

age of eighteen will very likely imagine that Michelangelo was a musician, or that Handel wrote comic verse. He will be unable to tell the difference between rates and taxes. He will not know the name of the present French Premier or the names of the battles of the Russo-Japanese war. He will not even know the difference between Cabinet and Parliament. He will be master of barely enough arithmetic to keep his own accounts, but as he is probably unwilling to keep any—that hardly matters. Science he may never have touched—he will probably imagine that radium is a vegetable. Latin and Greek have been almost his sole study for something like ten years; yet out of a hundred such boys barely fifteen will be able to turn the easiest piece of English into Latin without the most ridiculous grammatical blunders. They will know a great deal of Roman history of the period which is of the least general importance—they ‘end with the death of Augustus.’ As for their Greek——”

The German chuckled.

“Oh, that is not all,” proceeded the Englishman, with the utmost good-humour.

“I assure you when I left X.——”

“My friend,” interrupted the German, patting the Englishman’s knee, “you did well to study in Heidelberg. And your son—your little boy of whom you spoke, you will perhaps send him to one of our gymnasien, eh?”

The Englishman’s eyes twinkled with pride and pleasure. “Not a bit of it,” he said. “I shall send him to X., where I myself was educated. For I have shown you only one side of the picture. It is not because I see that the English Public Schools are awake at last to their own weaknesses; that nearly every school now has its laboratories and lecture theatres, and records term by term the dimensions and weight of each single pupil. I admit these facts encourage me. But I should send my boy to X. even if in these matters it stood where it stood in my time. He can get in a Public School what he cannot get anywhere else in any country, not even—I speak without offence—in Germany. He will learn self-reliance and will acquire certain other moral qualities—a sense of duty and fellowship, a knowledge of how to command and how to obey, which he can only get in an English Public School. I am not an athleticist. Freddy—my boy—will of course play games, and he must be keen on representing his school. But even if he should really be a rotter at games, he will learn the Public School tradition. And that tradition is something of which, as a nation, we are proud.”

There was a moment’s silence. The German had certainly been set a difficult problem. Suddenly an idea occurred to him. “All this time,” he said, “you have not spoken to me of the professors in your Public Schools.”

“The masters?—oh, they’re all right,” was the easy reply.

“But I mean,” said the German, “if you are really sending your boy to a Public School in the full confidence that he will obtain no intellectual advantages worth speak-