

method in detail will be published in the February News Letter.

**Date for State Dramatic Contest.** There was some discussion on the date for the state dramatic contest at the annual meeting. This year it is scheduled for March 20 (Friday) but the secretary was requested to submit to referendum the preference for the date for this event, with the arguments supplied in favor of the fall and spring dates. Preference Ballot is enclosed. Vote and return to the secretary.

**Judging of Contests.** After a discussion of the judging contests the chairman was authorized, by motion, to appoint a committee to study the problem of judging and to bring in a report with suggestions or recommendations at the next meeting. Mr. M. A. Fischer, Dodgeville (Platteville District) and Mr. Wm. C. Hansen, Oconto (Oshkosh District) were appointed to act with the chairman as such a committee.

**Special Debate Material on Affirmative of the Question.** An address by J. Frank Grimes, President of the Independent Grocers' Alliance, given at the Wisconsin Business Men's Conference on May 26, 1930, will be sent at the earliest possible date in mimeographed form to all schools debating the Chain Store question.

The Department aims to be prepared to supply the very best material available pro and con on debatable questions. It is often true that the proponents of any new practice talk and write more extensively than those adhering to the old regime. Thus more articles (in volume) have perhaps been written and are more easily available for the chain store.

Many of the articles of a general nature prepared by experts in the field of business and economics are basic in

the intelligent study of this question. Some of these articles (not included in the National University Extension Debate Handbook nor in mimeographed form) are included in the Bulletin of the University of Kentucky on Chain Stores and the Ultimate Consumer.

The Department has been able to secure a limited number of copies of this bulletin but in order to place it at the disposal of all teams, must limit the loan period to two weeks. The bulletin is sent to the schools in the order in which they have requested material. The loan period of two weeks will afford an opportunity to copy any parts you wish. Please do not ask for an extension of time on this bulletin. If you feel that the bulletin is especially helpful in your debate, you may remit 65c and retain it. We anticipate that we shall be able to purchase additional copies at this rate for those who wish to purchase them. The regular price is 80c, but a reduction of 20 per cent is allowed on orders of five or more as long as the supply lasts.

**Speech Teachers' Chicago Convention.** Wisconsin teachers of speech are cordially invited to attend the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the National Association of Teachers of Speech at the Hotel Stevens, Chicago, December 29-31. Special sections on Monday devoted to elementary and secondary school problems; on Tuesday and Wednesday sections arranged by subjects on debate, educational dramatics, interpretations, public speaking, speech correction, etc.

Mr. G. E. Densmore of the Michigan High School Forensic League says Michigan will have the largest delegation at this convention. Shall we accept this challenge and enjoy three days of inspirational contact with leaders in our profession?

# WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION NEWS LETTER

Vol. II.

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No. 2

Additional copies available to member schools at five cents each.  
Copies available to other than member schools at ten cents each.

## SCHEDULE FOR DEBATE CONTEST, 1931:

- Dec. 15—latest date for entering debate and dramatic leagues.
- Feb. 7—latest date for first round of district debates and dramatic contests.
- Feb. 14—latest date for second round of district debates and dramatic contests.
- Feb. 28—latest date for semi-final sectional debates and dramatic contests.
- March 12—(Thursday), latest date for sectional debate and dramatic contests.
- March 19—(Thursday), state debate.
- March 20—(Friday), state dramatic contest.

## FOR OTHER FORENSIC CONTESTS:

- March 1—latest date for entering league.
- April 11—latest date for league contests.
- May 1—latest date for district contests.
- May 14 and 15—state contests.

## WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

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Adviser in Dramatics.

## THE SELECTION, PREPARATION AND JUDGING OF DECLAMATORY CONTESTS

Gladys Borchers, Assistant Professor of Speech, University of Wisconsin.

With the close of the debating season, thousands of high school students in the state of Wisconsin will turn to other types of reading and speaking contests. In one of the most popular the speaker presents to an audience a declamation. The term is used by the Forensic Association to mean a story, prose or poetry, of either serious or humorous nature.

The first important consideration when a high school boy or girl decides to enter this contest, is to select appropriate material. Many excellent selections may be secured from the University Extension Division but if, in this collection, a student fails to find exactly what he wants, let him find among the plays, the novels, the short stories, or the poems which he has read, something which he likes. Then let him test it for literary merit. The real test of this is its effect upon the reader. Does he grow to like it better and better as he works with it? Does he see new meanings, new humor, new beauty in each repetition? Is the selection worth doing for its own sake? Is it worth struggling with, worth spending hours in rehearsal? If, after a few readings, it grows empty and meaningless, if the jokes become stale and the sentiment tawdry, have him throw it aside and select another. There are many readings worth his effort; readings with themes that are true to life, with characters that are real.

But not all good literature will please the audience before whom it is to be given, and the audience is a very

important consideration in the success of any public performance. Have the student select some piece of good literature that will hold the attention of an audience made up largely of high school students. The situation described should be within their experience, understanding or imagination. Avoid selections that are over-emotional. Remember that in order to hold an audience there must be variety in situation and in mood.

The third important consideration in choosing material for oral presentation is that as a result the student's speech be improved rather than harmed. There is a great temptation to give the girl with the weak, thin voice a selection in which the main character is a frail child and thus her defect is exaggerated instead of eliminated. To win a declamatory contest is small pay for the injury received by thus capitalizing on a voice difficulty. Rather, let the girl try a selection which requires round, full tones in order that this intensive training in the most impressionable years bring about a lasting voice improvement.

After the selection has been chosen the reader should try to get all of the meaning from the lines. He will discover that a careful study of the material gives him helps for delivery. The following list of suggestions may prove helpful:

1. Find out everything pertinent about the author.
2. Read the entire selection, looking up the meaning and pronunciation of all unfamiliar words.

3. Notice how the author has used punctuation marks to help the reader discover hidden meanings.
4. Look up all Biblical, historical and literary references.
5. Discover how the recognition of a person speaking or listening affects the oral presentation.
6. Paraphrase the entire selection to be sure that no part of the meaning is vague.
7. Read the selection aloud to be sure that the words are grouped according to the meaning.
8. Discover the central idea or theme.
9. Read and ponder upon descriptive passages until your characters and their surroundings are clear in every detail. Remember that your audience will see the pictures only if you yourself see them clearly.
10. Catch the dominant mood of the selection.
11. Discover whether the rhythm contributes to the thought.

When the meaning of the selection is perfectly clear, the student must decide what bodily action and what change in voice will best give that meaning to the audience. He must decide whether the thought can be given with more precision if he remain in the role of reader as he speaks to his audience, or if he impersonate another character as he speaks to his audience. If the former is true the bodily action and voice change of the various characters will be merely suggestive. The reader will never entirely break from the story telling audience contact. If, on the other hand, the latter is decided upon, the reader will try to change his bodily action and his voice until he sounds

and looks as near like the characters he is portraying as possible. In deciding upon his method, his criterion will always be: How can I best give to the audience all of the thought? And that method is best which gives most of the thought and gives it most accurately and precisely.

In order to memorize the selection, let the student go over it as a whole. Do not have him learn it line by line. He must read it over and over from beginning to end. He must read it always with understanding. It is more economical to read for many short periods at regular intervals than a few long periods. It is also helpful to read it thoughtfully just before going to sleep. These suggestions usually result in memorization with very little effort.

Speaking is such a complex process that the declamatory contest judge has great difficulty in dividing the performance into its elements. He is forced to judge largely by his general impression of the student's grasp of subject matter and his skill in giving that thought to the audience. After all, the real test of good speaking is just that! Did the speaker make his listeners understand and feel exactly what he wanted them to understand and feel? In determining this, the judge will not only watch the speaker, but he will watch the response of the audience to that speaker. If the speaker succeeds in accomplishing his purpose, it is because he knows the meaning of the selection; because his posture, movement and gesture help him depict the thought accurately; because his voice in quality, volume, rate and pitch is at all times appropriate; because his pronunciation, enunciation and articulation do not call attention to themselves; and because the declamation has been selected with wisdom.

## SPEECH AIDS

Because of numerous requests for a list of reference books in all fields of speech, the following minimum list is suggested by the faculty of the Department of Speech.

### MINIMUM CLASSIFIED LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ON VARIOUS PHASES OF SPEECH. RECOMMENDED BY THE FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH, THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

(A more comprehensive list will be supplied by the Forensic Association to member schools upon request; ten cents to others.)

November, 1930.

#### I. BEGINNING COURSES

##### A. For the pupil

WOOLBERT, C. H., and WEAVER, A. T. *Better Speech*. Harcourt, Brace, and Company, New York, 1922, 463 pp. Revised 1929. A comprehensive textbook of speech training for secondary schools.

##### B. For the teacher

BLANTON, Smiley, and BLANTON, Margaret Gray. *Speech Training for Children*. The Century Company, New York, 1919, 261 pp. For parents and teachers.

CABLE, W. A. *Cultural and Scientific Speech Education Today*. Expression Company, Boston, 1930, 206 pp. A collection of papers and addresses covering the various phases of speech education.

DRUMMOND, A. M. *Course of Study in Speech Training and Public Speaking for Secondary Schools*. Century Company, 1925, 291 pp. Compilation of thirty articles by different authors.

O'NEILL, J. M. and WEAVER, A. T. *The Elements of Speech*. Longmans, Green and Company, New York, 1926, 477 pp. A textbook which covers beginning college work in the field of speech.

#### II. DEBATE

##### A. For the pupil

IMMEL, R. K. and WHIPPLE, R. H. *Debating for High Schools*. Ginn & Company, New York, 1929, 251 pp. An elementary textbook for high school students.

WILLHOFT, W. O. *Modern Debate Practice*. Prentice-Hall Inc., New York, 1929, 339 pp. A simple discussion of debating technique and tactics.

#### III. DECLAMATION

ASHLEY, Winston H. *Fifty Orations That Have Won Prizes in Public Speaking Contests*. Noble and Noble, New York, 1928, 390 pp. Fifty recent college orations that have won distinction in college oratorical contests. Examples of present day student compositions.

#### IV. DRAMATICS

CRAFTON, A. and ROYER, J. *Acting, A Book for the Beginner*. F. S. Crofts, New York, 1928, 318 pp. A readable summary of the fundamental rules in amateur acting.

CRAFTON, A. and ROYER, J. *Play Production*. F. S. Crofts, New York, 1930, 314 pp. The ABC's of directing, mounting, and acting.

#### V. INTERPRETATIVE READING

##### A. Books devoted mainly to theory.

WOOLBERT, C. H. and NELSON, S. E. *Art of Interpretative Speech*, The. F. S. Crofts, New York, 1927, 385 pp. Text and examples for practice.

##### B. Collections of material.

JOHNSON, Gertrude E. *Modern Literature for Oral Interpretation*. The Century Company, New York, 1920, 418 pp. Revised, 1930. A collection of material of various types, together with suggestions on contests and judging.

SMITH, W. P. *Prose and Verse for Speaking and Reading*. Harcourt, Brace, and Company, New York, 1930. 382 pp. A large number of classified brief selections. Biographical notes on authors.

#### VI. PARLIAMENTARY LAW

HALL, A. B. and STURGIS, A. F. *Textbook on Parliamentary Law*. Macmillan Company, New York, 1923. A textbook and not merely a manual on parliamentary procedure.

#### VII. PHONETICS

RIPMAN, Walter. *Good Speech*. E. P. Dutton & Company, New York City, 1924, 88 pp. A treatment in simple form of the most important phonetic principles.

#### VIII. PSYCHOLOGY OF SPEECH

HIGGINS, H. H. *Influencing Behavior Through Speech*. Expression Company, Boston, 1930, 346 pp. A restatement of the theory of persuasion in terms of modern social psychology.

#### IX. PUBLIC SPEAKING

##### A. Textbooks dealing with speech composition and delivery.

BRIGANCE, W. N. *The Spoken Word*. F. S. Crofts & Company, New York, 1927, 329 pp. A treatment of the whole problem of speech composition.

##### B. Model Speeches.

BRIGANCE, W. N. *Classified Speech Models*. F. S. Crofts, New York, 1928, 413 pp. Fifty-seven complete modern speeches classified on the basis of the occasion.

#### X. SPEECH DISORDERS

FLETCHER, J. M. *The Problem of Stuttering*. Longmans, Green & Company, New York, 1928, 362 pp. A thorough and modern treatment of the subject from the point of view of psychology.

#### XI. VOICE TRAINING

MILLS, Wesley. *Voice Production in Singing and Speaking*. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1913, 293 pp. A reference book on the scientific principles of voice production.

#### XII. PERIODICALS

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF SPEECH. Business Manager: G. E. Densmore, Department of Speech, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Published by the National Association of Teachers of Speech. Each number contains about one hundred and fifty pages. Departments: *Leading Articles* on all phases of speech work; *Editorials*; *The Forum*—short professional discussions, announcements, etc.; *News and Notes*; *Periodicals*—a reference list with brief notes on articles carried in other journals dealing with affairs in this field; and *Book Reviews*.

THE SPEECH BULLETIN, published semi-annually by the committee on speech training in secondary schools of The National Association of Teachers of Speech. Bus. Mgr. G. E. Densmore, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Vol. II, No. 1, High School Debating, 60 pp. Price 50 cents; Vol. II, No. II, The High School Play, 60 pp. Price 50 cents.

## DEBATE

The general interest in this year's question and the abundance of reference material have induced several schools to enter debate for the first time. If you have not already decided, think it over carefully. No other activity affords a greater opportunity for citizenship training. Plan a debate for a community club or parent-teacher association.

A loan package library on the Chain Store question will be sent to your school upon request. One copy of the Handbook will be sent by the Board to all member schools debating the question. Additional copies may be purchased at fifty cents each.

December 15 is the deadline for entrance into a state debate league.

Begin to plan now to attend the state debate to be held in the State Capitol in March.

### Debating Plan at the Wausau High School.

"We intend to have a Junior-Senior debate this year and possibly a Sophomore-Junior debate. I have divided the twenty-eight debaters, who came out for debate, into eight different teams and scheduled them into sixteen debates which are being judged by myself and two faculty members, or citizens from about town who are interested. Each of the three judges is asked to grade each debater. These grades are then averaged for each debater and the four highest from each class are in this way chosen to represent their respective classes. Each debater has four debates at least and these constitute the so-called try-out. The debates are divided into four series, one series taking place each week. That gives each debater one week to make improvements for the next debate. I criticize each individual debater after each debate. I keep

the criticisms in a large note book. At the end of each debate I refer back to the criticisms of the preceding debate for each debater and call attention to any improvement or lack of improvement."

Nicholas M. Yaworski, Coach.

Send in to the secretary a report of debating or other forensic activities in your school. Your experience may prove very helpful to others.

### Reduced Railroad Fare.

The February News Letter will carry a detailed announcement on railroad fares granted by a number of carriers operating in Wisconsin. The fare will be granted for the period from January 1 to July 1, 1931, for groups of ten or more. A single fare for the round trip will be available to all high school groups who comply with the requirements which will be set forth in detail in the February News Letter.

The special fare has been granted for a trial period only. The fare will mean a substantial saving to the high schools,—public, private and parochial,—of Wisconsin. The special fare must show an increased use of the railroads, which also means an increased revenue for the trial period, if it is to become effective for the future.

High schools are asked to study carefully the announcement which will be made in the February News Letter. All high schools are urged to plan to use the railroads for group trips in order to make this experimental fare a success and thereby assure its continuance for the future.

Remember—A single fare for the round trip for high school groups of ten or more.

## NEWS ITEMS

**Election of Board Members.** Wm. C. Hansen, Oconto (Oshkosh District) and C. W. Dodge, Stanley (Eau Claire District) were re-elected as members of the Board to represent the two districts respectively. F. C. Bray of Fort Atkinson was elected to succeed A. R. Page in the Whitewater District. Mr. Page found it impossible, because of other duties, to continue on the Board.

**Registration.** No district has yet reached 100 per cent membership, although the enrollment this year to date exceeds last year's registration at this time.

**Amendment to the Constitution.** Please check and return promptly the proposed constitutional amendment.

**Reports on Contests.** Blanks will be supplied for reports on all contests. The members are urged to return all reports to the secretary immediately after any program—school, league, sub-district, district or sectional.

**Participation in Contests.** By ruling of the Board, if in any contest, the contestant winning first place does not wish to enter the next round, the contestant winning second place shall be eligible to represent said school, league, district or section as the case may be; if the second place winner does not wish to compete, the contestant ranking third shall be eligible, providing, however, that there is sufficient time between the refusal and the next contest for re-scheduling.

**Use of Costumes and Stage Properties in Contests.** By ruling of the

Board, any contestant in declamation, reading or oratory is prohibited from the use of costumes or stage properties of any kind other than a chair. To avoid any difficulty or misunderstanding in regard to the type of selection, the Board suggests that the selections furnished by the Association be used.

**Refund for State Contest.** By ruling of the Board, if the funds of the Association permit, schools participating in state contests shall be reimbursed for traveling expenses in accordance with the following plan:

1. Ascertain the average of the mileage traveled by the contestants to state contest.

2. The contestants traveling above the average shall be reimbursed at the rate of the railway tariff for the mileage traveled above the average.

**Statement of Debate Question.** This year unusual precaution was taken in regard to the wording of the question. The National University Extension Committee selecting this question agreed to the statement: Resolved: That chain stores are detrimental to the best interests of the American public. The special committee consisted of Baird of Iowa, Cunningham of Northwestern, O'Neill of Michigan, Kay of West Virginia, and Buehler of Kansas. They were fairly unanimous in feeling that the expression "detrimental to the best interests of the American public" gave greater opportunity for a discussion of the economic and social advantages and disadvantages.

**Ranking and Re-ranking.** Because there seems to be some misunderstanding in ranking and re-ranking at contests, an article explaining the