

THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

ENGLISH TEACHERS OF VIRGINIA IN ANNUAL MEETING

The English Teachers Section of the Virginia Education Association convened at 2 p. m., November 29, 1929, in the auditorium of the John Marshall High School, Richmond. In the absence of the president, Miss Mary Clay Hiner, who was unable to attend because of illness, the vice-president, Miss Elizabeth Cleveland, presided.

A brief business session opened the meeting at which over one hundred were present. Dues to the amount of \$14.50 were collected. Miss Cleveland appointed the nominating committee consisting of the following members: Mr. H. Augustus Miller, Jr., Petersburg; Dr. R. E. Blackwell, Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, and Mrs. Eva K. Jones, Emporia.

Mr. Miller gave a report of the organization in District D. He stated that an effort was being made to keep alive the organization of English teachers through a meeting every year at the district meeting.

Miss Cleveland called for reports from other districts. Miss Oge, for Miss Julia Riddick, made a report of the Tidewater Section. She reported that four meetings

were held during the year—two in Norfolk and two in Portsmouth. The programs consisted mainly of talks. These were made by the supervisor of Norfolk and by Miss Lash of Portsmouth. Miss Oge stated that the Tidewater Section was planning to have a speaker as well as a luncheon at the District L meeting.

English and Contemporary Life was the subject of the round table discussion which was presented from various angles. Dr. James M. Grainger, State Teachers College, Farmville, led the discussion by a talk on *Traditional Ballads in Virginia*, the Virginia Ballad Book. Dr. Grainger spoke of this volume of ballads, collected under the auspices of the Virginia Folk-Lore Society and edited by Professor Arthur Kyle Davis, Jr., of the University of Virginia, as the richest collection of genuine, ancient ballads in America.

The next phase of *English and Contemporary Life* was discussed by Dr. F. L. Janney of Hollins College who spoke on *Shakespeare, Our Contemporary*. He introduced this discussion by saying that something has happened to our idealism. "It has degenerated to vulgar optimism and sentimentalism and America needs to rid herself of this sentimentalism."

Miss Lucy Brickhouse of the Maury High School, Norfolk, gave a very interesting and inspiring talk on *Through Their Imagination*. She gave several reasons for the lack of imagination. Because of the scarcity of ideas, few pupils are able to understand *Thanatopsis*, the significance of the winding sheet in *The Tale of Two Cities*, Hepzibah in the *House of Seven Gables*, and the conversation in the Rainbow Inn found in *Silas Marner*.

Our Living Speech was the subject of the discussion led by Dr. Elizabeth W. Baker, State Teachers College, Fredericksburg. Dr. Baker distributed mimeographed sheets, listing the frequency of the various uses of Spoken English as well as the uses of Written English. Conversation, Business, Cour-

tesy, Telephoning, and Making Talks led the list as the most frequent uses of oral English. Letter Writing headed the list of the uses of written English.

The nominating committee presented the following list of nominees who were elected: President, Miss Lucy Brickhouse, Maury High School, Norfolk; vice-president, Professor Edward M. Gwathmey, William and Mary College; secretary-treasurer, Miss Evelina Wiggins, Lynchburg High School, Lynchburg. Mrs. C. B. Bowry of Burkeville and Mr. J. F. Blackwell of Trevilians were elected members of the executive committee to serve with the officers.

The question arose as to how the two members of the board of directors of the National Council of Teachers of English should be chosen. After some discussion, Dr. Blackwell made a motion that the retiring president and the new president have the authority to appoint the directors. The motion was carried.

Mrs. Pearl C. Strickler of Salem raised the question as to the nature of the work of the association. She inquired if parallels and required work were discussed and if some steps could be taken to help out the "over-worked" English teacher. Dr. Grainger suggested that *Co-operation with the Teacher of English* be suggested to the new executive committee as a topic for consideration. He pointed out that *How Every Class May Be An English Class* may be a project worthy of investigation by the committee. Every one present was urged to carry out this as an announcement.

Dr. Miller stated that the North Carolina Association publishes a pamphlet dealing with actual problems and that a member of the Association had suggested that Virginia and North Carolina co-operate in publishing a quarterly bulletin. No action was taken concerning this suggestion, but another suggestion that the *Virginia Journal* have a corner for English Teachers was made. Miss Laughton of the John Marshall High School, Richmond, moved that the in-

coming executive committee use the *Virginia Journal* as a vehicle for the discussion of problems relating to the high schools of Virginia. The motion was carried.

One of the most successful meetings of the Association adjourned at 4:30 p. m.

MURIEL SANDERS,
Secretary-Treasurer

N. C. T. E. ENTERS ELEMENTARY FIELD

The Elementary English Review, which is edited and published by C. C. Certain, of Detroit, Michigan, has recently been adopted by The National Council of Teachers of English as their official organ in the field of elementary school English. Membership in elementary school English in the Council now carries with it a year's subscription to *The Elementary English Review* without additional charge.

The Elementary English Review will publish official papers of The Council dealing with various aspects of elementary English, such as composition, reading, spelling, grammar, literature, and auditorium and library work.

Since its first issue, almost seven years ago, *The Elementary English Review* has been the only periodical dealing exclusively with the teaching of English in elementary schools. Its circulation extends throughout the United States, Hawaii, Virgin Islands, and the Philippine Islands.

In addition to adopting *The Review* as an official organ, The Council is further developing its organization in elementary English by the appointment of a committee on elementary school English to plan a program of activities in this field. Elementary school teachers desiring to become members of The National Council of Teachers of English should address their applications to 4070 Vicksburg Avenue, Detroit, Michigan. The annual dues are \$3.00, which includes copies of all publications by The Council and a year's subscription to *The Elementary English Review*.

M. L. A.'S FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Four Virginia professors presented papers at the recent annual meeting of the Modern Language Association of America, held this year in conjunction with the Linguistic Society of America at Cleveland, December 30 and 31, 1929, and January 1, 1930.

"Army English" was the title of a paper presented by Professor Atcheson L. Hench, "A Point in the Collecting of Ballads" of a paper by Professor Arthur Kyle Davis, Jr.—both of the University of Virginia. "A Danish Variety of the Shrew Story" was presented by Professor Jesse H. Jackson, of the College of William and Mary, and "The Sources of Hawthorne's *Feathertop*," an attempt to discover the relation of Tieck's *Die Vogelscheuche* to the recognized sources of *Feathertop* and to the tale itself, was presented by Professor Alfred A. Kern, of Randolph-Macon Woman's College.

North Carolina scholarship was represented by seven papers, four from Duke University, three from the University of North Carolina, as follows:

"Republican Ideas in France in the 16th Century," J. C. Lyons, University of North Carolina.

"Some Aspects of Old English Versification," Paull F. Baum, Duke University.

"The Legend of Milton's Decline of Power," Allan H. Gilbert, Duke University.

"Shelley and the Active Radicals of the Early 19th Century," Newman I. White, Duke University.

"Methods in Contemporary American Biography," Howard Mumford Jones, University of North Carolina.

"The Progress and Needs of American Literature," Jay B. Hubbell, Duke University.

"The Idealistic Philology of Karl Vossler," Urban T. Holmes, Jr., University of North Carolina.

NATIONAL DRAMA WEEK DRAMATIZES SERVICES AND NEEDS OF THE THEATRE

The purpose of National Drama Week (February 9-15) is to throw the spot light of public interest on the part which the drama plays in the life of the individual, the life of the community, and the life of the nation. The activities of Drama Week serve to dramatize the power of the theatre and its inimitable services to culture, education, recreation, and civic spirit. They serve also to stage the appeal of the drama to the public—the appeal for audiences which appreciate and show their appreciation, for audiences with a growing taste for the best.

This is the first Drama Week to be sponsored by the Church and Drama League, which is an affiliation of the Drama League of America (which inaugurated the idea), the American Theatre Association, and the Church Drama Association. It is the only nationwide organization devoted to the up-building of the theatre in all its forms. It is non-sectarian, unendowed, and unsubsidized by any commercial interest, and not operated for profit. Through a number of practical services it aims to make the audience worthy of its drama and the drama worthy of its audience. These aims are forwarded effectively through providing and stimulating audiences to support good plays which need support; guiding the playgoer in finding the best in the entertainments clamoring for attention; helpful in every possible way the semi-professional and amateur dramatic groups; co-operating with all technically interested in the dramatic arts through the medium of counsel and information, organized travel for first-hand study, etc.

Realizing that under present conditions in the commercial theatre, communities away from the few large theatrical centers must create their own living drama, particular attention is paid by the Church and Drama League to community theatres, dra-

matic clubs of schools and colleges, church dramatic organizations, and "little theatre" groups of all kinds. The League also recognizes that the regeneration of the commercial theatre may prove to be in the hands of those playwrights, performers, artists, and directors who have learned their arts in the practical schools of experience in these groups. Much that is vital, new, and inestimably valuable has already come to Broadway from these sources.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OFFICERS

Officers for 1930 elected at the Kansas City meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English are:

Ruth Mary Weeks, Paseo High School, Kansas City, president.

O. B. Sperlin, University of Washington, Seattle, first vice-president.

Henry Grady Owens, High School, High Point, North Carolina, second vice-president.

W. Wilbur Hatfield, Chicago Normal College, secretary-treasurer.

Carrie Belle Parks, State Teachers College, Indiana, Pennsylvania, auditor.

Rewey Belle Inglis, University of Minnesota, member of executive committee.

Among the five Council representatives chosen to serve as an advisory board to the *English Journal* is Miss Elizabeth Baker, State Teachers College, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

MATERIALS NEWLY AVAILABLE

Two maps and a chart providing teaching material meant to increase good reading and appreciation of literature have recently been issued by T. H. Macmillan of Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee, at 35 cents each or the three for a dollar. *Famous Spots of Song and Story* is a literary map of England; *Our Historical Novels* places important American works by states. The *Faerie Queene Chart* shows the plan, the allegory, and the Spenserian stanza form. Other similar teaching materials are announced for later publication.

THE READING TABLE

VIRGINIA BALLADS

TRADITIONAL BALLADS OF VIRGINIA. Edited by Arthur Kyle Davis, Jr. Boston: Harvard University Press. 1929. Pp. 634. \$7.50.

The publication of *Traditional Ballads of Virginia* may be regarded as one of the significant literary events in recent years. Already in "a state of lingering disappearance," the old-world survivals which constitute the subject matter of this book were recaptured just in time to save them from being lost forever. Credit for the success of this splendid literary achievement belongs to many men and women throughout the state, but especially does it belong to a few rare souls who were interested enough to pursue the venture to successful completion. Among the persistent in this quest must be named the late Dr. C. Alphonso Smith, founder of the Virginia Folk-Lore Society; Mr. John Stone, "ballad hunter extraordinary"; Miss Martha M. Davis, of Harrisonburg, Virginia; Miss Juliet Fauntleroy, of Altavista, Virginia; Miss Alfreda M. Pue, of Salem, Virginia; and Professor Arthur Kyle Davis, Jr., archivist of the Virginia Folk-Lore Society, and editor of the material.

This volume provides us with the richest collection of popular ballads yet made from the materials captured within the borders of a single state. Fifty-one genuine old-world survivals, together with six hundred and fifty versions, variants, and fragments, and one hundred and forty-eight tunes constitute the principal subject matter of the book. Every county in the state is represented by one or more complete ballads, or at least by a fragment. Albemarle county heads the list with sixty-six variants; Campbell follows, with sixty; Rockingham, with forty-eight; Washington, with twenty-nine; Roanoke, with twenty-seven; Franklin and Wise, with fifteen each. All of the other counties have supplied fewer.

Besides the ballad material proper, Professor Davis has added a very illuminating