

sincere desire for the highest possible realization of national endeavour ; if it mean not the pursuit of revenge, but the riving after national progress stimulated by competition with other nations—then, whether regarded in the light of the teaching of modern science or from the luminous heights on which succeeding ages have erected their ethical standards, nationalism is the most satisfactory stimulus to human activity in every department of life which the nineteenth century has handed down to us. I believe it may be said that it is the sort of nationalism which I have attempted to describe in the foregoing words which has stimulated Germany in every step which she has taken towards building up her magnificent system of education. She has been guided throughout by a desire to develop the nation to the highest possible pitch of excellence, and she has looked to her schoolmasters to strengthen those internal forces which can alone ensure steady and continued progress in the right direction. This ideal of a great and powerful and good nation has during the nineteenth century been, with one exception—with which we shall deal later on—the most productive of sound educational organization. The advantage of measuring progress in relation to the national unit is that there is ever at the disposal of the people a standard by which progress may at any moment be determined. It is no longer a question of blind and childlike growth and development under the directing influences of adversity—which, in this respect, occupies much the same place with regard to the nation as the school-

master to the child for whose training he is responsible ; it is no longer necessary to muddle along, surprised by obstacles before which we must succumb, or surmount and gain renewed strength in the process—either may happen ; but, to speak in the language of agriculture, it enables you to compare periodically the promise of your own crops with that of the field of your neighbor, and the means which you and he adopt for securing greater productivity and better quality. Where national ideas exist, disorganization would not for a moment be tolerated in the school systems. Speaking of the general results of the last century in German progress, Prof. Rein, whose voice has been heard more than once in this room, recently summoned it up as follows : —“ At the beginning we behold division, impotence, feebleness ; at the end an awakened spirit of unity, pleasure in and strength for work, for progress, and for friendly rivalry with other nations. All this, however, was made possible only through quiet and unobtrusive work in the schools, work going on throughout the century far away from political life. The forces which the nation require were nourished in the schools ; in them the ground was prepared for the success which led up to the realization of the aim ; in them the weapons were forged with which the battle for progress was fought. The activity continues even at the present time ; and since the re-establishment of the German Empire it bears a national imprint.”

The German educational system has been the object of so much recent study in England that it is well known to every educationist.