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SUNG THEIR LESSONS

Geography Set to Music an Old Time Teaching Scheme.

A PLAN OF YANKEE ORIGIN.

One of the Most Popular Aids in the List Used to Interest the Pupils in Their Studies Was "Auld Lang Syne"—"Bonny Doon" Also Liked.

Singing geography was a popular fad in the educational line in New York in olden days, particularly in up state school districts. It was of Yankee origin. It was never made part of the common school system of the state, but was taught outside the regular hours.

A set of wall maps known as Pelton's outline maps was used. There were no names of geographical divisions or places on them. The instructor would go over the map on which the lesson was found, pointing out with a pointing rod the different countries, cities, rivers, lakes or whatever might be the subject in hand, and at the same time the name of each division, place or body of water would be mentioned in song. The teacher, usually a man, would lead the class chorus as he pointed, and if the subject happened to be political divisions the song would run like this, to the tune of "Bonny Doon":

Let North America be first
In our descriptive rhyme rehearsed,
Its northern bound the arctic waves,
Its east the Atlantic ocean waves,
The gulf of Mexico we see
Upon its southern boundary.

Its western and southwestern sides
Are washed by the Pacific tides.
The geographical verses were contained in the pupils' text book called "The Key to Pelton's New and Improved Series of Outline Maps." Among other things the following is found in the preface of one of these old time volumes:

"With respect to the versification, it is more necessary to say that the design has been to put all the important geographical localities on the globe, in connection with much valuable matter, in a form which can be most easily committed to memory, and it is confidently believed that the exhilarating effect of harmonious sounds will greatly facilitate the acquisition of this knowledge, and care has been taken that none but popular and approved airs be inserted in the work."

"Auld Lang Syne" appears to have been regarded as an especially "popular and approved" air and was often used. In the very first lesson the pupils were taught to describe the earth by singing the following to this tune:

The earth is a large ball or globe
Whose surface has been found
Three-fourths with ocean waves submerged
And but one-fourth dry ground.

Two hundred millions of square miles
Earth's surface does embrace.
Eight hundred million people here
All find a dwelling place.

Tongue twisting names did not embarrass the geographical versifier, although the enunciation of all the pupils probably was not perfect when, for example, in the lesson on Asia they sang to the air of "Bruce's Address" such lines as these:

Now in modulations sweet
Asia's rivers we repeat,
Obi first in Russia great,
Irish river next.

Lost in sand behold Helmund,
Thy northward seek Yarkund;
Be not turbid Oxus shunned;
Sihon river see.

Ural river next in place,
Attruck and Koor river trace;
Kizil Irnak then embrace
In our melody.

There were thirty-one states in the Union when singing geography was in vogue, and the pupils were taught to bound each of them in verse. California was then the newest state, having been admitted in 1850; was the last on the list, and its boundaries were thus defined:

On California's northern side vast Oregon is placed,
Both Utah and New Mexico upon the east are traced,
Upon its southern borders next may Mexico be found,
And broad Pacific's sparkling waves compose its western bound.

In thirty-four stanzas set to the tune of "Bonny Doon" the geography class would make a tour of Europe and glean bits of information about various countries and cities visited. The tour would start in this fashion:

Now be our geographic rhymes
Transferred to European climes.
The grand divisions first we teach
With the metropolis of each.

Norway, a region bleak and cold,
By Christiania is controlled,
Sweden, that Charles the hero bred,
Takes Stockholm for its chief and head

Russia in proud expansion sits
And to St. Petersburg submits,
Austria, with its imperial crown,
Vienna takes for its chief town.

Turkey, in southern Europe placed,
Is by Constantinople graced,
Greece, once for arts and arms renowned,
With glorious Athens still is crowned.

Thus the geography pupils sang on through the list of European nations and capitals.—New York Sun.

Enlivened the Play.
"Monte Cristo" was playing to a crowded house in a New York theater. In a box sat a man who had looked on the wine when it was red. When Monte mounted the rock in the sea and exclaimed, "The world is mine!" the man in the box shouted, "What'll you take for Hoboken?"—Brooklyn Life.

Silence is a figure of speech, unanswerable, short, cold, but terribly severe.—Parker.

FRICITION.

What Causes It and What Would Happen Without It.

What is friction really caused by? Why will two things in contact not slip over each other easily? It is because every substance known to science has teeth; microscopic, it is true, but still teeth. The result, then, is obvious. If we shove a book across a table the teeth of the book interlock with the teeth of the table just as cog-wheels do, and the push has to be strong enough either to bend them enough or to break them off for the motion to continue.

It has actually been observed in a microscope that if the push is only a slight one and moves the book only a short distance, on the pressure of the hand being removed the book actually jumps back to its former position. This action is a slight bending of the two sets of teeth, only not far enough for them to lose their relative positions, and their elasticity on being released makes the book fly back.

It has been shown that this friction is not so much between different bodies as between bodies of the same material. One industrial application of this is the bearings for steel axles. They are made of brass instead of steel.

In some things we want as much friction as possible and in others as little. The former is illustrated in the friction between an engine wheel and the track, and sometimes being poured on the track to increase the friction. The latter case is illustrated in all bearings where rotating metal is in contact with stationary metal, sometimes ball bearings being substituted, thus lessening the friction.

Many peculiar things would happen if there was no friction. All screws in wood would immediately twist backward rapidly and shoot out into the air; trains could not run save on cogged rails, which would probably be necessary above as well as below, thus having four rails instead of two; buildings would tumble down, and new ones could not be built unless molded in place like Edison's or else riveted together. People would have to wear shoes with long spikes in them and then have to be careful, for dirt grains would slip over one another easily and would act like deep sand. But one great thing would happen—machines would run at 100 per cent efficiency, would give out as much energy as was put into them.—Lawrence Hodges in New York Tribune.

THE SPEAKER'S MACE.

Ancient Emblem Used in the House of Representatives.

With all its dignity, its senatorial courtesy and the forms and ceremonies that always are observed, the senate is far behind the house of representatives in the matter of one antiquated piece of furniture. The senate has no mace. Now, a mace is not much in the way of furniture. It is a silver eagle mounted upon a staff around which are bands of silver.

This mace is always an emblem of the house of representatives. It is the duty of one employee to look after it. Just before a session of the house begins he takes it from the office of the sergeant-at-arms into the house chamber, and as soon as the speaker's gavel falls he inserts it in a socket in a stone pillar at the right of the speaker's chair. The mace remains there while the house is in session and is taken out and stood beside its pedestal when the house is in committee of the whole. When the house adjourns the mace is carried back to the office of the sergeant-at-arms.

This ancient emblem has not a thing to do with the order of business of the house, save as one of the old time regulations that are continued. When the house is turbulent an officer seizes the mace and walks through the aisles. Only once or twice when the speaker failed to preserve order have I seen an officer seize the mace and walk through the house, waving it backward and forward. Possibly the sight of it brought members to their senses and they retired to their seats. At all events, that is about the only real use for the mace that I ever have observed.—Washington Cor. St. Louis Star.

Sensitiveness of the Phone.

Preece has calculated that an audible sound is produced in a telephone by a current of 6 to 10.13 amperes, and Pellat has calculated that a sound is produced by a difference of potential between the two stations amounting to only one two-thousandth volt. These statements give some idea of the great sensitiveness of the modern telephone, but the sensitiveness of the human ear, which perceives the invisible vibration of the telephone diaphragm, is no less remarkable.—Washington Star.

In No Hurry.

"Too many people," said a clergyman, "regard their religion as did the little boy in the jam closet. His mother pounced on him suddenly. He stood on tiptoe, larding jam with both hands from the jam pot to his mouth."
"Oh, Jacky," his mother cried, "and only last night you prayed to be made a saint!"
"His face, an expressionless mask of jam, turned toward her."
"Yes, but not till after I'm dead," he explained.

A Matter of Economy.

Mrs. Necessity—Mercy! You let your girl off every afternoon?
Neighbor—Yes, indeed; it is such a saving. The more she is away the fewer dishes she breaks.—Illustrated Bits.

Sloth never arrived at the attainment of a good wish.—Cervantes.

BIRTH OF A VOLCANO.

Nature's Process In Forming a Mountain of Lava.

THE FORCE OF AN ERUPTION.

Upheaval That Destroyed the East Indian Island of Krakatoa In 1883 Propelled an Air Wave Three and a Half Times Round the Earth.

Though volcanoes are often spoken of as burning mountains, they do not burn at all, nor, in the proper sense of the word, are they mountains at all. A volcano is really a flaw in the crust of the earth through which the fierce glowing heat lying below the crust has managed to burst a hole. Through this hole great floods of melted rock spout up. Some volcanoes work at intervals; some are in eruption all the time.

As the melted rock jets up into the air and falls it naturally builds itself into a mountain round the hole. The next eruption has to burst its way through the heart of that mountain. The chimney it spouts through is usually called "the pipe."

Sometimes an eruption is so fierce that when the lava (another name for melted rock) spouts out it is burst into bits. When it falls it is sometimes as fine as dust, sometimes the size of cinders. Most volcanoes, indeed, are simply gigantic cinder heaps.

When the force is not so great the lava in the pipe simply bubbles over and flows down the sides of the mountain, exactly as porridge boils over the edge of a pot. As lava is liquid, the slope of a lava volcano (or lava cone, as it is usually called) is always very gentle. Falling cinders, on the other hand, pile themselves up quite steeply. A lava cone, then, is always less steep than a cinder cone.

And a volcano never burns. What looks like flame is only the glow of the white hot lava on the clouds of steam. The more steam there is forcing its way up the pipe the more the lava bubbles, just as in the case of the porridge. If the pressure of steam is very great, then you have the lava blown to bits and falling as cinders, while the mighty clouds of steam rise high above the mountain. It is this steam that is mistaken for smoke.

Sometimes a cone sends out lava and cinders alternately, so that you have a great mountain of cinders bound together by layers and flows of lava.

These walls of lava are due to the fact that sometimes more lava wants to come up the pipe than the pipe will hold, so the lava bursts its way out through weak spots in the sides of the mountain. Etna has no fewer than 700 of these cones on its slopes. One of them, Monte Rossi, is a hill in itself, being 450 feet high. Indeed, a model of Etna looks as if it were covered with pimples.

When Etna is really roused it is far more dangerous than Vesuvius. In 1169 it nearly destroyed the city of Catania, killing 15,000 people. In 1693 it found its pipe so inconveniently small that it had to crack one of its sides. This crack was no less than twelve miles long. At the bottom white hot lava could dimly be seen through the clouds of steam. In 1755 millions of gallons of boiling water were shot out of the Val del Bove, which is a great circular pit on the slope of the mountain, four or five miles in diameter, its sides being cliffs nearly a mile high in places.

The greatest volcanic eruption ever known took place in the East Indies in 1883. The story makes almost incredible reading. The volcanic island of Krakatoa commenced proceedings by blowing half of itself into thin air. From the opening no less than a cubic mile of rock was shot out.

A column of steam and lava dust rose into the air to a height six times as great as that of Mount Everest. It spread and spread till for hundreds of miles around the air was black as midnight. Sounds as of distant cannonading were heard 2,900 miles off.

Sea waves fifty feet high killed 35,000 people and were felt as far off as California. Instead of an island half a mile high there was now a hole a quarter of a mile deep. The shock of the eruption sent air waves three and a half times around the earth. The fine dust in the upper atmosphere added for months afterward a strange glow to the sunsets in England and did not vanish completely for three years.

The exact cause of the eruptions is not known for certain. A popular theory is that they are caused by water getting in to the white hot mass which is supposed to lie under the outer crust of the earth. And it is certainly a fact that practically all volcanoes are close to the edge of the sea.

Some lava flows slowly, some quickly. Vesuvius in 1805 sent out a lava stream that in four minutes had reached a spot four miles off. The size of a lava stream is sometimes gigantic. In 1783 Skaftar Jokull in Iceland emitted two streams at one time. One was forty miles long by seven miles broad, the other fifty miles by fifteen. The average depth of both was about a hundred feet.

Lava cools very, very slowly, except on the surface, which cools at once. It is an extremely bad conductor of heat. Twenty years after a stream of lava was sent out from Jerullo, in Mexico, tourists could light their cigars through chinks in the surface, and the surface had been cold for twenty years. In 1823 a layer of snow many feet thick was found under a layer of Vesuvian lava. It was still unmelted and is probably there still.—Pearson's Weekly.

Scared into Sound Health.
Mr. B. F. Kelley, Springfield, Ill., writes: "A year ago I began to be troubled with my kidneys and bladder, which grew worse and worse until I became alarmed at my condition. I suffered also with dull heavy headaches and the action of my bladder was annoying and painful. I read of Foley Kidney Pills and after taking them a few weeks the headaches left me, the action of my bladder became normal, and I was free of all distress." A. McMillen.

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