

# The Importance of People

Column Editor: Harold Benjamin  
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*The contributor of the following tale offers apologies to the author of the Book of Daniel. If the editor might presume to imagine the ancient writer's response to this flattery, he would envision the old poet making warm acknowledgement to the young one for singing once more the timeless quality of courage serving great ideals.*

Harold Benjamin

## The Furnace of Public Opinion

NOW NEBUCHADNEZZAR JONES, the Voice of Tradition, made red images of wood, whose height was six cubits and the breadth thereof was sixteen cubits: he set them up in the Plains of Indifference in the Province of Education.

Then Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, sent to gather together the teachers, the supervisors, the principals, the superintendents, and all the other

Rulers of the Province of Education to come to the dedication of the red wooden image which Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, had set up.

Then the teachers, the supervisors, the principals, the superintendents and all the other

Rulers of the Province of Education, were gathered unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, had set up. And they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar Jones had set up.

Then an herald cried with authority: "To you it is commanded, O teachers, supervisors, principals, superintendents and all the other rulers of the Province of Education, that at what time ye hear the sound of readin' and ritin' and 'rithmetic, of Virgil, and Ovid, and Greek classics ye fall down and worship the red

wooden image that Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, has set up.

"And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning, fiery Furnace of Public Opinion."

Therefore since that time when all the people of the Province of Education heard the sound of readin' and ritin' and 'rithmetic, of Virgil, and Ovid, and Greek classics, all the teachers, the supervisors, the principals, the superintendents, and all the other rulers of the Province of Education, fell down and worshipped the red wooden image that Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, had set up.

Wherefore at that time certain men of the Plains of Democracy, of the Province of Progress dwelt among them who at the sound of readin' and ritin' and 'rithmetic, of Virgil, and Ovid, and Greek classics refused to fall down and worship the wooden image which Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, had set up.

And certain rulers of the Province of Education complained to Nebuchadnezzar Jones:

"O Voice of Tradition, live for ever. Thou hast made a decree that every man that shall hear the sound of readin' and ritin' and 'rithmetic, of Virgil, and Ovid, and Greek classics

shall fall down and worship the red wooden image, and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth that he should be cast into the burning fiery Furnace of Public Opinion. There are certain superintendents whom thou hast set over the affairs of the Province of Education, Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown, these men O Voice of Tradition, have not regarded thee: they do not answer the sound of readin' and ritin' and 'rithmetic, of Virgil, and Ovid, and Greek classics nor do they fall down and worship the red wooden image which thou hast set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar Jones, in his traditional fury, commanded to bring unto him Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown. Then they brought these men from the Plains of Democracy and the Province of Progress.

Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, spake and said unto them, "Is it true, Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown, do you not answer the sound of readin', ritin', and 'rithmetic, of Virgil, and Ovid, and Greek classics nor worship the red wooden image which I have set up? Know ye not that if ye do not these things which I have commanded that ye shall be cast into the burning, fiery Furnace of Public Opinion?"

Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown answered and said unto the Voice of Tradition:

"Nebuchadnezzar Jones, thou Voice of Tradition, we are not afraid to answer thee in this manner:

"We of the Plains of Democracy, of the Province of Progress cannot worship the red wooden image which thou hast set up, for we have seen a mightier image far beyond your

Desert of Intolerance in the dewy Oasis of Experience and Democracy. Thine image shalt never protect thy people against the Armies of Ignorance that shalt come by night and lay waste the increase of thy people in the Province of Education

Then was Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, full of fury and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown. Therefore he spake and commanded that the people of the Province of Education should heat the Furnace of Public Opinion over seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his Army of Propaganda to bind Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown and to cast them into the burning fiery Furnace of Public Opinion.

Therefore because Nebuchadnezzar Jones' commandment was urgent, and the Furnace of Public Opinion exceeding hot, the flame of the fire exposed and slew the men of the Army of Propaganda who took up Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown. And these three men, Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown fell bound into the midst of the burning, fiery Furnace of Public Opinion.

Then Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, was astonished and rose up in haste and spake and said unto his followers, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said unto the king, "True, O, Voice of Tradition."

"Lo I see them loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt."

Then Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, came near the mouth

of the burning, fiery Furnace of Public Opinion, and spake and said,

"Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown, ye servants of the Plains of Democracy, of the Province of Progress, come forth and come hither."

Then Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown came forth out of the midst of the fire of the Furnace of Public Opinion.

And Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition saw these men upon whom the fire had no power, nor was an idea of their heads singed and neither were their plans changed, nor was the smell of slanderous smoke still clinging to them.

Then Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, spake and said, "Praise be to the mightier image from the dewy Oasis of Experience and Democracy which has delivered Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown, even from the deciding test of the burning, fiery Furnace of Public Opinion."

And Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice

of Tradition, gathered together the teachers, the supervisors, the principals, the superintendents, and all the other rulers of the Province of Education, who at the sound of readin' and ritin' and 'rithmetic, of Virgil, and Ovid, and Greek classics, had continued to fall down and worship the red wooden image that Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, had set up.

Then an herald cried aloud, "To you it is commanded, O rulers of the Province of Education, to build mightier images than those which Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, has set up. And fashion them in time after the image that lies past the Desert of Intolerance in the Oasis of Experience and Democracy."

Then Nebuchadnezzar Jones, the Voice of Tradition, promoted Shadrach Smith, Meshach Miller, and Abed-nego Brown in the Province of Education.—*Armando Henriquez, Jr.*, Carnegie Fellow, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tenn.

## Curriculum Bulletins

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### Public School Systems and Schools of Education Help Each Other

WHEN STAFF MEMBERS in public school systems and those in colleges and universities work together, both groups should benefit from the process. In developing curriculum bulletins, public schools can use university and college personnel for consultant services on both the elementary and the secondary levels. Authors of many of the bulletins reviewed in this column

have used such university and college consultant service.

In some instances, a group of staff members from a teacher-education institution can devote time and ideas to help foster a curriculum project which can be extremely beneficial to an interested public school system. The first bulletin listed below illustrates this type of working relationship between

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