THE WRITING CONTEST

THREE BOOKS WILL BE AWARDED AS PRIZES EACH WEEK FOR THE BEST LETTERS

WRITING CONTEST

Arrangement of papers:

Subject.
Name.
Address. School.
Grade. Age.

There was a decided slump in the short stories this week, not nearly so many being received as usual. Consequently you'll have to make up for lost time on the new subject. The opening installment is given below. Remember that originality wins and don't make your stories too long. Get them into the office by Wednesday at the latest.

CONTEST STORY

Class elections were at hand. The real voting did not begin until the morrow, but the boys and girls were busy electioneering ahead of time. There were two prime favorites whose names were up for class president——

AWARDED A PRIZE

When Charlie and Dick Saved the Passengers

JACK G. NORTH JR.,
Mountain View. Mountain View School, Eighth Grade. Age 15

The sinking schooner was now a mere blot in the distance. Over in the east was apparent the first glimmer of new dawn, and the two boys marooned upon the fragile raft looked about for a sign of land, but no such sight greeted their eyes.

These boys, Dick and Charlie, were passengers of the lumber schooner Maria, bound for San Francisco from Portland, Ore. The schooner had encountered a severe storm while on the way down and had sprung a leak. The pumps were kept going, but to no avail. The crew and captain had at last taken to the boats, completely forgetting the boys. So the only thing for them to do was to build a raft out of the lumber on board. After making this they tied themselves to it and waited for a large wave to wash them overboard. Soon the wave swept over the deck, carrying off the raft with the boys on it. They had drifted about in the dark, they knew not where, and with the coming of dawn no land was to be seen. Suddenly off to the west a loud whistle was heard. Five minutes later a steamer was seen to leeward. By dint of much hard work and difficulty the boys kept the raft in the steamer's course. Half an hour later they were picked up. The steamer proved to be the Emily J. Snyder, bound for San Francisco from Nome Alaska. The boys explained their situation and were cared for.

Next morning the Emily encountered rougher weather. All of a sudden it hit a hidden rock and the shock was felt from stem to stern. The few passengers were panic stricken and threatened to man the lifeboats against the captain's will. In the meantime the boys had made acquaintances among the passengers. One of these was an aviator who had shipped at Portland, Ore., with his biplane. The boys had driven an aeroplane once, that of a friendly neighbor who had reluctantly given his consent to their experiment. Consequently they were interested in the mechanism of the airship, which Mr. Langdon, the aviator, explained fully to them.

When the shock came Mr. Langdon fell forward over a coil of rope and broke his arm. He was quickly taken to his room, where his arm was cared for. The boat was seriously damaged, a big hole being stove in her bow. The pumps were broken and the lifeboats were lost in attempts to launch them. Help was nowhere to be seen, and so it looked as if the boys would have to lose their lives after all. An idea suddenly took shape in Dick's head, and, telling Charlie about it, he hurried to Mr. Langdon's stateroom. The idea was laid before him, and he heartily agreed. The captain's permission was soon sought and obtained.

The whir of propeller blades was heard above the storm, and, looking aft, the passengers saw Dick and Charlie in the seat of Mr. Langdon's aeroplane. They gave a hopeful cheer as the boys soared away for help.

Three hours later, when hope was about given up and the top deck of the steamer so close to the water's edge that it seemed in five minutes they must give up their lives, a ship was seen in the distance. The passengers then knew that the boys' flight had been successful. They realized how dangerous the boys' trip for help had been. They were filled with joy and admiration for the plucky lads who braved the winds for the sake of others. The passengers and crew were safely transferred to the rescuing vessel a few minutes before the old steamer sank. Four hours later the exhausted people were taken ashore and put into the lighthouse station. Here they found Dick and Charlie, from whom they learned the details of their flight.

Two weeks after this stirring incident the boys received a handsome gift, an aeroplane bearing this inscription: "From the thankful passengers of the steamer Emily J. Snyder." This was about the happiest moment of their lives.

AWARDED A PRIZE

Modern Life Saving

GEORGINA YOUNG,
862 Walnut Street, Alameda. B Seventh Grade, Porter School. Age 14 Years

The sinking schooner was now a mere blot in the distance. Over in the east was apparent the first glimmer of a new dawn, and the two boys marooned upon the fragile raft looked about for a sign of land, while nothing but the gray sky coming down to meet the misty ocean was visible. All that night they had floated, cold and wet. All their hopes of seeing any of the crew on the ship had sunk with it. The men in the lifeboats with the people were nowhere to be seen. The sun rose high in the heavens and the deep ocean became calm and peaceful. The boys' raft drifted on and on into open space. Gradually the sun began to descend. The boys were hungry and food and water were becoming scarce. The cold, hopeless lads took turns in resting. The hours dragged on, and at last the dawn of another day was visible. It must have been nearly 10 o'clock and their courage was nearly gone, when a shadow darkened the water and in a few minutes there was a great splashing and churning, and a big aeroplane fluttered like a restless seagull on the waves beside them.

The boys were taken on board and soon left the raft far below them, being borne aloft on the white winged rescuer.

Great was their joy on arriving home to find anxious parents waiting for them after their perilous adventure.

AWARDED A PRIZE

The Castaways

SUSIE ROBINSON,
4 Lizzie Street. Fairmount School, B Fifth Grade. Age 11 Years

The sinking schooner was now a mere blot in the distance. Over in the east was apparent the first streak of dawn, and the two boys marooned on the fragile raft looked about for a sign of land. Off in the distance Earl saw a little black thing that looked like an island. He told Clarence, and Clarence said, "Let's row toward it." "All right," said Earl, "I am as hungry as a bear." "So am I," said Clarence, clutching his oar harder.

The boys were nearly exhausted from hunger and thirst when the raft struck a rock. Earl turned around and there, about 100 yards away, was an island.

They did not know what island it was, although Earl claimed it was near Africa. When they had landed Earl said: "Oh, look at those trees. I think there is some kind of fruit on them." "It's a date palm," said Clarence. "The captain told me how they grew." Earl, who was good at climbing, clambered up and got some of the fruit. Just then a little gazelle shot by. Earl said, "I hope there aren't any wild animals on the island. Well, anyhow, we won't die of starvation." "I know," Clarence said, "we'll make a bow and arrow to kill these beasts with." Next they made a hut out of some brush that grew near.

"I'll cook the dinner," said Earl, "but—but we have no, no dishes." "Well, let's try to make some, old fellow," said Clarence, consolingly, "but now let's eat some dates."

Just then something hit Earl on the head. Looking up, he saw a large ape in a cocoanut palm, throwing down cocoanuts. "We will make dishes out of the shells," cried Clarence. They picked some up and went on. Then, having shot some game, they went back to their hut.

They lived on the island three years. Nearing the end of the fourth year a vessel was seen. They waved skins and yelled. The ship took them on board, where, to their surprise, were their parents, who were hunting for them.

They were very happy when they safely reached their home in America.

Two Shipwrecked Mariners

GERTRUDE LACHMAN,
3037 Wheeler Street, Berkeley. McKinley School, Low Eighth Grade. Age 12 Years

The sinking schooner was now a mere blot in the distance. Over in the east was apparent the first glimmer of a new dawn and the two boys marooned upon the fragile raft looked about for a sign of land. Arthur thought he saw the outline of the shore, but Jack said it was only the one of the storm clouds in the distance. They wondered how many had escaped alive from their father's ship, The Wanderer, bound for San Francisco from San Diego. The boys had made several trips with their father, but it had always been during the summer vacation. This had been their first winter trip, and now they thought it would be their last. How awful had been the storm and how helpless had been The Wanderer in the big ocean!

The boys drifted for hours and well on in the afternoon began to feel hungry. All the food they possessed was a small tin of crackers, now gone, and a bottle of water. Jack was careful about the water, for he had read many sea stories and knew one could live without food for a day or so, but would go crazy for want of water. So he tried to cheer his smaller brother by telling him of how brave captains' sons were. "Why, let us brace up, Arthur, and fix a distress signal." So the younger boy was made to forget his hunger for a little while, as he helped Jack to knot strips of a shirt, and soon they had their signal flying. Then they began to feel the cold evening air. Poor boys! They dreaded the night. Arthur seemed exhausted and Jack held him close, and soon the little chap was asleep. He was awakened by a shout. "Oh, we are saved, oh, we are saved." They tried to stand up and cheer as the big tug approached, but weaknes and excitement overcame them and they sank back. Lines were thrown to them. Jack sent Arthur, and when the line was thrown again to him he was very glad to leave the raft.

Imagine his delight to find his father aboard, also some of the crew. Captain Wilson told his sons some of the men were lost, also his ship, but said he: "We have to expect such things in our profession." The tug had been sent out by some underwriters of San Francisco. Soon the boys arrived in the city and after each getting an outfit of clothing they were sent home by rail. The captain had to remain and go through a lot of red tape regarding the lost vessel, but he made up his mind to never again take his sons on any winter trips and hoped their experience would make them choose another following other than a sailor's.

The boys were received in great excitement, for in their home town they were favorites and their schoolmates had heard of the wreck. They had to tell the story over and over again. Arthur says: "Never again!" but Jack says: "Pshaw, we sailors expect it," and he still maintains that he will be a captain some day.

The Trip of "The Wanderer"

PAULINE WALSH
1185 Ellis Street. Presentation Convent, A Seventh. Age 13 Years

The sinking schooner was now a mere blot in the distance. Over in the east was apparent the first glimmer of a new dawn, and the two boys marooned upon the fragile raft looked about for a sight of land.

Tom and his brother George, with their parents, had been on their way to the Philippines. They were within a day of their journey's end. Late in the afternoon the boys had been playing sailor and both were upon the rigging when George saw a blaze spring up in the middle of the vessel. They were on the rear end of the boat alone. They both descended, but by the time they reached the bottom the flame had spread across the boat. There was no escape that way. They heard the men letting down the boats and tried to attract their attention, but their efforts were fruitless and it was with heavy hearts that they saw their mother and father get into the last boat, hoping that they had gone ahead.

Fortunately the flame spread the other way and, discovering some boxes, the boys set to work making a raft. They let it into the water and jumped on, just in time. They had drifted all night and now hoped to see a ship. In about an hour their search was rewarded by a speck on the horizon, which proved to be a ship coming rapidly toward them. Would they be seen? Could they attract attention? In a few minutes a shout, given by Tom, was heard by a sailor and preparations were made to rescue them. Just as a boat was lowered to the water and the boys thought that they were to be saved from a horrible death, the raft broke, and with a wild scream the boys went into the water. They both came up and looked for the boat. It was coming quickly toward them.

"George!" called Tom, "I—" and both the boys went under again. When they came up for the third and last time the boat was within 15 feet; now it was within 10; now it was— For the last time the boys went down, just as—

"Wake up, Tom," and his mother gently shook him. "Why are you screaming in your sleep?"

How a Mirror Saved the Abners

JOSEPH POSNER,
1420 Polk Street. Lowell High School, Second A Class. Age 13 Years

The sinking schooner was now a mere blot in the distance. Over in the east was apparent the first glimmer of a new dawn, and the boys marooned upon the fragile raft looked about for a sign of land. Zane and Alfred Abner, two brothers, were the only survivors of the ill fated schooner which had sunk the night before. They had luckily found a raft to which they clung desperately.

"I can't keep this up much longer," said Zane, despondently.

"Keep up your courage and—"

"Land, land!" shouted Zane, and sure enough a densely wooded island stretched away in the distance. Both left the raft and made for the isle. They soon reached it, but as soon as they did a crowd of black natives rushed to greet them. Uttering some unintelligible words they brought the boys to a man, who was, no doubt, the chief.

"They will surely kill us," thought Alfred. "What can I do?"

Suddenly an idea struck him. He had read of men being saved by strategy.

When the king ordered the brothers up closer to take a good look at them, Alfred flashed a small mirror in front of his face. Instantly the chief drew back. He seized the glass and gazed into it. He said something to another man and he took the boys again to the water, placed them in a canoe and hurried away, fearing they were gods.

The brothers rowed away, thanking their stars that they weren't served for lunch. A passing ship took them aboard and they reached home safely.

A Brave Dog

MARION NOBLE,
894 Union Street, Alameda. Haight School, A Sixth Grade. Age 12 Years

The sinking schooner was now a mere blot in the distance. Over in the east was apparent the first glimmer of a new dawn and the two boys marooned upon the fragile raft looked about for a sign of land. They whistled and called, but were too far out to be heard.

At last Alonzo, who lived by the sea all his life and was used to swimming, heard the faint sounds far out in the distance. He thought for a while and all at once gave a jump and sprang into the water. On he swam and soon he grew so tired he was going to turn back. "No," he thought, "I am going to keep it up," and on he went, brave and daring.

At last in the distance he saw the raft the men were clinging to. He kept up, although he was tired, until he reached it.

He stood on the raft for a while and then began barking as loud as he could. The raft was slowly floating toward the shore, but yet it was a long way off. His barks sounded loud and clear. All at once Alonzo stopped barking. The men didn't know what was the matter. Alonzo seemed to be happy and walked all around the raft. Soon something caught the attention of the men and they looked toward the shore. They saw a life saving boat coming toward them. Soon it reached them and they were brought in tired and hungry.

It was Alonzo's own master who came with the boat. Alonzo had saved the men. They were brought into Alonzo's master's house and were given a warm, hearty supper and good warm beds to make them comfortable at night.

ALONZO'S BARKS

Alonzo went a-barking upon a winter's day,
He thought to cull some choice thoughts and weave them in a lay;
But soon the lay was wanting, and asked the reason why,
"I ran into a cold frost," he sadly made reply.

"What," asked the Pup, "is a dreamer?"

"A dreamer," said Alonzo, "is a being whose mental alarm clock has never gone off. He is in a constant state of repose and walks in his sleep. Most dreamers have a faraway look in their eyes and wear their hair and tie flowing."

I am soon to join the ranks of the higher ups. I am already negotiating for an aeroplane, and Alonzo's stocks will surely go up in the aviation meet next month. Watch and see!

I have noticed that men miss a great deal of honest enjoyment in this life through wearing such plain clothes. Variety is the spice of life and a change of fashions goes far toward breaking the monotony of everyday existence.