

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 postoffice at Harrisonburg, Virginia, under the act of March 3, 1879.

CONRAD T. LOGAN, *Editor*
HENRY A. CONVERSE, *Business Manager*
CLYDE P. SHORTS, *Circulation Manager*

ADVISORY BOARD

JOHN W. WAYLAND ELIZABETH P. CLEVELAND
PEARL P. MOODY KATHERINE M. ANTHONY

Manuscripts offered for publication from those interested in our state educational problems should be addressed to the editor of THE VIRGINIA TEACHER, State Teachers College, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

THE CAROLINA PLAY-BOOK

The Carolina Play-Book is the most recent venture of the Carolina Playmakers and the Carolina Dramatic Association. Under the editorship of Professor Frederick H. Koch, of the University of North Carolina, this new quarterly publication first appeared in March, 1928. The magazine will help to create a still closer fellowship among North Carolinians who are committed to the development of a native theatre.

It is part of the creed of the Carolina Playmakers that if they can see the lives of those about them "with understanding, with imagination," they may be able "to interpret that life in dramatic images of enduring significance." *The Play-Book* is meant to further this ambition. Its subscription price of one dollar a year will bring it within the reach of all Southerners who are interested in the Carolina Movement—as important to us as the Irish Movement has been in its way.

The contents of the first issue include an article by Paul Green, winner of the Pulitzer play award, an essay on the first

American playwright, Thomas Godfrey, by Professor Archibald Henderson, and an account by Roland Holt of the Carolina Playmakers' invasion of New York. Numerous illustrations including attractive wood cuts by J. J. Lankes add to the pleasing character of *The Play-Book*.

SOUTHERN INTERSCHOLASTIC PRESS CONVENTION

The Southern Interscholastic Press Convention held at Washington and Lee University on May 11 and 12 was reported in the state press as follows:

A made-in-Virginia banquet, everything used being procured in Virginia and donated by Virginia firms, featured the closing of the Southern Interscholastic Press Convention, held by the Journalism School of Washington and Lee University here. For the last two days, 150 high and preparatory editors from ten Southern States, accompanied by twenty of their publication advisors and journalism teachers, have been in attendance at the convention.

A churchman, Rev. J. Lewis Gibbs, editor of the Southwestern Episcopalian; a lawyer, Professor R. T. Johnson, of the Washington and Lee law school, and an educator, Dr. William M. Brown, head of the department of psychology, spoke to the delegates during the banquet, giving their respective opinions of the modern newspaper.

A five-column newspaper, *The Banquet News*, published during the meal by the journalism students, was distributed to the delegates before the banquet ended.

Copies of ten leading Virginia dailies, including *The Richmond Times-Dispatch*, were distributed to each of the delegates following the banquet.

Dr. Henry Louis Smith, president of Washington and Lee, presented nine loving cups, donated by leading Southern publishers, to the prize winners in school papers, magazines and annuals.

First prize in class A annuals went to

Breckenbridge High School, of San Antonio, Texas; first prize in class B. annual went to Staunton Military Academy, of Staunton, Va., and first prize in class C annual went to Woodberry Forest School, of Woodberry Forest, Va.

First prize in class A magazines went to Central High, Greensboro, N. C.; first prize in class B magazines went to E. C. Glass High, Lynchburg, Va., and first prize in class C magazines went to R. E. Lee High, Staunton, Va.

First prize in class A newspapers went to Asheville High, Asheville, N. C.; first prize in class B newspapers went to George Washington High, Danville, Va., and first prize in class C newspapers went to Weston High, Weston, W. Va.

Winners of the individual merit contests were: Harry Berlingame, of McKinley Technical High, Washington, D. C.; J. M. Morse, Columbia High, Columbia, S. C., and H. E. Baum, of Princeton High, Princeton, W. Va. They were given books by Virginia authors.

FOR A SANE FOURTH

There are in the United States today 200 happy children, toddlers and older—maybe one of them is in your home—who will be mourned by grief-stricken parents on July 5, unless their parents take greater interest in and exercise more care over the way they celebrate the 'Fourth' than did the parents of 195 little Americans last July," says the American Museum of Safety in a statement issued by its president, Arthur Williams.

And in addition to these living sacrifices to the spirit of the Fourth of July season, there will be more than 3,000 other victims of the "Fourth" suffering varying degrees of agony, some of them condemned to go through life more or less maimed, even blind.

These tragic figures are based on cold statistics. They are the fore-knowledge gained by the American Museum of Safety

through its annual surveys of Fourth of July accidents and its efforts to keep these tragedies down to a minimum.

Yet, in spite of the annual warnings issued by the American Museum of Safety and other organizations, and the broadcasting of warnings by newspapers and magazines through pictures and the printed word and warnings issued to employes by many industries, each year sees an increasing danger to the innocent celebrants of the "Fourth." In the last three years the number of deaths has nearly doubled and the number of injuries has increased three-fold.

In 1925 there were 111 deaths and 1030 injuries; in 1926, the deaths were 161 and the injuries 2205, and last year 195 lives were lost and the injuries ran up to 3179.

Mr. Williams is a pioneer in organized safety work. He was one of the founders of the American Museum of Safety and has been its president since its incorporation in 1911. He expressed the belief that the annual toll of deaths and injuries would have been much greater but for these warnings.

"Yet, there is little excuse for this condition," Mr. Williams said. "Why should there be 200 or more happy children with us today who will not be living after the Fourth of July season, and more than 3,000 others who will be more or less severely injured, some of them blind? We cannot, for the most part, blame these deaths and injuries on the victims, because so many of them are so young. The blame attaches partly to parents and guardians, partly to conditions that permit explosive and inflammable material coming into the hands of children without proper supervision, and partly to the long-drawn-out celebration of the Fourth of July.

"Already, in June, in some communities, dealers have been arrested for the sale of fireworks to children. These are usually the smaller communities. In the larger cities the restrictions of the fire departments and police departments are more stringent.

"No doubt, the annual toll of fireworks victims would be greatly reduced if the sale of fireworks were limited to the short period from July 1 to July 4. Also there is no doubt that there would be a great reduction in these accidents if parents exercised more care over their children."

In 1927, the statistics show, there were 21 pre-Fourth deaths, 168 occurred on the Fourth, and six after the Fourth. Twenty-six of the victims were under five years of age, some of them only two, the cause of the deaths of these infants being phosphorous poisoning from eating torpedoes and other fireworks. The injured ran in about the same proportion, 124 of the victims being five years old and younger. The greater number of victims were between the ages of six and 20, and the great majority were boys.

A STATE-WIDE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM FOR EVERY STATE

Every state in our Union should have a teachers' retirement system that is actuarially sound, built up by both the public and the teacher. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia have state-wide laws, while eleven more states have laws applying to certain cities only. Some of these retirement systems are most satisfactory, while some states are working to revise and strengthen their laws.

The teachers of the states having a good retirement law can do a lot to help bring about the enactment of a sound law in the sixteen states now working for such legislation.

What can *you* do?

Use your influence, as a member of our great teaching profession, as a voting citizen, in season and out of season, to encourage the tax-paying public to see that good retirement systems make for better efficiency in the schools by making our teachers more efficient.

The teacher working under a good retirement system knows that a sound retirement law attracts and holds capable young people in the profession, that it gives a better guarantee of promotion within the profession because of the retirement of teachers at retirement age.

The fortunate teacher, under a good, state-wide retirement law, realizes that the efficiency of the teacher is increased because it lengthens the period of teaching efficiency by relieving her mind of the fear of destitute old age; and again she shows that the good retirement law makes it possible for the teacher to invest in study, training, and travel without endangering the provision made for her old age.

When the teaching profession and the rest of the taxpayers in the states having no retirement laws are made aware of this, retirement legislation will take place. Provision should be made for reciprocal relations between states with retirement systems. It should be possible for a teacher to render teaching services at any place in the United States or its territories without being penalized by a reduced retirement allowance. This will be possible when all states have a sound retirement law.—E. RUTH PYRTLE.

GOOD ENGLISH

"She looked like a lady, but did you hear her talk?" is a remark which indicates how often people are judged by their conversation. One of the frequent questions asked of librarians is "Where can I find books to help me improve my English?" With this in mind the American Library Association has published a reading course on *Good English*, which aims to help those who wish to improve their conversation, their use of words and incidentally their appreciation of what they read and hear.

The author, Virginia Bacon, readers' adviser of the Library Association of Portland, Oregon, has given the reader a num-

ber of suggestions to help him in his study. Among the things she mentions are: Use the dictionary. Keep a special notebook for vocabulary study. Find someone to study with you, and make a game of your work wherever you can. Avoid self-consciousness. Read good books, especially the informal essay and modern drama for help in improving conversational English.

Mrs. Bacon recommends five books, including a grammar, all of them simple and easy to follow. These together with the introductory essay point the way to the correct use of English for conversation and writing, to the enlargement of the vocabulary, and to a wider understanding and appreciation of the spoken and written language of other people.

Good English is the most recent of the Reading with a Purpose series. These reading courses, covering a wide range of subjects and written by persons of authority, are available at most libraries. They may be borrowed along with the books recommended in each course.

HEALTH SERVICE INCREASING IN VIRGINIA

Counties in Virginia conducting rural health service under the direction of a whole-time health officer increased from 6 in 1920 to 15 counties in 1928. In 10 counties a sanitation officer is employed, according to recent study of rural health problems in Virginia made by a graduate student at the University of Virginia. In 14 counties rural health service is in charge of a sanitation officer and a nurse; in 11 counties a public health nurse heads the work. In all, 50 of the 100 counties in Virginia maintain some form of public health service. The Virginia State Board of Health provides 50 per cent of the funds required to establish in counties whole-time medical health units up to a budget of \$10,000. A donation from the Rockefeller Foundation, equal to one-half of the State grant, further

supplements the amount available to counties for work of this character. For less complete forms of health service State aid is given according to the extent of the work undertaken.—*School Life*.

THE READING TABLE DICTIONARIES FOR DELIGHT

A DICTIONARY OF MODERN ENGLISH USAGE. By H. W. Fowler. New York: Oxford University Press, American Branch. 1927. Pp. 742. \$3.00.

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO GOOD ENGLISH. By George Phillip Krapp. Chicago: Rand McNally Company. 1927. Pp. 688. \$3.00.

These two rather similar books represent the sanest authorities in British and American usage. Mr. Fowler, widely known as co-author with his brother of *THE KING'S ENGLISH*, *THE CONCISE ENGLISH DICTIONARY*, and *THE POCKET ENGLISH DICTIONARY*, has here provided what must long remain the most charming, the most gracious, the most urbane, and the most readable of dictionaries. Professor Krapp, recognized as one of the soundest of American authorities in language, has produced a handbook less ambitious, perhaps, in its purposes but more practical for use in America.

MODERN ENGLISH USAGE is a constant delight to its readers; its flashes of wit are a unique touch in dictionary making. Under the word *pronunciation*, for instance, one reads: "The ambition to do better than our neighbors is in many departments of life a virtue; in pronunciation it is a vice; there the only right ambition is to do as our neighbors."

Speaking of writers who wish to safeguard their dignity and yet be vivacious, Fowler comments: "Surprise a person of the class that is supposed to keep servants cleaning his own boots, and either he will go on with the job while he talks to you, as if it were the most natural thing in the world, or else he will explain that the boot-boy or scullerymaid is ill and give you to understand that he is, despite appearances, superior to boot-cleaning. If he takes the