

THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

Published monthly, except August and September, by the State Teachers College at Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Entered as second-class matter March 13, 1920, at the post office at Harrisonburg, Virginia, under the act of March 3, 1879.

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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

THE ENLARGED PROGRAM OF HEALTH EDUCATION IN VIRGINIA

THE enlarged program of health education put on this session in the high schools of the state having departments of home economics is beginning to show remarkably fruitful results, according to officials both at the State Department of Education and the State Board of Health.

Last fall the high school departments of home economics were requested to provide hot, nourishing drinks for every undernourished child. One health play, or pageant, was suggested as another project for the year. Monthly health talks at chapel, one general health meeting of the local school organization, and monthly posters based on health habits, with special attention to drinking cups, amount of water drunk daily, safe water supply, etc., with carefully kept statistics of improvements in undernourished children—these were other tasks outlined in health work for the year.

Both from the reports received from the State Department of Education and from the field work of the representatives of the State Board of Health and the State Board of Education, there is abundant evidence, it is said, that departments of home economics

are peculiarly fortunate in opportunities to emphasize health education in an effective manner. Unfortunately, however, all standard high schools do not have departments of home economics, it is pointed out.

Altogether there is said to be around 225 departments of home economics in the high schools of the state. Of these 61 are state-aided and seven are federally-aided. One hundred and fifty-seven are reported on the same basis that chemistry, English, and mathematics are reported, having no special relation to state or federal aid or control. The enrollment in the state and federally aided departments this year is approximately 1670. No report has been received thus far as to the enrollment in other departments except in the evening classes conducted in the cities of Norfolk, Richmond, Danville, Roanoke, and at Schoolfield. In these night classes approximately two thousand white and colored girls and women meet for study.

The counties leading in the number of home economics teachers are Dinwiddie with eight; Henrico and Pittsylvania with seven each; and Norfolk, Scott, Tazewell, and Washington with six each. A number of counties have four or five home economics teachers.

The experiments made this year through departments of home economics in health education have convinced interested officials that these departments can and should be further capitalized in the interest of effective health work.

Sponsoring the teaching of biology, or the science of life, in the grades is regarded by the Oregon Social Hygiene Society as the most constructive and outstanding piece of work in connection with the schools. Not only has this science given the children a natural and wholesome attitude toward bodily functions, but it has also taught them to observe accurately, to experiment carefully, and to draw sound conclusions from their own observations and experiments.—*School Life*.

THE TEACHING OF CURRENT TOPICS SHOULD BE DONE PROPERLY OR NOT AT ALL

CURRENT problems relating to history, literature, science, and industry are generally insisted upon as a part of the work of the teacher, but, as is usual with so much that is expected of her, no place is provided on the day's program for such topics. Instead, therefore, of expecting important world, national, state, and local problems to be handled in an incidental way in connection with the history lesson or some other subject, special time should be set aside for the study of such things. They are doubtless, in many instances, much more valuable and more appealing to the pupil than the regular assignment, but if the history or other subject is worth while, it should be given its allotted time. The solution of this difficulty, as well as that of many others, rests with the overhauling of the course of study and the better determining of relative values.

Another serious difficulty of allowing current problems and events to be taught as a side issue of some other class is that such problems are taught by people not specially fitted by their own habits of mind to help young people approach questions with an open mind. It requires a specially trained mind to present such matters to children without forcing upon their attention a purely personal view. While many teachers are able to discuss current events without bias, yet there is always a danger in requiring such work indiscriminately without being assured of that "world-mindedness" or "national-mindedness" essential to success in this type of school work.

The presentation of current problems is generally conceded to be of sufficient importance for some treatment in the school-room; if so, it would likewise seem to be worth while to make proper provision for it. This can be done properly only by having a definite time on the program and a

specially equipped teacher for the work. A short daily discussion of important current events would furnish the background needed by the child to give him an interest in current periodicals of the right sort and worth while public discussions.

A GIFT FOR MEN, NOT MATERIALS

THE GUGGENHEIM FOUNDATION

A PRELIMINARY gift of \$3,000,000 for the endowment of the John Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowships was announced a few days ago by Simon Guggenheim, former United States Senator from Colorado, and his wife.

In a statement explaining the purposes of the Guggenheim Fellowships, Simon Guggenheim said:

"I want to supplement the great Rhodes Foundation by providing a similar opportunity for older students of proved ability, and for women as well as men. Furthermore, I want to make it possible for these persons to carry on their studies in any country in the world where they can work most profitably."

The purpose of the Foundation is to improve the quality of education and the practice of the arts and professions in the United States, to foster research, and to provide for the cause of better international understanding. It offers to young men and women world-wide opportunities under the freest possible conditions to carry on advanced study and research in any field of knowledge, or opportunities for the development of unusual talent in any of the fine arts including music. No age limits are prescribed.

While the amount of money available for each fellowship will be approximately \$2,500 a year, this may be made more or less, depending on individual needs. Appointments will be made ordinarily for one year, but plans for longer or shorter periods will be considered. The first awards will be made for the academic year 1926-1927.

STUDYING THE PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION

Three general meetings and 26 sectional meetings, to be addressed by approximately 100 speakers, will feature the Fifth Annual Educational Conference which will be held by the College of Education, Ohio State University, at Columbus, Ohio, on April 2, 3, and 4. The general meetings will be held on the evenings of the first and second days of the meeting and on the morning of the third day. The second day of the Conference, Friday, April 3, will be given over to the sectional meetings.

The sectional meetings will, as in the past, stamp this Conference as a "working conference." The keynote for the Conference as a whole has been announced as "Democracy and Education" and all of the meetings, general and sectional, will center their discussion around this topic.

Blackstone, and Mr. C. M. Givens, John Marshall High School, Richmond, are studying the work of the high schools.

Mr. T. McN. Simpson, Jr., of Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, and Miss Gillie A. Larew, of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, are studying the colleges.

Teachers interested in these various phases of the teaching of mathematics are urged to give the committee the benefit of their suggestions and comments. It is better that these be sent directly to the individual in charge of the particular part of the subject to which the remarks apply. Suggestions for the work of the committee as a whole or applying to more than one of the divisions of the field may be sent to the chairman of the committee, Miss G. A. Larew, R.-M. W. C., Lynchburg. Those teachers who respond to this request will confer a real favor on the committee.

CO-OPERATION OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS DESIRED

A committee of the Mathematics Section of the Virginia State Teachers Association has been appointed for the purpose of studying the present trend in the teaching of mathematics in the schools and colleges of our state. It is hoped that this study may be based on the experiences and the opinions of teachers doing active service in the classroom. The personnel and organization of the committee is as follows:

Miss Gillie A. Larew, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Chairman.

Miss Katherine Anthony, of the State Teachers College at Harrisonburg, is collecting material on the teaching of arithmetic in the elementary grades.

Mr. W. R. Bowers of the State Teachers College at East Radford and Mr. John D. Riddick of the Maury High School of Norfolk are performing the same services for the grammar grades.

Miss Alice Reed, of Blackstone College,

HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS

Have you a professional attitude? Are you interested in the fact that Virginia has more home economics clubs affiliated with the American Home Economics Association through its state association than any other state in the union? This is due to the untiring efforts of Mrs. Ora Hart Avery. Her goal is 100 per cent for all Smith-Hughes and state-aided schools. Why not make it 100 per cent for Virginia?

At the last meeting of the Virginia Home Economics Association in Richmond, there were three women of national reputation on the program. A large membership will enable the program committee to put on even a better program next year.

The annual membership fee is small and it includes membership, through affiliation, in the American Home Economics Association. Be sure to join through the state organization.

Annual dues of the Virginia Home Economics Association are for *teachers*, one dollar and a half, which should be sent to

Miss Frances Tabb, Treas., Virginia Home Economics Association, 1021 Holladay Street, Portsmouth, Va.

Annual dues of the *Home Economics Clubs* of schools and colleges are three dollars, and should be sent to Mrs. P. P. Moody, Chr., Virginia Home Economics Association, State Teachers College, Harrisonburg, Va.

BOOKS

DRAMA FOR THE PLASTIC

THE ATLANTIC BOOK OF JUNIOR PLAYS. Edited by Charles Swain Thomas. Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press. 1924. Pp. 320. \$1.40.

The thirteen plays included in this book of modern plays for junior high school children are all simple yet effective, and each has a fine literary tone. Either the child or the grown person who dips into its pages will be held by the charm of the collection.

The first play is a dramatization of *What Men Live By* adapted from the story by Leo Tolstoi. In a very inspiring introduction entitled *Appreciating the Drama* this play is enlarged as a basis for the study and appreciation of other plays. This analysis includes the visualizing of the scenery, actors, costumes, and voices; a method for character study; and some helpful suggestions as to the acting and writing of plays.

Russian, Old English, French, Spanish, American, and Biblical plays round out the collection. Some of those of a more serious nature are *Nerves*, *Jephthah's Daughter*, *A Minuet*, and *The Birthday of the Infanta*, while the balance is well preserved by the delightful comedy in *The Dyspeptic Ogre*, *A Marriage Proposal*, and *The Play of Saint George*. Oscar Wilde, Percy Mac Kaye, and John Farrar are some of the distinguished names from the list of authors.

Mr. Thomas states in his foreword that this collection is designed to meet the need of those in a still somewhat untutored and plastic stage, and to serve as an incentive to

a more complex study of the drama. He offers the truism that we must interest before we can instruct, and believes that the inherent dramatic instinct will find a wholesome training in the use of this collection of junior plays.

MAMIE OMOHUNDRO

BRIEF REVIEWS

THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY, by James Albert Woodburn and Thomas Francis Moran. New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1924. Pp. 504. \$1.48.

An elementary text in community civics, shot through with the idea that active co-operation is the most important of human relationships. In terms that young people will understand the authors talk of team work, of the idle poor and the idle rich, of practicing thrift, of keeping one's credit good. A set of continuity pictures, as they are called, illustrating the theme of each chapter, reinforces the ideal of co-operation and drives home its message.

PRECIS WRITING FOR AMERICAN SCHOOLS, edited by Samuel Thurber. Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press. 1924. Pp. 150. 90 cents.

Aimed very surely at the school which prepares for college, which—more specifically—prepares students to pass the College Entrance Board examinations in English; for abstracting or summarizing exercises are increasingly emphasized in these examinations.

Of course there is much value in the summary, and it is by no means a new device for the English teacher. From its use comes a threefold ability: to read carefully, to think precisely, and to write accurately. The 160 exercises offered here by an experienced teacher will be the more valuable because of the explanatory helps and the sample summaries.

Mr. Thurber justifies the word "precis" on the ground of its currency in composition teaching as practiced in England.

NEWS OF THE COLLEGE AND ITS ALUMNÆ

NEWS OF THE CAMPUS

February seems to be a favorite month for trips. The Star-Daughters made their invasion of Southwest Virginia and Tennessee; the Glee Club sang its way into the hearts of Tidewater Virginians; the entire music department repaired to Richmond where the Virginia Music Teachers Association held annual session under the guidance of its president, Miss Edna T. Shaef-