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**JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT
AND EDUCATION**

BY

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JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

I APPRECIATE the honour of being invited to address you, but I do so with diffidence. These lectures are associated with the name of one who was not only a great teacher, but also eminent as a thinker, and I am conscious that a more philosophical theme than the one I have chosen would have been a better tribute to his memory. If I have ventured to encounter the tedium which is stirred by the word 'education', especially among those who inflict and endure it, the reason is not merely my own inability to move in the high regions where theorists are at home. It is that social and educational changes, the result partly of our previous actions, partly of our failure to act, partly of forces whose impact could hardly have been averted, though their worst defects might have been, have turned the subject of my lecture from a speculative question into an issue of immediate urgency. Few who consider the development of English education can have failed to reflect how much would have been happier in our recent history had we sometimes selected in the past, among the alternative paths then open to us, a different course from that actually followed. To-day, as in 1870 and 1902, we stand at the cross-roads. We have slid into one of our periodical reconstructions of public education at a moment when educational issues are sharpened and complicated by an economic crisis. A new structure is arising. Its lines are still fluid, but are hardening month by month. Once crystallized, it will determine the range of educational opportunities open to the majority of children and the relations of social classes for the greater part of a generation. Hence decisions taken now will have momentous consequences. My purpose is merely to put before you some of the main elements in the problem.

Its emergence should have been foreseen. Education,

as I understand it, is the art of promoting the growth of human beings. Since children do not grow for twenty-seven hours a week and hibernate for the remainder, it is a matter, not merely of particular institutions labelled as educational, but of the impact on their whole personalities of their total environment. It is continuous because growth is continuous, and to labour the importance of one phase of the process to the disparagement of another is to do injury to both. But at different points in its history educational policy is faced by different issues, which are determined by changes in the character of that environment and by the stage which, at any given moment, educational practice has reached. Sixteen years have elapsed since the last great Education Act; and, while all departments of education have felt the effect of the impetus given them in 1918, the main centre of effort and controversy since that date can hardly be in doubt. Judged by the attention devoted to it, the distinctive character of the period of educational history which opened when Mr. Fisher introduced his Bill to establish 'a national system of education available for all persons capable of profiting thereby' has been the topic with which I am concerned this afternoon. It has been the needs of the adolescent.

Both the social and educational aspects of that problem are written large over the discussions of the last decade. On the one hand a series of investigations have revealed the industrial realities of adolescent life and labour with a wealth of detail paralleled only, among earlier inquiries, by the Reports of the Poor Law Commission of 1906-1909, that of the Consultative Committee in 1909, and the studies of juvenile employment and education made during the War. The Reports of the Committee on Education and Industry in 1928, of the recent Commission on Unemployment Insurance, and of the Advisory Councils on Juvenile Employment, together with such works as the admirable book by Mr. Jewkes and Mr. Winterbotham, have thrown a new light on the evils arising from the exploitation of juvenile workers, heightened, as they have been, during the

last five years by prolonged unemployment. On the other hand, the educational requirements of adolescents, and the methods by which they may be met, have been examined with a thoroughness not before devoted to them. The artificial division between different stages of education, which is one of the tragedies of English educational history, prevented for a generation serious attention being given to them. Slender bridges had been thrown between primary and secondary education, historically in England not, as they should be, two successive phases but two separate worlds, by the Act of 1902, and that momentous invention, the Free Place system of 1907. But to select special capacity for intensive cultivation is one thing; to recognize that to treat the whole of education between 5 and 14 as a single category is to do violence to nature is quite another. The mischievous word 'elementary'—in origin a social, not an educational, category, and even to-day haunted by the ghost of its disreputable past—concealed the implications of that truism. In spite of the central schools established in London in 1911, in Manchester in 1915, and later in other areas, Authorities which regarded the education of children from between 11 and 12 to between 15 and 16 as a distinct problem, demanding a special technique for its solution, were, before 1918, a rare exception. Then the ice broke. Section 20 of the Act of 1921, which imposed on Local Education Authorities the obligation to make special provision for advanced instruction for the older children in the elementary schools; the schemes of enlightened Directors of Education for carrying it out; Circular 1350 of the Board; and the regrading of education after 1927, almost arrested though it has been since September 1931, changed the whole situation. Even if the expansion of 'secondary' education in the conventional, and erroneous, sense of the term be ignored, it is probable that, since the Report of the Consultative Committee on *The Education of the Adolescent*, more than half the capital expenditure undertaken by Local Education Authorities, and much more than half the thought of their officials, has been devoted

to the task of making special provisions for children over 11.

It is a wise Committee which knows its own proposals by the time that the Press have set to work explaining them and Ministers of Education explaining them away. To these aspects of my subject I will return in a moment. But any policy worthy of the name must start from the facts. The facts for the educationalists are the realities of life and growth among the young. In the case of that group of them with which I am concerned, the most important external realities are, for good or evil, economic. They are their entry into industry and the conditions which they find there. Before proceeding to discuss what, if any, measures are required, let me touch briefly on that aspect of their lives.

The number of boys and girls between 11 and 17 is 3,837,000, of whom just over 2,000,000 are between 11 and 14 and just under 1,809,000 are between 14 and 17. The decisive points in their careers have hitherto been two: the first shortly after 11, when approximately 10·3 per cent. of them pass, as a result of the special place examinations, to grant-aided secondary schools; the second at 14, when all but a small fraction of the remainder enter industry. Of the group between 11 and 14, more than nine-tenths (94·6 per cent.) are attending some form of public school—I mean, of course, a public public school, not a private public school. Of the group between 14 and 17 just under one-fifth (18·6 per cent.) are returned as at school, and the remainder as either employed or unemployed. But, in fact, the proportion continuing their education is somewhat smaller. Since children leave school, not at their fourteenth birthday, but at the end of the term in which it occurs, the figures include those remaining at school only for a negligible period after 14.

On the conditions of their employment when they enter industry I would make only two observations. The first is that the legislative provisions for their protection are now out of date. English law, like Mr. Podsnap, is a great

lover of young persons, into whom, at the age of 14, it converts what the vulgar call 'boys and girls'. By an anomaly which has an historical explanation but is none the less absurd the hours legally permissible for them under the Factory and Workshops Acts are (except in the matter of overtime) the same as for adult women, so that a girl of 15 may be employed as long as a woman of 40. While in certain coal-producing countries of the Continent, including Poland—whose coal competes with ours—the Netherlands, and Russia, work underground is forbidden before 15, 16, and even, in the case of the last, 18, the British Mines Regulation Acts, like the corresponding German legislation, still allow boys to go down the pit at 14. In a considerable number of occupations hours are altogether unregulated. A Report published in 1932 showed, *first*, that in England and Wales such occupations are entered by more than one-quarter of the boys leaving the elementary schools, *second*, that over four-fifths of the children of 14 employed in them worked more than the 48 hours which is now normal for adults in industries regulated by trade-union agreements, over one-fifth of them more than 60 hours, and 7 per cent. over 66 hours.

My second observation relates to the character of the work done, and in particular to its effect on the future of the children concerned. It is sometimes asserted by bluff and hearty persons that the practical training of the workshop is worth all the instruction in the world, and that only an anaemic pedant would propose to retain at school youths eager to be grappling with the vivid realities of life. I have no particular enthusiasm for the voice of the teacher, being one myself; nor, in the schools which I desire for the majority of these young people, would that organ make much noise. But to those who prescribe this regimen for children of 14—usually, in my experience, the children of other persons—I am inclined to reply in the spirit of Mr. Shaw's engineer to the gentleman who declared that he believed profoundly in the dignity of labour: 'That is because you've never done any.'

It is quite true, of course, that to many, perhaps to most, boys and girls, an education containing a large element of practical activity is both more congenial and more mentally invigorating than academic studies—how often does not the university teacher feel, as he contemplates his pupils, ‘what good navvies I am spoiling?’ It is quite true that, if one could put every boy into a nice joiner’s shop or stonemason’s yard, one would prefer it to many schools. But neither that nor anything like it is the normal position. If practical men could be induced to descend from the clouds and look at the facts before their eyes, they would find that, as far as large numbers of young persons are concerned, their picture of ardent youth being prepared to take its place among the world’s workers is almost entirely illusory.

In the first place, a large proportion of the boys concerned cannot receive in the course of their work any definite training for their future employment, since they will not follow, and, owing to the relative numbers of young persons and adults engaged in many industries, cannot follow, the occupation which they first enter. It is necessary only to glance at the age distribution of employees in textiles, some branches of engineering and transport, and a host of miscellaneous occupations, to realize that the inflow between 14 and 15 must be balanced by an outflow between 16 and 18. In the second place, workshop education, like school education, if it is a reality, always costs money. While employers are normally willing to train a sufficient number of learners to recruit their skilled personnel, they do not wish to train more; nor, since they are not philanthropists, is there any reason why they should. Youths employed in industry fall, in fact, into two categories, learners and labourers. The former may receive some training, though often under modern conditions of mass production, extreme subdivision of processes and high speeds, an extremely ineffective one. The position of the latter was described to me in the engineering shop of an eminent industrialist now gone to a better place—I mean, of course, the House

of Lords—‘boys in this establishment are employed for their present commercial utility. You do not require a professor to work a machine.’ You do not. You require, very often, another machine, and you do your best to get or make one. The phenomenon is seen in its crudest form in the case of those firms which make a practice of taking on successive relays of children from the elementary schools, employing them as cheap labour, and dismissing them about 16 to take on another batch. But, apart from such deliberate parasitism, it appears in a greater or less degree, and to a degree which owing to technical changes is tending to increase, in a number of different occupations, as a result of the mere multitude of tasks which, under modern conditions, require no greater degree of skill or strength than is possessed by a child within a few months of leaving school.

The consequence is somewhat serious. On the one hand, not through any individual defect but merely as a result of the manner in which industry is organized, large numbers of young persons must necessarily lose their jobs when or before they reach the age of 18. On the other hand, they are not, while employed, acquiring any qualifications for subsequent employment; on the contrary, owing to the monotony and aimlessness of their work, they are not unfrequently losing them. In theory, work before manhood should be regarded, not merely as a source of immediate income, but as an investment. It should provide, not only for present maintenance, but for the acquisition of the conditions of future independence. In practice, some of those concerned, so far from cultivating their powers, are not infrequently actually degenerating in intelligence and character. They are not fitter to face life at 18 than they were at 14; they are often less fit.

All this is an old story. If any one thinks I have drawn too dark a picture, I can only refer him to the official sources which I have mentioned. But in the last five years a new feature in the situation has come into prominence, and is likely, in the near future, to become of increasing importance. Juvenile unemployment, on one scale or another,

is not a new phenomenon; but the dimensions of the evil are being so greatly increased by two new factors as to create a novel problem. The first is the increase in the number of young people of 14 to 18 requiring, if the school age is not raised, to be absorbed into industry. The second is the diminished capacity of industry to absorb them. Even had it been expanding with its pre-war rapidity, it would have found some difficulty in digesting the swollen army of adolescents which will result in the next few years from the high birth-rate of the years immediately following the War. As it is, the openings have contracted, while the number of those seeking to enter them will, for several years, increase. Together these two forces act like a pair of economic scissors. The rising generation is caught between the blades.

I will not trouble you with many figures. The essential facts are simple. Juvenile unemployment has been serious since 1929. In 1932 the official figure gave an average throughout the year of 166,000, to which 30 per cent. must be added to cover juveniles of 14 to 16 who do not register. It declined sharply in 1933; in December of that year it amounted, with a corresponding allowance, to about 100,000. But the decline was due primarily to the fact that the number of young persons seeking posts in industry had itself declined. Their number was roughly 131,000 below the corresponding figure for 1932, and 273,000 below that for 1931. Last year, in fact, in spite of the 100,000 odd unemployed in December, was an abnormally favourable one. That favourable situation was, however, quite temporary; it was the result of the low birth-rate of the later years of the War and has already ceased to exist. This year—1934—the effects of the high birth-rate of the years immediately after the War have begun to make themselves felt, and the number of young persons between 14 and 18 to rise. According to estimates made by the Ministry of Labour the figure will, in 1935, exceed that of 1933 by 115,000; in 1936 by 306,000; and in 1937 by 443,000. The last figure is actually larger than the total

number of children of 14 to 15 in the present year. The effect of the increase, in fact, is as though a whole new age-group were added to the four between 14 and 18. After 1937 the tide is expected to turn, but it will not recede to its former level. It is thought that, even in 1940, the number of juveniles available for employment will exceed that of 1933 by 167,000.

Even, therefore, if juvenile unemployment on the present scale be dismissed as no great evil, the prospective situation is somewhat grave. If, in 1933, when the number of young persons seeking work was at its lowest, not far short of 100,000 and probably more failed to obtain it, it needs no great gift of prophecy to foresee that, as the former figure rises sharply, the latter is likely to rise with it. In the twelve months ending March 1933, to put the same point somewhat differently, industry, agriculture, and commerce were required to absorb 372,000 children leaving the public elementary schools, and failed to absorb all of them. The annual average of school-leavers for the four years following that date is thought likely to exceed that figure by about 190,000 a year. Only a revival of trade on a scale at present unanticipated would warrant the hope that this large excess will succeed in finding work. Nor, of course, is it only juvenile workers who will be the victims of that situation. An increase in the number of boys and girls competing for work tempts employers to make an increased use of cheap juvenile labour. It is possible that part of the rise in juvenile unemployment which is otherwise to be expected may be averted by the substitution in industry of juveniles for older workers. That alternative, however, is hardly, if at all, less disastrous. It means that the effect of the swollen torrent of boys and girls scrambling for jobs will be felt, not only by them, but by their elders. Unemployment among the latter is likely to be aggravated, and the downward pressure on the wage standards of adults will be intensified.

So much for the bare facts and possibilities. It would be easy to dwell on the human aspects of the matter—the

dulling of bright minds, the slackening of eager energies, the loss of morale and hope among the young, the disillusionment of parents who have sacrificed much to give their children a chance, only to see them thrown on the scrap-heap before their life is well begun. But the facts carry their meaning on their face. No eloquence can heighten it. It can be agreed at any rate that, sentiment apart, the existence of large numbers of boys and girls who are not employed, because there is no profit in employing them, and who are not kept at school, because schools cost money, is a pretty bad business. Can the thing be stopped?

The answer is 'Yes, if we take the proper steps.' One line of action can be dismissed at once. Sections 13-15 of the Unemployment Bill now before Parliament contain three provisions as to juvenile unemployment. First, all Local Educational Authorities are required to make a survey of the number of young persons unemployed in their areas, and then, if they consider that courses of instruction are necessary, to submit to the Ministry of Labour proposals for providing them. Second, if the proposals are approved by the Minister of Labour, the Local Authority becomes under an obligation to provide the courses. If the Minister decides that the proposals are inadequate he may make a compulsory order and enforce it by a mandamus. Third, the Minister may, if he thinks fit, make attendance compulsory.

I have the less hesitation in dismissing these proposals as inept because persons of greater experience, including the Association of Education Committees, the Chairmen of certain great Education Authorities, and the leaders of the teaching profession, have already done the same. Local Education Authorities already have the power to establish Junior Instruction Centres. The power has been little used, because they do not believe in them. In the week ending January 24, 1934, there was an average attendance at such centres of only just over 17,000 children, about one-ninth of the number then unemployed. It is

probable that the Bill will lead to some increase in the facilities offered, at least in the larger towns, though not in areas with a scattered population, but even so the facilities will, in my judgement, be of little value. In the first place, the power to compel attendance at courses is not likely to be widely used. Compulsion to continue in a properly organized school a plan of education already begun is one thing; compulsion on young persons who are in and out of industry, and who, when out, are only eager to get back to it, to attend a course for unemployed juveniles is quite another. In the second place, an educational course involves a skilled teaching personnel, equipment suitable to the needs of the pupils concerned, and, unless the education is to be a farce, continuity of attendance. Even if the first two could be improvised, which they cannot, the absence of the last would necessarily be fatal. Many of the young people concerned are out of work this month, in work the next, and out again in the third. The educational turnover, to use a convenient phrase for a very uneducational process, is shown by the figures of attendance at Junior Instruction Centres. The total number of individuals who attended them between April 1933 and January 1934 was 93,490. The attendance in the week ending January 24, 1934, was 17,086. It is probable, in fact, that the personnel of the centres had changed more than five times in the course of nine months. A personality of genius can, no doubt, perform miracles, but to provide education of any serious value for a constantly changing constituency, here to-day and gone to-morrow, is beyond the wit of ordinary men.

With such practical objections confronting the proposed policy, it is needless to dwell on the absurdity of providing education—of a sort—only for those young persons who are unemployed at the moment of their unemployment, or on the ineptitude of turning the Ministry of Labour into a new Education Department. The truth is that this whole method of approaching the subject rests on a misconception even of the purely industrial aspects of

the problem. The question is not how can unemployment be made somewhat less injurious to some proportion of the children who are its victims. It is how can the unemployment of boys and girls be ended, except in individual cases of exceptional bad luck, and ended for good. That problem and that alone deserves consideration.

To the question, What solution do you propose? I answer that the first need is to return to fundamentals. It is not to improvise a palliative for an evil which, grave though it is, is only one symptom of a neglect which affects all sides of the life of the majority of adolescents. It is to consider what steps are required in order to ensure that they may grow up under conditions as favourable to their development as the resources at our disposal enable us to provide.

The vice of our traditional attitude has been that we have regarded the great majority of children as inevitably becoming at the age of 14 full-time wage workers, and have fitted such educational provision as we have made for them into the space left by that assumption. Like so many other elements in our social psychology, our conventional conception of the role of the young in economic life was formed originally in the conditions of an age of scarcity. It descends from a period when the working force at the disposal of society was all too small for the struggle with nature, and when, as a consequence, except in the case of a privileged minority, preparation for life was inevitably postponed to the immediate necessity of winning a livelihood. In such circumstances the economic justification for juvenile labour was simple. It was that the necessary work of the world could not be put through without it. The resources released by science removed that justification. But it is of the nature of capitalism that those who determine the procedure of industry do not either themselves or in the person of their own families submit to the conditions which they impose, and that the relative advantages of different types of labour and different methods of organizing it are judged, neither by

their effect on the individuals concerned nor by their social cost, but by their expense to the employer. It is not surprising, therefore, that the process of securing that all children under 14 were treated as non-combatants should have lasted more than a century, and should not finally have been completed till the abolition of half-time in 1921.

Young persons are not so cheap as children, but they are cheaper than adults. The market rate paid by the employer for a boy leaving school may represent—a point which I refrain from discussing—his present commercial value, but it does not include, except in the case of the minority of learners, the cost of qualifying him for future independence, which is not his employer's responsibility. It is as though a farmer, instead of buying or saving seed for future crops, were presented with it gratis at the public expense—and one may add, in view of the attitude of some employers, were to protest when it was proposed to terminate that agreeable system that he was being ruined by agitators. Hence, the employment of large armies of young persons has survived into an age when it is no longer required, as in the past, merely because the world is too poor to dispense with it. There may still be moments—for example 1914–1918—when the necessity of pressing every individual into the service of production returns, but this is neither the normal situation nor that obtaining to-day. When there is a shortage, not of workers but of work, the course which is economically expedient is to concentrate employment as far as possible on workers of the age of *optimum* employability. In a society where two and a half million adults are without employment, to pour into the labour market some 400,000 additional children year by year, is as absurd as to put boys of 14 into the trenches before calling out their seniors. The absurdity has been revealed in a dramatic manner by the growth of juvenile unemployment. But juvenile unemployment is merely the obverse of juvenile labour. To end one we must end both. We must secure that the years of adolescence, at least up to 15, are reserved as a period in which the main business

of the young shall be regarded not as wage-earning but as education.

By taking that step, by removing one additional age-group from the labour market, we should diminish the number of young persons otherwise competing for employment by from 370,000 to 400,000-405,000 in 1935, 398,000 in 1936, 370,000 in 1937. We should therefore absorb all young persons between 14 and 18 at present unemployed, and should re-employ some, though an uncertain, number of adults. I do not pretend that there are no difficulties; but, as the representatives of Local Education Authorities have repeatedly pointed out, the job can be done. In spite of the paralysis of reorganization since September 1931, about 50 per cent. of the departments for children over 11 are now reorganized; and, if the Board will abandon its present policy of vetoing capital expenditure, most authorities will be only too glad to carry out their programme. What is equally important, the decline in the school population in the younger age-groups has greatly simplified the problem of providing teachers and accommodation, and has also reduced the addition to the total educational expenditure of the country which the step would involve. The effect of that decline is, in fact, that, if the school age were raised this year, the school population in 1937 would exceed that of 1933 by only 60,000, or approximately 1 per cent.; in some areas, for example Lancashire, it would be actually diminished. It is quite true, of course, that not all the accommodation thus released is of the kind best suited to the older children, and that not all of it will be available where it is most required. But it will go a considerable way towards easing the situation. In such circumstances it can hardly be argued either that the measure is impracticable, or that it is a crushing addition to educational expenditure of the country.

Educational policy has canons of its own, and should not be dependent on the changing conditions of industry. It is not a question, however, of improvising an educational instrument to meet the needs of an economic crisis, but of

giving effect to a measure long urged on educational grounds, the economic objections to which, always somewhat unsubstantial, have now lost what plausibility they may have formerly possessed. The proposal of the Consultative Committee of the Board to raise the school age to 15, was advanced, not as an afterthought, but as an essential element in its scheme of reorganization. Its object was not merely to add twelve months to the existing school life, but to secure that all children should begin, between 11 and 12, a course of secondary education lasting for, as nearly as possible, four years. As long as four-fifths of them leave school at, or shortly after, 14, reorganization must remain a torso, since they have under three years in their new surroundings. Nor is that all. The Report of the Committee has had a somewhat curious fate. We are accustomed to commissions whose proposals are shelved. What happened in this case was that the policy advanced was greeted with enthusiasm, and that then a different policy, described—perhaps as a tribute of respect or of consolation to the authors of the Report—by the same name, was quietly substituted for it. The Committee itself conceived its recommendations as a step towards a universal system of secondary education. It laboured that point, indeed, with almost wearisome reiteration. It might as well have spared its ink. The British public has magnificent eyes for overlooking what it does not intend to see. That aspect of the Committee's proposals, to which the break at 11 was merely a means, has been almost entirely ignored. What has been put in the place of an enlarged system of secondary education is an improvement in the later stages of elementary education.

Such an improvement is obviously to be welcomed, but by itself it is insufficient. Acquiescence in that course of action has resulted in the evasion of certain major problems which have long clamoured for solution. As a consequence of the survival of the old meaningless administrative division of education into elementary and secondary, the anomaly of unequal conditions as to standard of staffing,

accommodation, and amenities for children of the same age with, as far as these matters are concerned, identical requirements, remains unaltered. There is a misdirection of ability. Children enter secondary schools who are better suited to the more realistic curriculum of central schools, because the former are supposed to carry an aroma of social prestige; children enter senior and central schools who should go to secondary schools, because the latter charge fees and the former are free. Transference between the two is impeded. The pressure to secure a special place, with its unfortunate effects on the earlier stages of education, is perpetuated. The right course is simple. It was urged nearly twenty years ago by Sir Percy Nunn, and was pressed on the Consultative Committee by witnesses representing all sections of the teaching profession and all bodies of educational administrators. It is to recognize frankly that the existing division between elementary and secondary education, which descends from an age when social stratification tempered by a competitive struggle was the accepted philosophy, is now obsolete; to treat all institutions giving full-time education after 11—senior, central, junior technical, and what to-day is called secondary—as different species of one genus, varying in curricula and methods but equal in quality and status, and—the practical corollary—to revise and broaden the present secondary regulations to meet the needs of all post-primary schools.

Such a policy raises certain administrative and financial problems on which I must not enter, but the obstacle to its adoption is not merely financial. 'Since the child of poor parents' ran a golden sentence in the Report which has done more than any other to determine the treatment of public education during the past two and a half years, 'is in many cases receiving an education equal or superior to that which the middle-class parent provides for his own child, we think that the time has come to . . . pause in this policy of expansion.' The lion in the path rarely roars so indiscreetly, but, even at his demurest, he is not asleep;

and the arrangement under which secondary education is a privilege reserved partly for exceptional capacity, partly—a curious combination—for ability to pay fees, is one of his fastnesses. The organization of education on lines of social class, which is the hereditary curse on the English educational system, has as one of its effects that those who determine educational policy have rarely themselves attended the schools most directly affected by it or sent their children to them, while those who attend such schools have hitherto had least to do with determining educational policy. It tends, therefore, to perpetuate itself. But, until it is broken the preparation of the young for life, which should be the greatest of common concerns, will continue to be the sphere of a struggle of interests; and education, which should be the great uniter, the symbol and cement of a common citizenship, will be a source of division. While the lines of the new system of post-primary education are still plastic, it is possible for us, not indeed to end that tradition—it has other and more formidable strongholds—but to end it in the sphere of public secondary education.

The effort to do so is, it seems to me, worth making. A nation may properly look to its educational system to promote and express a common culture. But the educational system can be a principle of unity only if it emphasizes by its practical organization that there is one department of life, at least, from which the influence of inequality of circumstances is to be rigorously excluded. In so far as in its own structure it reproduces lines of social cleavage, it not only reproduces, but also deepens them. A nation reaps what it sows, and in such circumstances the pious hopes of its well-intentioned moralists that antagonisms may be exorcized by a spirit of co-operation would be insincere if, as is more commonly the case, they were not merely unintelligent. Nor, perhaps, is such a reflection the visionary sentiment which doubtless it appears to some of my audience. Whatever conclusion may be drawn from the reversion over a great part of Europe to government

by violence, there is one, I think, which is not open to question. It is that the adjustment of conflicting interests and discordant claims by discussion, persuasion, and consent, if possible at all when ultimate issues are raised, is possible only in a society in which all needless obstacles to mutual comprehension have been removed. An educational system which accepts equality as its principle is one agency for removing them. The opportunity to establish it in England still exists. It will not exist for ever.