

Here I only wish to point out that much of our modern education seems to be reared on foundations that are at least equally indefinite and a good deal more unsatisfactory; indeed, one might go the length of saying that it is an attempt to build without any solid foundation at all. In so far as it has any definite object in view beyond enabling its disciples to pass examinations, it appears to aim at supplying promiscuous information and inspiring a belief in the virtue of intellectual work for its own sake. Now I do not dispute that information is occasionally serviceable, and intellectual work occasionally desirable, but I wish to protest against any theory that regards either the one or the other as intrinsically good; and in this preliminary skirmish I shall, from a safe distance, fling a pebble or two at that powerful and much honoured giant, *Work-for-Work's-Sake*. I am no David, and my little missiles will prove very harmless even if they should happen to hit their mark; so the Philistines need not feel at all alarmed.

I maintain, then, that we have nearly all of us, nowadays, a preposterous notion of the importance and value of work. By work in this sense, I mean, of course, intellectual and artistic work—so-called—as distinguished from the necessary labour of life. The latter takes its due place in any rational conception of life, and though, like most obvious and indispensable things, it is generally ignored in theory by educationalists and other people of superior attainments, it is sufficiently exploited by them in practice. We are all dependent upon it, and it may be fairly questioned whether any one who does not do his own share of it can be properly in touch with humanity at all. When intellectual work is so entirely divorced from this labour as is usually the case in our professional and academical circles to-day, its products run a considerable risk of being vitiated and rendered useless: they are like the artificial liver and bacon which an enterprising tradesman is recorded to have put upon the market with a modest advertisement of its being “wholesome or nearly so”—exceedingly ingenious in conception but decidedly innutritious as an article of human nature’s daily food. I shall not, however, expatiate on that point at present.