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EDUCATION.

John Bright On Education In England.

"We are," said Mr Bright, "according to the admission of all the world, a great nation. We have a population within these islands of thirty millions of people. We control the destinies

and distant portions of the globe. We have wealth which some people believe, and those who levy and decree the taxes appear to believe, to be inexhaustible. We have power which stretches to the ends of the earth. The English language, our English literature, our English morals, and our English freedom, affect the interests of mankind, not in those countries only that are subject to our sway, but in every part of the earth's surface where a civilized man or family exists. But though this is a grand picture, of which we are and ought constantly to be proud, yet, if we look at home, with all our greatness and all our wealth, we find amongst our population a mass of poverty, and of ignorance, and of suffering of which a Christian nation ought to be ashamed. I agree with an opinion which has been frequently expressed by my friend Mr Dixon, that at the basis of this vast mass of suffering which we would relieve is to be found the great ignorance in which two or three, or more millions of our people are brought up. What we want, at the very basis of society, is more intelligence, more instruction, more self-respect, and more hope. There are multitudes amongst us who are born and who live even to old age without apparently the slightest hope of improving their condition. Now, I have been an advocate for Parliamentary Reform especially with this object: that we might call in the great body of the people to frame the Parliament which shall govern us, chiefly for this purpose—that we might devise such a policy and such a means as shall, if possible, lay hold of this vast mass of ignorance and raise it many degrees in the social scale, and remove from amongst us that which is a discredit and a shame to our civilization and to our religion.

"I said that three years would not pass after the householders of the United Kingdom were enfranchised, before we should see some grand effort to give to the lowest, the humblest, the poorest classes of the community, that instruction, and the equal of that, which is given to the children of what are called the middle classes. I am weary, as I travel through the country, of looking upon the vast fabrics that rise up, which are, if you ask their names, poorhouses or lunatic asylums. We ought to have —throughout the length and breadth of a great and intelligent country like this— we ought to have buildings which shall strike the eye of every traveller through the country, and every to a large extent of nearly two hundred millions of men in other foreigner who visits it, which shall be consecrated to the greatest