

CITY LATE

NEW EDUCATION ENTHUSIASM

RUSH TO HEAR WORLD-FAMOUS
SPEAKERS

3,000 ATTEND TO-DAY'S
LECTURES

NEW MEMBERS BEING RAPIDLY
ENROLLED

Extraordinary enthusiasm was shown at the World Education Conference at the Witwatersrand University this morning. Already the membership exceeds 1,500 and new members are being enrolled as fast as possible.

The demand for day tickets is also exceeding all expectations. This morning about 3,000 people attended the various lectures.

From 9 o'clock until 11 o'clock each morning there will be sectional meetings followed at 11.30 a.m. by two concurrent lectures on topics of more general interest. There were six sectional meetings this morning, and each was largely attended.

The Government and Provincial authorities have recognised the value of the conference by releasing many of their officials, directly or indirectly concerned in education, and by paying their expenses to attend the conference.

RADIO AND CINEMA IN SCHOOLS

The uses to which the film and the radio could be put in education were outlined by Mr. G. T. Hankin, inspector of schools, Board of Education, London, in an address delivered at the Education Conference this morning. Mr. Hankin was addressing the first general meeting of the conference in the University Hall, which was crowded.

The problem of the introduction of mechanical aids, particularly radio and cinema, into the schools of South Africa called urgently for a definite solution. He had made experiments in this direction in the schools in Great Britain during the last few years, and the results might be of value in helping South Africans to reach definite conclusions on this topic.

When he spoke of mechanical aids to education he did not mean mechanical education. Nothing could ever take the place of the personal contact between teacher and pupil. If he thought the use of the radio or film would deprive the work of the teacher of that of a machine-murder, he would not be against their introduction in the schools. But we were living in a mechanical age and science and invention had provided means of assisting in the work of education.

A CURIOUS POWER.

Could mechanical aids help to broaden and deepen understanding and develop the higher qualities of the human mind? His experience was that the radio and the cinema had a curious power that ought to be utilised in education.

Could we give over the ether or on the screen anything that the teacher could not give equally well? He asked them to suspend judgment until they had seen the collection of films of various types he had brought with him, some of them classroom films to assist in the teaching of definite subjects, some background films to arouse general interest. He had also brought with him gramophone records of typical talk to be played on a radiogram. These records had been specially made by the B.B.C. for the conference.


Radio and cinema could bring a new voice into the school, new ideas and new methods of approach. "Listen to one of our geography lessons and see what you think of it. A traveller gives his personal impression of the life of the people—not a mere gossiping talk, but a talk with the necessary teaching points worked in without undue stress. The talk would not bear printing—easy conversational stuff in good spoken English. Unless the teacher has visited the country he could not give the talk. But he can use this material and weave it into his geography teaching."

MAKING HISTORY LIVE.

The same methods could be applied to music lessons, to language lessons, to history lessons. History became alive. No teacher would have the time to work up historical material with the same care nor had he at his disposal actors and the resources of a broadcasting studio.

In Britain 4,000 schools were taking broadcast lessons weekly. No authority was forcing or hurrying teachers to use the broadcast lessons. The demand for broadcast lessons was coming from the schools.

The difficulty in regard to the use of films was one of expense. Producers were unwilling to make educational films because there was no market for them. Schools were loth to install projectors because there are so few educational films. That vicious circle was, however, being broken into at two points. Far-seeing producers were risking capital expenditure in producing educational films and the British Film Institute was attacking the schools.



MR. G. T. HANKIN

These were some of the apparatus used by Professor Fred Clarke, the distinguished educationist, in an address on "Examinations" delivered to a crowded audience at a sectional meeting of the Education Conference this morning.

Professor Clarke referred to General Smuts's plea in his speech last night that children should not have their memories burdened with knowledge and information which could be as easily culled from text books and books of reference. Professor Clarke said that there was a minimum body of fact which you must carry round with you. The child must find out what were the facts which he must carry round with him which he must

In a world where rationalisation and science had changed the structure of society, they had to face the problem of social adjustment. Those who advocated that examinations should be abolished should consider the alternatives. If they did not have a rational test of some sort upon which to base the adjustment of education, they were going to have either an unholy scramble—chaos—or they were going back to the old system of privilege and patronage. Democracy demanded an examination system. How could they have a selective system without the use of examinations? The tendency of examinations should be towards making them a more prolonged test. The examinations of the future might last three years or even longer. There were good and sufficient reasons for preserving and even strengthening the examination system.

TOO LITTLE USE.

He would be bold enough to say that too little use was made of the examination system. It should be a daily feature. It should be used as a teaching system. The present practice of attaching a fatal day atmosphere to examinations should be abolished. They should detach from examinations the idea of impending fate—that success or failure decided whether you would go to heaven or descend to hell. The examination should rather be a daily feature by means of which the pupil himself could ascertain his own progress. It should be a daily guarantee of progress. Thus, it would become a teaching instrument.

The matriculation examination should not be abolished, but should rather be expanded. They should take into greater consideration the school record. In this way the fatal day atmosphere would be modified and the atmosphere of the recording angel would be introduced. When these changes were made he was not sure that pupils would not agitate for a return to the old system.

VALUE OF TESTS.

The systematic use of tests at school would give the boy an intelligent interest in and knowledge of his own progress.

The kind of examination visualised by General Smuts when the child would take his dictionaries and his text books to the examination was essentially the examination where you were testing understanding rather than knowledge.

Differentiating between various criteria, Prof. Clarke said that the English and European methods of education placed emphasis on general ability. The Americans would look for special efficiency. Others would look for culture. Cultural distinctions were going to be one of the features of the society of the future.

The main burden of this theme was, however, that the real fault was to be found not in examinations but in the methods of education. Among other things he wanted the pernicious system of having set books abolished.