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KIRKSVILLE, MISSOURI

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BETTER ENGLISH WEEK

By BLANCHE F. EMERY

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STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
KIRKSVILLE, MISSOURI

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RURAL LIFE CONFERENCE

The English Division of the Rural Life Conference will hold its regular meetings on Thursday and Friday, October 24 and 25. Announcements of the program will be published early in the fall.

BETTER ENGLISH WEEK

The suggestion of the American Speech Committee that the first week of November be celebrated throughout the nation as "Better English Week" is a happy one. Such celebrations already held in several towns and in one entire state have demonstrated both the values which may be realized and the best means to be employed. There need be no serious errors either of aim or of procedure.

The need is patent. Thousands of our recruits for the army were found to be illiterate or unable to speak English. Thousands more were unable to qualify as officers because of sheer inability to give commands so as to be heard and understood. Behind all lies the necessity for that social solidarity which conscious possession of a common tongue insures.

While we are awake is the time to act. English teachers, because of their special training and professional interests, may well be expected to be the first to act. They should, however, not fail to enlist the co-operation of all. Particularly should they not omit to give to children and young people the chance to plan and execute. Let us make English Week in every good sense of the term a successful project.—THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, May, 1919.

As announced in the ENGLISH JOURNAL for last month, the suggestion offered by Miss Claudia Crumpton, secretary of the American Speech Committee of the National Council, that all parts of the country be asked to join in the celebration of Better Speech Week next autumn was approved. The first week in November has been chosen. It is hoped that schools of all kinds and grades will begin at once to make preparations. A joint committee of students and faculty should be constituted to take charge. The local situation should be carefully studied so as to adapt the celebration to the local needs and possibilities. The success of the enterprise will depend, first, upon clear and definite aims; secondly, upon enlisting the full co-operation of the best leaders; and thirdly, upon arousing widespread enthusiasm. Each group should look upon the celebration as a project to be worked out rather than merely a program to be executed.

The American Speech Committee of the Council is preparing, in co-operation with the American Speech Committee of the Chicago Woman's Club, a guide for the celebration of Better Speech Week. This will contain a complete sketch of the general project, together with specific accounts of the different features. A number of posters are reproduced. This guide will be published by the National Council of Teachers of English and will be for sale. The price will be twenty five cents a copy. Advance orders may be addressed to the Secretary of the Council, 506 W. 69th Street, Chicago, Ill.—THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, May, 1919.

BETTER ENGLISH CAMPAIGNS

The Problem Presented

At the beginning of the summer term in 1919, there was assigned to the class in *THE TEACHING OF HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH* as a means of helping them to suggest problems in the teaching of English in high schools, the task of searching out the trend of thought among English teachers at the present time. Every member of the class, except one, intended to teach English in either a junior or senior high school during the winter of 1919-1920. Hence, the diligent search resulted in the analysis of some real facts. Through a system of Committees, there was made a "fine-toothed comb" examination of the official organ of the National Council of Teachers of English, *THE ENGLISH JOURNAL* for the year 1918-19. The compilation of the facts that the class presented, showed leaders of English thought stressing three things: An Americanization policy, better standards for English teaching, and better methods in teaching English. The problems for the summer were, therefore, clear cut and definite; the solution was quite another matter. This bulletin shall attempt to discuss suggestively the second and third topics—setting better standards by a method of Better English Campaigns.

The Problem Unlimited in Extent

Every summer the students who have been teaching English the preceding year put to the writer this problem, "How can we compete with the music and other "live-wire" departments, so that English need not be a secondary matter in the school and in the community?" The answer is easy—socialize English by means of Better English Campaigns and thus take the work of English to the people.

Let us see how great our problem is and, therefore, whether there is a need for socialization. Everywhere, at all times, communication between individuals is by means of speaking. Briefly then there is the problem in the business world, in the home, in the school. And the wedge for improvement is very likely to come from the schoolroom out to the home and eventually let us hope, to the business world.

The Problem Analyzed

When one thinks in terms of improvement in speech, he must necessarily analyze the steps of progress to be made. The following steps seem necessary: 1. Apprehension of error by directing attention to the specific difficulty. 2. Ear sensitization to the distinction between the right and the wrong. 3. Intelligent correction. 4. Continual repetition until the right habit is formed. The purpose of a Better English Campaign is, primarily, then to direct attention to difficulties until some degree of sensitization is secured.

Pitfalls to Guard Against

One must be pedagogically sound in presenting to the public such a cam-

paign. It is extremely easy in presenting Better English plays, pageants and contests to emphasize BAD English and not GOOD English. There must be an acknowledged didactic policy forcing repetition in the right direction and not in the wrong direction.

Again one needs to guard against a strong effort expended for a temporary period and then no "follow-up." There must not be a bomb exploded, a clearing away of the debris and nothing more. The follow-up campaign is, then, extremely important and probably the most unsolved. In another section the "follow-up" campaign will be discussed.

Better English Week Planned

The war has taught us that the way to launch a movement is to have as many people as possible talking about it, to use the daily press, to run motion picture slides announcing it, to have an overwhelming number of interesting events one week and so "ensnare" the popular mind. The same strategy is behind BETTER ENGLISH WEEK, the week, Nov. 4 to 8 which is set aside by the American Speech Committee for speech improvement.

It is necessary to begin early and to involve all people possible in the movement, every student, every teacher, every townsman not connected with the school. The people who have some responsibility are the dependable helpers later; so the more involved, the better. Judges should be from outside the English teaching force, and as many assistants as possible chosen from people at large. Such a constituency tests one's executive ability but brings large returns.

1919-1920 BETTER ENGLISH DRIVE

A SUGGESTIVE BETTER ENGLISH WEEK

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Monday | An announcement play which will give the plans for the week's campaign. |
| Tuesday | A pronunciation contest. |
| Wednesday | Better English speeches by students and townspeople, particularly business men. |
| Thursday | Dramatic, debating or other kinds of contests. |
| Friday | Better English pageant at the school followed by a Better English parade through the town, or Better English parade during the day and a Better English pageant at night. |

The Announcement Play

The following play was used at the Teachers College, having been written by members of the class in THE TEACHING OF HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH. It is offered as a suggestion for a short play to be written by a class in high school, the play to include the local data of the campaign.

"MR. B. E. WEEK"

CHARACTERS

Rastus—a negro boy wearing ragged blue overalls, a faded blue shirt and a torn black felt hat; a red handkerchief around his neck.

Topsy—a negro girl dressed in red calico house dress. Hair done up on rags.

Miss Better English—a young English teacher dressed in a white waist and dark skirt.

SETTING—A stage with seven chairs scattered about in disorder. A small table, at the left front of stage with a flower vase upon it.

SCENE I.

(Rastus whistling "Turkey in the Straw" enters from the left of stage with a bucket of water and a mop over his shoulder. Walks lazily to right front. Sets down bucket of water. Stops whistling. Sighs. Wipes perspiration from forehead with right hand. Notices chairs.) Rastus—angrily: "Lawsy dey sho' does werk a niggarr to def around dis here institution." (Straightens the chairs. Picks up mop, dips it in water, wrings it and begins mopping the floor.)

Topsy—(back of audience) "Rastus! Oh Rastus!" (Rastus looks all around and begins mopping vigorously.) (Topsy comes running from the audience from right with a dust rag and gets on the stage from the front. Goes to left front of stage) (Rastus keeps on mopping but stares open mouthed at Topsy.)

Topsy—(out of breath) "Good land of gracious, Rastus, I guess you better be gittin' a wiggle on you. Ain't you heard who's comin'?"

(Rastus stops mopping and leans on mop.) Rastus—(in wonder) Naw, who's comin'? (Pause) (Eagerly) "Abraham Lincoln?"

Topsy—(disgustedly) Abraham Lincoln. Say, niggarr, you better wake up. (Earnestly) I just been cleanin' up ober in de English department and everybody's talkin' about B. E. WEEK a comin'.

R.—"Say, I wonder who dis Mr. B. E. Week am?"

T.—(dusting chairs) "I dunno, but whoever he am, he's a comin' and you'd bettar watch your step."

R.—(begins mopping) "Well, say Topsy, when am dis Mr. B. E. Week a comin'?"

T.—"Why he's comin' TODAY."

R.—(Stops mopping) "Today!!"

T.—"Yes, today, and what I hear, the English department have planned to put on some stunts to be given in his honor while he's here."

R.—"Well you don't say. Whata day gona give? A jass ban' and turkey trot? If dey is, I'se right dere when it comes to givin' "Turkey in the Straw." (Whistles "Turkey in the Straw" and jigs a little.)

T.—(laughing) "No, Rastus, dey's not goin' to give a jass ban' or turkey trot but it's goin' to be a couple of big shows in de out door theatre."

R.—(bashfully) "Say, Topsy, let's me and you go? (Eagerly) It's free ain't it?"

T.—“You bet your boots its free, and I’m jest achin’ to see ’em. I heerd one of them English pupils say they wus goin’ to have a king an’ queen, an’ moving pictures, an’ ghosts, an’ goblins, an’ everything.”

R.—“Well, I see where Mr. B. E. Week gets us niggars and pore white trash to see somethin’ swell.”

(Enter Miss Betty English walking from the audience from right, reading an English theme to herself. She has a package of theme papers under her left arm.)

Topsy—(Dusting the table vigorously) “Sh! Here come Miss Betty English, that there English teacher. You better git to moppin’. (Rastus begins mopping industriously). Say, Rastus, you ask her if B. E. Week is comin’ to see her.”

R.—(Giggling) (Shoves Topsy away) “Go on, ask her yourself.”

(Miss B. comes on stage from the right front and stands in the center of stage between T. and R.) Miss B.—“Good morning, Topsy. Say, Rastus, (Rastus stops mopping) will you go outdoors and get me some pond lilies? (Rastus puts down mop) I want to decorate this stage a little.” (Sits down in a chair in center of stage and begins grading papers.)

R.—“Yassum.” (Exit to the right.)

T.—(Stops dusting and looks at Miss B. bashfully) “Say, Miss Betty, is B. E. Week comin’ to see you?”

(Miss B. looks up in extreme surprise) Miss B.—“Why Topsy? Is B. E. Week coming to see me? What do you mean?”

T.—“Well eberyone ’round dis institution am cleanin’ up for B. E. Week, ’cause dey say he’s comin’ today and I ’lows as how he must be comin’ to see you.”

Miss B.—(laughing) “Why Topsy, B. E. Week stands for Better English Week and it simply means that this week has been set aside by the English department to be observed as Better English Week.”

T.—(disappointedly) “Then B. E. Week ain’t no man a tall? Jest the name of a week or day like de Fourth of Ju—New Year’s?” (Miss B. nods (Topsy begins laughing, and calls loudly) “Rastus, O Rastus!” (Lower tone of voice) “Miss Betty that’s a good joke on Rastus. I don’t believe he’s right smart, do you?” (Begins dusting)

Miss B.—(smiling and rising) “Well I don’t know about that, Topsy. It seems to me that Rastus wasn’t the only one who didn’t know what B. E. Week was.”

(Rastus runs in from right, holding lilies in right hand at arm’s length and holding nose with left hand) Rastus (out of breath) Here’s dose flowers Miss Betty. I had to run from the janitor but here’s what I got here wid. Dey don’t smell much like flowers now. I had to come fru the chemistry laboratory”]

Miss B. (Puts papers on chair. Takes flowers) “Thank you, Rastus.” (Walks over to table and begins arranging flowers in the vase.)

T.—(“I don’t see why the superintendent don’t buy some gas masks for dem people what have to preambulate fru the chemistry department.”)

Miss B.—“Well putting all jokes aside, there really are going to be some unique programs.

(Add here the details of the local program.)

You are invited to attend all of them, Topsy. You can bring Rastus with you if you want to and I'll guarantee that both of you will enjoy it immensely. (T. and R. stop working, look at each other and giggle.) The English department hopes that there will be many Topsy's and Rastus's among the student body who will attend the programs for and during B. E. Week. The first stunt is—(Add local date—. Be sure to come, Topsy. Exit Miss Betty.

(Rastus and Topsy stare at each other. Rastus picks up bucket and puts mop on shoulder).

R.—Come on Topsy. Let's git this cleanin' up done afore — o'clock tonight.

T.—All right, Rastus. The superintendent's office am de next thing on our schedule. (Exit both with some excitement.)

Pronunciation Contests

We have tried out a series of contests in pronunciation at two different times, eliminating gradually the waste details. Our best results seemed to come when the contest was in the form of a tournament, every pupil in high school thus being involved. In small towns out-in-town clubs could be interested. The tournament gives, likewise, the opportunity to have provided a natural means of following up the campaign of Better English Week. In our school we have had the following groups competing,

Grammar vs rhetoric

Tchg. of Elementary English vs Tchg. of Elementary English

College Writing Division vs College Speaking Division

Dramatic Club vs Mark Twain Club.

This group requires seven contests in all: four first preliminaries, two second preliminaries between winners of the first and one final between the winners of the second preliminary.

In our own case, since we gave the contests in the Assembly Hall, it was necessary that we reduce the number of publicly-appearing contestants. Hence, by contests within each class room, we eliminated all but six contestants representing each class.

The words for pronunciation were selected by the students of a certain class who took it as their problem to find a suitable list, fifty words being used in each contest. In the finals these words were used in sentences. The list follows:

umbrella	strata	maintenance
vaudeville	predicament	advertisement
chic	children	exist
ordinarily	radiator	forum
cadaver	sacrifice	toward
numerous	naive	detail
France	Missouri	victim

giraffe
quinine
obituary
beneficent
naked
Newfoundland
overalls
neuralgia
different
hostage
biography
honest
idea
gigantic
geography
chastisement
abdomen
program
experiment
government
aeronaut
tedious
prelude
khaki
hosiery
orchestra
apricot
film
morphine
buffet
fiancee
demobilize
dromedary
despicable
genial
hoop
surprise
audacious
zoology
athletics
February
handkerchief
algebra
askance
bade
bedstead
bronchitis

superfluous
robust
parasol
docile
tassel
veterinary
niche
neuter
violin
discretion
financier
chestnut
Abraham
temperature
almond
delinquent
amateur
arctic
mayonnaise
economics
premier
Carnegie
simultaneous
eleven
hundred
banana
dictionary
student
helm
canine
theater
probably
recognize
superintendent
tragedy
mustache
pilgrim
gelatine
perhaps
feline
cemetery
boudoir
robust
research
lamentable
roof
sacrifice

limousine
piano
pianist
cornet
bowlegged
language
grandpa
dissolve
coffee
often
accurate
placard
chaperon
patronage
preventive
bouquet
conquest
coupon
debris
combatant
status
indisputable
predecessor
address
horizon
attacked
Bolsheviki
casualties
forehead
Entente
lingerie
Allies
precedence
calf
daughter
percolator
Chopin
dog
revolt
oblique
envelope
calliope
cordial
courtier
column
daub
lyceum

adult	library	equator
pecan	constitution	water
description	apparatus	athletics
perspiration	aviator	patrons
patronage	candidate	hearth
prescription	irrevocable	

These lists were published in the school paper and the class room work was done from these printed lists. At the public preliminaries, these words were written on the gelatine sheets and thrown on a screen. As a pleasant close for the whole series of pronunciation contests, the members of a public speaking division gave to the winners with appropriate speeches recognitions of public approval. In one case there was presented a box of candy of sufficient size to give each member of the winning division one piece.

After struggling with such contests one cannot but conclude that most people want to *learn* but forcible means must be used to get the attention of the busy American people. It's the old idea resurrected, "The American people do not like to hear of their faults but if one insists upon pointing out their errors, they hasten to correct them."

Better English Speeches

It has seemed to the writer that during the war the main value of the four-minute speeches was that a set of men everywhere committed themselves to a public policy. The principle, at least holds good in respect to a Better English Campaign. He who publicly speaks for it must be with it. Business men, students, teachers, any who are forced to think through for themselves the value of English as to its practical value in business and professional life have made a worth-while advance in their thinking.

Dramtic, Speaking, Debating Contests

Two high school classes in literature who were interested in the contests wrote and put on publicly competitive dramatization of selections which they were studying. One division chose Irving's MY AUNT; the other, Hawthorne's DAVID SWAN. Any form of dramatization was permitted. So the Irving people chose the conventional presentation with the different characters speaking and acting; the Hawthorne division chose the pantomime form with students acting the parts but a one reader at the side of the stage.

The speaking division held a preliminary contest within their class room, all entering the contest and speaking on some phase of War Savings. The three winners later contested publicly.

A part of a public campaign for Better English, debating contests as well as the accepted kinds of contests that the public is accustomed to accept as a part of school work can well be given.

Better English Pageants, Plays and Parades

The pageant which follows was written by students in The Teaching of High School English class in the summer of 1919 and presented by the children of the Practice School the same summer. The play here offered was

written by a committee of three students in a Practical English class in the winter of 1918-19 and staged and coached by this same committee with the class as the actors. Original pageants and plays are to be encouraged. Themes leading to the final destruction of Bad English are suitable. The simpler the play for didactic purposes, the better the theme stands out to the public.

BETTER ENGLISH PAGEANT

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Better English	Bad English
King Better English	King Bad English
Six guards	Six guards
1. A Boy Scout	1. Slangy Tom
2. A Girl Scout	2. Careless Sue
3. A Camp Fire Girl	3. Ignorant Sam
4. A Boy	4. Care-not Josie
5. A Girl	5. Bad-Grammar John
6. A Soldier	6. Bad-Grammar Jim
Six fairies	Six imps
Musician	
Two Americans (ordinary boy and girl fashionably dressed)	

COSTUMES

Kings in robes, crowns (robes may be of portieres). Better English King is stately, dignified, majestic as are his followers: Bad English King slovenly; he wears his crown on the side. He and his followers wear conspicuously careless dress.

Better English guards wear costumes appropriate to characters; Bad English guards wear tattered clothing.

The fairies wear white dresses and wings (wings of white mosquito bar bows; the imps, black bloomers, red swallow-tailed coats, black or red peaked caps.)

STAGE SETTING AND PROPERTIES

Out-of-doors or indoors with branches as background. Two thrones, one on each side of stage, with placard BAD ENGLISH above one throne, BETTER ENGLISH, above the other. Megaphones of paper for the fourteen characters that speak. Twelve placards on a solid base down center of stage (placards must be so they can be lifted up) bearing the following:

I took	I taken
I saw	I seen
We did	We done
He doesn't	He don't
It is I	It is me
I am not	I ain't

These placards must display to the audience the correct expressions but have the incorrect expression on the base immediately back so that it can be shown to the audience as needed.

FAIRY SONG

Oh, we are the good English fai - ries. Good morning and how do you

do? We came all the way from Fairy land to help you all we

can. We are so very po - lite. We

never make any mis - takes. But laugh and play the

long, bright day. As real little children do.

EPISODE

Imps and fairies skip in to music, imps from the left, fairies from the right. Each group forms a circle, giving a simple folk dance.

Exit fairies to the right, imps to the left.

Enter Boy and Girl as guards for the Better English King. Enter King, guards at side of throne, King ascends throne. Other Better English guards enter. They bow, acknowledge or salute their King. All followers stand very erect and dignified.

Enter Bad English King, marching out of time. His followers move with confusion and take irregular places.

Enter two Americans, one from each side. They look around, examine placards, discover each other's presence, stand undecided, then move to down stage right and left respectively, remaining until after all the drills.

King Better English calls roll. (All use megaphones) He calls "Camp Fire Girl," "Boy Scout," etc. All answer politely, "I am present, your Majesty."

Followers of Bad English calls "Ain't we gonna have no roll call?" Bad English King responds, "I'm doin' this." He calls roll. Followers answer, "I'm here." Having children place voices differently adds to the effect.

Bad English followers sing to the tune of Yankee Doodle (sing out-of-tune.

SONG

Oh, friends and neighbors come with us,
We'll show you a hot old time.
We've came to take you along with us
If you don't, you will be sorry.

(Chorus)

Oh p'rahaps you think you are too good
Oh no you ain't, we say,
You bet we know what we're about,
So do not stop to question.

Good English side sings the following song to tune of Yankee Doodle.

SONG

Oh, friends and neighbors, will you hear
What we've come to say
We'd like to have you to remember us
On this Good English day.

(Chorus)

Oh then good friends, let's better our speech
Which you will ne'er regret
Fall in line and keep good step
And we will be happy yet.

DRILL

6 & 6 march to front at same time. 5 & 5 follow, 4 & 4 next, 3 & 3, etc. First pair pick up first two placards, display them to audience, after which

Bad English turns his face away from audience. This leaves the correct expressions as a lasting impression. Each pair follows suit. After all placards are up they go back to places but 1 & 1 go first, the others following in order.

Americans move to center. The fairies and imps come to them and each group tries to persuade America to go to their respective sides. But Americans are undecided. Then fairies gather close to Americans and sing their song. The imps stand slightly aside and by gesticulations and mimicking faces mock fairies. At close of song the Americans surrounded by the fairies cross over to Good English throne and bow, then turn and face audience.

The Kings stand. The six followers of B. E. may move slightly closer to Americans or stay fixed. The imps are so interested they slightly follow up the fairies, peeping and craning their necks, utterly aghast at the idea of their prize. Good English side starts strain of Star Spangled Banner. Instantly imps sneak to Bad English side. Bad English side stand with dejected looks during the song.

BETTER ENGLISH PAYS

CHARACTERS

College Students

Priscilla Flash (Prissy)

Betty Wonders

Constance Wise

Charlotte Stillwell

Winifred Nagger

Nancy Bragg

Allie Stern

Gloria Wright

Prof. O. K. Leadum, Supt. at Errorsville.

Joe Noall, Pres. of Board at Errorsville.

Hiram Follows, Secretary of Board at Errorsville.

Will Knot, member of Board at Errorsville.

SCENE I.

Parlor of a rooming house in a college town.

Drawn curtain shows Wonders and Stern.

Wonders: I wonder what kin be akeepin' Prissy so late! Whin I left school she sed she'd be home in a minute and that's been three-quarters of an hour ago.—Oh! kum 'ere.

Stern: Huh! it's plain to be seen why she ain't 'ere yit.

(Enter Flash)

Flash: Oh! my, I'm all fussed! I'm a goan to a dance tonight an' I ain't got nuthin' to wear.

(Enter Wise)

Wonders to Wise: Air you agoan to the dance too? I reckon if I'd of stuck 'round and not have come home so soon I'd a had a date too.

Wise: Indeed, no! I have been planning to apply for a position as teacher of English in the Errorsville High School.

Flash: I should worry 'bout a job. It's a long time till September. Who'll loan me a party—

Wonders to Wise: D'yu know if there is any other vacancies in Errorsville?

Enter Stillwell and Nagger.

Nagger: What youall talkin' 'bout? Betty, I heerd you clean upstairs.

Stern: We've bin discussin' positions, but there ain't no chance fur you. They ain't a hirin' teachers what don't know no better 'n to say "heerd."

Flash: Positions wasn't all we wuz talkin' about. I don't kere nothin' about positions. I'm a goan to a dance tonight with the grandest—

Wise: I had just remarked that I intend to apply immediately for the position as teacher of English in the Errorsville High School.

Stillwell: Ain't it ruther soon to be alookin' round fur jobs?

Wise: I think not if you are desirous of obtaining a good position.

Flash: I wished you'd listen to me. I want to know at oncet whose got a real swell—

(Enter Bragg and Wright)

Bragg: Listen to me, everybody. We've had a rare streak o' luck. Professor Better-English practically assured us that he'd recommend us for high school positions, an' we won't have nothin' but a second grade certificate to teach on nuther. Now that's what I call real luck.

Wright: Yes, an' that ain't all. More'n that he told us where there was some vacant jobs.

Bragg: So weuns is a goan to go an git our applications wrote. (Bragg and Wright start to leave)

Stillwell: Where's thim jobs at?

Wright and Bragg: We didn't say, did we? (Exeunt Bragg and Wright).

Stern to Wise: What's the name of that there place you wuz talkin' 'bout, Constance?

Wise: As I have said twice before, I am consideraing a position at Errorsville.

Nagger: Is this Errorsville a up-to-date, modern, well-equipped burg?

Wise: I presume so. However, I have not thoroughly considered the possibilities as yet.

Stillwell: Betty, come go along to town with us. Me an' Winifred is goan up to git our Century Handbook of Writin' an' you might jest as well kum along an git yourn.

(Wise prepares to write, Flash fingers papers nervously.)

Stern: Believe it 'ud be a good plan fur me to see 'bout a job tomorrow. Maybe though I'd best try writin' an application first. (Starts to write.) Say, Constance, which had you ought to put first, the name o' the street or the name o' the town?

Wise: The street address comes first, followed, on the same line by the name of the town and state. The date is written on the line below. Be sure you get the correct spacing.

Stern: Would you 'dress the board as "gintlemen" or "dear friends?"

Wise: Gentlemen is correct when addressing a group of men.

(Flash begins to whistle Missouri Waltz very loudly and starts to dance.)

Stern: How'd I best start the rest of the letter.?

Wise: Come up to my room. I can't concentrate my mind upon anything when there is such an annoying sound in the room. (Turns to Flash) Priscilla, did you ever have a serious thought? Do you think of absolutely nothing but clothes, dances and men? (Exeunt Wise and Stern.)

Flash: (Making a face at the retreating Wise. Stands in the center of the floor.) Gee, but I'd love to do something mean to that purdish ole maid! (Stands still a minute. An inspiration comes) I've got it! I'll go right away immejately an' apply for that English job in Errorsville an' show her she ain't the whole show. (Starts off stage. Curtain drops.)

SCENE II.

Office of school board at Errorsville.

School board seated at table in office, and superintendent seated at a side table when curtain is drawn.

Pres.: Gintlemin, the house will now come to order. Secretary Follows will perceed to read the minutes of the last meetin'.

Secy.: Bein' as there wasn't no beezness at our last meetin' there ain't no minutes 'cept we adjourned.

Pres.: Say, Hiram, I've just been a thinkin' as to how we might put some fixins on that there school house of ourn. My ide was to put in one of them there new liberries that I seen when I was in the city a few days back. I just thought that might be a purty good investment bein' as we has some extra money layin' around.

Hiram: Well, I reckon yer ide' is all right but my ide' was to buy one of them there hot air furnishes so as to keep the buildin' het up fer them youngsters, but I guess the books is more necessary.

Pres.: Thatar furnis that they got is a plenty good enough fer them, and beins as that last English teacher ast me to buy some new books, I'se a goin' to buy 'em. I was over at Happy Holler Schoolhouse yesterday and I seen their liberry. They's got a heap better liberry than weins. But they ain't a gonna have much longer.

Knot. Well, Pres., I don't jist agree with you. I have saw that libary that you was a speakin' of and I cain't see as its one bit better than ourn. Why they ain't another libary in the whole country can be compared with ourn.

Pres.: I don't kere whether you just agree or not, Will Knot, the Superintendent has gave me a list of books that are needed by the English department and I'm a gonna git 'em.

Secy.: Noall, I agree with you that them English books had ought to be got so I reckon now is as good a time as any to order 'em.

Pres.: Well, if there ain't nothin' more to discuss I reckon we might as well see if the Superintendent has any applications for our vacant English job.

Supt.: I have recently two applications for the position as teacher of English in our high school. They are very different in character and show

pretty well the kind of work we could expect from each of them. One is very neatly and accurately written, while the other is full of grammatical errors with an attempt to cover them with big high sounding phrases. Here is an example: "I taken the full four year course at the Teachers College and feel elegantly qualified to fulfill the duties that would devolve upon your most gracious instructor of English.

Pres.: We kain't have none of this here Tom-foolery like's in that letter. I never did git a chance to go to high school and learn nuthin'; but I want our kids to have the best that's goin'. And I'm a speakin' the sentiments of the entire board too.

Secy.: That's right, we jist gotta give these here kids an edgucation. And while that there letter didn't sound so bad to me, it didn't suit Mr. Leadum, and I reckon he knows.

Knot: I'm kinder like you Hiram, that there letter sounded intellectually intelligible to me, and while I think Mr. Leadum ought to know moren we do about it, I kan't hep but think the board ought to have the say in hirin' the teachers.

Pres.: What are we hirin' the Supt. for if it ain't to lead us in our choice of teachers?

Supt.: You gentlemen will probably be able to come to a unanimous choice when you see these ladies in person. They have each informed me that they will be passing through today and that they will make personal application then.

Pres.: Good! I never yet was in favor of hirin' a teacher I hadn't saw.

Secy.: Nor me neither, I kin just read a feller the first time I see him.

Knot. And like as if the one you all don't like will appear the brightest of the two.

Supt.: Gentlemen, I've always found a simple little test very helpful when personal applications were made, I shall apply this test this morning and after you gentlemen see the results you will probably agree on one teacher.

Knot: Is it a fair test?

Supt.: Since I shall apply the same test to both applicants, and since they will not know at the time that they are being tested I should say it will be a fair one.

Pres.: It's fair nuf. What is't?

Supt.: Its a little test in the use of their English. I shall ask each one how much work she has done in the College. In answering if she says, "I have *did* so much, we can expect her to use incorrect English in her class room, if she says I have *done* so much we can expect her to use good English in her class room.

Secy.: I can't see much of a test in that.

Knot: Nor me whatcha testin'?

Pres.: Never mind what he's testin, thays a pint to it. Yit I can't see it.

Secy.: I reckon they is, then.

Knot: Tain't a goodun.

Pres.: It is, its a goodun.

Secy.: I think so too.

(A knock at the door)

Supt.: Will you come in?

Wise: This is Miss Wise, Supt. Leadum.

Supt.: Glad to know you. Miss Wise, this is Mr. Noall, our president, Mr. Follows, our secretary, and Mr. Knot.

Wise: I have come to make personal application for the position as teacher of English in your high school.

Pres.: You kin talk to the Superintendent.

Supt.: Will you take a seat? How much work have you done in English, Miss Wise?

Wise: I have done enough to allow me twenty college hours credit. Here are my credentials.

Supt.: (After a brief pause) She is quite well prepared.

Pres.: 'At's all we need, just as he says.

Wise: (Rising) I'm glad to have met you, and will appreciate a favorable consideration. (Exit.)

Board: You're welcome.

Supt.: The young lady has splendid qualifications.

Pres.: It's what we want.

Knot: I can't see as she is.

Follows: I can, she's smart.

Knot: She ain't.

Follows: She is.

Knot: She ain't.

Follows: She is.

(Pres. calls to order.) A knock at the door.

Supt.: Will you come in?

Flash: (Dressed gaudily) I am Miss Flash, Supt. Leadum.

Supt.: Glad to know you, Miss Flash, this is our president, Mr. Noall, our secretary, Mr. Follows, and Mr. Knot.

Flash: I'm so glad to know you. (Knot bows very low to her.) I have come to make personal application for the English teacher's job in your high school.

Pres.: Talk to the Superintendent.

Supt.: How much work in English have you done?

Flash: I have *did* work in English all my life, in the grades, in the high school, and in the college you know.

(Pres. Much disgusted): It's a gittin nigh noon and I 'spect we'd better hurry.

Flash: I'll enjoy a favorable vote very much. I'm just crazy about this little town. (Exit.)

Pres.: What d'you say, gintlemin?

Knot: Miss Flash suits me.

Supt.: She was quite careless in the use of her English.

Pres.: It sorta struck me that way. I believe Miss Wise is the one fur us.

Secy.: I think that's right; you say so, and I kin see the Supt. thinks so.

Knot: Miss Flash is more up-to-date.

Pres.: Are you ready to vote? (All nod assent). All in favor of Miss Wise, stand. (Secy. rises). All in favor of Miss Flash, stand. (Knot rises). (Immediately president rises.) Supt. Leadum, the vote is UNANIMOUS for Miss Wise—

Knot: How's that?—I—

Pres.: Supt., Miss Wise is elected. Write 'er and tell 'er she's the one for us. (Supt. exit) It's very agreeable that we all agree, but we know the gooduns when we see 'em.

THE ENGLISH PARADE

*“As 1918 was a year of parades the English Drive closed with a parade on Friday. The organization for this event was simple but effective. Each English class was made a unit of the parade, and all preparations were made during the English class-period. This created great interest and activity in the English classes without disturbing the other classes. Practically every pupil in the school was thus included in one “feature” of the parade, and there was no duplication of activities.

“A list of features was prepared by the teacher chairman of the parade, and each class selected one to carry out. The other teachers in the building were assigned to the English teachers as assistants in the work of preparation. Thus every teacher was called into service. Sometimes two or more classes joined in presenting one “feature.” One of the older boys, a home guard, suggested that the parade be organized on military lines, each class being led by a captain who should act as drill sergeant. The suggestion was acted upon; the young home guard was appointed grand marshal; captains were elected by classes; and the grand marshal drilled the captains before school at 7:30 a. m. After two weeks the captains were ready to take their classes out on the lawn or paved street for drill during class-period. Each class was allowed two drill-periods. There was no confusion or license, as everyone took the matter seriously.

Caps of the school colors, red and white, were made of crepe paper by members of classes. These were to be worn in the march by all the pupils, unless they had special head dresses. This was a very effective feature of the parade. Banners for each division were made of the same shape, size, and color, white with red lettering. The procession was headed by the American flag and the East High English Drive banner. Then followed the “Shock troops,” bearing white and red pennants; then the Death Battalion, girls in white middies; then Uncle Sam and the Goddess of Liberty, followed by the Patriotic Division. Next came Good English, a white-robed queen, followed by Bad English, represented by two strapping youths in chains; in turn followed All Americans, Business English, the Library, the History Division, Latin Citizens, the Algebra group led by Euclid, bearing aloft a real “square on the hypotenuse;” and the Parts of Speech, in orderly array. These were followed by representations and representatives of all the school clubs: the Splash Club, Tennis Club, Hi-Y Club, Girls' Club, the ORIENT (the school paper), and the CARDINAL (the Senior publication). Large delegations from the eighteen grade schools in the district followed. Bringing up the rear and

as a grand climax came the Lord High Executioner with a mighty ax, and after him the fateful "block," marked "Wooley." These were followed by a rabble, the whole tribe of Bad English: Poor Grammar, the Slang Family, Hackneyed Expressions, all led by a veritable slattern—Gum-chewing Liz. After these abominable creatures came their tombstones which were to be placed on the university campus seventeen blocks away. Some of the epitaphs were as follows:

SLANG

Remember, friends, as you pass by,
As you are now so once was I;
As I am now so you will be.
Prepare for death and follow me.
Here lie I GOT and YOU SEEN.
Long may their ashes rest.
I GOT of the English week died,
YOU SEEN by East's request.
TRY AND fought a losing fight.
TRY TO put him out of sight.
TRY AND'S quite under the weather
TRY TO'S with us now forever.

At the very end came a band of white-robed dancing maidens who fittingly closed the procession. The line formed at ten o'clock (no school that day). The procession marched through the business streets and then to the university campus where the line of march wound back and forth in lines doubling and redoubling, a very impressive and brilliant sight. Pupils paused at the campus knoll in front of the library building and placed the tombstones, while the dancers danced a joyful burial dance. After the ceremony the line of march was taken up again to Northrup Field, where the deans of the Colleges of Education, Engineering, Law, and Science, and Literature and the Arts addressed the pupils on the value of good English. At twelve o'clock the exercises were over.

The whole week was a great success. Every pupil in the school took part; the order was excellent; and all the pupils felt that they were doing something worth while and at the same time were having a 'good time'."

*The English Journal, May, 1919.

PLACARDS, SLOGANS, POSTERS, TAGS

Placards, slogans, posters, and tags are all useful devices for announcing plans, and enlisting interest as well as "following-up" the Better English Week Campaign. The campaigners must not forget that while the purpose of a war campaign was to bring things to a climax, collect money and quit, the purpose of an English Campaign is to stir interest to the same height but "collection" day never ends.

In our own campaigns we made use of only two slogans, "Watch your English" and "Better English Pays." There was no limit as to the types of

posters used—some for announcements, some for calling attention to definite errors and others for summarizing results of the campaign at times. Many of our students did not forget the heroic speech of the young man who announced sixty-eight errors in the use of the preposition, "like" registered by a class in a certain number of days and his follow-up speech a week later in which he reported a loss of one error, only sixty-seven having been registered the second week. The wholesomely joking way in which the campaign was conducted was the forerunner of a continued interest not to be disparaged. Some of the posters that proved most popular were:

A "Cut out" doll named SAW and on the other side two "Cut-outs" named HAVE SEEN. Below SAW, the sentence "I stand alone;" below HAVE SEEN, "We Stand Together."

A row of Campbell Soup Cherubs pursued by a Dutch Sapolio woman with the sentence, "Chase out the bad." Below another row of cherubs following a brownie ringing a bell and the sentence, "Ring in the good."

A little boy holding in his arms a struggling kitten with the label, "He doesn't like it." In the corner is a tiny mouse with the label, "He don't."

The picture of a saw took the place of the word "Saw" while below was the expression, "I seen him in small letters."

A collection of canned fruits was placarded, "It looks AS IF it were good," not, "It looks like it were good."

The wearing of tags seems to be of value only during the week of the campaign. All who wore tags permitted themselves to be freely corrected. We found no other use for the tags than the public recognition of the hearty cooperation by all those who were willing to be tagged.

Finally, a campaign with a "follow-up" means much hard work and detailed organization but as a young man at school said, "One can teach and teach grammar but it doesn't stick. A single campaign means more in results than weeks of the ordinary drill. "And after all, isn't our task one of making things stick?"

