Bould

Bould.

Register. 16 JUN 1924

61

elopment in such a way that he was ar-
sted of self control. A prime cause of
morbid sex curiosity was the mystery in
which the subject was shrouded. He
thought co-education made for a healthier
sex feeling in the community. Men and
women kept apart from the other sex
tended to degenerate, and the same thing
might be applicable to schools. The child
was bound to learn something of sex, and
their problem was to find out who should
impart the knowledge and when and how.
No matter how young a child was it
had the right to have its curiosity on this
subject allayed. There was no need to
go beyond the actual question asked.
Parents should undoubtedly be the people
to give the necessary instruction, but
most of them relied on the teachers to do
so, and the teachers should receive some
special training to fit them for the task.
(Applause).

This morning Miss Berry will speak on "Intelligence testing," and in the afternoon Miss Heather Gell will give a demonstration of Dalcroze eurhythmics.

Register

16 JUN 1924

TESTING INTELLIGENCE.

Child Study Clinic Wanted.

Dalcroze Eurhythmics.

A strong appeal was made by Dr. Mildred Mocatta and Miss Winifred Berry on Saturday in their addresses before the Educational Society of South Australia for the establishment of a clinic for child study to investigate the phenomena of mental development, and a training school for children mentally retarded.

The morning session of the Educational ociety's Conference on Saturday, at the nstitute, North terrace, Adelaide, was ocupied with a discussion of "Intelligence esting." The Director of Education (Mr. W. T. McCoy) presided, and the speakers ere Dr. Mildred Mocatta and Miss Winifred Berry.

Requirements for Success.

Dr. Mocatta said no single method of inelligence testing could claim to include within its scope the entire mental life of n individual, therefore every known ethod was open to criticism. A great anger lay in the fact that any enthusiasie teacher, educator, psychologist, or phyician might apply one method to everyhing, and abide slavishly by its results. This would damn any scheme and ruin all dvancement. In making a complete diagosis, four factors had to be considered. First, a physical examination had to be ade of the brain for signs of incomplete erebral development. Seconly, a psychohysical examination of the body to diover remediable physical conditions interering with complete cerebral development. Thirdly, a psychological examination to ascertain the social significance of mental retardation. Lastly, the environment of the individual had to be considered. No mental examination was complete, since the mind and the body were largely interdependent, and it would be worse than unfair to class as mentally dull a child suffering from physical disabilities. It was also unfair to classify as mentally retarded he child who failed in intelligence tests s the result of poor technique on the art of the examiner. Further, the tests aid down as standards in countries other han Australia were no definite criterion f what the Australian standard of inelligence should be, and it would be imossible to create these standards until housands of everyday children had been amined. As a rule few normal childn were brought to be tested. The exiner generally got those considered by achers or parents to be below par. ere was no chance of making tests table for Australian children until the ting of intelligence became part of the utine examination of every child enbed upon school life. Statistics in Ameca showed that 12 to 20 per cent. of hool children were definitely retarded, d this estimate excluded idiots and lowade imbeciles who, on account of their oss abnormality, were dealt with in mes and asylums.

The speaker quoted "The distribution nd relations of educational abilities," by ril Burt, who said:—"Of the children er 9 and under 15 attending the ordiy schools of the 'Borough, nearly 700 opeared backward by three years or more to be precise, 692, or 4.2 per cent. If e extend the lower age limit from 9 to , further include those backward by two ears, the apparent number rises to nearly ,000, or about one-tenth of all between ve and 15." That was a grave matter, specially when it was realized that a arge number of irresponsible persons were iven the full privileges of citizenship.

Methods in Use.

The method in common use in schools and colleges in America was the Stanford revision of the Binot-Simon test. In Melbourne Professor Berry and Mr. Porteus used in addition, the Porteous-Maze tests, and correlated them with measurements of the cranium. The tests consisted of questions and problems graduated according to chronological age, from 13 to 16 years. They were arrived at by the examination of large numbers of children. A test passed by 75 per cent. at any given age, say 6, was placed as the six-years-old test. That test was then tried on five-year and seven-year children. If most of the children of five years failed, while those of seven years passed with ease, the test was considered in its right place, i.e., the six-year-old group. These tests were devise to test native intelligence apart from environmental advantages or disadvantages, and apart also from scholastic attainments. Under the term "native intelligence" were include such mental factors as resourcefulness and adaptability, powers of comprehension and reasoning, application of knowledge, association of ideas, and the power of auto-criticism. The advantages of this method of examination might be enumerated as follows:—It should enable the examiner to detect children of superior intelligence, the future leaders in art, science, ethics; children of good average intellect; routine workers who followed, but could not create; the retarded children, the hewers of wood and the drawers of water; the defective child whose intelligence would never be more than that of a normal child of 12 years, and the delinquint child, who from an early age was unable or unwilling to recognise the difference between right and wrong.

Dr. Mocatta enumerated certain factors to be considered by the examiner before satisfactory results could be achieved, the principal being that the examiner must win the confidence of the child, and encourage rather than discourage him. The various age groups were dealt with in detail and explained. The 16-year-old group—called the average adult—had shown that in most cases native intelligence did not develop after that age. Memory, scholastic attainments, experience and judgment continued to grow, but they were superimposed on the foundation of native intelligence.

Need of a Clinic.

The lecturer said it was satisfactory that there were as many children above the average as below. Obviously money could be better expended to help our brilliant rather than our defective children. Dr. Mayo (of the Mayo Clinic in America), had said this was the age of the deification of the fit. If that were so, a determined effort should be made to conserve the fit. The real need was for research. Scientific knowledge must take the place of unverified opinions. The educational world should demand the establishment of Child Study Clinics to investigate the phenomena of mental development in school children, and a training school, in conjunction with the clinic, for investigating and training all children mentally retarded.

Group Testing.

Miss Winifred Berry contributed a paper on group testing, the most important division of which was the individual test. She proposed, however, to deal mainly with the second division. The group test did not claim to be more than a rough-and-ready means of estimating ability, and where abnormality was indicated the individual test should be applied. Group testing was first used in America in examining recruits for the army. From the numbers tested statistics were compiled which enabled research students to see many tendencies and make useful deductions from them. As group tests depended largely on the ability to read and write, they would be most useful in the upper grades of the preparatory schools. The speaker outlined the type of group tests standarized for use in particular grades. The value of group testing depended largely in the use to be made of the results. There was almost no limit to the possibilities to be opened up by research work in that field, and if exact results were not yet available, much had already been learned about the type of subjects to be taught in the schools and the methods of teaching them.

Eurythmics Demonstration.

At the afternoon session in the Elder Hall Dr. Harold Davies, Mus. Doc., presided, and, in introducing Miss Heather Gell's demonstration of "Eurhythmics," remarked that its value would be enhanced if he indicated what they might look for. It would take too long to explain in full the methods and teaching of Dalcroze; but the demonstration should largely explain itself. There were four advantages claimed for the method; musical, mental, moral, and muscular. Musical because it was an elemental expression of human feelings. The born musiciain had rhythmic sense, but the average student struggled to acquire that sense by the purely mechanical methods, such as counting. With such a system as the Dalcroze that sense developed instinctively. The mental value of the course was seen in the development of concentration, alertness, and memory, and the moral value was consequent on that of the mental. The muscular value was perhaps less than that in gymnastics, although what it lacked in the development of strength was more than compensated for by the acquirement of grace. It was of inestimable value in the training of the child. Every phase of human emotion could be reflected in physical terms, and a school of actors and dramatists trained and inspired by a sense of rhythm would open up an entirely new scope of stage presentation. Rhythm was energy in art, but it was more; it was controlled energy. It had a correspondence with the universal law of periodicity, and he might put it that the science of rhythm was that of becoming one with the cosmic order. There was thus a true metaphysics in the development of eurhythmics.

The demonstration was given by about 50 of Miss Gell's pupils, ranging in ages from three or four years upwards. Little babies evinced an unfailing appreciation of the differences between march, gallop, and swing rhythm and their knowledge of note values was shown by clappings. Older children expressed a feeling for legato and staccato music, and the beginnings of the training of the true sense were further indicated by different actions for each change of time; thus three-time was indicated by claps in a kneeling position, two time by clapping hand and floor alternatively, four time by arm movements, and five time by clapping, with the accent to one side. Note values were shown by movement of the feet, the students making one step forward in the space of every note. More involved was a demonstration of polyrhythm, indicating separate rythms with each arm movement. Then there were exercises for mental control and dissociated movements. Thus the students indicated two time with the head, three time with the left arm, four time with the right arm, and five time with the feet, all simultaneously. More interesting still were the demonstrations of musical application, the phrase values being shown by the older students kneeling in circle and lowering or raising their arms; and by the children by passing around them in alternate directions for each phrase. Syncopations was shown by two columns, one marching in bar time and the other in syncopated time. The demonstration concluded with beautiful studies in canon and in plastic expression; and an improvised study in skipping, in which Miss Gell led all the students in a maze of form and movement expressed on the piano by Miss Sterry. The demonstration was much appreciated and earned warm thanks for the gifted instructress.

DR. A. E. V. RICHARDSON.

A South Australian Offer.

Dr. A. E. V. Richardson, M.A., the brilliant South Australian agricultural authority, who has made his mark in Victoria as Superintendent of Agriculture and Director of the School of Agriculture at the Melbourne University, might possibly return to South Australia to fill an important position. It is understood that the Government have offered him the post of director of the new scheme at Urrbrae under the Peter Waite Trust. Should he accept the offer his return will be welcomed, and he will be a decided acquisition to the agricultural activities of this State.

Register. 16 JUN 1924

Dr. A. E. V. Richardson, Superintendent of Agriculture, and Director of the School of Agriculture at the Melbourne University, is still considering the offer to take charge of the Peter Waite Trust Research Institute in South Australia (says The Melbourne Herald). Scientific officers of the Victorian service say that unless some such position as Professor of Agriculture and Agricultural Research is created at the Melbourne University, and given to Dr. Richardson, he will accept the Adelaide offer. The Victorian Ministry will endeavour to retain Dr. Richardson, but one member of the Government said that he was not sanguine that the Cabinet would be successful.

Advertiser 16 JUN 1924

INTELLIGENCE TESTS.

Seeking An Australian Standard.

Need for a Child Study Clinic.

Advocating the intelligence testing of all children in the schools at the Educational Conference, Dr. Mocatta said Australia would have to devise its own standard of tests, as the tests employed in other countries were no definite criterion of what the Australian standard of intelligence should be.

Interesting papers on intelligence testing were read by Dr. Mocatta and Miss Winifred Berry at Saturday morning's session of the Educational Conference. The need of a special child study clinic to test the intelligence of every child in the State was stressed by both speakers, and the Director of Education (Mr. W. T. McCoy) endorsed their remarks.

Dr. Mocatta said no single method of intelligence testing could claim to include within its scope the entire mental life of an individual. Therefore every known method was open to criticism. A great danger lay in the fact that any enthusiastic teacher, educator, psychologist, or physician might lay hold of one method, apply it to everything, and abide slavishly by its results. To do this was to damn any scheme and to ruin all advancement. In making a complete diagnosis four factors had to be taken into consideration. First, a physical examination had to be made of the brain to see if there were signs of incomplete cerebral development; secondly, a psycho-physical examination of the body to ascertain whether there were any remediable physical conditions interfering with complete cerebral development; thirdly, a psychological examination to ascertain the social significance of mental retardation, and lastly, the environment of the individual had to be considered. No mental examination was complete since the mind and body were largely interdependent, and it would be worse than unfair to class as mentally dull a child who was suffering from physical disabilities. It was also unfair to classify as mentally retarded the child who failed in intelligence tests as the result of poor technique on the part of the examiner. Further the tests laid down as standards in countries other than Australia were no definite criterion of what the Australian standard of intelligence should be, and it would be impossible to create those standards until thousands of every-day children had been examined. As a rule very few normal children were brought to be tested. The examiner generally got those who were considered by teachers or parents to be below par. There was absolutely no chance of making tests suitable for Australian children until the testing of intelligence became a part of the routine examination of every child who had entered upon his school life.

Statistics in America showed that from 15 to 20 per cent. of school children were definitely retarded, and this estimate excluded idiots and low-grade imbeciles, who, on account of their gross abnormality, were dealt with in homes and asylums. In discussing the relations and distribution of educational abilites of London school children, Mr. Cyril Burt had said that of the children over nine and under 15 attending the ordinary schools of the borough, nearly 700 appeared backward by three years or more. If the lower age limit was extended from nine to five, and further included those backward by two years, the apparent number rose to nearly 3,000 or about one-tenth between five and 15. In addition 25.6 per cent. appeared a year behind their actual age. Barely one-half were assigned to a grade or standard assumed as normal for their age. As the result of an examination of 10,000 Victorian school children, Professor Berry confirmed these views of Mr. Burt regarding the prevalence of mental dulness amongst the school population. He found that a large proportion of the lower class population never attained mental levels above the age of 12 years, and at least 15 per cent. of the population would be in one or the other classes of subnormal mentality. The most dangerous groups of mental defectives were those who were in no other way different from the intelligent man, not only in outward appearance, but in conversation and bearing these people often passed as normal. They were thought to be simply untutored, and it was supposed that training would bring them up to the standard. But that such was not the case was testified to by the presence of hundreds of cases in institutions for the feeble-minded, and by thousands of other cases who were not in such institutions, but who were recognised by those who knew the feeble-minded as being mentally weak. This was a grave mat-