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# Let them choose the WORLD'S HEROES

By  
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WILLIAM PENN, political idealist; Simon Newcomb, mathematician and astronomer; and Grover Cleveland, twice President of the United States, were those last elected to New York University's Hall of Fame. That item in itself was not front-page news, but it contains a unique suggestion for high-school history clubs and classes.

Why not capture and stimulate the intense interest of high-school students in biography by establishing your own Hall of Fame elected by popular vote of the history club or classes? This could be done at the close of a year's or a term's work as a means of review; it could be done as a part of a special unit on historical biography; or it could be carried out as a special club program.

The Hall of Fame idea is flexible enough to suggest many possibilities. It might be restricted to one particular field of history, such as Ancient or Modern History. It might be confined to one period, such as the Middle Ages, or the Colonial period in American History. It could even be limited



EDITOR'S NOTE: Readers will remember Mr. Kenworthy's article, "American History in Verse", in the November, 1937, issue, and "I Hear America Singing", on the use of period-songs in history work, in the December issue. In this article he discusses an interesting project for history classes or clubs. The author is now head of the history department of the Friends' Central School, Overbrook (Philadelphia), Pennsylvania.

to a state or a smaller locality, if desirable.

The students should be given the opportunity to draw up their own rules, or urged to pattern them after the rules for election to some more famous Hall of Fame, such as Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol or the Hall of Fame at New York University. Nominating speeches would be quite appropriate, and if the coöperation of the English department could be obtained, an essay contest on the lives of those nominated or elected could be promoted.

The coöperation of other departments need not be limited to a minor role, however. The project could be made more valuable by soliciting the interest of the entire school, with each department presenting the outstanding contributors to civilization in its field. Greater breadth and greater interest would result thereby.

One can conceive of such a scheme carrying on from year to year, with one or two candidates added annually—by popular vote of the entire student body, by popular vote of the history department, or by a particular class.

In many schools it is a custom for groups of students to buy one picture annually for the school or for their classrooms. That might well be the picture of the World Hero chosen for the current year. In that way a real Hall of Fame or Collection of World Heroes would be begun.

Such inclusive schemes are not fantastic when one recalls the popularity of the World Hero contest conducted a few years ago by the National Council for the Prevention of War, assisted by a distinguished Com-

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1938



mittee of Award, including David Starr Jordan, Glenn Frank, Parker Moon, John Ryan and Stephen Wise.

Six thousand eight hundred schools in thirty countries elected as their World Heroes Louis Pasteur, Abraham Lincoln, Christopher Columbus, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Woodrow Wilson, Florence Nightingale, Joan of Arc, Socrates, Johann Gutenberg, David Livingston, and George Stephenson. These selections excluded founders of religions and persons then living, and were based on nobility of character, fearless and self-sacrificing devotion to a great cause, and constructive work of a permanent character for humanity.

Plans for such a Hall of Fame would necessarily be based upon the desires of those participating, but the sponsor of such a plan could obtain valuable background materials from various places.

For instance, he could communicate with the Director of the Hall of Fame, 745 5th Avenue, New York City. A more conveniently available reference, for details on the Hall of Fame of New York University, is the World Almanac. A second valuable source of suggestions is the portfolio of pictures and essays from the World Hero Contest conducted by the National Council for the Prevention of War, Washington, D.C.

Textbooks will be the main source of information for the groundwork of such a contest, but they will need to be supple-

mented by information from such reference books as the Encyclopedia Britannica and the Dictionary of American Biography.

More fascinating material can be found in collections of biography, such as Mary Hazelton Wade's *Master Builders*, Edwin Wildman's *Famous Leaders of Industry*, and Sarah Knowles Bolton's *Lives of Girls Who Became Famous*. All of these are particularly good for seventh- and eighth-grade groups. Joseph Cottler and Haym Jaffe's *Heroes of Civilization*, Floyd L. Darrow's *Masters of Science and Invention*, and Ariadne Gilbert's *More Than Conquerors* are especially recommended for the ninth grade. Gamaliel Bradford's many excellent volumes of collective biography are quite suitable for use by older students.

Two pamphlets of value to the teacher assembling books for such a contest are *Leisure Reading* and *Home Reading*, published by the National Council of Teachers of English. Both are exhaustive lists of books for high-school students, briefly but succinctly annotated.

Two similar pamphlets of value to the history teacher are Norma Olin Ireland's *Historical Biographies* (for junior and senior high schools, universities, and colleges), and Florence H. and Howard Eugene Wilson's *Bibliography of American Biography*, (selected and annotated for high schools) both obtainable from the McKinley Publishing Company.



### Classroom "Broadcasts"

Fifteen-minute "radio broadcasts" which do not go on the air are part of the activities of social-studies classes of the Sequoia Union High School, Redwood City, Calif. They are simpler to produce than playlets, and because they are presented in radio program form, prove more interesting to pupils. In addition to original scripts prepared by pupils, the school uses the scripts of actual radio programs that deal with subjects being studied by the class. One source of free ready-made scripts is the Radio Script Exchange, U. S. Office of Education.

### England's Union of Teachers

The National Union of Teachers of England is 68 years old and represents over 80 per cent of all the teachers in England. . . . As a result of the Union's work, in the past 10 years only two teachers in our opinion have been wrongfully dismissed. The Union pays such teachers their full salary from the date of dismissal, and continues to pay it, if they are unable to get work again, as long as they live.—ELSIE V. PARKER, President, National Union of Teachers of England, in an address at the American Federation of Teachers convention.