

Expanded Vocational Education Needed

(Cont'd from page 1)
and 1968 more than 80 per cent failed to go to college. When one takes into account the drop-outs who fail to graduate from high school, it is apparent that not over 15 per cent of the boys and girls who

are raised in Yancey County go on to college. Expanded vocational education is simply realistic recognition of the educational needs of the 85 per cent.

In this connection it is in order to correct the frequently

repeated statement that Yancey County sends an exceptionally high proportion of its young people to college. The statistics gathered by the officials from Raleigh show that this statement is without foundation.

It's too bad the statement is not true! But at the same time the facts argue strongly for furnishing better vocational education in our high schools.

Improving the vocational program, of course, costs money--the familiar bottle-neck to so many of our plans for needed improvements. Vocational education requires large classrooms and expensive equipment. But here, for once, the financial picture is not altogether dark.

In addition to State aid with the program, the Federal Appalachian Regional Commission stands ready to help with the vocational facilities. It was from this source that Avery County received major assistance in building their splendid central high school.

The plans being developed for Yancey County schools will certainly include extension of vocational facilities. The technical training provided should help many of our young people to a brighter and more productive future.

DEAR MR. PUBLISHER,

BY **PARSON JONES**

Dear Mr. Publisher:

Everybody these days are worried about being relevant. That's the same thing as being sure you don't put a square peg in a round hole. I understand ants are awful intelligent - I wonder if they ever worry about being relevant. In short, I wonder if they ever wonder what the grasshoppers think about 'em.

The men's group at our church is really getting relevant these days. They held a meeting the other night to deal with all the gaps in this country. Brother George opened the meeting by telling how his paw used to cut his hair and gap it all up. He used this little parable to point out that gaps ain't a pretty sight. George allowed as how everybody seemed to be yelling at one another. He quoted that Scripture about how "a house divided against itself cannot stand", and pointed out that we're not only sorely divided, but our divisions are being multiplied, and you shouldn't ever mix different kinds of arithmetic.

Anyway, the meeting was called to bring us all together again. "First", says George, "Let's define the problem". Well sir, that wasn't hard to do. Big Slim said it was the war in Vietnam. Dr. Chargewright swore it was inflation. Hezekiah allowed that it was the revolt of the young people. Another fella said it was racism - frontwards and backwards. Pretty soon the room was shaking with disagreement. Brother George shouted for order, "Gentlemen, if we can't get together, how can we bring others together." Everyone agreed and decided it might be less controversial to discuss the solutions instead of the problems.

Mr. Publisher, when they got on the solutions, I thought World War Three broke out. They finally set up a committee to study the matter farther - but they couldn't agree on the committee, so they set up two committees. Hopefully, they will come up with suggestions on how to bring us together again. Well, good-bye and God bless us all - we gonna need it.

Parson Jones.

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

Referring to the column of Tom Anderson, entitled "Straight Talk," and in particular to the issues of May 7 and 14 wherein he talks about comparison of the races, I want to discuss Mr. Anderson's ideas on the level of history and anthropology.

"What high culture have Negroes anytime, anywhere produced themselves?" he asks (May 7). He then goes on to say that before other civilizations arrived, the Black African had only built "thatched, windowless mud huts". Perhaps the author should inform himself of such African kingdoms as Mali (whose capital was the famous Timbuktu), Bornu, Benin, or the ruins of Zimbabwe. The first of these had a university when first encountered by Europeans in the 15th century; the second dominated the Sudan for centuries with mounted, iron-clad knights; the third had an organized political and economic structure allowing commerce throughout western Africa and is famous for its plastic arts; the last features massive, precise masonry walls of 32 feet height.

These and many other African civilizations had largely disappeared when Europeans began to arrive in force in the 19th century. They survived only in legend or in the accounts of Islamic historians un-

til archaeologists and anthropologists began to recover them within the last 20 years. That may help us to date Mr. Anderson's reading.

If space allowed, one could challenge almost every statement he makes in the two articles. Indeed, everything he writes on any subject is, as far as I can see, colored by misinformation, bias, and distortion. For example, he has slandered "liberal" clergymen, the National Council of Churches, the Methodist Church, and Union Theological Seminary. Speaking as an insider to most of these structures, I see no basis in fact to the charges he makes.

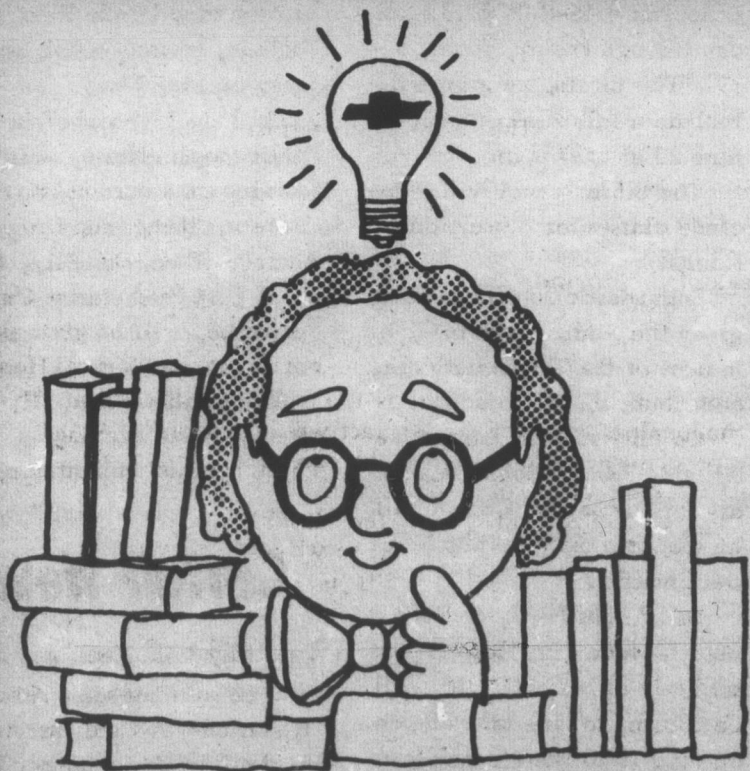
With good wishes to all your readers, I am

Sincerely yours,
Lloyd R. Bailey

Ass't Professor Old Testament
Union Theological Seminary

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