

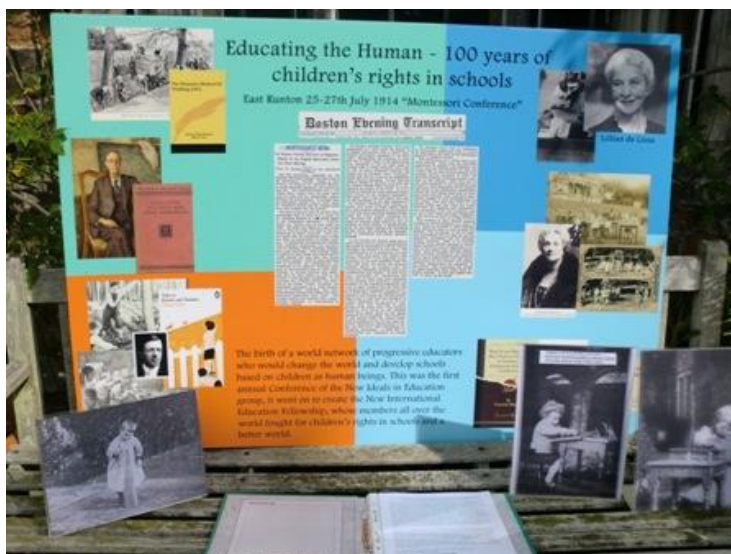
Children's Rights in our Schools – the movement to liberate the child, an introduction to the New Ideals in Education Conferences 1914-1937

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"...we welcome all ideas that represent the substitution of the freedom and self-expression of the pupil for the imposed authority of the teacher. That is the principle underlying the Conference." Rt Hon The Earl of Lytton, President of New Ideals in Education Conference 1915



Birthday card celebrating the centenary of New Ideals Conferences at Old Runton Hall, the host of the first conference in July 1914

1. Introduction

This article attempts to use the extracted words of the participants of a series of conferences that ran from 1914-1937, inspired the creation of parallel groups in Europe and Internationally^[1], and defined for England what was to be seen as modern primary schools centred around the child^[2]. These conferences were based on promoting the rights of the child in schools, or as they said, 'the liberty of the child'. They failed to change the secondary schools but had seen this likelihood from the beginning, and continued to explore ways secondary schools could bring about the freedom of the child, though within a field of private schools, as were most of the Grammar and secondary schools at the time.

This is an introductory article with the hope that these people, their words, meetings, publications and examples of practice help us to recover their aim, to create schools that humanise our children, that give them the space, the freedom, to develop and express themselves and empowers children to work with us, as equals, to create a just and peaceful world.

At a time of international crisis the speakers reminded their fellow practitioners of what our schools were for. Let us only hope that their fears, warnings and heroic actions can motivate us all at a similar point of crisis, when the nature of the human being, their identity and relationship to communities has become a focal point in the attempts to strengthen justice, equality and human rights; When we need a resurgence of children's rights in our schools; When adults and children need to be reminded of a cultural history of children's rights that they can reference, celebrate and build upon. All rights movements have succeeded through a shared history and culture of writings, songs, heroes, events, speeches, something we have denied our children. A history in which people died struggling for human rights.^[3]

I want their words to speak to us again, and for our conferences, our practices and our schools to hear these arguments as if we were at East Runton, one hundred and one years ago. I want us to remember that innovation, methodology, processes, the use of academic research, are dangerous to the humanity of the child, if they are not framed by children's rights, something that defines this community, their conferences and their publications.

1.1 The Importance of the New Ideals in Education Conferences

The importance of the New Ideals in Education Conferences is three fold:

1. They brought together state, private, progressive and anarchist educationalists and practitioners with people of power and influence from the eve of World War One for at least 23 years;
2. They publicly and consistently stated their shared foundation value of liberty for the child in the classroom, reflecting the need, reasons and effects of children's rights in action in the school and other children's institutions;

3. They effected practice through promoting successful models, searching for them, studying them and inviting them to the conferences, publishing their reports, writing text books, effecting training, philosophy and policy.

The Primary School in England was to be defined by the effects of these conferences and their participants^[2]. Sadly, as recognised as early as the first conferences, there were many hinderances to changing the education of secondary schools, the main three being inspections, exam system and parents.

“But the reason of the startling success at this and other conferences, of most of the Experiments papers which came from Elementary Schools lies deeper than this (the story of the working teacher). Elementary Schools are at present less inspected and examined than any other type of public school, and also are freer than the private prep schools, from the direct pressure of a dominant tradition, the result being that the pioneer in education finds in them a more open field than elsewhere for the exercise of originality and initiative. In a Secondary School the teacher is always tethered to the examination stake...” pvii Introduction, 1918

1.2 New Ideals and the History of Children's Rights

There is a huge gap in the history of children's rights. Missing is the story of teachers, schools and children's institutions which were run on the values of children's rights, values expressed by the New Ideals Conferences. The autonomy of the child, their self-expression, their decision-making, their creativity, their control of their own learning, is at the heart of children's rights. The gap is due to the lack of specific rights language used by the individuals and communities, instead it is the language of freedom and liberty; and that the heroes are labelled as progressive, anarchist or libertarian educationalists, and their histories so allotted. We have books on the history of progressive schools^[4], libertarian^[5], and therapeutic communities. These focus on individual schools and their founders, and appear to underplay or not notice the New Ideal's community, despite the presence of their referenced practitioners.



Birthday cake celebrating the centenary of the East Runton Conference. Cake was shared at East Runton and at the Institute of Education's conference the ISCHE 36 in 2014 on War, Peace and Education

The New Ideals Conference discussed the nature of freedom, and even had a presentation against its existence. They did not see what united them as methods, or processes, or ways of teaching but simply the principle of liberating the child from the authority of the teacher.

“The only point on which I stand is the view that the sole solution of the problems of education is in the free, self-governing school.

“And after all, the difference in ideas of Mr Lane and of Madame Montessori and of Miss Finlay Johnson are infinitely less essential than their community of aim.”
Norman MacMunn 1915

“Madame Montessori, Dr Yorke Trotter and Mr Homer Lane were all alike revelations of the same principle in practice. Today they might be said to be quite outstanding features. But he hoped that in five or ten years time they would be looked upon quite as naturally as a motor car is now.” Prof Culverwell 1914

From publishing the story of this community that lasted, successfully, over 23 years, children and teachers and adults who work with children can see how rights in the classroom were discussed, promoted and implemented. This should help us to criticise the present education community, which avoids the idea of foundation values in preference to a claimed pragmatism about what works^[6]. These conferences remind us of what works whilst showing us how to bring about change through having a foundation of values^[7]. This history of heroes and successful schools will help us to empower our children and ourselves, as teachers.

1.3 Origin at East Runton 1914 with Rev Bertram Hawker

The *New Ideals in Education Conferences* originated in the first *Montessori Conference* organised in England in 1914, 25th-29th July in a small Norfolk coastal town near Cromer, East Runton. The event was hosted by Rev Bertram Hawker and his wife, at their home, where he had founded the first Montessori School outside of Italy in 1912. Pictures of children at this school are used in the first English translation of the Montessori Handbook^[8].



'Fig. 4 - CHILD BUTTONING ON FRAME. (Photo taken at Mr Hawker's School at Runton'. Original caption from *Dr Montessori's Own Handbook*, 1914

Hawker had been impressed by the educational practices in East London settlements (Toynbee and Kingsley Halls etc), and in the Kindergartens of South Australia, where he helped fund the first conference on Kindergartens, with example classes, that lead to the formation of the South Australian Kindergarten movement. One of the influential teachers that impressed him was [Lillian de Lissa](#), who he went on to sponsor travelling around Europe seeing different examples of teaching young children, and training for a year with [Maria Montessori](#) in Rome. She wrote a report for the South Australian government and was a key speaker at the Montessori Conference.

“Education that concerns itself only with a child's schooling, rather than his living – with the exams, he must pass, the facts he must learn, the juggling with figures he must be able to do – this is only half an education. The things that will develop him as an individual, as a personality, things that will prepare him for life and citizenship, these are equally important and must have their place. And since the child can never learn to live theoretically nor establish courses of habits save through activity, so the form of the school must change and be a living community such as is found in a ‘Casa dei Bambini’”. Lillian de Lissa, Montessori Conf 1914 ^[9]

The East Runton conference attracted some 250 people, 50 of whom were members of the Montessori Society. It was organised by Bertram Hawker, the ex-chief Inspector of elementary schools [Edmond Holmes](#), and [Earl Lytton](#), on behalf of the Montessori Society. [Maria Montessori](#) sent a telegram, “I associate myself cordially with the Conference in favour of the liberation of the child. Grateful for the recognition of my work.” read out by the Chairman of the opening presentation, Mr B.V.Melville (p2). Some eight local village teachers from and around Runton attended, as did people from all over the country. The famous headteacher from East London, [Clara Grant](#) attended this conference, and at least two further ones. She was a supporter of the importance of the Montessori method but critical of the relevance of this method to her Stepney School where she had large classes, old classrooms and little money.

“Miss Clara Grant, Infant Mistress, Devon Road L.C.C. School, Bow and Bromley, hoped that those who like herself taught in the elementary schools would not be discouraged because they could not have all the apparatus of the Montessori system of education. It was not much encouragement to see at Runton small children under ideal conditions, while they, loving the system, had neither material nor apparatus. Freedom was a dangerous word, and they knew something of the restriction on their elementary schools in the past. It had been most disastrous. Those who lived among poor children and poor parents saw the results. And now the teachers were going the opposite way, and trying to make the apparatus and apply the system in their schools. She thought the class system had been a failure, there should be some individual competition over which the children could exercise their judgement, the children should be independent of the teacher. There were not enough teachers in the infant schools, so they used older children to teach younger. Personally she thought there was much in the system which could be taught and practised.” P23 1914

I have quoted the whole text with regards to Clara Grant, as we have here the voice of the audience, of a delegate who is a state school teacher, and who attends the

conferences over three years. This is a rare voice for research into communities and conferences, as it is a response to those louder voices who maybe selling their ideas. It is sadly not a voice recorded in all the later reports.

1.4 A Conference on the Liberty of the Child in Education

The conference explored the liberty of the child in their school or institution. It had example classes with the Montessori teacher and children at Bertram's school, presentations on Montessori Methods; [Froebel](#) and Montessori were compared, the use of democratic methods in the classroom described, and an enthusiastically received presentation by [Homer Lane](#) on his new Little Commonwealth^[10], a residential farm in Dorset for teenagers who were habitual criminals and would otherwise have been sent to prison. The children lived in a democratic community, holding their own meetings and making their own decisions. Another presentation was by [Dr Yorke Trotter](#) who introduced a group of his students, gave them pieces of music that they had never seen before to learn. After his talk on how he uses rhythm and harmony to help children to learn to create and understand music the children came back and played, from memory, the music he had given them 45 minutes before. There was a discussion on the relevance of Montessori for secondary schools, critical discussions on the concept of freedom, the role of the charismatic personality in ensuring experiments with freedom worked, and the need for money, time, small groups and equipment.

"...If we sum up our ideals in a single phrase, it would be that we endeavour to deal with experiments in education which have as their distinctive feature an atmosphere of freedom... we are most interested in is the individuality of the pupil, and what we aim at is the creation in the school of an atmosphere of freedom, in which the self-expression of that individuality may have as free play as possible." Lord Lytton Presidential Address 1917 Conference, Bedford



Celebrating the centenary of the 1914 Montessori Conference at the ISCHE 36 26th July 2014 on War, Peace and Education at the Institute of Education in front of PhD students. Lottie Hoare, conf organising committee, cutting the cake with Michael, the author of this article.

1.5 Birth of New Ideals in Education Conferences

At the end of the conference its success and the need for educationalists, practitioners and inspectors to share their innovations in the future lead to a suggestion of further conferences. Unanimously they agreed that there should be an annual conference. An organising committee was formed, and it was called the New Ideals in Education Conference. As stated at the beginning of each conference by the President Earl Lytton, or, at the least, in the full reports published of the conferences, the value that brought everyone together was the liberty of the child replacing the authority of the teacher in education.

A resolution carried at the close of the meeting: "That the Earl of Lytton and Mr Hawker should be asked to form a committee with power to add, with the object of repeating the Conference next year, and that to it should come not only representatives of the Montessori movement but of kindred movements, and that the conference should be in such a form as would lead to its being a permanent means of uniting advanced educational thought in this country."

1.6 The Role of the Conference During World War I

"In the first place, this amazing Conference – at which we have seen sitting side by side Government Officials, advanced Montessorians, antediluvian Teachers like myself, University Professors, Soldiers in khaki, Musicians, Artists, Headmasters of Public Schools, the superintendent of the Little Commonwealth, Primary School teachers, and the American Ambassador himself – stands, first and foremost, for Freedom, - I do not like "emancipation", for the word suggests slavery, and the use of it probably promotes it. We have all agreed that the child is to be free: yes, but the teacher must be free as well as the child..." Mr Lionel Helbert, Head Master of West Downs, Winchester, 1915 ^[11]

The conference starting at the eve of World War I and being based on practice that went back as far as the late 1800s, with Edmond Holmes's ^[12] example of [Harriet Finlay Johnson's](#) village elementary school ^[13] in Sompting, Sussex as a model of outstanding practice, based on exploring nature, drama, and allowing the children to have a say. The Little Commonwealth was just a year old. Montessori had been promoted by a report published by the Board of Education (1911) and written and researched by Edmond Holmes.

"Reference may be made in particular to the valuable experiments in self-government made in schools or institutions in the United States. The establishment and success of the Little Commonwealth in England is a sign of our growing appreciation of the importance of these experiments.

"Nor must it be forgotten that we owe to Russia – in Tolstoy's school at Yasnaia Polyana – what was probably the first school in which self-government by the pupils was fully carried out." P33 New Ideals from Abroad Prof Millicent Mackenzie, University of College, Cardiff 1915

Along with inspirations from the Modern School Movement of Francesco Ferrer ^[14], this all shows that education based on freeing the child was not a response to World

War. Indeed it was a response from those working with children in poverty, or with special needs, or being destroyed through work, or simply in a normal state school but inspired by Froebel and Pestalozzi and Rousseau. William Godwin wrote about the need for children to develop autonomy for a society based on justice. These models of practice arose from teachers struggling for justice for children.

Norman MacMunn, late Assistant Master at King Edward VI School, a teacher working with democratic methods and children's freedom in the classroom, had published his ideas^{[15] [16]}, but at the 1914 conference celebrated the coming together of those who held similar views on the freedom of the child; "Ladies and gentlemen, tonight I feel like a shipwrecked mariner who has reached land at last." He reflects the excitement of meeting people with similar aims, aims that appeared to be so at odds with the culture and society around them that many teachers felt isolated, without support from a community or history of shared ideas. This is why in 1914 their response was to create an annual conference, a much needed and well timed community of support and promotion.

Yet how did the conference see itself with regards to the 'Great War'? And how did the war effect the conference?



Delegates including Professor Stuart Foster at the ISCHE Conference sharing centenary cake for the East Runton Conference July 1914, in front of the birthday card.

1.7 Immediate Response to War

"As I was coming down in the train from last year's inspiring conference at East Runton near Cromer I met a Cabinet Minister, who expressed great anxiety concerning the consequences of the war which had just broken out between Austria and Serbia, which if it involved other European nations, would produce the ghastly experiences, and so change all the conditions of life that nothing would ever be the same again...

"I wish to say that our meeting is not merely due to the desire to stand by the arrangements made before the war broke out, but is the result of a deliberate decision of the Committee. They believed that the holding of the Conference was not only consistent with what was in everybody's mind, but was a duty rendered even more necessary by the fact the country was at war..." Earl Lytton, 1915

The relationship with the war was explored in several presentations over the war years. There were comparisons of the different education systems, of cultures and values. In a presentation on *The Montessori Principle in the Elementary School* Mrs Hutchinson, from Catherine Street LCC School spoke at length on the response of educators to war:

"It is surely significant that notwithstanding we are engaged in the most terrible conflict which has ever ravaged Humanity, there should yet be found time for us to meet together to discuss, not war and its accomplishments, but Education, the offering of Peace; and to give expression to those new ideals which animate us.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that the outbreak of war came as a shock – that many of us sustained a mental upheaval, which overthrew the ideals and ideas of a life time. Those who laboured, it matters not how humbly, for the uplifting of their fellows, were filled with despondency; and I do not hesitate to say that some of us asked in weariness of spirit, "to what end have we toiled?" "

She emphasised the enlightenment dilemma that we had respected the German ideas and practice of education, and we had a fair understanding of their culture and identity. How could two countries with highly developing national school systems, and who know each other, how could they enter such a destructive war against each other?

"The word "education" dies upon our lips, for are we not engaged in wrestling a foe, whose methods and conceptions of education have repeatedly been held up to us in this country as something to which we should strive to attain."

She expresses her worst fear, that our school's systems will simply get better at churning out soldiers, scientists, industrialists who will build better arms and fight more efficient wars.

"If education will not finally abolish wars, misery and cruelty, together with their parent, fear, then education is not worth another moments consideration. If the education of Man is to result in speedier and more complete methods of annihilation and enslaving his fellows, then I maintain that education of this kind is a curse, and not a blessing."

She quotes Maria Montessori from 1913 seemingly foreseeing the collapse of Europe: "Europe is riding for a fall. A type of education which tends to develop the power of the intellect, while omitting the systematic education of the character and the heart, constitutes a menace to the whole of Europe, and the blow will fall with terrific force."

But like all the practitioners at the conferences she held out hope, hope based on changing our education system so that it humanises the children giving them a sense of community, dignity and excitement of becoming an individual.

"The problem is not then "shall we continue to educate?" but "shall we continue to educate upon our present system?" What shall our children be taught, and how shall this education be carried out."

1.8 How do we Prevent War

Sir Robert Baden Powell, the founder of the boy scouts addressed the conference in 1916 on *The Boy Scout Movement*. He argued for an education system for the world of tomorrow that would create honour among business people, industrialists, scientists, that would contribute to creating a world of peace.

“Then there is the education of the child itself; in this we are going forward all the time. Immense developments have gone on in the last few years. I think this question largely hinges on one little fact, that Instruction is not Education. We want to educate the child from within instead of impose instruction upon him from without, and if that can be brought about I believe it will be a very great step in the right direction.”

The words of Bertram Hawker taking the place of Lord Lytton giving the Introductory Address at the 1919 conference tells the story of the conferences and reflects on the war:

“Ladies and Gentlemen – Our chairman, Lord Lytton, is unavoidably absent, having been detained by urgent Parliamentary duties. Those of you who attended the conference at Oxford last year will remember that he came straight to us from having steered the Education Bill through the House of Lords. This time it is the Transport Bill... This is our sixth conference and it is the first in which he has not taken part.



Chairman of the East Runton District Council, Mr J A Simpson, giving a speech before cutting the centenary cake for the 1914 Montessori Conference, at the home of Bertram Hawker and the site of the conference.

“... In the summer of 1914, a number of people – about 200 – who believed that sound education and true discipline can be attained only in an atmosphere of freedom, met in a little village on the Norfolk coast to confer on the Montessori and kindred movements. At the close of the conference a spontaneous resolution, unanimously supported, urged that the meeting should be made annual, the scope of it widened and the time for it extended.

“This, as some of you will remember, was on the eve of the War. Under the shadow of that impending catastrophe a movement was initiated which, if successful, would

go far towards making such catastrophes impossible, seeing that its object was to work for a constructive freedom, in which the latent energy and capacity for doing good inherent in every child, would have an opportunity to unfold, and in which the spirit of comradeship would therefore thrive apace.

"From Runton the conference has travelled to Stratford-on-Avon, to Oxford, to London, to Oxford again, and now to Cambridge, dealing with a great variety of urgent educational problems, giving a platform to educational pioneers, and publishing each year a full Report of the proceedings" 1919.

He goes on to thank the women, many of whom were or had been struggling for the right to vote, and for equality. The reports were published by the Women's Print Society, London.

"...kindness and self-sacrifice of the principles and staffs of certain colleges of Women..." 1919

The conference in 1919 was on creativity.

1.9 Learning From War

"...The subject for this year's conference is the "Creative Impulse and its place in Education" 1919

The theme includes an impressive address by Arthur J Brock MD Capt RAM on the *Effect of Handicraft on Mind and Body*. He explores the nature of shell shock, and how in his Scottish residential hospital, [Craiglockhart War Hospital](#), he uses crafts to bring back the soldiers from a state of passivity and fear of life.

"We had arrangements with local farms, art schools, and the rest." P33.

Crafts were to be activities of creativity that the patient could find a love in doing and that would help to improve the environment. He also got his patients to learn about the craft as part of the local environment and community. "... encouraging him to study the life of his region as a whole." P35 1919

"I venture to come before you as a medical man who has been more or less driven, by recent events, to take up the task of Re-education." 1919

Shell shock took officials to a "large extent by surprise". The "number of soldiers, who, following the rigours of war, and especially after exposure to shell explosions, were left in a condition of helplessness, of inability to face life... tended to remain stationary or even to get worse." They seemed to rely on "someone to 'take responsibility off his shoulders'. But once this support was withdrawn they would relapse.

He parallels the symptoms of his patients, "- An acute or exaggerated form of a condition which was nearly general in society, before the war.", with children shocked into powerlessness through the brutal cultures of poverty and the inhumanity of industrial society.

“These are people who know how to “make a living and are yet quite ignorant of how to live. Such people, as soon as they get outside the beaten track of their own particular professional reaction, and emerge into the broader battlefield of life, drift like rudderless ships, and often founder.” 1919

This is a Doctor rebuilding the minds of severely damaged soldiers proposing how his experiences and results can help rebuild a destructive society.

“My experience of shell shock has confirmed and crystallised the views I was forming in the years preceding the war.” 1919

His famous patients included Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, who wrote and edited his hospital journal, *The Hydra*, part of the creative work treatment ^[17]. As well as 'progressive education', the New Ideals case studies like Lane's New Commonwealth, Summerhill and Caldecott Community have been called 'therapeutic communities'. Dr Brock sees his therapy as a necessary part of reconnecting people to their humanity, and as such a valuable process for us to save ourselves from the ongoing inhumanity of our society.

“... We must go back to and make our start from the primitive occupations of field and forest, of mountain and sea. ‘culture’ must be linked up with agriculture.” p47 1919

“What can save what is good in it and prevent a relapse into barbarism... Well, only, I believe, an extensive and rapid spread of just the ideals for which this meeting stands. It must be both speedy and widespread – the extension of your movement, or else the rising tide of anarchy may come in and overwhelm us all.” P47 1919

There were speakers who compared England and Germany, their cultures and their schools. They saw the culture of obedience and the authoritarian nature, efficiency and effectiveness of the German schools as one of the reasons why war was possible, and why children could so easily become effective soldiers.

“The traditional ideal of education may be set forth in the homely words ‘Do what I tell you’. This ideal of education Germany has adopted as her ideal for life. ‘Do what I tell you’ is what the German teacher says to the pupil, what the German Officer says to the soldier, what the German official says to the citizen, what the German State says to the people, what the German people would like to say to the rest of the world.” Mr Edward Holmes 1915 *Ideals of Life and Education – German and English* P18

The need to liberate the child from arbitrarily imposed authority had been re-enforced by the First World War.

“If the formula ‘Do what I tell you’ can do so much to demoralise and devitalise the manhood of a nation, is it likely that it will leave the youth of that or any other nation unscathed?” P19 Mr Edward Holmes 1915 *Ideals of Life and Education – German and English*

1.10 A Community Framed by Values

Though we always must remember this community was founded in 1914, and people like Holmes had been arguing for the liberation of the child long before the war. Lord Lytton is the same. Here, in 1917, he presents the values that the conferences are out to challenge and replace:

“I think, generally noticeable in old schools two ideals, or rather one ideal which finds its expression in two directions – the ideal of conformity to authority. It finds its expression both in the social and in the intellectual sphere. In the social sphere of a school there is a tendency to submerge the individuality of each pupil through enforced conformity to a conventional standard of conduct: and in the intellectual sphere there is the enforcement of the rule that it is the duty of the pupil to listen to the teacher, to reproduce his teaching, and generally to do strictly as he is bid. In other words, on the social side of the school we expect pupils to do as others do, be as others be: on the intellectual side we expect them to accept absolutely the dictation of the teacher.” Lord Lytton P2-3 Bedford College 1917

During the war the conference numbers rose from 250 to 350 to 450. One was attended by H.A.L. Fisher, the member of the War Cabinet who was steering an education act through parliament to extend the school age to 14. He opened the conference fully supporting its values.

“...We have had many pioneers of education, we have on the platform here one of the greatest of our pioneers of education, but we want a great army of missionaries, and I would ask every one of you here who is anxious to secure an advance in education to influence so far as you possibly can those people with whom you come into contact and who may want a little gentle or strenuous conversion. And now I have been asked why it is I have not gone further that I have gone. Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, it lies with you. If you can convert the country to a longer measure of educational reform than that which I have already proposed, well ‘more power to your elbows’. You won’t find me reluctant to follow in your footsteps...” p 15, 1917
Mr H.A.L.Fisher President of the Board of Education

Lytton even comments on the attendance of Sir Robert Morant, previously permanent secretary to the Board of Education, who attended for “a few tantalising minutes”. To look at the list of speakers for the conferences, to read the names of the organising committee, is to see how important this community was for promoting the rights of the child within schools.

“This, as some of you will remember, was on the eve of the War. Under the shadow of that impending catastrophe a movement was initiated which, if successful, would go far towards making such catastrophes impossible, seeing that its object was to work for a constructive freedom, in which the latent energy and capacity for doing good inherent in every child, would have an opportunity to unfold, and in which the spirit of comradeship would therefore thrive apace.” Bertram Hawker

Every conference, and every report repeated the history of the community, and the values behind it. Unlike our education conferences of today, these were practitioners who knew that they needed a foundation of values. They may have differed in their views of the reason for this foundation, they may have differed in their interpretation of what freedom meant, especially in the later conferences. But they were to explore practical examples within the framework of liberating the child from the authority of the teacher. Something that though it effected our primary schools for many, many years, and our teacher training, as an example of an education community meeting and working together it became lost in the archives.

Their history was recounted as early as 1923 in the Gloucester Journal by T.J.Gueritte, in a series of three articles covering the lectures of all the previous conferences in England, the birth of the movement in France, with its emphasis on co-operative learning and enterprise, and the precursors in America. The newspaper coverage of the conferences always acknowledged their aims. The one below contrasting them with the policy and professional details discussed in the big teacher Union meetings.

“More than 63 motions will have been considered before the conferences closes on the Thursday. Teachers from France, Belgium, Holland, Spain and Denmark are expected. While the big unions are discussing ‘domestic’ policy and professional details, the New Ideals in Education Conference at Oxford, composed of those interested in educational theories and ideals will endeavour to forge a programme suited to the needs of education in a changing world.” Lancashire Evening Post Wed 28th March 1914

The gathering strength of the community, its ongoing publications, its influence abroad, its promotion of its members work, until its possible last conference in 1937, shows us what can be done, and how we can transform our education system again, and this time, hopefully, change the secondary schools.

“The present war is a crisis in the life of the human race... Foremost among our ideals are those which dominate our schemes of education. What verdict will the War pronounce on these? “ Mr E.Holmes p3 1915 Ideals of Life and Education – German and English

1.11 Making the Conferences more Effective

At the 1917 conference at Bedford College new objectives were implemented. These were decided by the committee between conferences, and were introduced by the President, Lord Lytton, in 1917: "We realised after last year's conference that we were in some danger of becoming a mere gathering of persons interested in education without a very distinctive programme and without any features differentiating ours from other educational conferences, and were in danger therefore of losing our own individuality. It was accordingly decided by the Committee since

the last meeting at Oxford, that in our future Conferences as of which this is the first – two definite objects of policy should be aimed at..." p4 1917

They were

1. "Utilize the period between the successive Conferences in looking out in the country for experiments in education, practical experiments, upon our lines and in conformity to our ideals... search out, investigate and arrange for papers for the next conference"
2. "Select a prominent subject of immediate and special educational interest to concentrate on."

In Chairing and introducing the first three days of sharing examples of practice we have Edmond Holmes reminding us that the organisers and participants were far from the 'idealists' and 'cranks', that they are often portrayed as when 'alternative' education is discussed. These were mainstream practitioners, sharing and promoting good practice:

"Ladies and Gentlemen – Experiment Day is for me the fulfilment of a long cherished dream. For five years I was what is called Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools in England, in which capacity I visited every district in the country and got to know every inspector. My colleagues showed me sport, in the form of interesting schools; and it did not take me long to discover that in many of our elementary schools experimental work of an original type was being done, and remarkable results – not of the conventional order – were being produced. But what distressed me was, that the beacon lights, for such they ought to have been, were hidden under the proverbial bushels..." Edmond Holmes 1917

As in recent times Ofsted has now, rather late, realised its role in using case studies of 'Outstanding Schools' to promote what they see as good practice^[18]. It is strange that they do not relate and celebrate their history of contributing to sharing good practice in the Ideals Conferences.

Ofsted does not help create the space for innovation and experiment, in terms that these practitioners meant. Their outside influence would have closed down the many innovations these conferences found and shared.

P32 "What the laboratory is to the factory, the experimental school is to organised education, but successful experiment can only be carried on when, as in a laboratory, all necessary material and conditions can be secured and where there is no outside influence." 1915 New Ideals from Abroad Prof Millicent Mackenzie, University of College, Cardiff

The values of Ofsted and HMI are now at odds with this history, these heroes, their struggle for a better world. Instead of discussion of examples of experimental and innovative practice, we have a framework firmly embedded in authority, the cult of the leader, the power to transform through the use of authority. The new Ofsted guidelines for inspecting schools starts with how a school is lead, not how as a community it learns together ^[19].

“The extent to which the school meets the independent school standards is linked directly to the judgement on leadership and management.” P23 Framework for Inspecting Independent Schools, Ofsted 2015

Could Ofsted and HMI now ever celebrate its past inspectors, nine of whom attended the 1917 conference, and several presenting in different years on schools that they saw as outstanding examples of practice of liberating the child.

“...those values which alone sustain our faith in education and give meaning to our voyage of discovery; for ‘where there is no vision, the people perish.’” P35 1915 New Ideals from Abroad Prof Millicent Mackenzie, University of College, Cardiff

The case studies were from state and private schools, elementary and secondary, and from communities that supported education, continuation and adult education schemes, as well as groups that used the countryside, or even the army and the prison system.

“Five pages were read on Experiments Day – two by teachers in Elementary Schools, one by an Assistant Master in a Grammar School, one (dealing with the part-time education of adolescents) by the educational organiser to Bournville works, and one by a lady who has conducted an interesting and successful experiment in a cookery class for girls from an Elementary School.” Bedford College 1917

The conference was a public forum for presenting and sharing, its published reports were spread widely, and it published leaflets about the examples of practice. They saw themselves as a “clearing house” for good practice developed and used by teachers and others that enhanced the freedom of the child.

“So far as the country was concerned, so far as the teaching profession as a whole was concerned, these pioneers did not exist. I felt then what urgent need there was for the establishment of what I may call a clearing house for educational ideas and experiences, so list unique work of this or that teacher might become known to all who were interested in education... with a view to its being studied and meditated on, and becoming a source of inspiration, or, to say the least, of stimulus, if not of actual guidance...” Edmond Holmes 1917

1.12 Profile of the Delegates to the 1917 Conference

It is possible because of the detail of a number of the reports to analyse the attendees, at least those that registered such that they appear on the published delegates list. Against many of their names are listed where they are from and their jobs. I have chosen the 1917 conference, here there is a conflict between the numbers given for attendees, in one of the introductory speeches to the conference, and the number in the delegate list. Yet it appears to be one of the most comprehensive lists for occupations.

The members of the conferences were always listed at the end of every report, initially with their addresses and occupation, though this tapers off. Taking the report of 1917 we find, 232 listed conference members. Of these there are 42 men, some 81% women. They come from all over England: London, Kent, Halifax, Surrey,

Hereford, Manchester, Cardiff, Bristol, Nottingham, Sheffield, Reading, St Andrews, Monmouth, Leeds, Halifax, Lincoln, Southampton, Hull, Sussex, Cumberland, Norfolk, Northampton, Birmingham, Somerset, Brighton. Their professions include 49 teachers; 42 head and deputy heads of schools or colleges; Professors and lecturers in Education 22; 9 Inspectors, 1 for Women in factories, and a Poor Law Visitor of Paddington; Director of Education for Manchester, Working Vice Chair of Education, Education Secretary East Ham; two journal editors - Journal Com of Child Study, and Personal Right journal; Secretaries of Fabian Education Group, Dalcroze Society, Civic and Moral Education League, Montessori Society, Penal Reform League.

This shows that the delegates reflect all levels of educational practice, that they are there to share their own practice and/or to develop it. Inspectors, politicians on local education committees and management members of the major education associations show the importance of the conferences to the politics and administration of education. The fact that Clara Grant went three years shows that a busy London state school elementary teacher supported the values and events of the conferences.

1.13 What is at stake?

Homer Lane tells the story of one of the boys at his Little Commonwealth, who by the age of 14 had been ordered by the magistrate to be birched on 14 occasions in the previous 2 years. He uses the imagery of warfare in his description of how the boy became violent.

“At the age of seven it occurred to him that it would be a great accomplishment if he could dominate other people as his parents dominated him. The soldier astride a broom charging an imaginary foe was nothing but make-believe. He must have real war, for is this not a world of real things? So he engages Tommy Smith in single combat.” P48

Instead of helping the growing young boy to become an active, creative member of his community we exact harsh punishment and expect obedience, condemning him to a criminal justice system.

“At any point in his life during the past few years, an understanding teacher might have removed the stumbling block from his path, might have set him free, and allowed his strength to be utilized for good. But no, we would not have genius, we do not want him to be himself. We insist upon his becoming a duplicate of ourselves. And so we bind him about with convention, and as he, with the wonderful force of childhood, bursts our bonds asunder and asserts his own right to be himself, we add more and more bondage, until he hates. We have not only suffered the loss of a contributor to the welfare of society, but we have created a destructive force – a double loss.”

We brutalise our children because of their energy and attempts to express themselves, and even when they may only be seeking a sense of justice. How can we support their growing sense of autonomy, dignity and desire to be an active member of a community?

“...many of these are sent there from the police courts of London. If left to their own environment their future would be very darkened indeed; if left to the old fashioned way of correction I am not sure but that their futures would be darker still. Mr Lane has taken these children, and, by organising them into what he happily calls a Commonwealth, training them first of all in responsibility.”

“I have twice had the pleasure of visiting the Commonwealth, and I have seen the thing in operation. The stories I have heard of the complete transformation of human character under the deft handling of this master are such as to inspire hope in anybody that anything can be done with any child. The Commonwealth, as you know, is self-governing. They have their own court; one of the children acts as a judge, and they impose punishment on offenders. I was going to say they give rewards for good conduct; but good conduct is its own reward, - that is the fundamental dictum that runs through the whole scheme.” P37 Chair: His Excellency Dr Page, American Ambassador

1.14 Measuring Our Children

With Cyril Burt and similar psychometricians joining the community later on it is worth remembering the ethos of support for the sharing of practice, that it relied on experiential evidence and observation, it relied on story telling, and on visitors and observers seeing the experiments in action. Viscount Haldane expresses the shared attitude that exams and measurement posed a threat to the values of freedom and developing a child's humanity.

“There was formerly a great disposition to say that the real was that which could be measured with the balances or the measuring rod: unfortunately the balances and the measuring rod do not cover everything. They are highly appropriate to mathematics but not to morality.

“... we are looking for something new, and in fact this Conference, with the new conception of education it is searching for is part of the movement in search of wider view of reality – a view which will find reality is quality at least as much as quantity...”
Chair: Viscount Haldane

Holmes links this measurement to the very nature of autocratic authority, that the measuring is a very necessary part of destroying the autonomy of the human being.

P14 “The pressure of autocratic authority tends to externalise life. The verdict of authority – external, visible, embodied authority – takes the place of the verdict of experience, of life, of Nature. An officer's or a teacher's estimate of worth is accepted as final and decisive. An examiner's certificate determines a man's 'station and degree'. Class lists, orders of merit, prizes, medals, titles, grades, and the like interpose themselves between the soul and the ultimate realities of existence. Under such a regime the sense of intrinsic reality is gradually lost. What is reported to be is a man's chief concern, not what he really is.” Mr Edward Holmes 1915 Ideals of Life and Education – German and English

On reading Holmes and reflecting on the present Ofsted cult of the leader, one can shiver with the implications of their anti-rights, anti-human and anti-democratic values, and how efficient and effective they can be. They can 'turn around' schools, they can improve test results, they can create cultures of authority, but at what cost, and ultimately what difference is their education to that described in Germany before the First World War, except their methods now fit so well into the competitive world of commodity, competing for exams, class and status, and economically, nation against nation.

"When external authority takes the place of the real and ideal, life shrinks within finite limits. Reality is regarded as measurable and ponderable. Standards of value which are outward, finite, and mechanically adjustable, take the place of those which are inward, infinite and self-adjusting. In other words, autocratic authority idealises itself and expects to be idealized by its victims. 'I am sufficient for you,' It says to those who submit to it 'do not go beyond me.'" P15 Mr Edward Holmes 1915 Ideals of Life and Education – German and English

1.15 The New World

The last conference appears to have happened in 1937. Over 23 years this community had met, shared, celebrated, discussed and published practical, working examples of schools and other institutions working with the freedom of the child. With supporters from government ministers, inspectors, professors they helped to define the child-centred primary school of the last century. Our evaluation of schools should hold up their examples as standards to guide us by. The valueless concept that innovation has become, shows that we are simply flailing within a free market for methods and processes that we can sell. Each method will have its headline, will have its book and its outcome of improved results, will float for a while and then sink in a sea that lacks a sense of history and a framework of values. We have lost the Ideals.

"The old world is dead, and the new world is at school. In between the two are the armies who have bled and suffered for the errors of the old. They all call for new life, new hope, a new spirit in industry and new ideals in the school." Mr Henry Wilson p181 – Epilogue to Conference 1919

The 1937 conference saw the memorial lecture on Edmond Holmes by Mr E Sharwood-Smith and chaired by his friend and co-founder of the Conferences, Bertram Hawker.

"I think (except for the first meeting of all, at East Runton) he never missed one in 23 years. Such was his enthusiasm for education and the instruction for education and the instruction and enlightenment of the teacher." P39

"Wherever education is carried out in a atmosphere of love and freedom, the spirit of Edmond Holmes is there." P 48 Mr E Sharwood-Smith Edmond Holmes Memorial Lecture Chair: Bertram Hawker Tues March 30th 1937 New Ideals in Education Conference

Just pause and think about our present leaders in education and how many of them will be remembered for their unfailing support for freedom for the child. How many of them, instead of standing on the shoulders of the heroes of the past, have deliberately, politically ignored them, dismantled their legacy and sought to create a school system that trains our children to compete in an international market. Who see citizenship, creativity, children's voice, building character, values education as cross curricular add-ons, as projects for charities and NGOs to deliver in our schools, as extra's needed to 'combat terrorism and radicalisation' or challenge bullying and racism or even to increase motivation and participation for some vague idea of a Big Society.

"those concerned with education had to meet the new menace of dictators, who dislike above all things democracy, liberty, freedom of expression, and all the virtues we in this country associated with democracy.

... British youth must be given a liberal education, and must be trained in wise and sensible citizenship." Wed April 24th 1935 Education and Democracy p50 Speaker: Sir Earnest D Simon, Chairman of Association for Education in Citizenship

Where did Holmes think we should begin? What startling, progressive, off the wall idea did he have for our schools and communities.

"How best to do this, how best to let the rising generation live, how best to help it unfold its hidden life, how best, in educating it, to harmonise order with freedom, direction with spontaneity, organisation from without with growth from within, is a problem which will give us much to think about for many generations. Perhaps, if I may make one positive suggestion, we might begin by allowing children to let one another live – in other words, by giving them a freer social life than they enjoy now. That would be the thin end of a great wedge – the wedge of comradeship – which might some day cleave this still feudalised world of ours asunder. " P23 Mr E.Holmes 1915 Ideals of Life and Education – German and English

1.16 Epilogue

In 1949 HMI, the government school inspectors published a report on a private school stating "What cannot be doubted is that a piece of fascinating and valuable educational research is going on here which it would do all educationalists good to see." A different set of Inspectors also wrote in another report in 1948 that an East London state school was "A vision of what the new form of secondary school can be." These schools were A.S.Neill's Summerhill, and the state school Neill thought was the most democratic and free, Alexander Bloom's St Georges in the East. Even after the Second World War, even from those who represented the official education establishment, the vision of the Ideals in Education Conferences were still there, and as radical as ever.

Summerhill, one of the surviving products of the age of promoting schools based on the humanity and rights of the child, was threatened in 1999 because of its philosophy of choice for the child, it won its court case and the Department for

Education signed an agreement saying it, and Ofsted, would respect this philosophy in the future. The agreement received the consent of the children of the school through a democratic meeting in the Royal Courts of Justice courtroom. Summerhill also won an inspection process that would allow it to have two advisers, and the DfE have one, who observed, reviewed and fed into the inspection process as it happened. Under this process its last inspection in 2012^[20] received an outcome of outstanding for everything but teaching, and this was due to the school refusing to assess and measure its students all the time.

The Department of Education has written to the school over the past two years stating it is tearing up the court agreement. The school is waiting to see if this includes the agreement to respect its philosophy. At a time we are moving further and further from the values of the New Ideals community, and the rights of children in education, this maybe the last historic example of good practice that the authoritarians will symbolically destroy.

The A.S.Neill Summerhill Trust is publishing a centenary edition of Neill's first book published in November 1915, *A Dominies Log*, and his first year as headteacher of a village state school in Scotland. It is inviting artists, educators, cultural figures, activists to contribute to the new edition to renew the educationalists' fight for children's rights. The book is a celebration of the individuals and community of the New Ideals in Education, as expressed by one teacher who fought for the rights of the child in state schools, and then through creating Summerhill and sharing its model of practice.

I end with a quote from 100 years ago that urges building on the work of the New Ideals Conferences, and the creation of a centre that will link education, art, and science. I plan to organise as a centenary of *A Dominies Log* a conference in November 2015 that will celebrate and promote this idea, with the overt framework, stated and referenced publicly, of the rights of the child.

"In the second place we need a sort of clearing house for educational ideas in the broad sense – not merely a Bureau of Education (useful as that would be/nor yet a learned society, but something international lines or at least on a wider basis than any ordinary society. Such an institution would afford a meeting place for the interchange and discussion of ideas from all partys of the world, and from such a centre research, experiment and all kinds of new enterprise in science, art, or education might be arranged and exhibitions and demonstrations carried out." P34 1915 New Ideals from Abroad Prof Millicent Mackenzie, University of College, Cardiff

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A History of the New Ideals Conferences and their Effect on Communities Internationally

I have fully published the three articles by T.J.Gueritte, F.S.E., M Soc. C.B. (FRANCE) published in 1923 in the Gloucester Journal, every Saturday for three weeks, in October for several reasons. It gives another source for the listed presentations for the conferences, including detailed lists of those of experiments. And he does this for conferences in other countries.

He describes the influences of the New Ideals abroad, linking the conferences to New Era and the New Education Fellowship. It shows his perspective of the importance of what was happening through the New Ideals Conferences. Gueritte is a presenter in the French conference. It is a brilliant primary source for further research, in terms of who were the presenters and the experimentalists and what they spoke about.

Lastly I find it significant that the history was worthy of writing about and being published in 1923. I feel it certainly is in 2015.

ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE AND ART SOCIETIES.

New Ideals in Education. (By T. J. GUERITTE, F.S.E., M Soc. C.B. (FRANCE).

The first three articles giving a brief history of the movement England, France and America.

Great strides have been made lately various countries for the advancement of new methods in education, giving children freedom and responsibility, liberating them from useless and cramping restriction and devitalising pressure by guiding their spontaneous activities into the channels mental, moral and spiritual growth.

Dotteressa Montessori succeeded in systematising a practical way principles and details of application which were experimented upon by a few pioneers in various lands, quite independently and unknown to each other, and thus set up a movement far-reaching consequences. Her work in Italy was hardly known in this country until 1910, when the Board of Education sent Mr. Holmes, late Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools, to investigate her system. A. Montessori Society was then started in London, and progressed rapidly, the leaders of the movement arranging a Montessori Conference at Hun ton in 1914. The papers contributed were: " The Social Aspect the Montessori Movement," Miss de Lissa; " Froebel and Montessori," Mme Pujol-Segalas; " Montesisorism in Secondary Schools," Norman MacMunn; "The Biological Aspect of the Montessori Movement," Prof. Culverwell; "The Musical Training of Children," Dr. Yorke Trotter; " The Montessori Apparatus and Its Use,' Miss Olive Smee; "The Little Commonwealth " (for Young Delinquents), Homer-Lane.

In 1915 the leaders of the movement decided not give exclusive assistance to any particular pedagogical school, but to aid all endeavours toward reverence for the pupil's individuality, and belief that individuality grows best in atmosphere of freedom. The Group, assuming the title of "New Ideals in Education," held a Conference Stratford-on-Avon, with the following papers: "Ideals of .Life and Education! —German end English," Edmond Holmes; "Ideals From Abroad," Prof. Mackenzie; "The Faults and Misdemeanours of Children," Homer-Lane;" Some Recent Montessori Experiments in England," Dr. Kimmins; "A Year of Experience with Montessori Apparatus in an Elementary School," Miss Crouch; "The Montessori Principle in the Elementary School," Mrs. Hutchinson; "New Movements in Rural Education," Christopher Turnor; " Steps the Development of a Rural School," W. Taylor; "The Place of Music in Education/' Dr. Yorke Trotter; " Freedom and Discipline," Prof. Nunn and Prof. Bompas Smith; "Papers on Mothercraft," Mrs Slys Russell, Dr. Benjamin Broadbent and Dr. C. W. Saleeby; "Recent Developments in the Teaching- of Drawing," H. Tunaley; "Drawing and Mental Development," H. Barrett Capemter. All reports are obtainable from the Secretary, 24, Royal-avenue, Chelsea.

In 1916 the Oxford Conference presented a novel feature, yix., Reports on actual Educational Experiments: "Physiological Education in an Elementary School," J. Arrowsmith; " Independent Study in a Girls' Elementary School," Miss M. Price; " The Caldecott Community," Miss Ph. M. Potter; " A New Method of Classifying Infants," Miss Blackburn; "A New Method in Handwriting," Miss Golds.

The papers were: "The Indirect Method in Religious Education," Principal Jacks; "The Ethical Aspect of Religious Education," Prof. Mackenzie; "Comprehension and Definiteness in Religious Education," Bishop Frodsham; "The Value and Importance of Handicraft in Education," H. Wilson; "Practical Design for Boys and Girls," G. Cooks; "The Boy Scout Movement" Sir Robert Baden-Powell; "Scouting—Its Educational Value," Ern. Young; "Regional Studies and Human Surveys," Prof. Fleure; "The Place of Science in Education," Sir H. Miers and Mr. D. Pye; "The Examiner Examined," John Russell; "Universities and Their Re-Planning," Prof. Patrick Geddes; "The Open-Air School: Its Physical and Educational Possibilities," Dr. Crowley.

To guard against the tendency of the Conference to become too indefinite in character, three full days of the London Conference, 1917, were devoted to one special subject, the papers being: "Continued Education," H. A. L. Fisher; "The Mind of Youth," F. Roscoe; "Problems of Urban Continuation Schools," Prof. Bompas Smith; "Problems of Rural Continuation Schools," R. G. Hatton; "Education, Craftsmanship and Leisure," A. Mansbridge; "Clubs in Relation to Continuation Schools," Mrs. Arnold Glover. Papers on other subjects were: "The Religious Problem of the Little Commonwealth," Homer-Lane; "The Religious Training of the Adolescent," G. H. Archibald; "The Ideal Nursery School," Miss M. McMillan; "The Training of Teachers for Nursery Schools," Miss F. Hawtrey; "Nursery Schools," Miss G. Owen. Reports on Experiments: "The Possibilities of Literature in an Elementary School," Miss Enright; "New Ideals in Geometry Teaching," W. G. W. Mitchell; "Self-Instruction in Elementary Arithmetic," Miss Dewdney; "Part-Time Education—The Bournville Scheme," R. W. Fergusson; "The Teaching of Cookery," Mrs. Burt Brown.

At the 1918 Oxford Conference, the central idea was "The Office of the Teacher." Lord Lytton, who had carried the Fisher Education Bill through the Lords, delivered once more the inaugural address followed by: "The Relation of the School to the Home and to Social Life," Kenneth Richmond; "The Relation of the School to the Home in 'Egeria's' Village." Edmond Holmes (who had described in his great book on education "What is and what might be," the work of a gifted village schoolmistress, on lines parallel to those followed by Mme Montessori, whose existence she ignored; her identity was veiled under the name of "Egeria"); "A Wider Life for the Teacher," Miss E. P. Hughes; "The Making of the Teacher for Young Children," Miss de Lissa; "The Making of the Teacher, age 7-14," Miss Wodehouse; "The Training of Teachers for Rural Schools," Christopher Turnor; "The Making of the Teacher for the Wage-earning Age," Prof. Findlay.

But what gripped the audience best was the description of experiments in schools: "Graduated Group Teaching for large Infant Classes," Miss E. McNicholl; "Free work with large class in an Infant School," Miss Milton; "New Education Scheme in the Army," Capt Egerton; "Developments in Self-activity in Elementary School," O'Neill; "The Farm House School," Miss J. Fry; "A Central Rural School in Warwickshire," Mr. Horn; "Unaided Dramatic Work by boys of 13," N. MacMunn; "A Co-operative student Class," J. W. Wells.

The date of the Cambridge Conference 1919 prevented the attendance of secondary school teachers no reports on experiments were read. The central theme was "The Creative Impulse and its place in Education," introduced by Henry Wilson, the other papers being: "The Effect of Handicraft on Mind and Body," Dr A Brock; "Drawing and the Imaginative side of Education," Prof. Rothenslein; "The Craftsman, his Education, and his Place in Industry," Alec Miller; "Nationality in Music," Geoffrey Shaw; "Creative Education—Learning by Doing," E. F. O'Neill; "The Educational Value of the Artistic

Crafts," N. Fletcher; "Craft and Culture," Prof. Lethaby; "The Creative Impulse in Musical Education," Dr. Y. Trotter; "Needlecraft in the School," Miss M. Swanson; "The Drama in Education," G. Whitworth.

Stratford-on-Avon saw again the Conference in 1921, no Conference being held in 1920. The general papers dealt with: "Education and Life," Prof. Geddes; "The Suppression the Creative Instinct," Henry Wilson; "The Drama and Education," Miss Lena Ashwell; "The Psychology of Repression," Dr. Olive Wheeler; "The Recreations of the Spitalfields Weavers," Edmond Holmes; "The Nature of Poetry," John Drinkwater; while reports on experiments were provided by Miss Helen Parkhurst: "The Dalton Laboratory Plan"; and Mons. Roger Cousinet: "Experiments in French Elementary Schools." A feature of the Conference was the exhibition of the art work of Prof. Cizek's pupils, of Vienna, which excited much wonder and admiration.

"Drama and Education" being the subject for the 1922 Conference, it was held again in Stratford. with the following papers: "Origin of the Drama," F. Cornford; "Playwriting," John Masefield; "Drama and National Life," Miss Lena Ashwell; "Drama in Relation to Education," Dr. Rudolf Steiner; "Tendencies of Modern Drama," Miss Cicely Hamilton; "The Educational Use of the Drama in Mysteries," Henry Wilson; "Drama and Education," Granville Barker; "The Cinema and the Theatre," St. John Ervine; "Shakespeare and the New Ideals," Dr. R. Stainer. Experiments were related as follows: "The Dramatic Instinct in Elementary Education," Mrs. Weller; "Drama and the Boy," E. Sharwood Smith; "Dramatic Work in Public and Elementary Schools," Kenneth Tyndall; "A School Dramatic Society," Miss F. Beaumont; "Self-Expression in School and the Drama," Guy Pocock; "Literature Action," Miss E. Fogerty.

The date of the 1923 Conference, Oxford, was unfortunately inconvenient for secondary teachers, and there was only one report on experiments though a most interesting one from Mr. E. Mallison: "Self-Education an Elemental School." The general theme under discussion was "The Discipline of Freedom." If the "New Ideals Education" advocate freedom, in the sense of release from injurious constraint, both for teacher and child, it does not mean release from all constraint: freedom is not opposed to true discipline, the discipline of self-control, as distinguished from that of mechanical drill. Hence the following papers: "The Beginning of Wisdom and the Fulfilment Law," Prof. Campagnac; "The Philosophy of Freedom," Principal Jacks; "The Rhythmic Claim of Freedom and Discipline," Prof. Whitehead; "Freedom for the Teacher," E. Sharwood Smith; "Freedom for Young Children," Miss Mackinder; "Rural Education Scheme," A. W. Bryant; "The Freedom the Open Air," Miss McMillan; "Freedom and Adolescence," J. H. Simpson; "Freedom and University Students," E. Barker; "Freedom and the Dalton Plan," A. J. Lynch.

This somewhat dry expose was necessary to show the vast field research of "The New Ideals in Education." In another article shall endeavour to show the results attained.

ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE. AND ART SOCIETIES.

New Ideals in Education.

(By T. J. GUERITTE F.S.E., M. Soc. C.E. (FRANCE).

(Continued.)

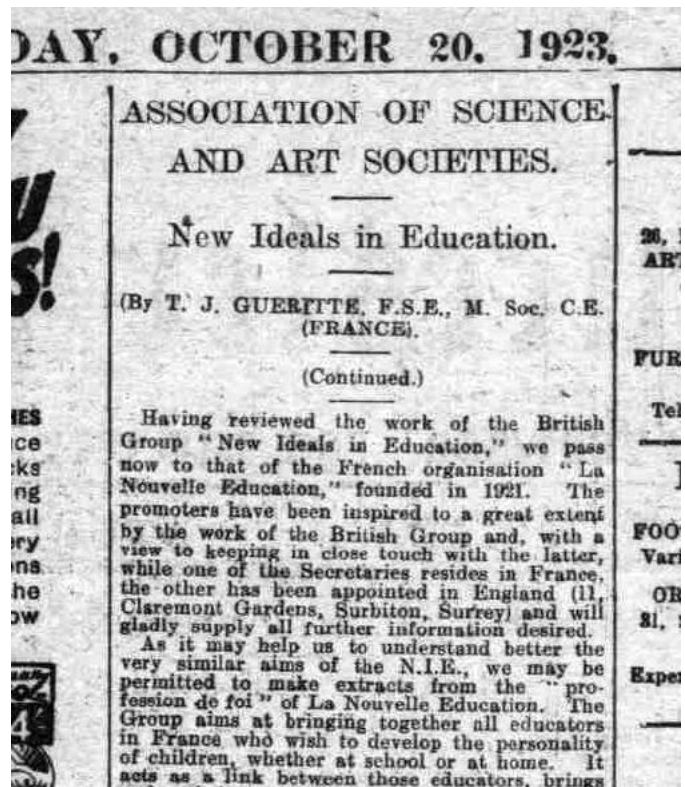
Having reviewed the work of the British Group "New Ideals Education," we pass now to that of the French organisation "La Nouvelle Education," founded in 1921. The promoters have been inspired to a great extent by the work of the British Group and, with a view to keeping in close touch with the latter, while one of the Secretaries resides in France, the other has been appointed in England (11, Claremont Gardens, Surbiton, Surrey) and will gladly supply all further information desired.

As it may help us to understand better the very similar aims of the N.I.E., we may be permitted to make extracts from the "profession de foi" of La Nouvelle Education. The Group aims at bringing together all educators in France who wish to develop the personality of children, whether at school or home. It acts as a link between those educators, brings under their notice the experiments carried out by others, and induces them to repeat them, so that the experience gained by one may profit the others, helping to bring nearer the desired changes in educational methods of the present day.

The discoveries of psychology and experimental pedagogy in all lands tend to prove that education should not aim at forming the children, (which too often means only deforming), but at placing them into surroundings such that they may grow under the most favourable conditions. Experiments have proved that such growth is best attained in an atmosphere of free activity, and that children may thus reach a higher level of physical, mental and moral development than is the case with present methods. In the same way as modern infant welfare has discarded the use of swaddling clothes which, in past years, deformed the body, modern education rejects the constraints or the exaggerated grandmotherly care, which deform intellectual and moral faculties the child.

The child is a particular being, endowed with an individuality which must be respected. We must supply the material and spiritual food which it requires, and then allow it to grow in peace. We must give it the possibility of acting and expressing itself as it chooses, because this is the only way in which we may get to know it, and which it may develop, first, its muscles, and then, having gained mastery over them, develop its powers of observation and its will, the true basis of all intellectual and moral growth. Finally, must encourage it to practise team work and play, as it will learn thereby how to use strong personality for the benefit others, which is the hall mark of a truly civilised being.

Desirous of informing its members without delay, concerning educational experiments and important papers, " La Nouvelle Education " published, during the last two years, a monthly bulletin embodied as a supplement the review "L'Education " (Haftier, publisher, Paris). The growth of the



movement has now induced the group to double the importance of the Bulletin and publish it independently.

The first Conference took place in 1922 at the Lycee de Jeunes Filles Versailles (Paris University), the papers being: "Handwork," G. Quenioux; "The Education of Young Girls," Mme. Fernier; "Experiments in Auto- Education in a Rural School," Mlle. Wauthier; "An Experimental School: l'Ecole des Roches," M. G. Bertier; "Results in Education," M. R. Cousinet. An evening was devoted to the performance by girls of the elementary classes of the Lycee, of plays entirely written and staged by them. During the Conference, an exhibition of samples of free work, carried out by auto-educated children, was held. The interest aroused was such that the exhibits were sent for a month to the Musee Pedagogique, in Paris, and later, for a week to Havre.

The second Conference was held in 1923 at the Musee Pedagogique, Paris, being opened Senator Hounorat, former Minister of Education with the following papers:— "An Experiment of Progressive School in Switzerland," M. Ad. Ferriere; "The Physical Science Laboratory in School," M. P. Martin; "A Co-operative Society Among School Children," M. Profit; "Further Experiments in Team Work at School." Mlle. Charmaison {being a continuation of Mlle. Wauthier's paper. 1922}; "Vocational Guidance for School Children." M. Gh. Quiliard; "Children's Libraries in France," Mlle. L. Duproix; "Esperanto in the School," M. T. J. Gueritte. .

It will be observed that the subjects are somewhat more strictly practical than is the case with the "New Ideals in Education" Group, and refer exclusively to descriptions of actual facts. During the conference an exhibition of children's work was held, and, with view to enabling members to compare the results work carried out on parallel lines by educators of various lands, exhibits had been gathered from Austria. Belgium, Great Britain. U.8.A., and Switzerland in addition those from French schools.

A further manifestation of the activity of the Group was the publication of a pamphlet on the principles and details of application of free team work, as practised in certain French schools, under the supervision of M. R. Cousinet, inspector of primary education. Such work not only leads to auto-education of the child, but goes a step further by producing auto-education of the team as a whole. The teacher lets the children form their teams as they please, just as they form their own groups at play; they choose the subjects of their co-operative studies, sifting the information gathered by individual members the team, and thereby correcting faulty observation or interpretation. The first experiments in work of this kind related to scientific work, mostly elementary physical science combining analysis and synthesis the children training themselves gradually into sound methods of scientific research indexing etc. Applications to history were soon in great favour too; from research concerning the history of things (the evolution of dwellings of means transport etc.) children passed gradually to that relating to events and very soon became keen upon reconstructing historical scenes writing them down and even staging them. Literary work appealed to them as well, poems and stories being written in common and illustrated by them sometimes taking the form comedy or drama and being staged.. Mathematical work was the outcome of forming buying and purchasing groups for fun at first. The formation of school co-operatives (see 1923 Conference) led to wonderful development of this aspect of team work the child - buying and selling in earnest and attending to all the accounting in the same way as would be done in a business undertaking.

This pamphlet as well as copies of the reports on the two congresses are obtainable from the secretaries.

Our third article will deal with the International aspect of the movement.

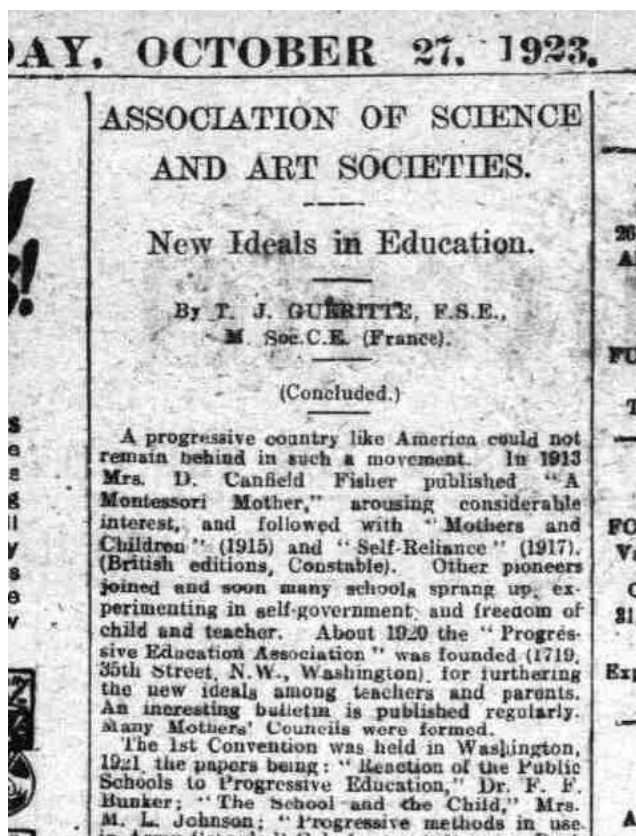
ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE AND ART SOCIETIES.

New Ideals in Education.

By T. J. Gueritte, F.S.E., M. Soc.C.E. (France).

(Concluded.)

A progressive country like America could not remain behind in such a movement. In 1913 Mrs. D. Canfield Fisher published "A Montessori Mother," arousing considerable interest, and followed with "Mothers and Children" (1915) and "Self-Reliance" (1917), (British editions, Constable). Other pioneers joined and soon many schools sprang up, experimenting in self-government and freedom of child and teacher. About 1920 the "Progressive Education Association" was founded (1719, 35th Street, N.W., Washington), for furthering the new ideals among teachers and parents. An interesting bulletin is published regularly. Many Mothers' Councils were formed.



The 1st Convention was held in Washington, 1921. the papers being: " Reaction of the Public Schools to Progressive Education," Dr. F. F. Bunker; "The School and the Child," Mrs. M. L. Johnson; "Progressive methods in use in Army Schools," Col. Leuts; " Moraine Park School and the Progressive Movement in the Middle West," F. D. Slutz; "The Sunrise Zone between Public Schools and Industry," P. K. Millar; "Progressive Education in Public School," Angelo Patri. The 1921 Convention, at Dayton, Ohio was mainly devoted the discussion reports of the work in many American progressive schools.

In 1922 the Convention was held at Baltimore, when the following papers were contributed: "Normal and Abnormal Repression," Dr. A. Mayer; "What are our Schools Doing to Prevent War?" Mrs. F. B. Boeckel; "Work, Study and Play Plan, as the Solution of our Public Schools Problems," Mrs. A. B. Fernandez; "The Schools of India," Dr. K. N. Das Gupta; "Eleven Years Student Government," Mrs L. K. W. Wyman; "The Workers- Education Movement in England." A. Mansbridge. The reports on the 1923 Convention are not yet complete; the addresses dealt mostly with co-operation, scientific and psychological research, the analysis children's habits.

Coming now to the international organisations dealing with the subject, one should mention first the "Institut Jean-Jacques Rousseau," of Geneva, or School of the Science of Education, where teachers over 18 and both sexes come from all the world to receive, under the able direction of M. P. Bovet, a training specially adapted to those who wish to devote themselves to the new schools (such being the name generally given to those schools in which the principles of modern pedagogy are systematically applied). The research work carried out at the Institute receives publicity in the

"Intermediaire des Educateurs," the "Collection d'Actualites Pedagogiques" (Delschaux and Nestle, Neufchatel), and the "Revue de pedotechnie" (Lamertin, Brussels) this latter being the organ of the "Societe Belge de Pedotechnie" which does such excellent work.

In close collaboration with the Institute works the "Bureau International des Ecoles Nouvelles," led by Dr. A. Ferriere. at Pleiades sur Blonay(Canton Vaud). Created in 1899, and fully organised in 1912. it acts as a link between the new schools throughout the world, centralising all documents relating to them, keeping them all advised of all experiments and research carried out in other schools, so that this mutual help may increase rapidly the momentum of the movement, set up through this universal effort. Needless to say, the wonderful documentation thus gathered not reserved for the new schools. All educators interested receive most willing and useful help when they apply for information.

It may not be out of place to resume the 30 characteristics which, according M. Ferriere, must possess the ideal new school: (1) It must be a laboratory of practical pedagogy; (2) a boarding school; (3) in the country, though not far from a town; and (4) in which the children are grouped, from 10 to 15 in number, in separate homes, so as to enjoy a familial atmosphere; (5) both sexes are co-educated; (6) handwork must be practised; (7) especially joinery, agriculture and horticulture; (8) in addition to curriculum work, free work must be encouraged; (9) physical culture, a necessity; (10) travelling and camping play an important role.

(11) General culture of the mind is more desirable than the cramming of knowledge, but (12) must be followed by spontaneous specialisation. (13) Teaching is based observation of facts and on experience; (14) on appeal to the personal activity of the child; and (15) to its spontaneous interest. (16) To individual work must be associated (17) team work. (18) Actual teaching is limited to the morning. (19) Few subjects, one or two only should be studied each day, and (20) few subjects per month, so as encourage the spirit of continuity.

(21) Moral education must come from within, not from without, and it is well to encourage the children form a commonwealth. (22) with leaders elected them, and (23) with duties toward, and work for the community. (24) Rewards consist in giving opportunities for increasing one's sphere of activity and usefulness; (25) punishment in giving means to repair error. (26) Emulation by comparison between one's own results, past and present rather than between results other pupils. (27) The new school must have atmosphere of beauty, (28) music, choral and orchestral, having great importance. (29) The education of moral consciousness should result from practical examples and applications rather than from theoretical teaching. (30) Spiritual education should be non-sectarian, and lead to tolerance toward the various ideals, long they strive toward spiritual growth.

January, 1920, had seen the birth of a quarterly magazine for the promotion of reconstruction in education, "Education for the New Era" (11 Tavistock Square, London), under the leadership of Mrs. B. Ensor, and aiming at bringing an international spirit in the study of that question. In January, 1921. it became "The New Era" and witnessed the birth of The New Education Fellowship, which sought to establish an elastic Association adapted to the idiosyncrasies and methods of individual countries. No rules, no application for membership, the latter being acquired subscribing to the organs published under the auspices the Fellowship. An International Conference was arranged to take place at the College of Calais in August, the directing idea to be "The Creative Self-Expression of the Child." The papers contributed were: "The Liberation of Curative Faculty by Education." L. Haden

Guest; "The French Child at Home and at School." Clondesley Brereton; "The Montessori Method," C.A. Claremont; "Craftsmanship and Creative Education," Henry Wilson; "Co- Education," Mlle. Decroix and H. Baillie Weaver; "Is the Child Capable of Creative Power." R.Nussbaum; "The Abolition of Authority," A. S. Neill; "A Liberal Education in Elementary Schools," Miss R. A. Pennethorne; "An Experiment of Curriculum of Elementary Schools with Personal Activity of the Child," Dr. Decroly; "Applications of the Method of Dr Decroly, ' Mlle. Hamaide; "The Active School," Dr. A. Ferriere; "Rural New Schools," Dr. Ferriere; "Self- Government and the Growth of Character," E. A. Craddock; "Psycho-Analysis," Dr. J. Young; "The Cultural Value of Analytical Psychology," Dr. Young; "Art and the Child," F. Choisy; "The Value of Drama in Education," Miss I. M. Pagan; "Some Recent Developments in Intelligence Tests," Miss K. A.Walters; "The Schools of To-morrow," Mrs. B. Ensor; "The Educative Values of Scoutism," J. Loiseau.

During the Conference the formation was announced of a sister Association to the New Fellowship Association: " The Ligue Internationale pour l'Education Nouvelle " with a quarterly organ, "Pour l'Ere Nouvelle," Geneve, being the French edition of "The New Era," entrusted to Dr. Ferriere. while a German edition, "Das werdende Zeitalter," was entrusted to Dr. Elizabeth Rotten, Berlin.

The second Conference took place in 1923 Montreux, Switzerland, the central theme being, "Education for Creative Service" with the following papers: "The Active School and Creative Service," Dr. Ferriere; "Passive Schools versus Active Schools." Dr. H. Tebler; "Eurhythmics," Jacques Dalcroze; "The Bret-Harte System of Rhythmic Breathing," E. J. Burton; " The New Schools of the Austrian Government," Dr. O. Rommel; " Self-Education and Team Work," R. Consinet; "Which Services may Render New Schools to Elementary Schools," G. Bertier; " Contemporary Art," Prof. Ciack; "Suggestion and Auto Suggestion," E. Coue; "Memories from Childhood," C. Baudouin; "Growth of the Junior Cross, in. the U.S.A., Europe and Other Lands," Miss E. G. Benedict. H. H. Barton and L. Bryson; "Labour and Education East and West, and the League of Nations," H. Wilson; "Civic Education in New Schools under State Control," Prof. Helene Rauchberg; "The Teaching of Living Languages baaed upon Experimental Psychology," Prof. Elsa von Kohler; "How Intellectual Education Contributes to Sublimate Tendencies," Dr. Decroly; "World Literature for Children," Frau H. Scheu-Riess; " Education and Analytical Psychology" Dr. C. J. Jung; "Psychological Types," Dr. Jung; "The Dalton Plan in the Elementary School" J. Eades. Each lecture was systematically heralded by ten minutes of music.

A list of the principal New Schools in Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Holland and U.S.A. was published in "Pour l'Ere Nouvelle" of July, 1922.