

Education is nothing less than an aspect of life. The more one is a student of Education, the more one realizes the depth and the necessary variety and the far-reaching and delicate complexity of educational influences. In order to judge them fairly, to interpret them sympathetically, it is not sufficient to be a specialist in pedagogy. One needs a far deeper and more living experience than that. On Education as an aspect of life, all who have tried to do their duty—be they rich or poor, learned or simple—have some wise or warning word to say. The specialist is necessary—necessary up to a certain point—in education as in everything else. But in nothing is it so dangerous as it is in education to be guided by the judgment of the specialist alone. The judgment of the specialist needs to be criticized, corrected, and supplemented by the experience of all who have direct knowledge of the problems of life which education professes to prepare us; and the methods of the specialist need to be frankly discussed by those who have watched the practical results of those methods as illustrated by the skill, the character, and the good sense of the people in whose training those methods have been applied.

When we compare different systems of education, we are often in great danger of slipping unconsciously into expressions which implicitly carry with them the idea that an educational system is nothing more or less than a system of schools. Now you may have an elaborate system of schools, perfectly tidy and neat, known to everybody in the street, an object of local satisfaction and immense boasting; you may multiply it by a thousand, and call it a national system of education; and yet all the time you may be actually having less of a really na-

tional system of education than is enjoyed by a free country which possesses a strong tradition of national unity, and knows that education is not a matter of schools or book learning alone. Therefore, if we propose to study foreign systems of education, we must not keep our eyes on the brick and mortar institutions, nor on the teachers and pupils only, but we must also go outside into the streets and into the homes of the people, and try to find out what is the intangible, impalpable, spiritual force which, in the case of any successful system of education, is in reality upholding the school system and accounting for its practical efficiency. No one can visit the German schools without feeling great reverence for the brain-power, the energy, and the foresight of those who build up that school system. But a great school system like that of Germany (to speak of Germany as a whole, as at this distance we are justified in doing, though, of course, as a matter of fact the different parts of Germany have separate systems which differ from one another in many respects), a great school system like the German, does not run by itself. It is upheld by something outside itself, by the national interest in education. The higher-school systems of Germany, as distinct from the elementary school system, is greatly influenced by the possibility of getting off part of the period of compulsory military service. If a boy goes through the whole course at a recognized secondary school, he is let off a year of compulsory service, and, what is more, he serves his year on a much higher social level than if he went as an ordinary private. In Wales, the new Intermediate Schools are upheld by the wonderful social enthusiasm of the people, and unless we take that into account and enter