

DEAR EDITOR....

Parents Should Cooperate More

Editor
Torrance Press
Sometimes I wonder if "it's

worth it." Teachers study and work, work and study. Once they are in the classroom, they are confronted with 30 individuals (if they are lucky) with 30 problems.

To really complicate and make teaching more difficult, teachers have to keep 60 or more parents not informed but pacified and tranquilized. The honest truth is that parents do not wish to hear where Johnny is weak nor why he is weak, because he, the parent, might be to blame.

It is so much easier to say "it's the teacher's fault," "the Torrance school system stinks," or "this is what progressive education does to children."

The ground work for school is laid during the first six years of a child's life. It is during these first years the child learns obedience, respect, tolerance, and self-control.

It is during the first six years the child knows security and love. These two are the most important.

It is out of these, love and security, that grow obedience and respect. If a child knows no love or sense of security, he is not ready to learn; he does not want to learn, and he will not be made to learn.

In this day when many of the mothers work, how can they make a child feel secure in love? As one psychologist aptly put it, "It's not the amount of time a parent spends with the child, but how he spends the time. For, if a parent has taken one hour of the day to read a story to Johnny, to listen to his troubles or accom-

plishments, or to teach him a craft, Johnny knows he is loved and wanted.

He knows someone cares when his mother comes to see what he is doing ever so often rather than let him wander the streets all day.

Every parent should ask himself, does my child tell me his troubles? Does he confide in me? Does he turn to me for other than an allowance, room and board?

If a parent says, "yes," then he is a friend. His child regards him as a trustworthy person. The parent has gained the child's confidence.

If the parent answers "no" to the questions, he has not had respect for his child. He is constantly nagging or belittling the child. He is griping without actually really wanting to know or to be bothered about the reason the child does or acts the way he does.

A truly interested parent knows what his child is doing, thinking and learning without dominating him and stifling his desires.

The parent foresees what his child will do, for children are like mirrors. Their faces betray them. Yet parents rather than blame themselves for their children's actions, blame the schools.

The child should never be present at a conference. Instead of saying to Johnny "see, what the teacher says," . . .

It should be "I'll see if I can make the atmosphere more pleasant so that Johnny can study. I will stimulate more interest in reading by having reading time, discussion time, or story-telling time. I will ask Johnny what his opinion is on current events. I will treat him as an individual with rights. I will give him a feeling of im-

portance. I will show him success."

But in order to maintain this importance in the family, Johnny has certain responsibilities.

The jobs are small when he is two. At five he has school studies which have to be done; and as the years progress the studies increase; and thus his responsibilities and so also his knowledge that "it depends on him" if he is to remain important in the family.

So . . . study habits are produced and developed from infancy not acquired or bought in adulthood.

In kindergarten the teacher either takes up where the parent left off or she tries to redo the six years again to teach Johnny "good habits" of self-control, respect of others and their property as well as responsibility.

The trouble is it takes more than kindergarten or first grade to "snap the child out of it." Johnny might try in the first or second; but about the third grade success hasn't been his, so he gives up.

His excuse — a reflection of his parents' opinions — "I'm dumb." "I just don't get it." "I don't like to read." "I dislike school." "My mother says I can't do arithmetic or learn history and etc." Some give up in the 4th, 5th, or 6th grade. The child now merely "keeps the seat warm" in the classroom.

Even an adult gives up if he doesn't "taste success" often enough. Parents have one, two, three children to love. Teachers have 30 or more to know, to understand, and then to teach.

Then a teacher is expected in one year to make Johnny a good American citizen and in that same time undo the parents' damage of the pre-school years.

The fact here is that many teachers try. It's too bad that those that talk against "progressive education" or the Torrance Unified School system are those that don't make it a point to know "what's going on" or that have allowed bad habits to develop in their children.

Competition in business is fine. But, in a class of varying emotions and intelligence, why should the emotionally disturbed child be "shown up."

The slow child likes success too. There are other ways to stimulate the love of spelling such as in composition, letter writing, and other applications. Spelling for the love of spelling . . . is like boiling water for the love of it. Something has to be done with it to be useful.

Our English language is not a pure language. It is a blend of Celtic, Anglo-Saxon or Germanic, Danish, Latin and French.

Since this is the case, it has many irregularities. These are learned by various means — by reading, by memorizing, and by phonics or phonetics.

But — to use pure phonics is not possible. It is fine as a crutch for beginners of reading or spelling. It is a help.

But, after a student catches on to the various sounds of each of the vowels and the various sounds of each of the consonants, explain these a) I write a letter. b) turn right. c) this is the Jewish rite. d) Lye is an ingredient in soap. e) that's a lie. f) Lie down. g) I to, too,

and two. d. 1) route. 2) roof.

All these are learned by reading, by seeing in print over and over again, by writing and using them correctly in composition, letters and etc., and, thus, engraving the spelling in one's memory.

How many children write letters? How many do home-work? How many read not only school books but literature on their own level available to them at home? Then — how many can spell? All goes hand in hand. How about parents cooperating a bit more with teachers? (Name withheld on request)

Unjustified Criticism

Editor
Torrance Press
In today's edition you published a letter from Mrs. Pauline Whittaker, a secretary residing at Seaside, who made some very strong generalizations about our city school system.

I say "very strong" in the same sense in which she used the expression "the Torrance Unified school system stinks."

Mrs. Whittaker utilizes her personal experience with one school as a basis for wholesale condemnation of the system; therefore, I feel justified in using my own experience in rebuttal.

I speak as a parent of four school-age children who after nearly seven years of contact with this school district, has no qualms about sending her fifth child to Walteria elementary school.

Three of my children have been a part of one of the most experimental projects in our present educational system. (The "Little Red Schoolhouse" plan) and have benefited from the opportunity.

I am very much interested in education (I am a student, myself) and have watched my children's progress with growing enthusiasm.

At first, I like Mrs. Whittaker, was appalled at her inability to spell, but I soon found that it was a temporary affliction.

Suddenly, in the third or fourth grade, they not only were able to spell well, but could also read with much more fluency than children who had to spell out each word, piece-meal.

My children are not geniuses and their deportment isn't perfect. When a problem arises at school, as occasionally one does, the teacher and I discuss it, decide together upon some course of action, and both of us follow it through.

The teacher is just as willing to discuss and to cooperate in the solution of any problem at home, if I feel help is needed.

This helpfulness is an attitude I've found in each of the teachers I've met through the conference system.

I feel that Mrs. Whittaker does not know, or has forgotten that a good teacher is not only willing, but eager to discuss a child's progress with his parents at any time, not only at conferences.

Any parent can learn more about his child's standing at school in twenty minutes of serious talk with his teacher than she can from any number of report cards.

Any teacher can learn more about a child's mental, emotional, and physical capacity from talking with his mother, than she can from any number of parental signatures on report cards.

There is far more to teaching than correcting papers, just as there is far more to learning than bringing home little marks on a piece of pasteboard.

The two processes are a joint venture whose goal is good citizenship, good government, and the betterment of human kind. Knowing how to spell words is no good if you haven't any ideas to express. A good teacher instills in the student an attitude of inquiry, and gives him words to use as instruments.

Too many parents place the responsibility for mental development on the school teacher, for moral development on the Sunday school teacher, and feel they are fulfilling their obligation by providing for the child's physical needs.

They fail to realize that he is a whole, and that his basic attitudes in every area stem directly from their teaching, whether they are consciously setting an example or not.

Bringing up a well educated, well integrated citizen is a co-

operative endeavor, and it takes more than one (the teacher) to cooperate, no matter how willing that one may be.

Certainly there is room for improvement in our school system, as in any organization, and gains can be made more quickly through positive, constructive suggestion than through idle criticism.

Let's back our teachers with enthusiasm and work with them in the interest of better education for all.

Sincerely,
(s) Mrs. De M. Sharp
3311 Newton St.

Teaching Method Will Prove its Worth

Editor
Torrance Press
I was very interested in a letter you printed in your issue of January 31. I feel sure that are an unbiased paper and would wish to present both sides of every question, and I am confident that this reply to Mrs. Whittaker's letter will be printed.

I am not writing this letter in an official capacity, but during the past year while I have served as president of Seaside P.T.A., I have been in close contact with the school staff. I have yet to find a more cooperative group of people.

I have four children in Seaside Elementary school, ranging from second through sixth grade, and all of them having attended there from kindergarten on I feel that I am well acquainted with the school system.

If I were dissatisfied with the way my children's papers were being graded I would feel free to go to any teacher at Seaside and discuss it with them. The children do correct each other's papers from time to time, which relieves the teacher of a great deal of routine work and leaves them freer to plan a more challenging and interesting course of study.

I would like to quote from a Progress Report one of my children brought home last week. "His spelling has improved but he needs to continue working hard in this area." Does this not tell you more fully than an A, B, C, or D, on a report card how your child is progressing?

It seems to me Mrs. Whittaker has taken one or two isolated incidents which may have occurred and made sweeping general statements about the whole Torrance School System.

The schools do believe in competition on the level of the child's own ability. Children in the higher reading groups compete with others in their own group.

However, children of low ability are not forced to go through the frustrating experience of competing with others against whom they are not mentally equipped to compete.

Does not the high rate of mental illness among adults today show what a terrific toll the competition and pressure of present day living has taken? Should we advocate more of this in childhood?

I think the present method of encouraging children to want to learn and helping them enjoy it while they are learning will prove its worth when this generation comes of age.

There are always some people who refuse to recognize a change for the better in a field, medicine, science, education, etc. To them the "good old

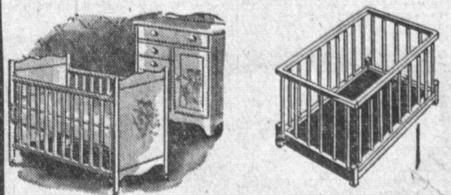
Why Pinch Pennies? If a few extra bucks would make the going easier, get 'em the way so many people do. Sell surplus furniture, idle appliances, out-

days" are always the best and no amount of statistics or case histories to the contrary will convince them.
Very truly yours,
(s) Mrs. Warren S. Boggs
5321 Carol Dr.

INCOME TAX SERVICE
FA 8-7408
NITES DA. 4-4150

Cherie's KNIT STUDIO
4152 Pacific Cst. Hwy., Walteria (at Smith Bros. Fish Shanty)
FR. 5-0910
VISIT OUR CLASSROOM
Complete Instruction, SPEED-O-KNIT, Automatic Knitter, Hand Knitting, Crocheting, Yarns & Accessories
ENROLL NOW FOR NEW KNITTING CLASSES
New Charting Classes Scheduled for Feb. 12th REGISTER NOW!
HOURS: Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat., 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.
Tues., Thurs., 12 noon to 9:30 P.M.

STAR FURNITURE CO. HEADQUARTERS FOR ALL BABY'S NEEDS



ALSO...
Children's Rockers
Dolls - Doll Buggies
Tricycles
Baby Swings
Bassinets
Bathinettes, Etc.

STAR FURNITURE COMPANY
2173 Torrance Blvd. FA. 8-1247
WE CARRY OUR OWN CONTRACTS
You Deal Only With the Owners
Frank Higgins - Steve Schmidt - Ken Belles

TONIGHT - FRIDAY - SATURDAY ALL-COLOR SHOW

M-G-M's Masterpiece of Suspense in COLOR and CINEMASCOPE

SPENCER TRACY ROBERT RYAN

BAD DAY AT BLACK ROCK

Just the Way it Happened!

Co-Starring ANNE FRANCIS - DEAN JAGGER - WALTER BRENNAN JOHN ERICSON - ERNEST BORGNINE

— PLUS —

"SANTIAGO"
Spencer Tracy — Robert Ryan

ROADIUM DRIVE-IN East of Crenshaw on THEATRE Redondo Beach Blvd. ***DA. 4-2664**

SPECIAL - 3 Day Sale - \$100 Off
Only **\$219⁹⁵** Each **Both for only 2⁵⁰ PER WEEK**

REG. PRICE 269⁹⁵

MAYTAG ALL NEW "Highlander" Automatic Washer and Dryer

Redondo Trading Post
EVERYTHING IN HARDWARE AND APPLIANCES
110-118 Diamond St. ● FR. 2-2141 ● Hermosa Beach

Theatre Directory

Thursday, Friday and Sat.
ROADIUM DRIVE IN
Opens at 6:45. DA. 4-2664
"Bad Day At Black Rock" plus "SANTIAGO"

Friday, Saturday, Sunday
GRAND Opens 6:45 FA. 8-6500
"Valley of Headhunters" "CANNIBAL ATTACK"

Thursday, Friday, Saturday
STADIUM Open 6:45 FA. 8-6375
"THE SHARK FIGHTERS" "THE MOUNTAIN"

Thursday, Friday, Saturday
HARBOR DRIVE IN
Opens 6:30 ● TE. 4-8501
"7TH CAVALRY" plus "TEN TALL MEN"

Paint Savings WHOLESALE PRICES
THURSDAY - FRIDAY - SATURDAY, FEB. 14 - 15 - 16

Plastic Redwood Oil \$2⁹⁸ GAL.
STAIN & CLEAR—Guaranteed 5.98 val.

High Gloss Enamel \$2⁹⁸ GAL.
WHITE ONLY—Guaranteed 4.98 Value

Fence Paint
WHITE, GREEN, RED

PAINT A ROOM IN ONE HOUR
AMAZING FOR LIVING ROOMS and BEDROOMS
VINYL LATEX \$3⁹⁸ GAL.
ONE COAT COVERS!
DRIES IN 15 MINUTES!
ABSOLUTELY NO ODOR!
126 COLORS!
WITH THIS AD ONLY

MANY OTHER ITEMS AT FACTORY TO YOU PRICES
MOR-GLO PAINT FACTORY
... SEE PAINT MADE...
18937 S. MAIN ST. (Between Carson and 190th) Ph. DA 4-0015
Look for the Yellow Factory Building