

from the Elementary Schools may go into the Secondary Schools, but they are looked down upon. The classes in the Elementary School are enormous, 60 is supposed to be the maximum, but often there are nearly 100; consequently individual attention is impossible. The teachers, too, in many cases do not possess very high qualifications, and the apparatus is poor. These defects are not so common in the Secondary Schools, where the classes are much smaller, and the teachers better equipped; but still there is no "educational ladder" whereby the poorest child with brains may attain a University degree.

The chief cause of difficulty in connection with the Elementary Schools is the expense, for they are maintained principally with local money, though there are Government grants for excellence in special subjects. So when more teachers are asked for, there is an outcry as to the rates going up. I feel sometimes I should like to go over the country and conduct a campaign about rates, and try to show people what benefits they receive from them, and what they would have to pay for these benefits if they had to pay for them out of their own pockets. Think of the roads, parks, libraries, schools, gas, electricity etc., etc. To hear people talk, one might think these had all dropped from Heaven! Lives have to be sacrificed to secure these blessings; ideas have to permeate mankind for generations before inventions can be perfected. We get these things collectively, and we pay for them collectively out of the rates; and our cry should rather be "Up with the rates and down with the death rate, and ignorance and crime and misery!"

Great efforts are being made to get all the charges of Education placed on the National Exchequer. It would be in every way more satisfactory, and also fairer, because boys, when grown up, often go to other places and so pay back to them the debt that they owe to their birthplace.

There is a decided tendency to improve educational methods and to get rid of cram, payment by results, and the overcrowding of the syllabus. When the teacher's salary depends on his getting the child up to the required standard, one may expect to find children of tender years, who cannot do mental arithmetic, kept in after school or otherwise punished. But such things will disappear, and some of the less necessary subjects be

replaced by Arts and Crafts that help to make the child useful to the community, and teach him how to make home happy.

During the last few years, excellent progress has been made in the direction of saving infant life. It is estimated that six millions of children died in the last 50 years, the majority of whom ought to be alive and strong now. In some parts of the country the death-rate among infants is 350 per 1000; more die in the working class than in the middle class and the upper class. There was an amazing difference—over 100 per cent between the death-rate in Hampstead, which is on a hill, and Bethnal Green, where the houses seem to be on top of each other, rows upon rows, with scarcely any outlet for air, or inlet for sunlight. Drink is largely responsible for the high mortality, but still more the poverty of the surroundings, material, mental and general. Many do not earn more than £2 a week; there are two million adult men that do not earn over £1 per week, and they have to pay 6s or 7s for a house, or 4s or 5s for a room, so no wonder there is starvation, especially among the mothers, who will live on dry bread and tea, that their husbands may have the scanty morsel of meat available; yet they go on bearing children that die as infants or grow up stunted in body and mind. This poverty **must** be removed, and all over the country institutions working to this end, voluntary organised schools for mothers, where they are fed on good wholesome, but cheap meals, for which, if they can afford it, they pay 1d, and where they are taught to look after their babies and not to give them hard eggs or fish and chips. These schools will probably be municipal concerns. The politicians too are helping, but they move slowly. But only a few months ago Lloyd George promised £2,000,000 for the purpose of establishing in industrial centres clinics to teach prospective mothers. Visitors are appointed also, to go and instruct the mothers in their homes. Where such reforms can be carried out we shall save the nation a million children, but alas, everything of the kind is indefinitely postponed through the war. Another reform that has materially helped is the improvement of the public milk supply through placing it under the control of the municipal authority resulting from which the deathrate of infants was reduced in Finsbury from 165 to 60 per

1000. An enlightened Mayor of Huddersfield offered mothers in one district £1 for every baby born, if it was well at age of 12 months, and the deathrate soon fell considerably. There is now sitting a Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases. The sexual immorality of men and women is due in large measure to the false idea that the standard of morality for men must be lower than for women. It must be equally high for both, and many mothers are to be blamed for not requiring that the husbands of their daughters should be as pure in outlook and life as the wives of their sons. Why should a young man "sow his wild oats" any more than a young woman? A healthy, pure race can be built up only on pure fatherhood as well as pure motherhood; and girls should be solemnly warned not to marry men corrupt as to morals, nor to marry drunkards in the hope of saving them. They **may** be saved mentally and spiritually, but the sacrifice of the girls is not justifiable.

With reference to the child worker, great changes have been made since the Industrial Revolution. Those were dreadful days—days of which Mrs Browning wrote in the "Cry of the Children"—when four-year-old children from the workhouses worked for 12 or 14 hours a day, picking up fluff in the cotton factories, or when half-naked women dragged truckloads of coal in the mines. But good men and women, like Lord Shaftesbury or Robert Owen, the cotton manufacturer, have worked, and got factory laws improved. Now no child works under the age of 12 years, and no young person under 18 years works at night, or more than 54 hours per week. Boys and girls between 12 and 14 years are allowed to work half time, attending school the other half, but there is nothing to be said for the system. Recently a ballot was taken for raising the age to 13, but the vote of the workers was against raising it. The system is bad; the children neither work well nor learn well. If they attend school in the afternoon they are too tired to learn; if in the morning, they are fresh but impudent, and "won't be bossed over by a woman." One argument has been raised in favour of the system that so many splendid M.P.'s have been half-timers. May it not rather be, in spite of being half-timers, they have risen to leadership? Will Crooks began work at eight years