

# Administrator Lays Foundation Stone of English Medium School

## Unconventional and Beautiful Design

MR. SMIT CONDEMNS ABUSE OF FREE EDUCATION.

Mr. Gerard Moerdyk has placed Pietersburg under a debt of gratitude to him for his design for the English Medium School. He has broken away from the barrack- or prison-like designs with which the Public Works Department has so profusely plastered South Africa and while not for a moment losing sight of the utilitarian aspect, has given this town the School Beautiful. Not only Pietersburg, but South Africa should be grateful to this architect of genius who has had the courage to abjure the barrack mentality which has hitherto governed the outlook of those responsible for the designing of our educational institutions.

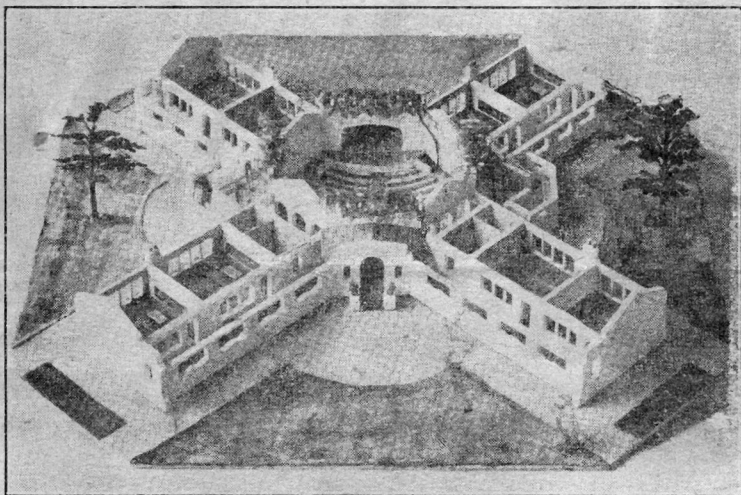
Under the most auspicious conditions His Honour the Administrator of the Transvaal (Mr. J. S. Smit) laid the foundation stone of the English medium primary school at Pietersburg on Saturday morning in the presence of a goodly gathering. Mr. E. G. Ireland, chairman of the English Medium Primary School Committee, presided and was supported by Mr. Chris Hofmeyr, M.P.C. (Chairman Pietersburg School Board), Mr.

they must say to themselves, there would be no schools to go to."

### Unpopular with Parents of School-going Children.

In more serious vein, the Administrator proceeded to say that he knew he was unpopular with parents of school-going children because of his views on a certain aspect of education.

"The parent knows I do not and will not agree with the system of



P. W. Roos, Mr. S. Marcus, Mr. Norman Harley, Mr. M. L. Marcus, Mr. J. A. Smuts (Principal, Pietersburg High School), Rev. Bro. Superior (Principal, College of the Little Flower), Mr. Cyril C. Hicks (Principal, English Medium School) and Mr. C. P. Snyman (Principal, Afrikaans Medium School).

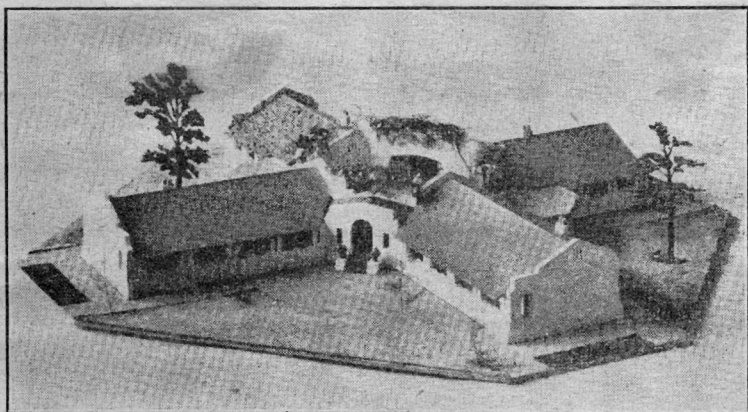
Mr. Gerard Moerdyk, the architect, was present and had with him a model of the beautiful building which is to arise.

"I am indeed very grateful for what has fallen from Mr. Ireland as regards myself and my Executive," said the Administrator, "because I must confess that when I

unlimited free education that we have in the Transvaal. The child of to-day did not appreciate the value of the education he received because he was being brought up on a policy of give, give, give by the Government. In my opinion that cannot lead to a sound South Africa; that cannot lead to a stable people and a people proud of themselves and race conscious."

### A Voice Crying in the Wilderness.

The Provincial Council did not share the view that parents should contribute towards the cost of their children receiving secondary education and his was a voice crying in the wilderness.



receive invitations to ceremonies like these I feel a little surprised and a little diffident about accepting these invitations because I know that I am not too popular with most school children. When they see me I can imagine them saying, 'Oh, this is the man who puts up these nasty buildings and applies the educational laws.' If these buildings were not put up,

"Let us look at the position. Let us compare the Transvaal with the Free State. In the Free State the parent is asked to contribute something towards his child's education in the high school. Here everything is free."

One would think that under such conditions there would be a more regular attendance in the

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### School not built on gaol lines.

Mr. Ireland concluded by paying tribute to the architect, Mr. Gerard Moerdyk. A most agreeable surprise was provided, he said, when it was discovered that the school had not been designed on the lines of the Pretoria gaol or Dartmoor prison. He hoped that the building would open up a new era in school architecture. Mr. Moerdyk had designed a building that would not only be properly constructed for the purpose it was intended to serve but would also be artistic.

Mr. Moerdyk followed Mr. Ireland: "Let me congratulate you on the possession of a magnificent site. You will overlook the whole of Pietersburg and the magnificent stretch of country beyond. Surely this will be an inspiration not only to the children who will be here, but to the architect who designed the building."

### "Heaven's sake don't produce a Standardised Mind."

The present system of education tended towards standardisation. Standardisation was an excellent thing for bricks, for agricultural produce and various other products. It was a system which rendered articles easier to handle, easier to describe, and so forth. "But, ladies and gentlemen," continued Mr. Moerdyk, "for Heaven's sake, don't produce a standardised mind. Life would be too hard to bear." The school was the most potent factor in forming character and building up a nation.

Turning to the Administrator, Mr. Moerdyk said: "I heard you, Sir, say yesterday at Nylstroom that one of the most degrading and demoralising things was this handing out money for nothing, this dole system that we have descended to. Pay a man for doing nothing and you not only get nothing but you demoralise him. Not only is it demoralising, but it is bad busi-

ness. If you give money to the poor the poor are helped, but the country is none the better."

The money would be better spent in building schools and other institutions of public utility, for in that way not only would unemployment be relieved but something would be acquired for the money spent.

"I have seen you (the Administrator) in very many places in South Africa. You know the circumstances existing throughout the country better than anybody in the Government. The building trade in South Africa, except for a little in Johannesburg, is at a standstill. Good men, who are the backbone of the country, are walking the streets vainly looking for something to do. You have been criticised for wasting money on buildings. 'Why put up these magnificent buildings when the money could be given to the poor?' This is the main criticism that these buildings have to endure. But I have made it plain that the poor do get the money and the country benefits at the same time." There was no more equitable distribution of money than putting up buildings.