

that it is a general fact that, owing to the present frantic exploitation of the scholar in the service of his science, his *education* becomes every day more accidental and more uncertain. For the study of science has been extended to such interminable lengths that he who, though not exceptionally gifted, yet possesses fair abilities, will need to devote himself exclusively to one branch and ignore all others if he ever wish to achieve anything in his work. Should he then elevate himself above the herd by means of his speciality, he still remains one of them in regard to all else,--that is to say, in regard to all the most important things in life. Thus, a specialist in science gets to resemble nothing so much as a factory workman who spends his whole life in turning one particular screw or handle on a certain instrument or machine, at which occupation he acquires the most consummate skill. In Germany, where we know how to drape such painful facts with the glorious garments of fancy, this narrow specialisation on the part of our learned men is even admired, and their ever greater deviation from the path of true culture is regarded as a moral phenomenon. 'Fidelity in small things,' 'dogged faithfulness,' become expressions of highest eulogy, and the lack of culture outside the speciality is flaunted abroad as a sign of noble sufficiency.

"For centuries it has been an understood thing that one alluded to scholars alone when one spoke of cultured men; but experience tells us that it would be difficult to find any necessary relation between the two classes to-day. For at present the exploitation of a man for the purpose of science is accepted everywhere without the slightest scruple. Who still ventures to ask, What may be the value of a science which consumes its minions in this vampire fashion? The division of labour in science is practically struggling towards the same goal which religions in certain parts of the world are consciously striving after,--that is to say, towards the decrease and even the destruction of learning. That, however, which, in the case of certain religions, is a perfectly justifiable aim, both in regard to their origin and their history, can only amount to self-immolation when transferred to the realm of science. In all matters of a general and serious nature, and above all, in regard to the highest philosophical problems, we have now already reached a point at which the scientific man, as such, is no longer allowed to speak. On the other hand, that adhesive and tenacious stratum which has now filled up the interstices between the sciences--Journalism--believes it has a mission to fulfil here, and this it does, according to its own particular lights--that is to say, as its name implies, after the fashion of a day-labourer.

"It is precisely in journalism that the two tendencies combine and become one. The expansion and the diminution of education here join hands. The newspaper actually steps into the place of culture, and he who, even as a scholar, wishes to voice any claim for education, must avail himself of this viscous stratum of communication which cements the seams between all forms of life, all classes, all arts, and all sciences, and which is as firm and reliable as news paper is, as a rule. In the newspaper the peculiar educational aims of the present culminate, just as the journalist, the servant of the moment, has stepped into the place of the genius, of the leader for all time, of the deliverer from the tyranny of the moment. Now, tell me, distinguished master, what hopes could I still have in a struggle against the general topsy-turvification of all genuine aims for education; with what courage can I, a single teacher, step forward, when I know that the moment any seeds of real culture are sown, they will be mercilessly crushed by the roller of this pseudo-culture? Imagine how useless the most energetic work on the part of the individual teacher must be, who would fain lead a pupil back into the distant and evasive Hellenic world and to the real home of culture, when in less than an hour, that same pupil will have recourse to a newspaper, the latest novel, or one of those learned books, the very style of which already bears the revolting impress of modern barbaric culture----"

"Now, silence a minute!" interjected the philosopher in a strong and sympathetic voice. "I understand you now, and ought never to have spoken so crossly to you. You are altogether right, save in your despair. I shall now proceed to say a few words of consolation."

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## SECOND LECTURE.

*(Delivered on the 6th of February 1872.)*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,--Those among you whom I now have the pleasure of addressing for the first time and whose only knowledge of my first lecture has been derived from reports will, I hope, not mind being introduced here into the middle of a dialogue which I had begun to recount on the last occasion, and the last points of which I must now recall. The philosopher's young companion was just pleading openly and confidentially with his distinguished tutor, and apologising for having so far renounced his calling as a teacher in order to spend his days in comfortless solitude. No suspicion of superciliousness or arrogance had induced him to form this resolve.

"I have heard too much from your lips at various times," the straightforward pupil said, "and have been too long in your company, to surrender myself blindly to our present systems of education and instruction. I am too painfully conscious of the disastrous errors and abuses to which you were wont to call my attention; and yet I know that I am far from possessing the requisite strength to meet with success, however valiantly I might struggle to shatter the bulwarks of this would-be culture. I was overcome by a general feeling of depression: my recourse to solitude was not arrogance or superciliousness." Whereupon, to account for his behaviour, he described the general character of modern educational methods so vividly that the philosopher could not help interrupting him in a voice full of sympathy, and crying words of comfort to him.

"Now, silence for a minute, my poor friend," he cried; "I can more easily understand you now, and should not have lost my patience with you. You are altogether right, save in your despair. I shall now proceed to say a few words of comfort to you. How long do you suppose the state of education in the schools of our time, which seems to weigh so heavily upon you, will last? I shall not conceal my views on this point from you: its time is over; its days are counted. The first who will dare to be quite straightforward in this respect will hear his honesty re-echoed back to him by thousands of courageous souls. For, at bottom, there is a tacit understanding between the more nobly gifted and more warmly disposed men of the present day. Every one of them knows what he has had to suffer from the condition of culture in schools; every one of them would fain protect his offspring from the need of enduring similar drawbacks, even though he himself was compelled to submit to them. If these feelings are never quite honestly expressed, however, it is owing to a sad want of spirit among modern pedagogues. These lack real initiative; there are too few practical men among them--that is to say, too few who happen to have good and new ideas, and who know that real genius and the real practical mind must necessarily come together in the same individuals, whilst the sober practical men have no ideas and therefore fall short in practice.

"Let any one examine the pedagogic literature of the present; he who is not shocked at its utter poverty of spirit and its ridiculously awkward antics is beyond being spoiled. Here our philosophy must not begin with wonder but with dread; he who feels no dread at this point must be asked not to meddle with pedagogic questions. The reverse, of course, has been the rule up to the present; those who were terrified ran away filled with embarrassment as you did, my poor friend, while the sober and fearless ones spread their heavy hands over the most delicate technique that has ever existed in art--over the technique of education. This, however, will not be possible much longer; at some time or other the upright man will appear, who will not only have the good ideas I speak of, but who in order to work at their realisation, will dare to break with all that exists at present: he may by means of a wonderful example achieve what the broad hands, hitherto active, could not even imitate--then people will everywhere begin to draw comparisons; then men will at least be able to perceive a contrast and will be in a position to reflect upon its causes, whereas, at present, so many still believe, in perfect good faith, that heavy hands are a necessary factor in pedagogic work."

"My dear master," said the younger man, "I wish you could point to one single example which would assist me in seeing the soundness of the hopes which you so heartily raise in me. We are both acquainted with public schools; do you think, for instance, that in respect of these institutions anything may be done by means of honesty and good and new ideas to abolish the tenacious and antiquated customs now extant? In this quarter, it seems to me, the battering-rams of an attacking party will have to meet with no solid wall, but with the most fatal of stolid and slippery principles. The leader of the assault has no visible and tangible opponent to crush, but rather a creature in disguise that can transform itself into a hundred different shapes and, in each

of these, slip out of his grasp, only in order to reappear and to confound its enemy by cowardly surrenders and feigned retreats. It was precisely the public schools which drove me into despair and solitude, simply because I feel that if the struggle here leads to victory all other educational institutions must give in; but that, if the reformer be forced to abandon his cause here, he may as well give up all hope in regard to every other scholastic question. Therefore, dear master, enlighten me concerning the public schools; what can we hope for in the way of their abolition or reform?"

"I also hold the question of public schools to be as important as you do," the philosopher replied. "All other educational institutions must fix their aims in accordance with those of the public school system; whatever errors of judgment it may suffer from, they suffer from also, and if it were ever purified and rejuvenated, they would be purified and rejuvenated too. The universities can no longer lay claim to this importance as centres of influence, seeing that, as they now stand, they are at least, in one important aspect, only a kind of annex to the public school system, as I shall shortly point out to you. For the moment, let us consider, together, what to my mind constitutes the very hopeful struggle of the two possibilities: *either* that the motley and evasive spirit of public schools which has hitherto been fostered, will completely vanish, or that it will have to be completely purified and rejuvenated. And in order that I may not shock you with general propositions, let us first try to recall one of those public school experiences which we have all had, and from which we have all suffered. Under severe examination what, as a matter of fact, is the present *system of teaching German* in public schools?"

"I shall first of all tell you what it should be. Everybody speaks and writes German as thoroughly badly as it is just possible to do so in an age of newspaper German: that is why the growing youth who happens to be both noble and gifted has to be taken by force and put under the glass shade of good taste and of severe linguistic discipline. If this is not possible, I would prefer in future that Latin be spoken; for I am ashamed of a language so bungled and vitiated.

"What would be the duty of a higher educational institution, in this respect, if not this--namely, with authority and dignified severity to put youths, neglected, as far as their own language is concerned, on the right path, and to cry to them: 'Take your own language seriously! He who does not regard this matter as a sacred duty does not possess even the germ of a higher culture. From your attitude in this matter, from your treatment of your mother-tongue, we can judge how highly or how lowly you esteem art, and to what extent you are related to it. If you notice no physical loathing in yourselves when you meet with certain words and tricks of speech in our journalistic jargon, cease from striving after culture; for here in your immediate vicinity, at every moment of your life, while you are either speaking or writing, you have a touchstone for testing how difficult, how stupendous, the task of the cultured man is, and how very improbable it must be that many of you will ever attain to culture.'

"In accordance with the spirit of this address, the teacher of German at a public school would be forced to call his pupil's attention to thousands of details, and with the absolute certainty of good taste, to forbid their using such words and expressions, for instance, as: '*beanspruchen*,' '*vereinnahmen*,' '*einer Sache Rechnung tragen*,' '*die Initiative ergreifen*,' '*selbstverständlich*,'[3] etc., *cum taedio in infinitum*. The same teacher would also have to take our classical authors and show, line for line, how carefully and with what precision every expression has to be chosen when a writer has the correct feeling in his heart and has before his eyes a perfect conception of all he is writing. He would necessarily urge his pupils, time and again, to express the same thought ever more happily; nor would he have to abate in rigour until the less gifted in his class had contracted an unholy fear of their language, and the others had developed great enthusiasm for it.

"Here then is a task for so-called 'formal' education[4] [the education tending to develop the mental faculties, as opposed to 'material' education,[5] which is intended to deal only with the acquisition of facts, *e.g.* history, mathematics, etc.], and one of the utmost value: but what do we find in the public school--that is to say, in the head-quarters of formal education? He who understands how to apply what he has heard here will also know what to think of the modern public school as a so-called educational institution. He will discover, for instance,

that the public school, according to its fundamental principles, does not educate for the purposes of culture, but for the purposes of scholarship; and, further, that of late it seems to have adopted a course which indicates rather that it has even discarded scholarship in favour of journalism as the object of its exertions. This can be clearly seen from the way in which German is taught.

"Instead of that purely practical method of instruction by which the teacher accustoms his pupils to severe self-discipline in their own language, we find everywhere the rudiments of a historico-scholastic method of teaching the mother-tongue: that is to say, people deal with it as if it were a dead language and as if the present and future were under no obligations to it whatsoever. The historical method has become so universal in our time, that even the living body of the language is sacrificed for the sake of anatomical study. But this is precisely where culture begins--namely, in understanding how to treat the quick as something vital, and it is here too that the mission of the cultured teacher begins: in suppressing the urgent claims of 'historical interests' wherever it is above all necessary to *do* properly and not merely to *know* properly. Our mother-tongue, however, is a domain in which the pupil must learn how to *do* properly, and to this practical end, alone, the teaching of German is essential in our scholastic establishments. The historical method may certainly be a considerably easier and more comfortable one for the teacher; it also seems to be compatible with a much lower grade of ability and, in general, with a smaller display of energy and will on his part. But we shall find that this observation holds good in every department of pedagogic life: the simpler and more comfortable method always masquerades in the disguise of grand pretensions and stately titles; the really practical side, the *doing*, which should belong to culture and which, at bottom, is the more difficult side, meets only with disfavour and contempt. That is why the honest man must make himself and others quite clear concerning this *quid pro quo*.

"Now, apart from these learned incentives to a study of the language, what is there besides which the German teacher is wont to offer? How does he reconcile the spirit of his school with the spirit of the *few* that Germany can claim who are really cultured,--*i.e.* with the spirit of its classical poets and artists? This is a dark and thorny sphere, into which one cannot even bear a light without dread; but even here we shall conceal nothing from ourselves; for sooner or later the whole of it will have to be reformed. In the public school, the repulsive impress of our æsthetic journalism is stamped upon the still unformed minds of youths. Here, too, the teacher sows the seeds of that crude and wilful misinterpretation of the classics, which later on disports itself as art-criticism, and which is nothing but bumptious barbarity. Here the pupils learn to speak of our unique *Schiller* with the superciliousness of prigs; here they are taught to smile at the noblest and most German of his works--at the Marquis of Posa, at Max and Thekla--at these smiles German genius becomes incensed and a worthier posterity will blush.

"The last department in which the German teacher in a public school is at all active, which is often regarded as his sphere of highest activity, and is here and there even considered the pinnacle of public school education, is the so-called *German composition*. Owing to the very fact that in this department it is almost always the most gifted pupils who display the greatest eagerness, it ought to have been made clear how dangerously stimulating, precisely here, the task of the teacher must be. *German composition* makes an appeal to the individual, and the more strongly a pupil is conscious of his various qualities, the more personally will he do his *German composition*. This 'personal doing' is urged on with yet an additional fillip in some public schools by the choice of the subject, the strongest proof of which is, in my opinion, that even in the lower classes the non-pedagogic subject is set, by means of which the pupil is led to give a description of his life and of his development. Now, one has only to read the titles of the compositions set in a large number of public schools to be convinced that probably the large majority of pupils have to suffer their whole lives, through no fault of their own, owing to this premature demand for personal work--for the unripe procreation of thoughts. And how often are not all a man's subsequent literary performances but a sad result of this pedagogic original sin against the intellect!

"Let us only think of what takes place at such an age in the production of such work. It is the first individual creation; the still undeveloped powers tend for the first time to crystallise; the staggering sensation produced

by the demand for self-reliance imparts a seductive charm to these early performances, which is not only quite new, but which never returns. All the daring of nature is hauled out of its depths; all vanities--no longer constrained by mighty barriers--are allowed for the first time to assume a literary form: the young man, from that time forward, feels as if he had reached his consummation as a being not only able, but actually invited, to speak and to converse. The subject he selects obliges him either to express his judgment upon certain poetical works, to class historical persons together in a description of character, to discuss serious ethical problems quite independently, or even to turn the searchlight inwards, to throw its rays upon his own development and to make a critical report of himself: in short, a whole world of reflection is spread out before the astonished young man who, until then, had been almost unconscious, and is delivered up to him to be judged.

"Now let us try to picture the teacher's usual attitude towards these first highly influential examples of original composition. What does he hold to be most reprehensible in this class of work? What does he call his pupil's attention to?--To all excess in form or thought--that is to say, to all that which, at their age, is essentially characteristic and individual. Their really independent traits which, in response to this very premature excitation, can manifest themselves only in awkwardness, crudeness, and grotesque features,--in short, their individuality is reproved and rejected by the teacher in favour of an unoriginal decent average. On the other hand, uniform mediocrity gets peevish praise; for, as a rule, it is just the class of work likely to bore the teacher thoroughly.

"There may still be men who recognise a most absurd and most dangerous element of the public school curriculum in the whole farce of this German composition. Originality is demanded here: but the only shape in which it can manifest itself is rejected, and the 'formal' education that the system takes for granted is attained to only by a very limited number of men who complete it at a ripe age. Here everybody without exception is regarded as gifted for literature and considered as capable of holding opinions concerning the most important questions and people, whereas the one aim which proper education should most zealously strive to achieve would be the suppression of all ridiculous claims to independent judgment, and the inculcation upon young men of obedience to the sceptre of genius. Here a pompous form of diction is taught in an age when every spoken or written word is a piece of barbarism. Now let us consider, besides, the danger of arousing the self-complacency which is so easily awakened in youths; let us think how their vanity must be flattered when they see their literary reflection for the first time in the mirror. Who, having seen all these effects at *one* glance, could any longer doubt whether all the faults of our public, literary, and artistic life were not stamped upon every fresh generation by the system we are examining: hasty and vain production, the disgraceful manufacture of books; complete want of style; the crude, characterless, or sadly swaggering method of expression; the loss of every æsthetic canon; the voluptuousness of anarchy and chaos--in short, the literary peculiarities of both our journalism and our scholarship.

"None but the very fewest are aware that, among many thousands, perhaps only *one* is justified in describing himself as literary, and that all others who at their own risk try to be so deserve to be met with Homeric laughter by all competent men as a reward for every sentence they have ever had printed;--for it is truly a spectacle meet for the gods to see a literary Hephaistos limping forward who would pretend to help us to something. To educate men to earnest and inexorable habits and views, in this respect, should be the highest aim of all mental training, whereas the general *laisser aller* of the 'fine personality' can be nothing else than the hall-mark of barbarism. From what I have said, however, it must be clear that, at least in the teaching of German, no thought is given to culture; something quite different is in view,--namely, the production of the afore-mentioned 'free personality.' And so long as German public schools prepare the road for outrageous and irresponsible scribbling, so long as they do not regard the immediate and practical discipline of speaking and writing as their most holy duty, so long as they treat the mother-tongue as if it were only a necessary evil or a dead body, I shall not regard these institutions as belonging to real culture.

"In regard to the language, what is surely least noticeable is any trace of the influence of *classical examples*: that is why, on the strength of this consideration alone, the so-called 'classical education' which is supposed to

be provided by our public school, strikes me as something exceedingly doubtful and confused. For how could anybody, after having cast one glance at those examples, fail to see the great earnestness with which the Greek and the Roman regarded and treated his language, from his youth onwards--how is it possible to mistake one's example on a point like this one?--provided, of course, that the classical Hellenic and Roman world really did hover before the educational plan of our public schools as the highest and most instructive of all morals--a fact I feel very much inclined to doubt. The claim put forward by public schools concerning the 'classical education' they provide seems to be more an awkward evasion than anything else; it is used whenever there is any question raised as to the competency of the public schools to impart culture and to educate. Classical education, indeed! It sounds so dignified! It confounds the aggressor and staves off the assault--for who could see to the bottom of this bewildering formula all at once? And this has long been the customary strategy of the public school: from whichever side the war-cry may come, it writes upon its shield--not overloaded with honours--one of those confusing catchwords, such as: 'classical education,' 'formal education,' 'scientific education':--three glorious things which are, however, unhappily at loggerheads, not only with themselves but among themselves, and are such that, if they were compulsorily brought together, would perforce bring forth a culture-monster. For a 'classical education' is something so unheard of, difficult and rare, and exacts such complicated talent, that only ingenuousness or impudence could put it forward as an attainable goal in our public schools. The words: 'formal education' belong to that crude kind of unphilosophical phraseology which one should do one's utmost to get rid of; for there is no such thing as 'the opposite of formal education.' And he who regards 'scientific education' as the object of a public school thereby sacrifices 'classical education' and the so-called 'formal education,' at one stroke, as the scientific man and the cultured man belong to two different spheres which, though coming together at times in the same individual, are never reconciled.

"If we compare all three of these would-be aims of the public school with the actual facts to be observed in the present method of teaching German, we see immediately what they really amount to in practice,--that is to say, only to subterfuges for use in the fight and struggle for existence and, often enough, mere means wherewith to bewilder an opponent. For we are unable to detect any single feature in this teaching of German which in any way recalls the example of classical antiquity and its glorious methods of training in languages. 'Formal education,' however, which is supposed to be achieved by this method of teaching German, has been shown to be wholly at the pleasure of the 'free personality,' which is as good as saying that it is barbarism and anarchy. And as for the preparation in science, which is one of the consequences of this teaching, our Germanists will have to determine, in all justice, how little these learned beginnings in public schools have contributed to the splendour of their sciences, and how much the personality of individual university professors has done so.--Put briefly: the public school has hitherto neglected its most important and most urgent duty towards the very beginning of all real culture, which is the mother-tongue; but in so doing it has lacked the natural, fertile soil for all further efforts at culture. For only by means of stern, artistic, and careful discipline and habit, in a language, can the correct feeling for the greatness of our classical writers be strengthened. Up to the present their recognition by the public schools has been owing almost solely to the doubtful æsthetic hobbies of a few teachers or to the massive effects of certain of their tragedies and novels. But everybody should, himself, be aware of the difficulties of the language: he should have learnt them from experience: after long seeking and struggling he must reach the path our great poets trod in order to be able to realise how lightly and beautifully they trod it, and how stiffly and swaggeringly the others follow at their heels.

"Only by means of such discipline can the young man acquire that physical loathing for the beloved and much-admired 'elegance' of style of our newspaper manufacturers and novelists, and for the 'ornate style' of our literary men; by it alone is he irrevocably elevated at a stroke above a whole host of absurd questions and scruples, such, for instance, as whether Auerbach and Gutzkow are really poets, for his disgust at both will be so great that he will be unable to read them any longer, and thus the problem will be solved for him. Let no one imagine that it is an easy matter to develop this feeling to the extent necessary in order to have this physical loathing; but let no one hope to reach sound æsthetic judgments along any other road than the thorny one of language, and by this I do not mean philological research, but self-discipline in one's mother-tongue.

"Everybody who is in earnest in this matter will have the same sort of experience as the recruit in the army who is compelled to learn walking after having walked almost all his life as a dilettante or empiricist. It is a hard time: one almost fears that the tendons are going to snap and one ceases to hope that the artificial and consciously acquired movements and positions of the feet will ever be carried out with ease and comfort. It is painful to see how awkwardly and heavily one foot is set before the other, and one dreads that one may not only be unable to learn the new way of walking, but that one will forget how to walk at all. Then it suddenly becomes noticeable that a new habit and a second nature have been born of the practised movements, and that the assurance and strength of the old manner of walking returns with a little more grace: at this point one begins to realise how difficult walking is, and one feels in a position to laugh at the untrained empiricist or the elegant dilettante. Our 'elegant' writers, as their style shows, have never learnt 'walking' in this sense, and in our public schools, as our other writers show, no one learns walking either. Culture begins, however, with the correct movement of the language: and once it has properly begun, it begets that physical sensation in the presence of 'elegant' writers which is known by the name of 'loathing.'

"We recognise the fatal consequences of our present public schools, in that they are unable to inculcate severe and genuine culture, which should consist above all in obedience and habituation; and that, at their best, they much more often achieve a result by stimulating and kindling scientific tendencies, is shown by the hand which is so frequently seen uniting scholarship and barbarous taste, science and journalism. In a very large majority of cases to-day we can observe how sadly our scholars fall short of the standard of culture which the efforts of Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, and Winckelmann established; and this falling short shows itself precisely in the egregious errors which the men we speak of are exposed to, equally among literary historians--whether Gervinus or Julian Schmidt--as in any other company; everywhere, indeed, where men and women converse. It shows itself most frequently and painfully, however, in pedagogic spheres, in the literature of public schools. It can be proved that the only value that these men have in a real educational establishment has not been mentioned, much less generally recognised for half a century: their value as preparatory leaders and mystagogues of classical culture, guided by whose hands alone can the correct road leading to antiquity be found.

"Every so-called classical education can have but one natural starting-point--an artistic, earnest, and exact familiarity with the use of the mother-tongue: this, together with the secret of form, however, one can seldom attain to of one's own accord, almost everybody requires those great leaders and tutors and must place himself in their hands. There is, however, no such thing as a classical education that could grow without this inferred love of form. Here, where the power of discerning form and barbarity gradually awakens, there appear the pinions which bear one to the only real home of culture--ancient Greece. If with the solitary help of those pinions we sought to reach those far-distant and diamond-studded walls encircling the stronghold of Hellenism, we should certainly not get very far; once more, therefore, we need the same leaders and tutors, our German classical writers, that we may be borne up, too, by the wing-strokes of their past endeavours--to the land of yearning, to Greece.

"Not a suspicion of this possible relationship between our classics and classical education seems to have pierced the antique walls of public schools. Philologists seem much more eagerly engaged in introducing Homer and Sophocles to the young souls of their pupils, in their own style, calling the result simply by the unchallenged euphemism: 'classical education.' Let every one's own experience tell him what he had of Homer and Sophocles at the hands of such eager teachers. It is in this department that the greatest number of deepest deceptions occur, and whence misunderstandings are inadvertently spread. In German public schools I have never yet found a trace of what might really be called 'classical education,' and there is nothing surprising in this when one thinks of the way in which these institutions have emancipated themselves from German classical writers and the discipline of the German language. Nobody reaches antiquity by means of a leap into the dark, and yet the whole method of treating ancient writers in schools, the plain commentating and paraphrasing of our philological teachers, amounts to nothing more than a leap into the dark.

"The feeling for classical Hellenism is, as a matter of fact, such an exceptional outcome of the most energetic

fight for culture and artistic talent that the public school could only have professed to awaken this feeling owing to a very crude misunderstanding. In what age? In an age which is led about blindly by the most sensational desires of the day, and which is not aware of the fact that, once that feeling for Hellenism is roused, it immediately becomes aggressive and must express itself by indulging in an incessant war with the so-called culture of the present. For the public school boy of to-day, the Hellenes as Hellenes are dead: yes, he gets some enjoyment out of Homer, but a novel by Spielhagen interests him much more: yes, he swallows Greek tragedy and comedy with a certain relish, but a thoroughly modern drama, like Freitag's 'Journalists,' moves him in quite another fashion. In regard to all ancient authors he is rather inclined to speak after the manner of the aesthete, Hermann Grimm, who, on one occasion, at the end of a tortuous essay on the Venus of Milo, asks himself: 'What does this goddess's form mean to me? Of what use are the thoughts she suggests to me? Orestes and Oedipus, Iphigenia and Antigone, what have they in common with my heart?'--No, my dear public school boy, the Venus of Milo does not concern you in any way, and concerns your teacher just as little--and that is the misfortune, that is the secret of the modern public school. Who will conduct you to the land of culture, if your leaders are blind and assume the position of seers notwithstanding? Which of you will ever attain to a true feeling for the sacred seriousness of art, if you are systematically spoiled, and taught to stutter independently instead of being taught to speak; to aestheticise on your own account, when you ought to be taught to approach works of art almost piously; to philosophise without assistance, while you ought to be compelled to *listen* to great thinkers. All this with the result that you remain eternally at a distance from antiquity and become the servants of the day.

"At all events, the most wholesome feature of our modern institutions is to be found in the earnestness with which the Latin and Greek languages are studied over a long course of years. In this way boys learn to respect a grammar, lexicons, and a language that conforms to fixed rules; in this department of public school work there is an exact knowledge of what constitutes a fault, and no one is troubled with any thought of justifying himself every minute by appealing (as in the case of modern German) to various grammatical and orthographical vagaries and vicious forms. If only this respect for language did not hang in the air so, like a theoretical burden which one is pleased to throw off the moment one turns to one's mother-tongue! More often than not, the classical master makes pretty short work of the mother-tongue; from the outset he treats it as a department of knowledge in which one is allowed that indolent ease with which the German treats everything that belongs to his native soil. The splendid practice afforded by translating from one language into another, which so improves and fertilises one's artistic feeling for one's own tongue, is, in the case of German, never conducted with that fitting categorical strictness and dignity which would be above all necessary in dealing with an undisciplined language. Of late, exercises of this kind have tended to decrease ever more and more: people are satisfied to *know* the foreign classical tongues, they would scorn being able to *apply* them.

"Here one gets another glimpse of the scholarly tendency of public schools: a phenomenon which throws much light upon the object which once animated them,--that is to say, the serious desire to cultivate the pupil. This belonged to the time of our great poets, those few really cultured Germans,--the time when the magnificent Friedrich August Wolf directed the new stream of classical thought, introduced from Greece and Rome by those men, into the heart of the public schools. Thanks to his bold start, a new order of public schools was established, which thenceforward was not to be merely a nursery for science, but, above all, the actual consecrated home of all higher and nobler culture.

"Of the many necessary measures which this change called into being, some of the most important have been transferred with lasting success to the modern regulations of public schools: the most important of all, however, did not succeed--the one demanding that the teacher, also, should be consecrated to the new spirit, so that the aim of the public school has meanwhile considerably departed from the original plan laid down by Wolf, which was the cultivation of the pupil. The old estimate of scholarship and scholarly culture, as an absolute, which Wolf overcame, seems after a slow and spiritless struggle rather to have taken the place of the culture-principle of more recent introduction, and now claims its former exclusive rights, though not with the same frankness, but disguised and with features veiled. And the reason why it was impossible to make public schools fall in with the magnificent plan of classical culture lay in the un-German, almost foreign or



cosmopolitan nature of these efforts in the cause of education: in the belief that it was possible to remove the native soil from under a man's feet and that he should still remain standing; in the illusion that people can spring direct, without bridges, into the strange Hellenic world, by abjuring German and the German mind in general.

"Of course one must know how to trace this Germanic spirit to its lair beneath its many modern dressings, or even beneath heaps of ruins; one must love it so that one is not ashamed of it in its stunted form, and one must above all be on one's guard against confounding it with what now disports itself proudly as 'Up-to-date German culture.' The German spirit is very far from being on friendly times with this up-to-date culture: and precisely in those spheres where the latter complains of a lack of culture the real German spirit has survived, though perhaps not always with a graceful, but more often an ungraceful, exterior. On the other hand, that which now grandiloquently assumes the title of 'German culture' is a sort of cosmopolitan aggregate, which bears the same relation to the German spirit as Journalism does to Schiller or Meyerbeer to Beethoven: here the strongest influence at work is the fundamentally and thoroughly un-German civilisation of France, which is aped neither with talent nor with taste, and the imitation of which gives the society, the press, the art, and the literary style of Germany their pharisaical character. Naturally the copy nowhere produces the really artistic effect which the original, grown out of the heart of Roman civilisation, is able to produce almost to this day in France. Let any one who wishes to see the full force of this contrast compare our most noted novelists with the less noted ones of France or Italy: he will recognise in both the same doubtful tendencies and aims, as also the same still more doubtful means, but in France he will find them coupled with artistic earnestness, at least with grammatical purity, and often with beauty, while in their every feature he will recognise the echo of a corresponding social culture. In Germany, on the other hand, they will strike him as unoriginal, flabby, filled with dressing-gown thoughts and expressions, unpleasantly spread out, and therewithal possessing no background of social form. At the most, owing to their scholarly mannerisms and display of knowledge, he will be reminded of the fact that in Latin countries it is the artistically-trained man, and that in Germany it is the abortive scholar, who becomes a journalist. With this would-be German and thoroughly unoriginal culture, the German can nowhere reckon upon victory: the Frenchman and the Italian will always get the better of him in this respect, while, in regard to the clever imitation of a foreign culture, the Russian, above all, will always be his superior.

"We are therefore all the more anxious to hold fast to that German spirit which revealed itself in the German Reformation, and in German music, and which has shown its enduring and genuine strength in the enormous courage and severity of German philosophy and in the loyalty of the German soldier, which has been tested quite recently. From it we expect a victory over that 'up-to-date' pseudo-culture which is now the fashion. What we should hope for the future is that schools may draw the real school of culture into this struggle, and kindle the flame of enthusiasm in the younger generation, more particularly in public schools, for that which is truly German; and in this way so-called classical education will resume its natural place and recover its one possible starting-point.

"A thorough reformation and purification of the public school can only be the outcome of a profound and powerful reformation and purification of the German spirit. It is a very complex and difficult task to find the border-line which joins the heart of the Germanic spirit with the genius of Greece. Not, however, before the noblest needs of genuine German genius snatch at the hand of this genius of Greece as at a firm post in the torrent of barbarity, not before a devouring yearning for this genius of Greece takes possession of German genius, and not before that view of the Greek home, on which Schiller and Goethe, after enormous exertions, were able to feast their eyes, has become the Mecca of the best and most gifted men, will the aim of classical education in public schools acquire any definition; and they at least will not be to blame who teach ever so little science and learning in public schools, in order to keep a definite and at the same time ideal aim in their eyes, and to rescue their pupils from that glistening phantom which now allows itself to be called 'culture' and 'education.' This is the sad plight of the public school of to-day: the narrowest views remain in a certain measure right, because no one seems able to reach or, at least, to indicate the spot where all these views culminate in error."

"No one?" the philosopher's pupil inquired with a slight quaver in his voice; and both men were silent.

FOOTNOTES:

[3] It is not practicable to translate these German solecisms by similar instances of English solecisms. The reader who is interested in the subject will find plenty of material in a book like the Oxford *King's English*.

[4] German: *Formelle Bildung*.

[5] German: *Materielle Bildung*.

THIRD LECTURE.

(*Delivered on the 27th of February 1872.*)

Ladies and Gentlemen,—At the close of my last lecture, the conversation to which I was a listener, and the outlines of which, as I clearly recollect them, I am now trying to lay before you, was interrupted by a long and solemn pause. Both the philosopher and his companion sat silent, sunk in deep dejection: the peculiarly critical state of that important educational institution, the German public school, lay upon their souls like a heavy burden, which one single, well-meaning individual is not strong enough to remove, and the multitude, though strong, not well meaning enough.

Our solitary thinkers were perturbed by two facts: by clearly perceiving on the one hand that what might rightly be called "classical education" was now only a far-off ideal, a castle in the air, which could not possibly be built as a reality on the foundations of our present educational system, and that, on the other hand, what was now, with customary and unopposed euphemism, pointed to as "classical education" could only claim the value of a pretentious illusion, the best effect of which was that the expression "classical education" still lived on and had not yet lost its pathetic sound. These two worthy men saw clearly, by the system of instruction in vogue, that the time was not yet ripe for a higher culture, a culture founded upon that of the ancients: the neglected state of linguistic instruction; the forcing of students into learned historical paths, instead of giving them a practical training; the connection of certain practices, encouraged in the public schools, with the objectionable spirit of our journalistic publicity--all these easily perceptible phenomena of the teaching of German led to the painful certainty that the most beneficial of those forces which have come down to us from classical antiquity are not yet known in our public schools: forces which would train students for the struggle against the barbarism of the present age, and which will perhaps once more transform the public schools into the arsenals and workshops of this struggle.

On the other hand, it would seem in the meantime as if the spirit of antiquity, in its fundamental principles, had already been driven away from the portals of the public schools, and as if here also the gates were thrown open as widely as possible to the be-flattered and pampered type of our present self-styled "German culture." And if the solitary talkers caught a glimpse of a single ray of hope, it was that things would have to become still worse, that what was as yet divined only by the few would soon be clearly perceived by the many, and that then the time for honest and resolute men for the earnest consideration of the scope of the education of the masses would not be far distant.

After a few minutes' silent reflection, the philosopher's companion turned to him and said: "You used to hold out hopes to me, but now you have done more: you have widened my intelligence, and with it my strength and courage: now indeed can I look on the field of battle with more hardihood, now indeed do I repent of my too hasty flight. We want nothing for ourselves, and it should be nothing to us how many individuals may fall in this battle, or whether we ourselves may be among the first. Just because we take this matter so seriously, we should not take our own poor selves so seriously: at the very moment we are falling some one else will grasp the banner of our faith. I will not even consider whether I am strong enough for such a fight, whether I can