

ENGLISH NOTES

GRINDING 'EM OUT

Upper-grade teachers pound and knock off individualistic tendencies of their pupils, shape the children to their idea of what a child should be in the grade in which they happen to be teaching, claims H. Lawton Chase, superintendent of schools at Charlestown, New Hampshire. And finally, he says—

"Every child, instead of just the teachers' pets, can now recite the Psalm of Life through his nose and, unless we have been very remiss, by the time the eighth grade is reached every child can write an asinine essay on The Autobiography of a Fountain Pen. . . . And by the way, how would you like to be stuck at the desk and forced to write upon some such topic?"

HOW WE BEGAN OUR STUDY OF ASIA

[The seventh year class of Miss Claudine L. Kizer, an English teacher in the Frank Roane School, Lynchburg, was asked to tell how and why they made their book, *Stories From Asia*. Willingly everybody told his part; then a group of five was selected to draw up this paper, the result of an hour's work.]

When the 7 B class of Frank Roane School began its study of Asia, the first question that came up before us was, why is so little known of the largest continent of the world? Immediately we decided that if we knew more of the old Asiatic stories we would become more interested in Asia. The suggestion that we go to the Jones Memorial Library for our information met at once with the hearty approval of the class. To find a story told to the children in Asia and tell it in our oral language period was our task.

When the appointed time came for us to go, we were dismissed and told to meet our teacher at the library door promptly at one-thirty. Arriving there we found that the librarians having so much interest in our work, had arranged many, many books on Asia around on the different tables. There was nobody who could not find

many interesting things. Immediately we settled down to read and to take a few notes on the story we had selected to tell. Everybody was deeply interested and all were surprised when two-thirty came. Many took books home, while others remained to read.

We told our stories in our very best style during the next two language periods. The class had two hours of real pleasure listening to them. There were fairy stories, animal stories, myths, fables, and legends of the many lands of Asia. Lest we forget the joy of these periods, we wrote and illustrated our stories for a booklet. Committees were chosen to make the cover, to write the foreword, to compile the bibliography, and to assemble the book. We dedicated the book to our language teacher. We are quite proud of our *Stories From Asia* and think it was worth the time and trouble it took and we hope others will think so too.

VERA WILLIAMS
RUTH FORD
LOIS WOOD
JASON BALLOU
CHARLES HILLER
Committee

SENTENCE CONTROL

Speaking before the California Teachers Association (Southern Section), Alfred M. Hitchcock, of the Hartford Public High School, waxed fervent on the values of the blackboard to the teacher of English. Said Mr. Hitchcock:

"I like to put on the board an unduly long sentence and show how, by deleting the useless, by substitutions, etc., it can be compacted. I like to take a slow-moving sentence and make a racer out of it; a lean, scrawny sentence and feed it till it is plump; an ill-tempered sentence and make it jolly; a rasping, jolting sentence and tune it into melody; a stiff sentence and limber it by simple osteopathy; a vague sentence and re-

focus it into sharpness. I like to do a score of things such as every trained writer does, and get the youngsters to first watch, then later try their hand at it. They enjoy it. Particularly do they find fun in making graphic sentences out of commonplace ones by adding details. Here, for example, is a set of sentences which I have used for demonstration purposes:

- A bug climbed a grass blade.
- A ladybug climbed a grass blade.
- A brown-spotted ladybug climbed a grass blade.
- A brown-spotted ladybug climbed the dizzy height of a grass blade.

"Exercises of this kind is pretty sure to result in better composition—better because written with something of the pleasure an artist experiences when he strives to produce a desired effect."

ROSTER OF VIRGINIA TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The 1924-25 roster of teachers of English in Virginia, has been reprinted in a small pamphlet, which may be obtained at cost of printing by sending 10 cents in stamps to C. T. Logan, State Teachers College, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

NEARLY A MILLION AMERICANS STUDY LATIN

Courses in Latin are enrolling more high-school students than courses in all the other foreign languages combined.

The average daily time outside the class now given by Latin pupils to the preparation of their lessons is considerably greater than is required for any other subject in the secondary school. Latin students surpass non-Latin students in the mastery of other subjects, and the superiority seems to be due to something gained from the study of Latin rather than to greater initial ability.

Records of 10,000 candidates for college entrance made in the 10-year period 1914-

1923, inclusive, show that the Latin students do better by about 13 per cent. than the non-Latin students in all subjects outside of Latin and Greek, and in general the greater the amount of Latin studied the greater the superiority.

Approximately 22,500 teachers of Latin are employed in the secondary schools and the demand for well-trained teachers is steadily increasing. Nearly a million American young people are studying Latin, 940,000 in secondary schools and 40,000 in colleges. Of 609 colleges in the continental United States 606 will accept and 214 require Latin for admission to an A. B. degree. Greek occupies a less important place. About 11,000 high-school and 16,000 college students are enrolled in Greek. Only 20 colleges require a knowledge of Greek for admission to an A. B. course, though 559 will accept it.

These are the main facts brought to light in a three-year investigation of classical subjects, conducted by the American Classical League, as reported by James F. Abel in *School Life*, a publication of the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education.

"To train boys and girls to apply themselves in the face of difficulties is the greatest benefit that the school can bestow," is a statement made by Dr. John J. Tigert, United States Commissioner of Education, at a conference on thrift education as reported in a recent number of *School Life*, a publication of the Interior Department, Bureau of Education. Doctor Tigert, recognizing the need of "time for recreation, amusement, social intercourse, and intellectual as well as spiritual improvement," believes in the proper restriction of working hours and the improvement of machinery and labor-saving devices, but questions the extent to which this can be carried without the deadening effect upon character and ambition which result from protracted inactivity.