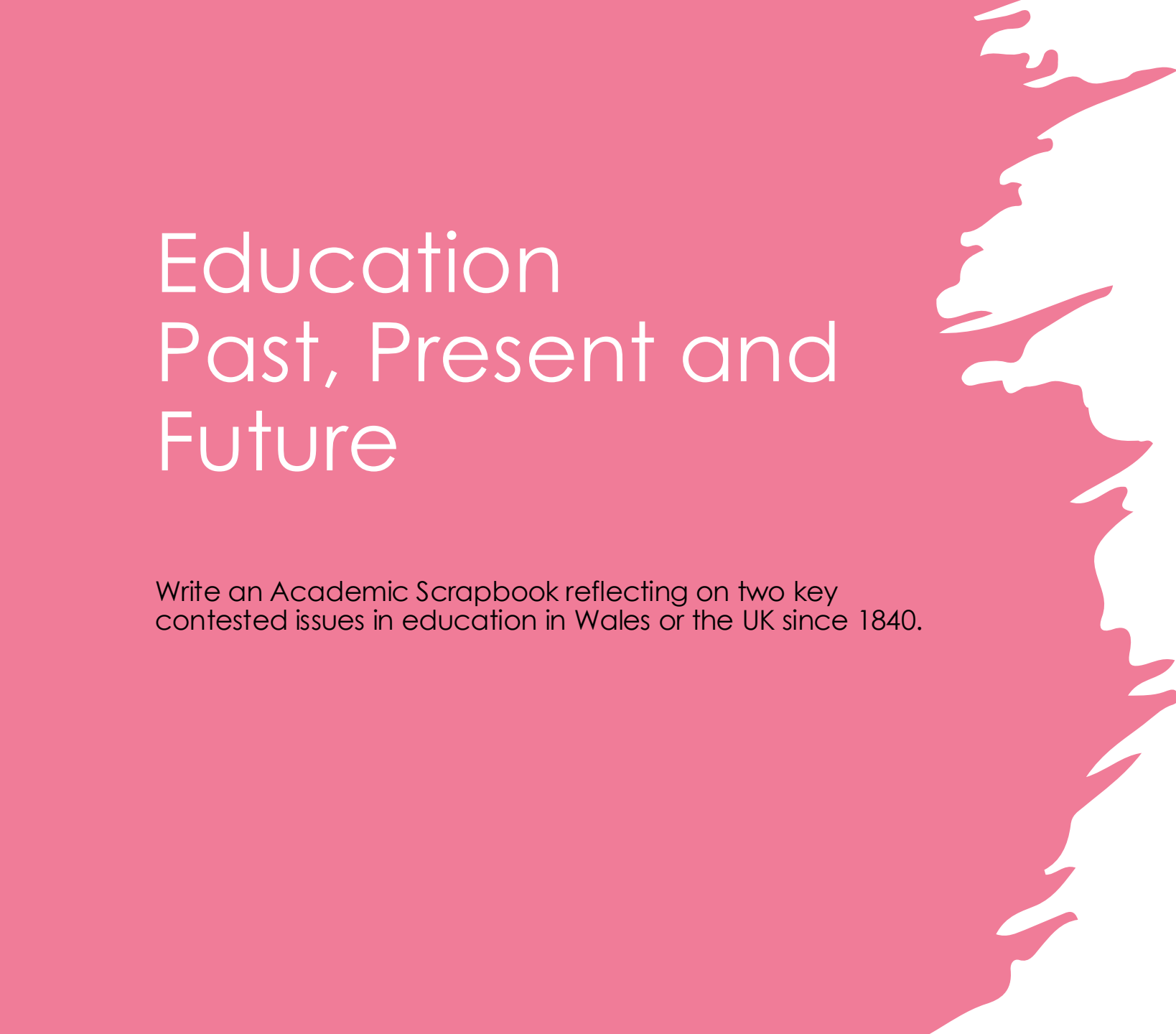


A large, solid pink silhouette of the United Kingdom, including Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is positioned on the left side of the slide. It serves as a background element for the title and the assignment description.

Education Past, Present and Future

Write an Academic Scrapbook reflecting on two key contested issues in education in Wales or the UK since 1840.

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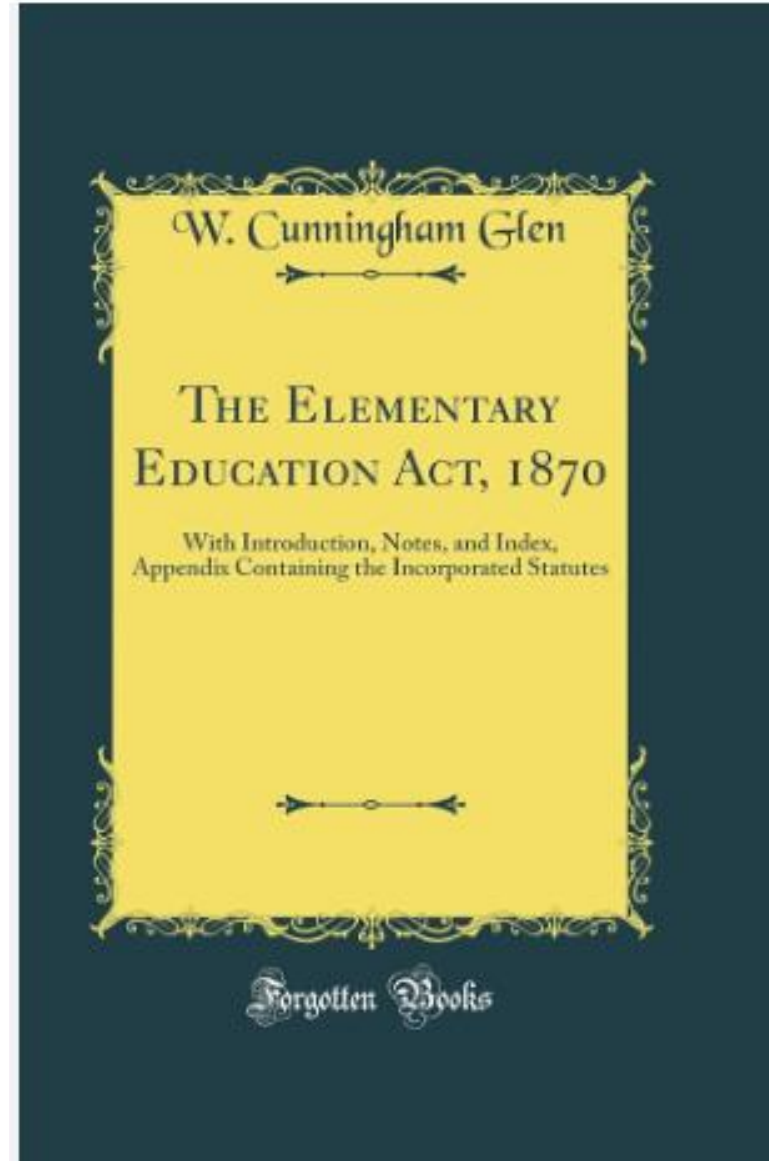
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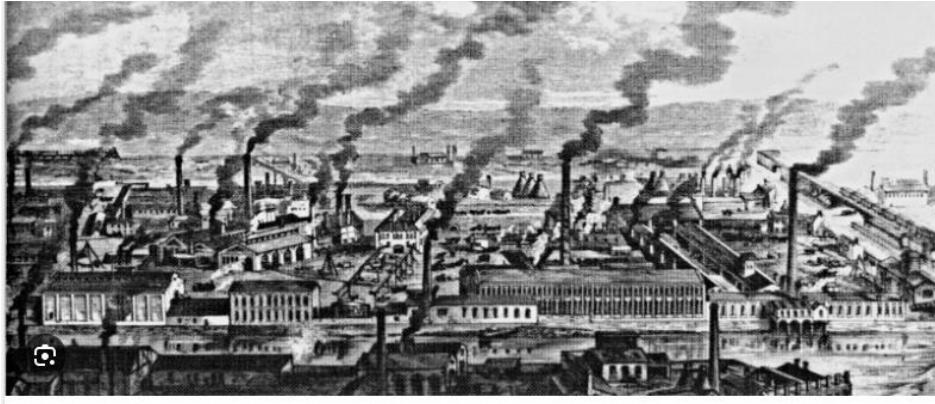
I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Throughout the period of 1840 to today, there have been masses of changes in education. Some of these include school becoming compulsory until age 16, giving children with learning difficulties a right to education and to the way school children are 'punished' for behaviour. In this scrapbook, I will be looking into two contested issues within education from 1840 to today. The two issues chosen are ones which made huge reforms in education, yet were still contested due to many different opinions.

1870 Education Act

- In this section of my scrapbook, I will be discussing The 1870 Education Act and why it is seen as contested. This Act, also known as the Forster Act, was the first piece of legislation that dealt with the provision of education in England and Wales. It made schools accessible from the age of 5 to 13 (UK Parliament). The second Industrial Revolution that was happening at this time led to growth in cities as people moved from farms to factories. Neil J. Smelser argued that “education in general and primary education in particular were probably as finely and self-consciously differentiated by social class (in nineteenth-century Britain) as they have been at any other time and place”. Here, we see that the Industrial Revolution has clearly had an impact on education because the working class had not been educated. William Forster recognised the need for education for all, not just those who could afford it. The Act set a system of ‘school boards’ to build and manage schools in areas which they were needed. The boards were people from the local area who had been elected, they received their funding from local rates. Furthermore, the Act made education compulsory from the age of 5 to 13. (UK Parliament 2024).
- This Act set for a lot of change in education and is deemed as contested due to the opposition from several groups, including working class parents, teachers and The Church.





<https://top5resources.blogspot.com/2014/05/industrial-revolution.html>

Historical Context

- As previously said, the Industrial Revolution had a great impact on people's lives in 1870. Florence. S (2015) highlights that although Britain had become very industrial and therefore citizens had practical skills, they did not have basic education. She further states that 60% of women and 40% of men were illiterate at the beginning of the 1800s. However, after years of the education act being in place, the percentage decreased.
- Before 1870, education was mainly provided by the Church of England's National Society. However, the church could not provide places in schools for every child. So, the Duke of Newcastle was appointed to "inquire into the state of public education in England and to consider and report what measures, if any, are required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction to all classes of the people (page 1)." The Newcastle Commissions report was very important for showing the criticisms of education before the 1870 Act was passed. In the report, it states how "not more than one fourth of children receive a good education." Ultimately, the report led to the Forster Act due to the observations and criticisms of education in England and Wales.



<https://industrialrevolutiontwo.weebly.com/common-workers.html>

Working Class Opposition

- There was huge opposition from working class parents to the Forster Act. The Commissioner in the Newcastle Report was against any idea that school should be made compulsory or that age of leave should be extended. In the report, it states “if the wages of the child's labour are necessary, either to keep the parents from the poor rates, or to relieve the pressure of severe and bitter poverty, it is far better that it should go to work at the earliest age at which it can bear the physical exertion than that it should remain at school (page 188).” This is very interesting information because it shows how normalised and essential child labour was for families to earn money. Clearly, parents of the working class were completely against the idea of their children attending school because their children working was an important part of the family income. Therefore, the fact the Forster Act made education more of a requirement for children aged 5 to 13, working class parents were not happy and disagreed with the Act being passed. Furthermore, as stated by the Norfolk Record Office (2023) Working Class parents also had the issue that education was not free. Therefore, losing more money by children being in schools rather than working and having to find the funds to pay for the education. Again, this shows their issues with the Act and highlights one reason why it is deemed as contested.



<https://brewminate.com/children-and-the-industrial-revolution/>



<https://pressbooks.pub/anne1/chapter/the-industrial-revolution-and-sts/>

The Church



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Carlingford_NSW_%28formerly_Permant_Hills%29_St_Paul%27s_Church_of_England_School_19th_century.jpg

- Gillard, D. (2018) presents the idea that the 1870 Act did not fix the problem of the churches part in state educational provision. Prior to the Forster Act, education in England and Wales was primarily provided from the Church of England's National Society. Furthermore, shown on the UK parliament website, with the Act putting education in the hands of the state and local school boards, it started conflict over whether the state should pay for religious led schools or whether schools should have no religious aspects. Following on, there was also issues with funding. The Act decided not to separate the church and state, which was happening in other countries at the time. Under the Act, church schools did not receive any money for new buildings. According to Parker GS, Allen S and Freathy R (2020);

By the time the 1870 Act was passed, some in the Church of England believed it to be on the losing side of the decades-long debacle of elementary schooling.

This is particularly important because it shows how some felt the Act completely ignored the previous spoke about issues for elementary schools and therefore shows why people in the Church of England were unhappy with it being passed.

Teacher Opposition

- Teachers had reason to oppose the Act due to The 'Revised Code of Regulations' 1861. This code meant that teachers were paid based on their students' results. The purpose of the code was to reduce money expenditure on schools, however as attendance in schools grew after the 1870 Act was passed, expenditure continued to rise. Furthermore, school curriculum was restricted to the three R's (Reading, writing and arithmetic). Children would be examined on the three R's and their results would determine the teachers pay (Gillard, D 2018).

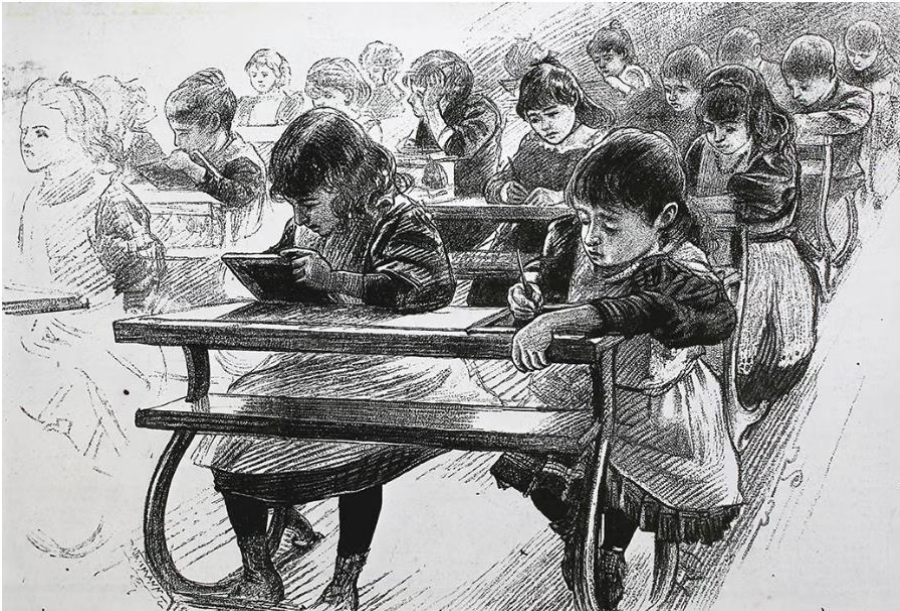
Teachers saw it as their duty, indeed a necessity, to get as many children through the examination as possible, and the most effective way of doing this, especially with very large classes, was by rote learning and drilling. Children learned their reading books off by heart (Simon 1965:116).

- Clearly, teachers felt a huge pressure to perform because their pay was at risk. The 1870 act did not change this for teachers and therefore the pressure remained. In addition, inspections took place and the results of these determined how much money would be funded to the schools, again putting a huge pressure on teaching staff. With more children being in school, more pressure and no government help, teachers were unhappy with the act.



<https://www.facinghistory.org/ideas-week/teaching-light-womens-history>

Positives



<https://daily.jstor.org/why-would-parents-oppose-compulsory-education/>

- Although there are groups of people who were against the Act, some people had positive views for the Act being passed, making it contested. McCulloch, G (2020) states how the “1870 Education Act was celebrated”. This highlights how the Act was clearly a strong and important piece of legislation at the time to a lot of people because it was the start of education becoming an important issue to be improved.
- Furthermore, industrialists showed their positive views on the Education Act because they believed that education for all was essential for Britain to keep its lead in manufacturing (UK Parliament). This is in complete contrast to the ideas of working-class parents, as they saw the Act in a light that stopped children from working. Education was an important aspect for manufacturers because being illiterate is no use when it comes to trading and building with instructions.
- Although a lot of parents did not like the idea of their children going to school as opposed to working and earning money, some parents did see education as a positive. Some parents saw the access to education as a good proposal, because they believed that their children would attain a good job due to being educated and therefore earn money and give their parents a happy retirement. (Parker, S 2020)

Conclusion

- The 1870 Education Act, as shown, was widely contested. Although many people argued against the proposals in the Act, it stands as the first piece of legislation to show a commitment to the provision of education. From looking at different opinions, it is clear why the Act was contested because it was such a big change from how schools previously were. Making education accessible for all children from the age of five and thirteen hugely impacted life in the late 1800s. Overall, although the 1870 Education Act did not make education free or compulsory, it still was a huge step forward in schooling and bringing education to where it is today.

1944 Butler Act

- The Butler Act, also known as the Education Act of 1944, provided free secondary education for all pupils and made schooling compulsory for children aged five to fifteen. (UK Parliament). The Act also introduced the 'Tripartite System' which established three types of schools: Grammar Schools, Secondary Modern Schools and Technical Schools, with grammar school being for the most academic children. Butler also identified the importance of splitting age groups, so developed 'progressive stages'. These stages were primary, secondary and further education. The British Academy childhood policy milestones chronologies (2019).
- The Second World War had a huge impact on children and their education. With children being evacuated from cities to countryside, learning about gas masks as opposed to numbers, education took the back seat for months. As the war continued, education became a major issue due to criticisms to the Board of Education for reasons such as delays in providing school meals and medical services for returning evacuees. There was clearly a need for change and improvement, so Rab Butler created the Ministry of Education and became the first Minister. (Gillard, D. 2018). The Act is seen as contested because of the criticisms towards areas such as the tripartite system, which many people felt unhappy about. However, with the act also making school free and compulsory, after wartime education resentment, many people felt as though things were then moving forward. Prior to the 1944 Education Act being passed, there was 'The White Paper' which set out a list of legislative proposals for education. These included: raising school age to 15, improvement of school facilities and to change the local administration of education board. The Education Act 1944 was widely based on The White Papers proposals (Gillard, D. 2018).

The Tripartite system

- Under the Butler Act, children were to sit the '11 plus' exams which determined which school they would go to, also known as the Tripartite system. The system was created with the intent of providing children from all backgrounds and classes with the same opportunities within education (UK Parliament). The three school options being grammar, secondary modern and technical. Some people liked the tripartite system, Castle, J (2016) states how the system did remove some class barriers as working class children were previously unable to attend grammar schools. Also, children being taught the same subject and topics was seen as giving them equal opportunities to success.
- However, Castle also shows how many people were against the system. Although the children were all taught the same content, middle and upper class children had more resources and encouragement from their home and families, whilst the working class were still dealing with the effects of World War Two. Furthermore, as said on BBC Bitesize, children sitting these "life-defining" tests at such a young age was hugely criticised because the outcome set them up for the future. Many people saw the exams as unfair because the children were so young to be sitting a test that would more than likely determine what jobs they were able to achieve in the future. Clearly, pupils would have felt a huge amount of pressure to succeed in order to go to grammar school, which had more skilled teachers and better resources. It is obvious that although the system was created for the purpose of closing class divisions, it created more divisions with the grammar school children being labelled as the smarter children. The Tripartite system is important for showing how the act was contested.



<https://www.shortcutstv.com/blog/education-1-structure-and-organisation/>

The Fear Of Change

- As said by Gillard, D (2018) “the passage of the bill was not easy”. This is because there were still some “old styled tory” MPs on the conservative side who felt that educational reconstruction was not needed. This information is very important because it clearly highlights how members of parliament were against the act being passed, furthermore showing how it was contested. However, these Tories obviously did not have influence because there were other members of the conservative party who knew that this educational progression was needed. Additionally, at the time, the labour party had no progression plans for education as they were in favor of social service reform as opposed to education. This highlights how education reform was seen as unimportant and therefore the 1944 act being criticised for not needing to happen.



<https://redhillsdurham.org/the-pitmans-parliament-in-session-during-the-second-world-war/>

Church Upset

- Furthermore, Gillard, D (2018) also highlights how there were some criticisms of the Act from the church. Firstly, one issue that the church had was the worry about parts of the country with a single voluntary school, which often belonged to the church of England. It was firstly said that voluntary schools were to be taken over by local authorities, before realising how many voluntary schools there were. Therefore, Butler made the decision that there was to be an agreed syllabus to be taught across all these schools. Additionally, The Roman Catholic Church was unhappy with the financial agreements for their schools. Therefore, Butler changed the initial financial idea to giving long-term loans to catholic church schools which made them feel more settled with the new Act. By the time the act was passed, many amendments were made to ensure there was religious support. Section 25 of the act stated that
- “the school day in every county school and in every voluntary school shall begin with collective worship on the part of all pupils in attendance at the school, and the arrangements made therefor shall provide for a single act of worship attended by all such pupils unless, in the opinion of the local education authority or, in the case of a voluntary school, of the managers or governors thereof, the school premises are such as to make it impracticable to assemble them for that purpose (25(1)).”
- This is very important because it shows how initially, Butler was not concerned heavily on religion with education progression, however, after upset from the church he made important decisions so that he had their support. The ideas of the act was contested even before it was passed.



<https://ccnm.org/history/people/1935-44>

Positives

- Although the Tripartite system made a lot of people feel resent towards the 1944 Act, there were many positives and reasons why it is still such a hugely spoken about Act today. C.H, Batteson (2010) says how ending the fees for secondary education was a huge step forward as children from the working class could stay in education as opposed to prior where it was not an option because they could not afford it. This coming into place after the Second World War was hugely positive for working class parents who are recovering from the effects, as they do not have to worry about education fees.
- Gillard, D (2018) says how the school leaving age being risen to 15 “enjoyed widespread support”, highlighting the positive effect this part of the act had on people at the time. Not only was this a huge progression for education, but also a huge step forward in equality. Samuels, H (2017) says how women were able to attend school the same as males, be taught from the same syllabus and have no fees. They had the same opportunity in the 11+ exams meaning they could go to grammar school and later university. Not only this, but the act abolished the marriage bar which stopped married women from being teachers.



Conclusion

- The 1944 Butler Act was a huge step forward in the progression of education. Establishing the line between primary and secondary, making secondary school free and making school compulsory until age 15 are three of the great elements of this act. However, as shown, people at the time argued against other elements, such as the tripartite system and church funding. The Butler Act being so positive for change yet still causing huge controversy shows how it was so widely contested.

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