

EDUCATION

Plea for Better Education

➤ IN ORDER TO KEEP UP with a changing world, the United States must supply better education on the semiprofessional, technical and skilled levels.

Our system of education is failing to prepare individuals for a new world of work in an advanced technological society, warned Dr. Grant Venn, superintendent of schools for Wood County, W. Va.

At no level of American education has the fact been fully recognized that technology has created a new relationship in which education is placed squarely between man and his work, Dr. Venn stated in his 184-page report published June 1 by the American Council on Education.

Only one student in ten now leaving the educational system without a bachelor's degree has some specific occupational preparation.

For the 80% of children who drop out of junior high school, high school and junior college without a degree, prospects are bleak when they enter a labor market where jobs require constantly higher levels of education and skill development.

In our new world of automation, computers and dynamic changes that constantly alter or obliterate whole occupations and create new ones, most vocational educational programs are no longer adequate, stated Dr. Venn in his report, "Man, Education and Work."

"The average youth of today will prob-

ably shift occupations some five times over the next 40 years," he said.

Vocational and technical education programs should be made a major part of the objective in two-year colleges in America, which could then assume their proper and effective role in the educational system of the nation.

In a strongly worded plea for better and more educational teaching, Dr. Venn warned that the educational community, particularly those in higher education, should accept greater responsibility for vocational and technical education.

Educators should take a leading role in providing a solution to the paradox of a nation with between four and five million persons unemployed and yet with job openings for some four million skilled workers.

For too long, he said, vocational and technical education has been isolated from the mainstream of American education. It has been regarded as a "second class kind of education" and a "dead end." Because of this attitude, many of today's youth did and do not receive adequate occupational education. This is a serious shortcoming of the educational process.

The American Council on Education also plans a series of regional conferences for college faculty and administrators, secondary school personnel, vocational and technical educators, and public officials.

• Science News Letter, 85:372 June 13, 1964

PUBLIC HEALTH

More for Mental Illness

➤ INCREASED INSURANCE coverage for mental illness was urged by Dr. Robert H. Felix, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, Bethesda, Md.

Otherwise, patients will not be able to afford the services provided through the country's new community-based mental health program, he told 3,000 members of the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Los Angeles.

After meeting with major health insurance firms and labor and management groups, the NIMH developed five recommendations as guides to developing broader insurance coverage of psychiatric illness, he said. They are:

1. In treating the mentally ill, emphasis should be placed on early referral and short-term, intensive therapy. Insurance coverage, in the category of outpatient benefits, might well be 100% for the first few visits, with a progressively decreasing percentage of cost coverage for subsequent visits, up to a stated limit.

2. In-hospital benefits should be increased and partial hospitalization should be included in these benefits. "Allowable hospital expenses" should include those incurred within day and night hospital programs, even though the patient's daily length of stay is less than 18 hours.

3. Increased recognition should be given

to all professional skills essential to treatment. Coverage should include, in addition to the services of psychiatrists and other physicians, those of the clinical psychologist, psychiatric social worker and psychiatric nurse, when supervised by a qualified physician.

4. Insurance should not favor a particular type of treatment, since coverage of one therapy without coverage of others might encourage treatment not best suited to the needs of the patient.

5. Prescribed drugs should be covered for ambulatory as well as for hospitalized patients.

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COMMUNICATIONS

New 'Viewphone' Uses Regular Phone Wires

➤ A NEW, relatively inexpensive "viewphone" has been developed, enabling a caller to see the person at the other end of the line.

Developed by Tokyo Shibaura Electric Company, the device will cost about \$250 when produced. It operates over conventional telephone lines without the need for special television equipment.

The device also can take still photographs automatically, if desired, for about 25¢ each.

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Questions

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ENGINEERING—Where is the first atomic powered lighthouse located? p. 377.

GENERAL SCIENCE—How many scientific and technical journals are published in the United States? p. 371.

What type of occupations predominate among those residing in Megalopolis? p. 373.

PHYSICS—Why is water stretching under study in Scotland? p. 376.

PUBLIC HEALTH—Why is flute-playing recommended for asthma sufferers? p. 374.

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