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EDUCATION AND EMPIRE

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EDUCATION & EMPIRE
ADDRESSES ON CERTAIN
TOPICS OF THE DAY

BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
RICHARD BURDON HALDANE
M.P., LL.D., K.C.

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1902

PREFACE

THE addresses which this little volume contains were delivered under varying circumstances, and no one of them was, or with propriety could have been, in the nature of a party speech. Nevertheless, the first four illustrate some of the articles in a political creed of which I count myself an humble but firm adherent.

There is a Liberalism which some of us believe to be the Liberalism of the future. It holds that the faith which it has made its own cannot stand still, but must advance with the advancing needs of new generations. To-day, at the beginning of the twentieth century, we as

a nation have to face the problem of preserving our great commercial position, and with it the great empire which the great men of past generations have won and handed down to us. That empire it is our duty to hold as a sacred trust, and to pass on in such a fashion that those who come after may be proud of us, as we are proud of the forefathers who did their work before our time. The duty which we have to discharge requires an effort. That effort must assume the form neither of swaggering along the High Street of the world, nor of sitting down with folded hands on a dust heap. It is rather to be sought in clear views and activity of the kind that is at once unshaking and unrelaxing. Around us is surging up a flood of new competition. If we are to hold the ground which our predecessors won before the days of that

competition, we shall require above all things enlightened views, and not least enlightened views about our commerce, and enlightened views about the common constitution which unites us with our colonies and dependencies. With the former of these necessities the two addresses on education deal. The first was delivered to commercial men in a great city which is showing itself thoroughly alive to the new situation. What I there ventured to insist on was this, that not only elementary education in this country, but our secondary and tertiary systems must be thoroughly overhauled and coordinated if we are to be brought near to the existing level of Germany, and that to which the United States are rapidly approaching. More than this, to the linkage of the various portions of the education system must be added, in

secondary and tertiary education at all events, the recognition of the double function of our educational institutions, the imparting of culture for culture's sake on the one hand, and the application of science to the training of our captains of industry on the other. This means an increase of our educational provision of a tertiary type. In this we are at present far short of both Germany and the United States. London and Birmingham have already shown us how we may found the new teaching universities. Liverpool is making a splendid effort in the same direction.

The second of the educational addresses was delivered to teachers, and its moral is that for the success of any new movement of a comprehensive kind larger and more enlightened views are required on the part of the teachers themselves. For this de-

velopment better training and a better status for the teacher are necessary, and to that end the Government must formulate a policy. It is essential that the spirit of the new policy should be such that the Universities may come into closer connection with the teaching institutions in their districts, and may permeate from above downwards. The dominating influence must be, not the Church, but the University, if efficiency is to be attained. When this happens denominational controversies will be of small importance, and may be left to the diminishing body of the politicians of a past generation.

The third address was delivered in 1900 at the Colonial Institute before the Australian delegates. Its purpose was to examine the working of the unwritten and developing British Constitution as this has been reproduced in Canada and Australia,

and may be in South Africa. It points out the inaptness of the term "federal" to such a type of constitution, and endeavours to indicate the lines along which a closer relation of the Imperial and Colonial Governments may be assisted to self-development. It lays stress on the growing tradition, not the less weighty because unwritten, by which the Imperial Parliament is coming to recognise itself as trustee of its supreme powers for the empire as a whole, and not merely for the home constituencies which return it.

The fourth address presses the importance of constituting a new link in the empire in the shape of a real Imperial Court of Appeal. From more points of view than one, the time seems to have come for the transference of the Appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords and the Judicial Committee of the Privy

Council to a Supreme Tribunal for the empire. The recent proposals of the Government appear to have fallen short in comprehension as well as courage. Our colonies and dependencies want a real Supreme Court of Appeal, and not merely an upholstered and decorated Judicial Committee, which would continue to be starved in talent by any separate court of the House of Lords which should remain to be manned alongside of it.

The last address is in substance a plea for tolerance. In view of the fact that the majority of our fellow-subjects in the empire are of different religions to our own, a wide outlook among those who rule is essential here as elsewhere.

In the political creed to which I have referred there are, it is needless to observe, many topics other than those touched on in these pages, topics over which there may

be, and probably before long will be, much controversy. But if of the views to the expression of which these addresses are limited it is said that they are in the year 1902 no monopoly of any one political party, my comment will be. "By so much the better."

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