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Building a Better Briton: Parliament's Push for State-Funded Secondary Schools, 1901-1903

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ABSTRACT

The first three years of the twentieth century were a crucial time in the development of state-funded education in England. The rising tide of Germanophobia in the wake of the South African War impressed Conservative politicians with the need to improve England's educational system in order that she remain competitive in the world. With the aid of a very few Liberal imperialists, the Conservatives were able to shepherd through a series of bills which established state-funded secondary schools throughout all of England, an expansion on the system created by the Education Act of 1870 in terms of both curriculum and breadth of jurisdiction.

The Liberals opposed much of this legislation based on their allegiance to their nonconformist constituents, who viewed the expanse of state-funded schools as a threat to their voluntary schools and as an attempt to enforce Anglican uniformity. The fact that these MPs opposed these bills, and later modified them greatly when Liberal, and later Labour, governments came to power in the decade immediately preceding the first World War, should in no way diminish the importance of these pieces of Conservative legislation.

This essay fits into the historiography of its topic in that it provides a detailed examination of debates which have often been overlooked due to historians' emphasis on the later Liberal legislation.

INTRODUCTION

From 1900 to 1930, the European powers sought to achieve actual control of the colonies which they had acquired during the scramble of the previous 20 years, striving to turn mere legal possession into a meaningful, profitable relationship. In England, among the most crucial aspects of this quest were the education reforms designed to cultivate the requisite leadership qualities in the younger generation. Of the various reforms enacted in the first years of the twentieth century, the Education Acts of 1901, 1902, and 1903 were arguably the most important. These three acts established of state-funded[1] secondary education in England which, according to the Conservative government under A. J. Balfour, was of utmost necessity in the preservation and maintenance of the British Empire. Examination of the Parliamentary debates concerning the Education Acts of 1901, 1902, and 1903 reveals that these debates presaged many of the educational issues that continue today to plague Britain and even the United States.[2]

Beginning around the turn of the twentieth century, some imperialists, including Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Curzon, Lord Rosebery, Alfred Milner, and Cecil Rhodes, began agitating for social reforms in order to ensure that the English maintained their status as an "imperial race." These "New Imperialists" were greatly influenced by Walter Bagehot who, in his 1894 book Social Evolution, outlined the theory of

Social Darwinism and then enumerated the factors which made the English the most "socially efficient" race. Because of the Englishman's superior social efficiency, Bagehot wrote, humanitarianism dictated that he ought to administer the affairs of other races, an administration which was being threatened by the rising tide of colonial nationalism. Further, the course of the recent war in South Africa showed that England must now afford the other European powers, especially Germany, greater concern and respect than had previously been the case.[3]

Faced with these threats to the empire, many Britons turned to a familiar source of power – the young men of the public schools. It was expected that, upon graduation, these men would take up careers as officers in the army or as bureaucrats in the Colonial Service. The Britons adopted as their program the progressive position outlined in G.G. Coulton's Public Schools and the Public Needs (1898). Coulton urged that the public school curriculum be revised to include modern languages and other practical subjects. In order to toughen up these young men, it was urged that they be taught "less Latin and more geography; less cricket and more rifle-shooting." They were not only to be taught the academic subjects necessary to administer the empire but to be molded in such a way as to shape their character for employment in the Colonial Service.[4]

By this time the link between the public schools and the empire was increasingly on men's minds. Geoffrey Drage's Eton

and the Empire (1890) advanced the proposition that the empire was held together by the mindset taught at Eton, with its emphasis on patriotism, piety, and obedience to superiors. The Eton Volunteer Rifle Corps, founded in 1860, was by 1899 considered "one of the most important institutions in the school." The Corps was enrolled as the 4th Volunteer Battalion of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry and marched in Queen Victoria's 1887 and 1897 Jubilees. The Corps was said to be an example of the advantages of systematic drilling for boys. In his history of Eton, Lionel Cust named as the primary benefit of an Eton education the inculcation of the habits of giving and receiving leadership, as appropriate. He then went on to list a large number of Etonians who distinguished themselves in the service of colonial administration, stating that "The sun never sets on Eton." Eton was not alone, of course. Many Public Schools Year Book entries contained a line such as "The school specializes in the preparation of boys for the ICS and the Colonial Services."[5]

For the New Imperialists, on the other hand, no one social class could be expected to bear the burden of supporting the empire. They held that all Britons must work together for this task, which would require, they said, significant remolding of British society. Some, such as Dr. Thomas Macnamara, suggested socialism as a means to effect this reform, while others, such as Lord Meath, advocated eugenic methods to weed out the "weak and stunted"

in British society. Yet others were to call for universal conscription as a means to better suit the average Englishman for his role in the preservation of the empire. However, a less drastic measure was to be eventually decided upon — education reform.[6]

The British educational system at the turn of the twentieth century was still operating under the Education Act of 1870.[7] While this act had done much to improve the state of education in England, it had been, of necessity, a political compromise. While the Liberal ministers who proposed the bill would have liked to see the establishment of a nationwide system of primary schools, the Conservatives' continued control of the House of Lords made this impossible. Instead, they reached a compromise wherein the existing voluntary schools would be the beneficiaries of increased grants from the Treasury, while in areas which were not then serviced by a voluntary school, elected school boards were formed to administer new government-funded primary schools. As a concession to the Liberals, the religious education in these schools was to be nondenominational. Nonetheless, the state-funded schools were to be primary schools only and the jurisdictions of the various school boards did not encompass all of England.[8]

The restrictions on religious instruction and on curriculum imposed by the 1870 act demonstrate eloquently the differences in educational policy between the two parties. Because of their strong majority in the House of Commons, the

Liberals were able to gain fairly large concessions from the Conservatives. The aforementioned compromise on religious education represented a major concession by the Conservatives, who, left to themselves, would have mandated Anglican religious education in state-funded schools. In fact, the mere passage of this bill, even in its restricted form, was a concession by the Conservatives, who would have preferred not to have spent government money on education at all.[9]

In a state of quiet rebellion, some schoolmasters at state-funded schools began providing their students with secondary education in defiance of the provisions of the Education Act of 1870. It was only to be expected that eventually legal action would be taken against one of them. On 20 December 1900, a verdict was handed down in the case of Regina vs. Cockerton confirming the crown's position that under the Education Act of 1870, which was still in effect, the school boards did not have the authority to provide secondary education out of government funds. Even as the London school board was appealing the Cockerton decision, the Conservative government was preparing a new education bill in order to bring the 1870 act up to date with current conditions.[10]

Oddly enough, one of the greatest spokesmen for the Conservative effort was Viscount Richard Burdon Haldane, a prominent Liberal. In a speech made before a group of Liverpool businessmen, later published under the title

"Education and Empire," Haldane stated that the primary, secondary, and tertiary (by which he meant collegiate and technical) educational systems much be completely overhauled in order to reach "the existing level of Germany, and that to which the United States is rapidly approaching." If Britain hoped to remain a first-rate power, Haldane concluded, she must follow the German educational model,[11] with its emphasis on science and technology, and revise her educational system.[12]

The larger part of the educational debate at this time, though, was not framed in imperialist or economic terms, but in religious ones. As had been the case in 1870, the Liberals remained loyal to their Nonconformist constituents while the Conservatives upheld the interests of the Church of England. The two sides remained largely unchanged, then, when the Cockerton decision forced Parliament to re-enter what George Dangerfield called that "mysterious labyrinth, down whose crooked paths the Church of England and its sectarian opponents endlessly chased one another."[13] The major difference, however, was that in 1900 the Conservatives held the majority in Parliament.

THE EDUCATION ACT(S) OF 1901

On 20 December 1900, Justice Wills handed down a decision in the case of Regina vs. Cockerton[14] in which he stated that board schools were exceeding their authority under the Education Act of 1870 in paying for secondary education and by paying for continuing education for students older than 16-1/2 years of age. The London School Board, under whose authority Cockerton had been teaching, immediately brought an appeal before the Master of the Rolls. Consequently, for the first quarter of 1901 the court system controlled the course of English educational reform, as the government was unwilling to chance introducing a new education bill to Parliament until the appeals process had been exhausted in the Cockerton case.[15]

While Parliament as a whole was awaiting a final judgement in R. vs. Cockerton so that they could begin work on an education reform bill, there was a debate in the House of Lords on the subject of education reform which in many ways was an illustration in miniature of the debate to come. The Duke of Devonshire opened the debate by speaking out in favor of the creation of a second body in each area, working in conjunction with the existing school boards, which was to have control of secondary education. This plan could be enacted without necessitating the alteration or repeal of the Education Act of 1870 and was substantially the same as an education reform plan which Devonshire had tried to have

passed in 1900. Lord Norton seconded the Duke of Devonshire in this plan, claiming that the sorts of programs likely to be instituted by a unified school board would amount to "what is practically an apprenticeship . . . for lucrative employment" to the sons of the "rich manufacturers and tradesmen" at public expense. Their chief opponent in this debate was Earl Spencer, who argued in favor of creating a new unified school board in each area which was to govern both primary and secondary education. Spencer opposed Devonshire's plan for two major reasons. First, to graft a new educational system on top of the existing system of school boards would do nothing to address the fact that the school boards did not provide schools for all parts of England. Secondly, Devonshire's plan would necessitate the closing of the continuation (secondary) schools which had been operating, even if not entirely legally, since the passage of the Education Act of 1870. This would deprive many students, especially in urban areas, of the education which they had been receiving in these schools, and thus do great harm to the English educational system. Spencer took a larger view of the educational problem, viewing the proliferation of well-educated citizens as a benefit to England far outweighing the cost of providing that education.[16]

Even before a final decision had been rendered in the Cockerton case, Parliament grew anxious to begin debate on a bill. In response to questions from Dr. Thomas Macnamara,[17]

among others, A. J. Balfour provided assurances that an education reform bill would be introduced before Whitsuntide, with the hope that it would be passed by 1 October. Even at this early stage of debate, however, lines were being drawn in the sand. In a speech on 29 April, Francis Channing, seconded by Dr. Macnamara, stated boldly that any education bill which in any way limited secondary education would fall afoul of declarations made in the past year by labor organizations and, being deemed "prejudicial to the interests of the children of working men," would be vigorously opposed.[18] Finally, the Master of the Rolls had returned a verdict in the Cockerton case upholding that of Justice Wills and the London School Board had decided not to further appeal by bringing it before the House of Lords.[19] Only then, on 7 May 1901, did Sir John Gorst,[20] Vice-President of the Board of Education, introduce the new education bill.[21]

Gorst stated that this new bill would "establish in every part of England and Wales a local educational authority, which is intended to supervise education of every kind, and which may ultimately have the control and supervision of all schools, whether elementary, secondary, or technical."[22] He did not seek to create a new educational authority, instead presenting two entities as being suitable to take over the management of education: the school boards and the county councils. Of the two, he promoted the county councils as the most suitable entities because collectively they already had jurisdiction over all of England, while the

school boards covered only two thirds of the country. Furthermore, he stated, the county councils administered areas large enough to provide all forms of education, whereas some of the school boards administered only a single small parish whose resources would be sufficient only for the provision of elementary education.[23]

Dr. Macnamara criticized this proposition for the very reason that it did not unify education under the school boards but instead turned the management of the schools over to the county councils. This would, he claimed, have the unplanned side effect that currently existing urban secondary schools would be forced to close, leaving the new governing body without the benefit of the institutions and practices currently in place. These schools, ordered closed by the Cockerton decision, had been run by their local school boards with funds obtained under the Technical Instruction Act.[24]

Furthermore, Macnamara stated emphatically that in order for this bill to be successful, London must be handled separately, as it had been in all previous education acts, including the landmark act of 1870. He contended that the London School District, consisting of "500,000 children in 1,430 schools with 10,000 certificated teachers, spending £2,000,000 in rate money and £1,000,000 of Exchequer grants," was simply too large of an institution to be managed by a committee of the County Council.[25]

Debate was heated on the topic of curriculum as well as of administration. Gorst told of his visit to the

educational exhibit at the Paris Exhibition, during which he was much impressed with the German and American educational systems, both of which provided secondary education in the form of arts and sciences suitable to prepare students for factory work. Gorst's opinion was supported in the Commons by speakers like Haldane, who in a recent debate over the 1901 Finance Bill had attributed a 40% increase in American exports to the quality of American scientific and technical education.[26]

There was not, however, universal support for this curriculum. The MPs from London protested that the new bill made no provision for London schools to provide the commercial education which was necessary for employment in London. The commercial firms of London required a different sort of worker than was required by the industries of the remainder of the kingdom. Thomas Lough cited a Memorandum sent out by the Board of Education on 2 March 1899 which advocated increased provision of commercial training and education in modern languages. Jasper Tully supported this statement and elaborated on what was meant by commercial education: Typing, shorthand, bookkeeping, and modern languages. In the end, the debate over curriculum was to end in the same sort of impasse as that over administration.[27]

Sensing that the deadlocks over the issues of administration and curriculum would most likely not be resolved in time for the bill to be passed that term, Dr. Macnamara began pressuring Gorst to provide some other

legal means whereby secondary and technical schools could continue their operation until Parliament was able to pass a bill. He brought up this subject at least four times during May and June of 1901. By early July, the government had conceded that the Education Bill of 1901 would not be passed by the end of the term. Gorst then introduced the Education Bill (no. 2) of 1901, which provided for ad hoc funding of secondary, evening, and technical schools for a period of one year to give Parliament time to pass a comprehensive bill. This bill passed a third reading in the Commons on 30 July 1901 by a vote of 200 to 142, passed a third reading in the House of Lords on 6 August 1901, and received royal assent on 9 August 1901. The relative ease with which this bill was passed serves to show that Parliament was not divided on whether or not there should be educational reform but instead was bogged down on a multitude of smaller issues, primarily administrative and financial, which would greatly affect the shape of reform.[28]

The Education Act of 1902

Although the passage of the Education Act (no. 2) of 1901 had allowed members of Parliament a period of respite, the issue of education reform still weighed heavily upon them. As early as 24 February 1902, Dr. Macnamara began applying pressure on A. J. Balfour, First Lord of the Treasury, to introduce a new education bill, urging that this be done before Easter. Perhaps in an attempt to show that Macnamara was not the only one who keenly felt the need for education reform, Balfour introduced the Education Bill of 1902 exactly one month later, on 24 March. In the course of introducing this bill, Balfour noted that while London was included in the Education Act of 1870, the sections of the act concerning London were distinct from the rest of the bill, constituting a sort of bill-within-a-bill. In order to facilitate passage of the 1902 bill, he had taken this process a step further by omitting London from the bill entirely, postponing discussion of the London School District until the 1903 session. Macnamara endorsed this decision wholeheartedly, stating that London's problems, bad as they were, were not so urgent that they could not wait a year. Also, he suggested that the process of passing the 1902 bill should make it easier to draft and pass a London education bill in 1903.[29]

Balfour began his introduction of the 1902 bill by stating his three goals for education reform: To establish a

single authority for primary, secondary, and technical education; to provide this authority with the ability to levy taxes for the support of the schools; and to grant this authority the right to support voluntary schools as well as board schools. However, he stated that it was absolutely necessary that this body must not use its support of voluntary schools to play a role in conflicts among religious denominations. He then went on to give his impression of the situation as it then stood:

> We find dealing with education, secondary and primary, two elective authorities — the County Councils and Borough Councils on the one side, and in certain cases the school boards on the other. They are, and must be, to a certain extent, in rivalry. Not in hostility necessarily, not in hostility usually; but still, with a long, undefined frontier between the two, which must inevitably produce much confusion and some collision.

Based on this assessment of the current state of English education, Balfour did not blame the school boards for encroaching on secondary education, although he did note that it was illegal to do so. However, he did find the school boards to be an inadequate tool to establish a system of secondary education capable of providing a complete three or four year program in preparation for college or technical school.[30]

One of the chief flaws which Balfour found with regard to the school boards was their ability to draw unlimitedly on

the rates for funding without the necessity of rendering an accounting to the county or borough council. Gorst later picked up this theme, noting that in America, school boards could not levy taxes unlimitedly but instead were either allocated funds by the city government or else were allowed to levy taxes, but only up to a ceiling set by state law. He used this example to demonstrate why the school boards should be abolished and control of schools given over completely to the county government: so that there were never two bodies levying taxes and exercising power independently of each other in the same area. He noted that "even in Scotland" they have a single body governing education.[31]

These sorts of comparisons between the English educational system and the systems of other countries, particularly America and Germany, were exceedingly common in the debates on the Education Bill of 1902, as other industrial powers increased their stature relative to England. Herbert Lewis compared the English and American educational systems and claimed one of the major problems with the English system to be the lack of public involvement with the schools, which he attributed to the public's lack of any say in the management of the schools. To remedy this, he proposed that elementary schools be run by the parish councils and secondary and technical schools by the country councils, with the school boards eliminated altogether. This proposal would have fulfilled the government's desire for separate authorities governing primary and secondary schools

while at the same time establishing state-funded secondary education and extending state-funded education to all of England.[32]

Members of Parliament on both sides of the aisle began to chafe at the endless bickering over minor issues. George White probably expressed the general sentiment best when he said:

> A friend of mine, who for many years was a prominent Member of this House, in an address recently delivered as Lord Rector of St. Andrew's University, made use of this expression — 'It is my opinion, as one who has watched this long, that it is not too much to say that commercial and trade decay lies before us unless we can pull ourselves together in this matter. We potter over night-schools and this or that piece of technical reading; where our competitors are spending thousands of pounds we spend half a dozen pence.

This feeling, stated by White in early May, was rapidly spreading through the House. The debate escalated until in late June John Middlemore scathingly observed that the entire bill could be funded with "a sum equal to one week's cost of the war in South Africa," and that this investment should please the Chancellor of the Exchequer greatly, "for there would be no scandals connected with it." The government knew that in order to pass the bill it would have to bring a final vote soon.[33]

The fact that such a vote was able to be brought and that it was passed can in large part be attributed to Viscount Haldane. Haldane recognized that any bill which the Liberal party could bring would be shaped by the compromises necessary to keep from offending their Nonconformist constituents.

In over eight thousand parishes, there were only Church of England schools, to which Catholics and Nonconformists were forced to send their children by necessity. Liberals generally felt bound to help Nonconformists in this matter. Sir Robert Finlay brought out for discussion one possible solution to this problem when he mentioned the concept of purely secular education, devoid of any religious content. However, he just as quickly dismissed this idea. Based on his own theories and on a report which he had received from "some gentleman from one of our colonies" where the experiment had been tried, he concluded that purely secular education was not only detrimental to the development of the students' character but also to the practice of secular instruction.[34]

Having established early on that the religious issue could not merely be circumvented, Parliament was left searching for a solution to this thorny problem. Jasper Tully had earlier presented the German system as one possible example of how the religious question could be handled in British schools. Tully reported that in Germany, schools in each district taught the religion of that district. He

contrasted this with the way that British Catholics (who were predominantly poor and Irish) had to attempt to fund parochial schools for their children while still paying the rates to fund board schools. Yet even this solution would not be entirely satisfactory to those who happened to be in the religious minority in their school districts. Charles Philips Trevelyan spoke for many Nonconformists when he cited their great support for improvements in the educational system so long as those improvements did not come at the cost of increasing the dominance of the Anglican religion in the schools. He cited New South Wales as an example of a satisfactory solution to the problem. In that colony, at a certain time each day a number of clergy would come to the schools, each to teach the members of his own denomination. Because the bill under consideration made no such provisions, instead opting to attempt institution of non-denominational religious education, the Liberals had announced their intention to vote against it as being against the interests of their constituents.[35]

Being strongly of the belief that the educational issue here should take precedence over the religious one, Haldane broke from the Liberals and voted for the bill, even announcing his intention to do so beforehand. While this did not lead, as he had hoped, to an exodus of the Liberal Imperialists (Haldane was the only Liberal to vote for the bill), it did help to strengthen the spines of any conservatives who might have been wavering. In the form in

which it was finally passed, the Education Act of 1902 abolished the school boards and placed all state-run schools under the control of the county councils. The councils then were responsible not only for regulating the curricula, under the supervision of the Board of Education, but also for levying funds for the operation of the schools and the building of new schools as needed. The public schools, however, remained outside of this system so long as they remained self-supporting.[36]

The importance of this exemption for the public schools should not be underestimated. Despite the funding granted to the voluntary schools by Parliament in 1897, private donations to the schools had not decreased and had, in the case of the Church of England, actually increased. These 14 thousand voluntary schools were responsible for educating 3 million students, with the remaining 2.6 million being educated by the 5.7 thousand board schools. This relieved Parliament of the cost of educating over half of England's students. The cost to the government if these schools were to close, by the calculations of A. J. Balfour, would be no less than £26 million.[37]

THE LONDON EDUCATION BILL (1903)

The Education Act of 1902 had successfully established secondary education in all of England except for London, which had been deliberately omitted from the bill in order to prevent a repeat of the standoff over the 1901 education bill. In order to remedy this shortcoming of the newly established educational system, on 7 April 1903 Sir William Anson introduced the London Education Bill in the Commons. This rather odd bill was a piece of legislation conducted by reference, as it consists of a first clause stating that it extends the Education Act of 1902 to London with a number of subsequent clauses acting almost as amendments, stating the changes to be made in the 1902 act in order for this extension to take place.[38]

Anson stated that the main problem with implementing education reform in London was the status of the borough governments, the London County Council, and the London School Board in the final plan. Rather than parcelling out the running of the London schools to the various borough councils or creating a specialized body along the lines of the London School Board, this bill aimed to put control of the schools in the hands of the county council, just as was done in other counties under the 1902 act. Meanwhile, the borough councils would be responsible for handling more routine affairs, such as the hiring and firing of teachers and the maintenance of buildings.[39]

Anson's chief arguments against a directly elected, single-purpose school board were the cost of such a body, its isolation from other governmental issues, and the difficulty of getting the public to vote in a strictly educational election. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman[40] protested, however, that doing away with the London School Board was not only unnecessary but, because of the upheaval of the transition from one governing body to another, would be injurious to London schools and their students.[41]

Sir John Gorst defended the bill from Campbell-Bannerman's attack, stating that it was necessary to transfer control of London's schools to the county council because only the council had the authority to levy taxes. As this idea had been effectively defended during the debate concerning the Education Act of 1902, rather than attack it again, the defenders of the London School Board tried a new angle. Dr. Thomas Macnamara made the claim that doing away with the school board and turning control over to the county council was impossible because of the sheer size of the problem. The statistics he supplied indicated that the London School board had 55 members who met once a week, plus seven standing committees and thirty-two subcommittees, all of which met either weekly or biweekly, amounting to a total of 706 meetings in 1902. He advanced the quite plausible claim that this would be too much to add to the duties of a city councilman. This claim was severely damaged, if not demolished, however, when William Peel[42], an MP who was also a

member of the London City Council, rose to state that this would not be the case. Peel noted that not all of the duties of the school board will be assumed by the city council, as many of the lesser responsibilities of running the schools would be delegated to lesser bodies, such as the borough councils.[43]

When the bill was again debated before a second reading on 29 April 1903, the nature of the administrative body dominated the discussion. A proposal was advanced, with generally good reception, which allowed several members of the London School Board to serve as advisors to the London County Council during the first five years after the bill went into effect, as this was deemed to be enough time for a total transition. Even this idea did not meet with unanimous approval, and after a long and heated debate the second reading was approved by only a narrow margin.[44]

The discussion of the bill in committee on 18 May went little better than it had on the floor of the House. Neither the partisans of the London School Board nor those of the City Council presented much in the way of a novel argument, instead hoping to use tenacity and parliamentary maneuvering to wear down the other side. The debate began, after a brief speech by Macnamara, with J. W. Lowther, Chair of the Education Committee, using parliamentary procedure (and the support of Prime Minister Balfour) to prevent Macnamara and Thomas Lough from amending subsequent clauses of the bill until Clause 1, stating the general intent of applying the

Education Act of 1902 to London, had been agreed on. Anson spoke up against Macnamara, stating that there was no use discussing the later clauses until Clause 1 had been approved, while James Yoxall supported Macnamara, stating the Clause 1 could not be properly discussed until the nature of the governing body referred to in that clause had been approved. Furthermore, he claimed that Lowther's actions as chair of the committee were blatant "parliamentary draftsmanship" and were intended to prevent discussion and criticism; these charges were also to be levelled by Anson and Balfour during the course of the debate by frustrated supporters of the London School Board. After much debate, however, a motion was finally passed in committee which allowed for discussion of subsequent clauses of the bill while Clause 1 was amended to allow for further discussion of the composition of the governing body at a later date.[45]

After one more appearance in committee, the bill was brought back before the House for a third reading. Although Lowther, Anson, and Balfour had used their parliamentary skill to bring the bill to a fairly speedy vote without major alterations from what they had originally intended, the bill still suffered fairly strong opposition. On 22 July, the day of the final reading, Macnamara stood to state his opposition to the bill for one last time. He stated that handing London's schools over to the county council would be damaging to the schools and the students and that by writing this bill by reference to the Education Act of 1902, with only minor

modifications, the government had been able to rush the bill through without adequate time for debate. William Crooks, who was both an MP and a member of the London County Council, also rose to oppose the bill. He stated that he was elected to the council because of his knowledge of roads, trams, and other transportation measures. If this bill were passed, he would have to learn the issues surrounding education, as would the other council members, thus giving control of schools to people who would have to learn the job when there was already a body in place doing the job very well. In one of the final speeches before the election, Anson once again spoke out in favor of the bill, noting that the decline in turnout for school board elections would make that body less responsive to public opinion than the county council. Furthermore, the provisions in the bill for control of local issues by the borough councils would obviate the current inexperience of some of the councilmen with regard to educational matters.[46]

Despite the vigor of the opposition voices, the bill passed in the Commons by a margin of 228 to 118, the voting split strictly by party affiliation. There were no surprise votes such as Haldane had provided in 1902. Gorst and Anson voted for the bill, Macnamara and Yoxall against it, all exactly as expected. The bill was passed in the House of Lords with no real opposition, passing a third reading on 8 August with no debate at all. The king gave his assent to the bill on 14 August, and in his speech to Parliament that

day made a point of specifically mentioning the London Education Act. He stated that he heartily approved of the Education Act of 1902 and was exceedingly glad that this act had been extended in 1903 to include London.[47]

CONCLUSION

By August of 1903, the Conservative-led Parliament had created a state-funded system of secondary education and then extended this system to include London. Obviously not all were satisfied with the solutions contained in the Education Acts of 1901 and 1902 and the London Education Act (1903), or the Liberals would have felt no need for the subsequent Education Acts of 1904, 1906, and 1910. The Edwardian Parliaments were struggling with the problems of education in an industrial country, which have still not been resolved. Indeed, Walter Runciman's protest in committee on 19 May 1903 against government funding of voluntary schools, and C. R. Devlin's reply that this bill instead allows parents of voluntary school students to benefit from the taxes they pay for schools, could have come from any American congress or British Parliament of the 1990s.[48]

The issues surrounding this debate still resonate today, as education reform remains a violently partisan issue, particularly in Britain, where educational issues which in America would he handled on a local level become topics of Parliamentary debate. Legislators seek to cope with low turnout for school board elections, financial conflicts between school boards and other local governing bodies, the problems of scale inherent in managing large urban school districts, and the variety of problems presented in different school districts as defined by the urban or rural status of

the district and the wealth or poverty of its constituents. These issues have led to passionate debates and sweeping educational reforms several times during this century, each wave of reformers seeking to some extent to undo the work of the previous wave.

The most recent wave of these reforms occurred in the 1970s, when a conservative government led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher enacted reforms based on correcting the perceived flaws in the system instituted by the Labour government in 1945. As had been the case three-quarters of a century earlier, conservative MPs passed an education reform bill, seeking to use a modernized educational system to revitalize a stagnant economy.

Specifically, the Labour government had widened the reach of the state-funded schools by making them comprehensive, while the conservatives later instituted a system favoring the voluntary schools. An analogous situation exists in America, where the Democratic party sees reformation of state-funded schools as the only acceptable vehicle of education reform while the Republicans have often advocated a voucher system which would enable parents to take their children (and their tax dollars) out of a state-funded school and put them into the voluntary school of their choice.

By looking back at the efforts of the British government in the early years of the twentieth century, one can see the beginnings of modern educational policy. Despite the many

scientific and technological advances during the course of the century, these issues remain in dispute, often with the same arguments being presented in the same terms. These contests for the hearts and minds of a nation's youth present some of the most bitterly fought legislative battles, as legislators attempt to find simple solutions to complicated problems.

Despite the partisan opposition to these early education reforms, even their opponents would have to declare them a success. The young boys entering the new schools created by these acts would later be the young men swelling the ranks of the British army in World War One, administered Britain's colonies during the difficult decades that followed, and eventually were to preside over the dismantling of the British Empire.

APPENDIX A: BRIEF SUMMARY OF EDUCATION BILLS, 1901-1903

EDUCATION BILL OF 1901: This bill, which was never passed, would have established state-funded secondary schools by abolishing the school boards and turning control of schools over to the county councils.

EDUCATION (NO. 2) BILL OF 1901: This bill, passed as the Education Act of 1901 was introduced out of desperation due to the deadlock in debate on the Education Bill of 1901. All this second bill did was to allow secondary schools currently in operation to continue operating under the same conditions for another year, until Parliament had a chance to consider a new education bill in the next session.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL: This bill, passed as the Education Act of 1902, created secondary schools under the control of the county councils in all of England except for London, which was deliberately exempted, to be the subject of a separate bill in a later session.

EDUCATION ACT OF 1901 (RENEWAL) BILL: As debate on the Education (England and Wales) Bill dragged on into the late summer, this bill was passed extending the Education Act of 1901 for an additional year in order to allow schools to continue to function while Parliament's debates continued into the school year. Passage of this bill was essentially a formality, with no debate on the matter. The entire process took two weeks from introduction in the House of Commons to royal assent, and was even so abbreviated that the second and

third readings in the House of Lords took place on the same day.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL: This bill, passed as the London Education Act, extended the provisions of the Education Act of 1902 to the city of London. A vigorous liberal opposition, led by Dr. Thomas Macnamara, had sought to have the bill modified such that control of London's schools remained in the hands of the London School Board, but the conservatives were able to quash this plan.

APPENDIX B: CHRONOLOGY OF EDUCATION BILLS, 1901-1903

DATE	HOUSE	ACTION
7 May 1901	Commons	Introduction and first reading of the Education Bill of 1901.
28 June 1901	Commons	Withdrawal of the Education Bill of 1901.
2 July 1901	Commons	Introduction and first reading of the Education (no. 2) Bill of 1901.
8 July 1901	Commons	Second reading of the Education (no. 2) Bill of 1901.
30 July 1901	Commons	Third reading of the Education (no. 2) Bill of 1901.
1 Aug. 1901	Lords	First reading of the Education (no. 2) Bill of 1901.
2 Aug. 1901	Lords	Second reading of the Education (no. 2) Bill of 1901.
6 Aug. 1901	Lords	Third reading of the Education (no. 2) Bill of 1901
9 Aug. 1901	Lords	Royal assent to the Education (no. 2) Bill of 1901
24 Mar. 1902	Commons	Introduction and first reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill.
5-8 May 1902	Commons	Second reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill

DATE	HOUSE	ACTION
17 July 1902	Commons	Introduction and first reading of the Education Act of 1901 (Renewal) Bill.
21 July 1902	Commons	Second reading of the Education Act of 1901 (Renewal) Bill.
22 July 1902	Commons	Third reading of the Education Act of 1901 (Renewal) Bill.
24 July 1902	Lords	First reading of the Education Act of 1901 (Renewal) Bill.
28 July 1902	Lords	Second reading of the Education Act of 1901 (Renewal) Bill.
28 July 1902	Lords	Third reading of the Education Act of 1901 (Renewal) Bill.
31 July 1902	Lords	Royal assent to the Education Act of 1901 (Renewal) Bill.
2 Dec. 1902	Commons	Third reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill.
3 Dec. 1902	Lords	First reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill.
4 Dec. 1902	Lords	Second reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill.
15 Dec. 1902	Lords	Third reading of the Education (England and Wales) Bill.

DATE	HOUSE	ACTION
16 Dec. 1902	Commons	Consideration of the Lords' Amendments to the Education (England and Wales) Bill.
17 Dec. 1902	Lords	Consideration of the Commons' amendments to the Education (England and Wales) Bill.
18 Dec. 1902	Lords	Royal assent to the Education (England and Wales) Bill.
7 Apr. 1903	Commons	Introduction and first reading of the London Education Bill
29 Apr. 1903	Commons	Second reading of the London Education Bill.
22 July 1903	Commons	Third reading of the London Education Bill.
23 July 1903	Lords	First reading of the London Education Bill.
28 July 1903	Lords	Second reading of the London Education Bill.
5 Aug. 1903	Lords	Third reading of the London Education Bill.
10 Aug. 1903	Commons	Consideration of Lords amendments to the London Education Bill.
14 Aug. 1903	Lords	Royal assent to the London Education Bill.

ABBREVIATIONS

Hansard's	Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 4th series (1892-1908)

NOTES

[1.] A note on terminology: In an attempt to avoid confusion because of the different English and American meanings of the phrase "public school," an effort has been made in this paper to use the phrase "voluntary school" to refer to what the English call a public school and the Americans a private school. Likewise, the phrases "state-funded school" and "board school" have been used to refer to what the English call a board school and the Americans a public school.

[2.] Alice Conklin and Ian Christopher Fletcher, European Imperialism, 1830-1930: Climax and Contradiction (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 4; J.A. Spender Great Britain: Empire and Commonwealth, 1886-1935 (London: Cassell, n.p.), 200-201.

[3.] William L. Strauss, Joseph Chamberlain and the Theory of Imperialism (Washington, D.C.: The American Council on Public Affairs, 1942), 116-117.

[4.] Edward C. Mack, Public Schools and British Opinion Since 1860 (New York: Octagon, 1941), 218-219; Bernard Porter, The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism 1850-1995, 3d. ed. (London: Longman, 1976), 130-133.

[5.] Edward C. Mack, Public Schools and British Opinion Since 1860 (New York: Octagon, 1941), 217; Lionel H. Cust, A History of Eton College (New York: Scribner's, 1899), 261, 279-282; Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, The Old School Tie: The Phenomenon of the English Public School (New York: Viking, 1977), 194-195.

[6.] Porter, 130-131.

[7.] The Education Act of 1870 had extended primary education to all of England by establishing school districts operating state-funded in areas not served by voluntary schools. Of note, however, in those sections of the country where voluntary schools did operate, these schools remained the only educational institutions.

[8.] G. M. Trevelyan, History of England v. 3 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1953), 238.

[9.] Ibid.

[10.] Duke of Devonshire, Speech in the House of Lords on 25 February 1901, Hansard's, v. LXXXIX, 985; Dr. Thomas J.

Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons, Hansard's, v. XCII, 492. Spender, 200-201.

[11.] On this occasion as well as during later debates in Parliament, Haldane presented the brewing industry as a case study to demonstrate the necessity of reforming the British educational system and of integrating it with industry. He stated that during the latter part of the nineteenth century, German beer exports increased from being practically nonexistent in 1870 to being almost on par with those of England in 1900. This remarkable increase, Haldane said, could be easily explained by the differing methods of educating brewers in the two countries. British brewers had continued to use their traditional methods, while German brewers had sought to use science to increase their productivity. The Brauerbund, established in 1862 and fully organized by 1871, had as part of its mission the establishment of scientific stations, most notably at Munich, to assist brewers in confronting technical problems and also the founding and running of brewery schools, of which there were 10 in Germany and Austria by 1900, to train brewers competent in the latest technical advances.

[12.] Richard Burdon Haldane, Education & Empire: Addresses on Certain Topics of the Day (London: John Murray, 1902), ix, 8-10, 34.

[13.] George Dangerfield, The Strange Death of Liberal England (New York: Capricorn, 1935), 14.

[14.] Henceforth referred to simply as "R. vs. Cockerton" or "the Cockerton case." It should, however, be noted that the name of the case changes to Rex vs. Cockerton upon the death of Queen Victoria on 22 January 1901.

[15.] Devonshire, Speech of 25 February 1901, 985; James Henry Yoxall, Speech in the House of Commons on 2 April 1901, Hansard's, v. XCII, 551-552; Dr. Thomas J. Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons on 2 April 1901, Hansard's, v. XCII, 492; Sir John Gorst, Speech in the House of Commons on 21 February 1901, Hansard's, v. LXXXIX, 692.

[16.] Devonshire, Speech on 25 February 1901, 985; Lord Norton, Speech in the House of Lords on 25 February 1901, Hansard's, v. LXXXIX, 987-988; Earl Spencer, Speech in the House of Lords on 25 February 1901, Hansard's, v. LXXXIX, 985-987.

[17.] Thomas James Macnamara (1861-1931) had had a successful career as a schoolmaster before being elected to Parliament as a liberal, representing North-West Camberwell from 1900-1924. While in Parliament, Macnamara also served as a member of the London School Board, giving him further insight into the issue of education. Macnamara was closely associated with Lloyd George and even after leaving

Parliament remained active as a speaker and organizer for the liberals.

[18.] Francis Channing, Speech in the House of Commons of 29 April 1901, Hansard's, v. XCIII, 77-78.

[19.] A. J. Balfour, Speech in the House of Commons on 26 April 1901, Hansard's, v. XCII, 1456-1458.

[20.] Sir John Eldon Gorst (1835-1916) served in Parliament from 1880 to 1906, serving as vice-president of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education from 1895 to 1902 (the last man to hold this office. Although he had spent his political career up to that point as a conservative, in 1906 Gorst broke with that party and devoted the last ten years of his life to the causes of education and health. His 1906 book The Children of the Nation was dedicated to the Labor members of the House of Commons.

[21.] A. J. Balfour, Speech in the House of Commons on 26 April 1901, Hansard's, v. XCII, 1456-1458; Sir John Gorst, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 May 1901, Hansard's, v. XCIII, 970.

[22.] Scotland was not included in this bill because Scottish schools were governed by a separate law, which was in fact very similar to the 1901 Bill. Scotland was divided into a number of districts, each of which had a school board which governed both elementary and secondary education.

[23.] Gorst, Speech on 7 May 1901, 970-971.

[24.] Dr. Thomas J. Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 May 1901, Hansard's, v. XCIII, 994-997.

[25.] Ibid.

[26.] Sir John Gorst, Speech in the House of Commons on 5 March 1901, Hansard's, v. XC, 670-671; Richard Burdon Haldane, Speech in the House of Commons on 5 March 1901, Hansard's, v. XC, 653.

[27.] Thomas Lough, Speech in the House on Commons of 5 March 1901, Hansard's, v. XC, 647-648; Jasper Tully, Speech in the House of Commons on 5 March 1901, Hansard's, v. XC, 650.

[28.] Hansard's, v. XCII, 621-626.

[29.] Dr. Thomas Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons on 24 February 1902, Hansard's, v. CIII, 912; A. J. Balfour, Speech in the House of Commons on 24 March 1902, Hansard's, v. CV, 862; Dr. Thomas Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons on 24 March 1902, Hansard's, v. CV, 886.

[30.] Balfour, Speech on 24 March 1902, 850-852.

[31.] Balfour, Speech on 24 March 1902, 850-851; Sir John Gorst, Speech in the House of Commons on 5 May 1902, Hansard's, v. CVII, 665, 670.

[32.] Herbert Lewis, Speech in the House of Commons on 3 June 1902, Hansard's, v. CVII, 1291-1292

[33.] George White, Speech in the House of Commons on 8 May 1902, Hansard's, v. CVII, 1150; John Throgmorton Middlemore, Speech in the House of Commons on 30 June 1902, Hansard's, v. CX, 322-323.

[34.] Alfred Emmott, Speech in the House of Commons on 5 May 1902, Hansard's, v. CVII, 751; Sir Robert Finlay, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 May 1902, Hansard's, v. CVII, 994-995.

[35.] Jasper Tully, Speech in the House of Commons on 5 March 1901, Hansard's, v. XC, 650-651; Charles Philips Trevelyan, Speech in the House of Commons of 5 May 1902, Hansard's, v. CVII, 737, 742-743.

[36.] Stephen E. Koss, Lord Haldane: Scapegoat for Liberalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 18-19; Richard Burdon Haldane, An Autobiography (New York: Doubleday, 1929), 159; Mack, 255.

[37.] A. J. Balfour, Speech in the House of Commons on 24 March 1982, Hansard's, v. CV, 854-855.

[38.] Sir William Anson, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 April 1903, Hansard's, v. CXX, 1261-1267.

[39.] Ibid.

[40.] Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836-1908) was first elected to Parliament in 1868, representing the Stirling Burghs uninteruptedly until his death. Always a very progressive liberal, in his early years in Parliament Campbell-Bannerman had identified himself with the more independent of Gladstone's supporters. He served in the Cabinet on many occasions, his fortune during his early years tied to that of Gladstone. Upon Gladstone's resignation, Campbell-Bannerman was elected to the leadership of the liberal party, and in 1906 to the Prime Ministership. Throughout his career education remained one of the particular focuses of his attention, along with military reforms and various economic reforms for the benefit of the people of England.

[41.] Anson, Speech on 7 April 1903, 1264-1266; Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 April 1903, Hansard's, v. CXX, 1275.

[42.] William Peel (1867-1937) was in the early 1900s both a member of Parliament, under the Unionist party, and also a member of the London City Council. In 1917, when the coalition government came into power, he elevated to the position of joint parliamentary secretary to the National Service Department, then in 1919 to the post of undersecretary of state for war under Winston Churchill. In his later years, he was to be exceedingly active in the

problems of India, being consecutively a member of the India Round Table Conference of 1930-31, the Burma Round Table Conference of 1931-32, and the joint select committee on Indian constitutional reforms of 1933.

[43.] Sir John Gorst, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 April 1902, Hansard's, v. CXX, 1281; Dr. Thomas Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 April 1902, Hansard's, v. CXX, 1285-1286; William R. Wellesley Peel, Speech in the House of Commons on 7 April 1902, Hansard's, v. CXX, 1303.

[44.] Hansard's, v. CXXI, 799-873.

[45.] J. W. Lowther, Speech in the House of Commons on 18 May 1903, Hansard's, v. CXXII, 942-4; Dr. Thomas Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons on 18 May 1903, Hansard's, v. CXXII, 944-946; Sir William Anson, Speech in the House of Commons on 18 May 1903, Hansard's, v. CXXII, 947-948; James Henry Yoxall, Speech in the House of Commons on 18 May 1903, Hansard's, v. CXXII, 955-959.

[46.] Dr. Thomas Macnamara, Speech in the House of Commons on 22 July 1903, Hansard's, v. CXXV, 1452-1459; William Crooks, Speech in the House of Commons on 22 July 1903, Hansard's, v. CXXV, 1464-1467; Sir William Anson, Speech in the House of Commons on 22 July 1903, Hansard's, v. CXXV, 1489-1493.

[47.] Hansard's, v. XCCV, 1507; Hansard's, v. XCCVI, 1570; Hansard's, v. XCCVII, 1282.

[48.] Walter Runciman, Speech in the House of Commons on 19 May 1903, Hansard's, v. XCCII, 1109-1110; C. R. Devlin, Speech in the House of Commons on 19 May 1903, Hansard's, v. XCCII, 1111-1112.

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