task of protecting life.

Another way to retrench would be to quit paying salaries to the unemployed who occupy posts in public office.—Arkansas Gazette.

One Hundred Little "Parkers"

The unusual story about an illegitimate child in this county recently gave rise to considerable talk. They called the little fellow "Parker," the name being assigned to him when child welfare workers parked him here and there over a period of several months.

While the facts surrounding the hectic life of little "Parker" were really out of the ordinary, there were nearly 100 other similar cases in this county last year. And the number is apparently increasing, incomplete reports indicating that this county is rearing another large crop of illegitimate children this year.

The waywardness of young girls, the statistics showing most of them to be under 21 years of age, and young men is already affecting the tax rate in this county, and the trend is to dump this bit of unwanted humanity upon the county either directly or indirectly. Each week with few exceptions finds a prosecuting witness in the court of this county pleading for support of an illegitimate child—children, in some cases. Not all of the fathers accept the obligation, and the taxpayers are called upon to supply raiment and food to the victims of a corrupt society.

The off-spring needs sympathy rather than biased criticism, and instead of looking down upon the little unfortunates, society will find it far better to snap out of its lethargy and attack the conditions that overflow the land with dependents.

Much talk has been heard about economic recessions, but possibly the greatest trouble with us today is a real depression in our moral and spiritual lives.

The case of little "Parker" is not a joke, and its seriousness is aggravated by just about 99 other similar ones.

Now, we have an agency offering relief to dependent children. Later, we will have to have an agency to offer relief to illegitimate children. Welfare departments with their trained workers cannot cope with the situation; the solution rests with society and if it is lax, it will have to pay the bill later on.

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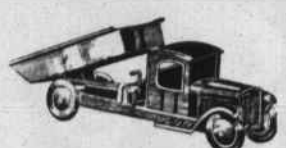
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