

## ENGLISH NOTES

## THE NEWBERY MEDAL

The Newbery Medal for the best children's book of the year has been awarded to Charles J. Finger for his *Tales from Silver Lands*.

Miss Marguerite Wilkinson, chairman of the A. L. A. Children's Librarian's Section in presenting the medal at the Seattle meeting of that group said:

"Our program this morning shows us that children become book-readers and book-lovers instead of merely book borrowers through contact with 'real' books, instead of imitations in that shape. Whenever, therefore, a 'real' book for children of whatever age falls into our hands we salute it instinctively, rejoicing in the fine tale that is told, revelling in the rich imagination, and savoring the perfect phrase. Finding such a book is a rare enough event to produce a genuine happiness that must be expressed somehow. To express this happiness and to recognize the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children, the Children's Librarians' Section, this year awards the John Newbery Medal to *Tales from Silver Lands*. It is with enormous pleasure and great pride that I present this medal to you, Mr. Finger, the highest honor it is in our power to bestow."

Mr. Finger in accepting said: "Experience with all kinds of people, savage and civilized, leads me to believe that the chief thing to be achieved by the story teller is a sense of reality; without that it is not possible to interest boys and girls. A story teller who tries to talk either up or down to children will fail. The juvenile mind is active, alert, critical and everything set before it is subject to swift, critical analysis. Lacking sincerity the story will be rejected."

This is the fifth year of the award. The medal which is the gift of Frederic G. Melcher, editor of the *Publishers' Weekly*, is awarded annually by a committee of the

Children's Librarians' Section.—*The Library Journal*.

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POETRY AT THE E. C. GLASS HIGH SCHOOL,  
LYNCHBURG

We try to make our pupils at the E. C. Glass High School love and appreciate poetry. This is not a natural tendency on the part of the 90%, and even the 10% need a good deal of interpretation and explanation, especially in the early years. "I don't understand what it's telling about when I read it, but when you read it, it's fine!" says the lower grade pupil in *Idylls of the King* or *Lady of the Lake*. It is gratifying to see the interested attention on the days when poetry is assigned for reading or recitation. Our pupils like best, of course, poems that have a story. A little lyric poetry goes a long way. One senior girl declares that "Drink to me only with thine eyes" is all foolishness. Yet the class sat still and impressed when an earnest-minded boy recited "Crossing the Bar."

E. C. Glass High School can boast two real poets of fairly recent graduation, brothers, Abe and Murrell Edmunds, each of whom has published a volume of poems that has received favorable comment. Every year we ask these young men to come to the high school and discuss with the upper classes poetry and their own experiences in poetry. We feel that this has an inspirational influence. Last year we developed a school of budding poets, led by four senior boys. They made a study of the technique of free verse, entirely on their own initiative, and the first thing we know, they were turning out quite creditable poems, which found ready publication in the *Critic*, our literary magazine. One of these young men, George Leckie, now at the University of Virginia, won the state prize in poetry last year on his "Purple Hyacinth," and another poem, "The Harp," was printed in *The Gleam*, a magazine of verse for young people. He intends to make journalism his profession, as a result,



he says, of our encouragement; and we feel confident that he has chance for success in the field of poetry.

This year it seems to be our girls that are writing most of the poetry. One of them has found that free verse is the easiest kind of poetry to write, she says, after one discovers the method.

Thus we do all we can to stimulate a love of poetry through class lessons, parallel reading, and composition. When a composition subject is announced as "Write me a poem," there is usually a terrific groan, but the result is often quite readable and well-constructed poems on the part of a few, and a worth-while effort, perhaps, on the part of a good many. In the third year we take a little scanning in order that our pupils may have training in rhythm. In the upper grades, we teach the history of literature mainly through the reading of the masterpieces themselves. We have our pupils memorize many poems and selections from poems. In short, we try earnestly, in our English work, to give our boys and girls a love of poetry and to train them in appreciation of this form of art.—MATTIE H. C. NICHOLAS.

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VIRGINIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION MEETS AT  
WINCHESTER

The annual meeting of the Virginia Library Association will be held October 14, 15, and 16 at Winchester, in the Valley of Virginia. Mr. C. Vernon Eddy, librarian of the Handley Library at Winchester, will be the official host, and has taken pains to arrange a program that will offer librarians an opportunity for sightseeing as well as papers and round tables.

Library cataloguers of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia will meet with the Virginia Association, and teachers of English, whose professional objectives lie so nearly parallel to those of librarians, are of course invited to attend these meetings.

MAKING BOOK WEEK COUNT

Values attaching to the observance of National Book Week as a project of the English department are effectively presented by Miss Evelyn L. Moore, an English teacher in the E. C. Glass High School, Lynchburg, Virginia, in the *English Journal* for September, 1925. With this issue, by the way, a new cover design serves to enhance the appeal that the magazine's contents can always be counted on to make to teachers of English.

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The State department of education of South Carolina, through its official journal for the year 1924-25, is promoting school consolidation, according to *School Life*, a periodical of the Interior Department, Bureau of Education. The State rural school supervisor reports, for 1922-23, 1,256 consolidated schools and only 782 one-teacher schools. Reports from 22 county superintendents state that nearly all of these counties are carrying on programs of consolidation, building better schoolhouses, extending the term length, and transporting pupils. Already in this school year Union County has consolidated five districts and has eliminated four one-teacher and two two-teacher schools. Spartanburg County is improving its schools and enlarging many buildings as new families are attracted by the opportunities for their children.

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To present new ideas on some of the everyday but difficult problems of grade teachers is the purpose of the Teachers' Association of the State Normal Schools of New Jersey in their plan to issue a series of 10 leaflets in 1924-25. These leaflets, for the most part, are prepared by the faculty of the Montclair State Normal School. Each number covers one topic and gives a complete outline of suggestions for carrying out the project.