

can be held as superior scientifically to the other. This latter finding, though seemingly impossible, seeing that the Prussian people are subjected to seven years' compulsory schooling, is confirmed by the opinion of Mr. Laing, and entirely in accordance with the experience of the two nations; and when Mr. Smith says that nobody can deny that German officers of works are better educated than British, the answer is that success is the best test of true ability, and of what education best fits a man for doing his work well; and most persons will require more than Mr. Smith's *ipse dixit* to make them believe an averment so irreconcilable with practical experience. Of course, a Briton acquainted with mechanics and chemistry, other things being equal, will make a more efficient workman than one who is not, whether his work be burglary or boiler-making, but that does not warrant the conclusion that therefore technical schools ought to be established.

As to the rebutting evidence, Mr. Bell, after a careful comparison of the exhibition of iron at Paris, declares Britain had not fallen behind other nations, and from many years familiarity with the subject at home and abroad, states confidently that there has been no change in the relative position of our own and other nations in regard to iron manufactures. Mr. Ferdinand Kohn, at the British Association, commenting on the exhibition of iron and steel in Paris, said that a vague notion of the superiority and predominance of British iron manufactures having ceased to exist, or was threatened to be overthrown by continental competition, was without foundation, judging from that exhibition. Mr. Fornie, referring to the same facts, declares, so far as France is concerned England has not been excelled in the manufacture of iron. An able critic in the *Saturday Review*, while conceding that the French furniture is beautifully executed and generally light and elegant, maintains that the English shows equal skill and more originality of thought. Mr. Kitson, referring to the choicest productions of France in the exhibition, declares that Britain produces articles superior in quality and most certainly superior in design, though design is the point in which France is alleged greatly to excel and Britain to be greatly deficient. In all branches of trade connected with mechanical science, Mr. Kitson, fortified by the opinions of men of great experience confirming his own finding, declares that Britain stands without superior. Our marine engines are gems of mechanical finish superior in design to anything the continent can show; our locomotive engines are unequalled in beauty of

form and simplicity and appropriateness of construction; our machinery for working iron and other metals has no equal; our iron is of unequalled quality; our tools have no compeers; our war materials are incontestably superior to all others, and in advance of those of any other nation. In the fine arts our execution is such as to give the alarm to France that we are about to excel her in this her favourite subject. The armourers of Liege have a name in history, but in their work we are now ahead of both Belgium and France, our last achievements, only chronicled a few days ago, far surpassing anything of the kind ever before attempted. The success of Flanders in cotton cannot compare with that of Britain, though obtained by the aid of British machinery, and for the most part by British supervision. In France, when great undertakings are to be executed, they are not unfrequently committed, as in the late matter of locomotives mentioned at the British Association, to British controul, and executed according to British design, which would not in any instance be the case if, as alleged, the French had superior men for the work. In printing machinery, and printing in newspapers and popular publications, as well as in more substantial reading, and book-binding, what has the continent to show compared with Britain. In agriculture Britain is *facile princeps*. In agricultural machinery, if Britain is surpassed at all it is by the United States and Canada, and most certainly not by any European nation. In shipbuilding, where is there anything to compare to the erections on the Clyde and the Tyne. With all the advantages of recent arrangements so much heralded, is Lowell superseding Glasgow in the markets of Japan and China? Who is threatening to give remotest India cotton goods which must diminish the British supply, or to give the world broadcloth to the exclusion of Yorkshire manufacture? Whose cutlery is surpassing or supplanting that of Sheffield, or in what other department is Britain falling behind, and in what special instances are foreigners occupying the places they used to fill? In none! Stripped of its generality and reduced to specific instances of actual fact, the allegation is a mere assertion without a particle of fact to support it.

Let me say as to the point at issue, that it is not simply the superiority of the foreigner, but their superiority now in departments where formerly they were inferior to the Briton, and mainly that that superiority is owing to their technical education, as it is only in such cases that their superiority can be cited in support of the cry for technical schools here. Belgium may supply iron, Flanders cloth and France steam-engines, to those who