

## OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THEIR INFLUENCES

THERE are being trained every year in the great public schools of the United Kingdom a number approximate to ten thousand scholars, under head masters who are eminent men distinguished not only for their scholarship but for their ability to govern and guide colonies of boys, many of whom are destined to make their mark in the world and to take a foremost place in our national life. These boys are piloted through their studies and watched over in their school career by a body of devoted under masters whose high attainments, generally speaking, and human experience particularly qualify them for the duty.

As a result, there is an annual output of young men well developed in mind and body, and of good manners, who for the most part go to fill vacancies in those spheres of Empire employment which call for the display of intellect and leadership. Failures and disappointments there are, of course, in schools as in every walk of life; but they are quite exceptional to the general rule, and not infrequently it happens that a wider horizon has the effect of turning them into sound and useful members of the community.

It is proposed to discuss in this article some of the means which contribute to the result above mentioned, and some other matters relating to education and the formation of character.

Now, the first question suggested is, What is the primary object in sending our boys to the public schools? To that question it is possible to offer several answers which parents and guardians would probably give in different ways. Few might be able to reply clearly or precisely as to their positive aim, because at the early age of school entry it had not been practicable for them to gauge the bent of their boys; and nearly all would hesitate to lay down a hard and fast line of career that the boys must certainly follow. Nothing, it is well known, is more sure than that youthful impulses are apt to be formed and swayed according as their imagination is played upon by the chums, the sets, the atmosphere with whom and with which they are surrounded at school. So, it is unwise to dedicate a youth to a definite class of work in life unless he has positively lent himself to the idea of

a particular profession, or until he has shown such clear evidence of his fancy as to justify the assurance of his being in absolute sympathy with it. Early and reliable manifestations of that character are unusual, if not rare. Some boys of course are from the first marked down to be soldiers, sailors, doctors or lawyers in consequence of its being 'in the family'; but they are not quite cases in point because, from the nursery perhaps, tradition determines their choice.

However, the generality of parents would most likely have in their minds the desire to give their children what is commonly called a good general education—and an excellent thing too. Some would declare they meant by that an education of which classics, that is, a respectable knowledge of Latin and Greek, were the leading features; it might be from a prejudice that in Latin and Greek alone are to be found true culture, or from the fact that classics are essential as a preparation for the universities and dignified positions in the law and the Church. Others would see more merit in the modern side on account of its consecration to modern languages, mathematics and science, suitable for the professions say of medicine and what is called 'business'; they might argue from their point of view that in the world of to-day no boy is adequately equipped for the struggle unless he is acquainted with the principles of natural sciences and physical laws. Others, again, would look with favour upon any system of tuition leading up to success in examinations for the public service or army; and some, no doubt, would have no particular idea at all as to what a good general education ought to comprise.

A philosopher called upon to define on the spur of the moment what he meant by education might probably answer—To cultivate and train the mental powers so as to qualify a person for the business and duties of life. A man of the world might under the same circumstances vary the definition by saying—Education is what remains, in character, after a boy has done with school. Both of them would be right, for we may look at the matter from different aspects. But before doing so let us consider for a moment the composition of the ordinary boy sent to schools of the character of Eton, Winchester, Rugby, etc. As we take him along, the subject will invite discussion of other issues arising out of it affecting the community in general.

Prior to entry there he is generally committed at an early age, say about ten, to a Preparatory, where he is specially prepared for admission to the great school. His time is mainly given to classics, in which he will have to pass a moderate test before matriculating, and he gets in addition an elementary knowledge of other subjects, like history, geography, and primary mathematics. He goes into the nurseries of cricket and other recrea-

tions, imbibes generally the juvenile traditions of public school life, and worships the day that will carry him on to the great seminary chosen for his educational outfit. There he proceeds about the age of fourteen, a healthy-looking, well-grown boy with not very much in his head unless he is phenomenal or has been heavily crammed, and no startling ideas or deep ambitions beyond perhaps the dream of figuring as school representative in the Boat, Eleven, or Fifteen. He does not weigh or care much as a rule what he is going to learn, or how he will turn his learning to account.

This, the croakers will say, is all wrong; but it is not so; he is in the delightful phase of boyhood, and it is a crime to blight it by attempting to fix a grave head on young shoulders. What is more charmless and melancholy than children who cannot bend to the innocent vanities of youth or can be even hostile to its allurements? At that age their brains are not yet formed; they are brimming over with gay and buoyant spirits which do not accommodate themselves to great thoughts of becoming Lord Chancellors and Archbishops. Moreover, if they started with such grand ideas at the big school their toes would be trodden upon and other gentle suffering inflicted, to remind them that there were a good many senior candidates in front of them. So that the tendency is to keep youth in its natural place and not to encourage infant prodigies. Genius and ability will be sure to assert themselves in due time according to the fitness of things; there is no keeping them under.

On arrival at the big school our young friend begins again at the foot, and thus far has had the experience of proceeding by useful steps from the bottom to the top of a baby school, and then starting fresh on the ladder of a higher circle. That is all in his favour. If he was inclined to be conceited with himself as one of the swells at the Preparatory, it is knocked out of him, and the door is opened for him to go in and win new spurs. He is in fact taught to perfect himself in the goose step of public school ranks and is passed through the elementary stage of discipline which attends the process of elevation from the ranks to command. That command may mean in turn the head of his form, his dormitory or house, leadership in games, the authority of one in the sixth form, or finally the coveted position of being head of the school.

The holder of any of those positions has had to endure at the hands of his fellows criticism, abuse, jealousy, and applause of the most exhilarating description if won, for there is no more enthusiastic audience in the world than that which greets a boy after a meritorious innings, a fine run at football, or upon advancing to receive a scholarship or other reward for merit. It is

therefore a fine theatre for training, where wholesome discipline prevails and qualities are not only being constantly developed but tested. In that kind of atmosphere each one receives impressions, and he emerges from the ordeal with a certain amount of character varying in force according to his nature and capability.

Why some rise to the occasion so much more easily than others, all things being equal, is at times a mystery. Nothing of course is more faulty than to assess all boys of even age as equal also in capacity, or to assume that, because some do not show early promise of great things or signs of ability they are not and cannot ever become capable. It often happens that under an apparently torpid disposition there lies brain power which only needs the touch of a chord to awaken and set going. What an edifying story it would be, if a group of head masters could be induced to relate in one record their life-long experiences of the surprises they had encountered in respect of those pupils who failed strangely to justify promise, and those who advanced unexpectedly after hanging back to a late moment. And not only their recollections, but their inferences as to how it came about that most hopeful cases occasionally proved failures and gloomy cases turned out brilliant successes—what led to it—what, in fact, was the turning point upwards or downwards, that is to say, an accident, influence or inspiration.

An analysis of the careers of distinguished men during the past hundred years shows, for instance, how few comparatively were renowned as great scholars, and how many, on the other hand, who left school with the reputation of being only ordinary if not indifferent performers became eminent leaders of thought and action in after life as statesmen, soldiers, authors, administrators, and what not. This somewhat strange order of things is hard to reconcile. Though we cannot clearly understand why it should be so, it is possible to suggest reasons.

If one feature is more evident than another in a study of biography, it is that the human mind has frequently been unmasked by extraordinary influences, and that often its deployment has been retarded for want of exciting impulse or timely inspiration.

We recognise that genius is usually a gift born to the owner, such as in regard to music, poetry, invention, and, as some think, command; but the acquisition of the latter faculty, first as a habit and then as a force, may oftentimes be traced to the opportunities which school experience has afforded for the practice of it.

This article, however, does not contemplate dealing with phenomenal beings who are interesting subjects for professors in the study of cerebral anatomy; it is intended to deal rather

with the general average individuals possessed of an ordinary share of brains. What we know is that some intellects give precocious signs of proficiency in any task or business they may be set to accomplish; others in early stages appear slack and dull of comprehension.

The minds of young people, like their bodies, grow at various ages and in various ways. It is a commonplace to hear that such and such a boy has sprung up or grown out physically in one term or vacation. Similarly, his brain may suddenly appear to expand and indicate ability hitherto obscure. Thus it must be difficult for parents and masters to discover mental power where its growth, which may be stimulated by utterly unknown and unimagined causes, is entirely beyond their control. It may be that health has affected it or that the one thing essential to quicken it has not been discovered. Then perhaps some magnetism sets the mind going as well as growing and we wonder what the motive power springs from, what brought to the surface energy and ability that no one ever dreamt of. Casting round for explanation we hit upon a lot of conjectures and arrive at the conclusion, different in each case probably, that it may have been that 'sympathetic talking to,' that 'gentle remonstrance,' that 'singular opportunity,' or that 'stirring ambition.' Above all stands out the fact that ability of a certain order was there all the time and only wanted drawing out.

Now, there are several sorts of capacity commonly exhibited which a parent or tutor can trace and cultivate, such as memory, application, quick understanding and solid grasp. These all minister to the composition of mind, but are not the absolute formulæ required for the constitution of character, which cannot be built up by study alone, and is in general the product of various influences exerted during a lengthened course of studentship. There is no manner of doubt that the good influence of masters and tutors ranks very high in the founding of character, and that as a rule it is exercised with telling effect. But there are other factors which synchronise with it.

We are accustomed to hear complaints from the upbraiding section ever ready to put things right, and to read periodical howls addressed to the *Times* and other organs of the Press inveighing against the perniciousness of games as encouraged at our public schools to the detriment of learning. We are told that the German nation, whose army is held up as an idol to be worshipped (though man for man it is not as good as our own), and whose every institution and system are assumed to be superior to ours, has reached its present altitude of greatness and prosperity without games. It is not a convincing argument, because, in the opinion of many, they would have fared better still if national

pastimes like our own, which they sometimes try to adopt, had been a characteristic. It is probably true that at the completion of their studies the German boys are better primed in the arts and sciences. But that is not all which goes to make men.

For the abuse of games there is nothing to say, except that it may be condemned as freely as vice or any other objectionable practice. Even the misdemeanour of cramming learning into brain-weary boys may be denounced. For the use of games in due season there is much to be said. You cannot with profit concentrate a juvenile mind on work for more than a limited number of hours in a day or days in a week. If you do, the brain gets as clouded and overloaded as the stomach after a surfeit of Christmas feeding, and that means the doctor or abstinence. Boys require change, refreshment and, if healthy, output of energy, without which what miserable objects they would be. They want tonic excitement such as may be derived from robust games, which revive all that remains of the chivalry the books on their library shelves tell them of. What a charm there is, for instance, in the anticipation of contest, the shock of a scrimmage, the thrill of keen rivalry; and what value in exciting the physical energy, which modern races have in some degree lost since they have ceased to be governed by the law that the fit can only survive by the exercise of it. Energy, in fact, requires stimulation or it is liable to decay. Natural history affords us an object lesson in the example of those birds which, being no longer compelled to fly in self-protection, have ceased to do so and lost the capacity. Similarly, our boys if not urged to manly exercise as part of a system would soon lose their vitality and become knock-kneed specimens.

Let us consider for a moment what qualities are demanded and developed by our national games and pastimes in vogue at schools. To begin with, take cricket. Before a boy wins his way to the status of players in the front rank, many stages have had to be traversed. He has had to fag, to be coaxed and broken into careful play at the nets, to practise fielding and other accomplishments. Then he has to be keen so as to catch the eye of the captain or coach, to show himself capable of effort, to keep his head in crises and to compete with others in the contest for highest efficiency. Finally, upon winning his colours, he has to subordinate himself to the captaincy until such time as he can gain the crest himself, to play unselfishly for his side and keep up its reputation; and all the time to remember that a game is never lost till it is won and may always be saved by the last effort of the last player. And then he finds himself partner in a game conspicuous from all time for its perfect straightforwardness. There is absolutely nothing crooked in its methods and aims. So

much was the honour of the thing enshrined in the bosoms of players, that a proverb coined in days gone by has been handed down for generations as part of the moral code to condemn any unworthy act in the phrase 'It isn't cricket, it isn't playing the game.' That proverb runs throughout the British Empire wherever its sons are gathered, whether the game continues to serve them as a pleasure to be shared in or not; and it is an enduring game which affords refreshment to millions of watchers after they have abandoned the pursuit of it.

Then, as regards football, we find it arouses the same ambitions, the same effort to excel and win a high place as cricket does. The game is one to beget and preserve manly fellows who will take buffeting and bruises in good part and will work unsparingly for their side. Egoism is not an uncommon fault with schoolboys. There is nothing which tends to cure it more than football, where if you play honestly for your side you cannot be selfish, and if you are selfish you soon come under the ban of a schoolboy audience which is quick to observe and strong to express itself. So likewise the shirker has a poor time and is exhorted to perform thoroughly the task he is appointed to do.

To take another illustration, viz. rowing, limited of course to riverside schools. It has, probably more than any other branch of athletics, excited the ardour of eminent Britishers—otherwise studious of habit—who have emanated from our public schools and universities. To quote one instance only of a really great man. It is related in a biography of the late Lord Kelvin that, having become enamoured, he joined his college boat at Cambridge and thenceforth was able to think and talk of nothing else but the races. Apart from the fascination of rowing, there are the lessons it teaches of self-reliance, determination and discipline. Before a crew is chosen, its members have had to prove their watermanship and their mettle, not only in muscle but in devotion to their cause, which is to win if possible, but at any rate to train punctiliously so that the product may be the fullest effort of eight men pulling in harmony. Rowing in its proper form is the application of scientific principles, requiring the attention both of mind and body. Those who have never indulged in it cannot perhaps appreciate the glorious sensation felt by a crew of sturdy souls as they lift their boat in unison, struggling with rivals alongside for every inch of waterway. The value of the effort cannot be measured by the actual success achieved as between competing crews. There is something elevating to the character of individuals who are entrusted with the duty of making an earnest attempt to serve a communal purpose.

Of other pastimes, all good in their way, one word as to athletic sports, concerning which periodical squibs are fired off

about the iniquity of letting boys exhaust themselves on the running path. It is folly of course to let them attempt too much and run themselves off their legs, or permit those of questionable physique to engage in long and punishing races. That is where abuses may creep in to neutralise the good effect of fine exercise leading up to the cultivation of stamina and endurance. But undue exertion is not the fault of schoolboys only; men and women of mature age occasionally overtax their strength and come down badly. Yet we do not condemn the whole social system because Mrs. A., age sixty, exhausted herself with a long day in town, or Mr. B., after an extra round of golf, caught chills and succumbed. They are object lessons for us to study. The problem for each one is to preserve a sense of proportion by subordinating the will to physical powers, remembering that what some may do with impunity others may find most injurious.

Now, what I desire to emphasise is that for inculcation of the discipline which human nature stands in need of, all these games and pastimes referred to are sound and are a healthy supplement to intellectual training. They afford relief during the period of mental strain, and wholesome occupation; they enforce the practical lessons of obedience which must be learnt as part of the equipment for future command; they bring out the qualities that make successful leaders and tend to the formation of character; they foster some of the characteristics we like to think are truly British, viz. calmness in excitement or danger, resolution in difficulties, resource and judgment in action. There is, in fact, little doubt that, but for the ambitions they kindle, the stimulus to exertion required by healthy individuals would as a rule fall short of the mark. A final point in their favour is that they call into being a form of comradeship leading to enduring friendship memorable and useful in after life. Enmities there must be also; but they are comparatively trifling, for the whole spirit of true sport is to take defeat in good part, to be modest in victory and generous to the vanquished. So that, weighing it all up, it is not hard to realise, apart from the material benefit of games, how great a moral influence for good they exercise upon the minds of youthful generations who are bound by the best traditions of school honour and ethics.

Whilst holding strongly to these views, I must admit that they are controversial and raise other issues. There are, for instance, those who contend that games have the effect of making boys hold in contempt their fellows who aim at distinction in scholarship. The writer ventures the opinion that as a rule this is quite incorrect. He believes that the great majority to-day are ambitious to gain the coveted position which distinction in form alone can give them, and that in any case they are loyal to

scholarly merit wherever it is found. There are others, again, who go so far as to urge that the 'grit of our forefathers,' if not a lost quality, is waning badly. In a contribution to this Review of September 1908, Lord Meath supports that opinion. He does not allude to schoolboys in particular, but to the British race as a whole, defining the word 'grit' as 'that virile spirit which makes light of pain and physical discomfort and rejoices in the consciousness of victory over adverse circumstances, and which regards the performance of duty, however difficult and distasteful, as one of the supreme virtues of all true men and women.' Then he proceeds to give reasons for doubt whether grit permeates the entire mass of the population in anything like the proportion it did a hundred years ago.

Amongst his arguments are :

(1) That in the late South African war there were, compared to other campaigns, questionable British surrenders to the enemy.

(2) That whilst the Englishman's head is filled with thoughts of sport, the German is gaining knowledge which will avail to advance him in his profession.

(3) That the waste places of the earth used formerly to be colonised by the Briton; now he finds the labour of subduing nature too severe for his enfeebled energies, and settles in the towns, leaving the health-giving tillage of the virgin soil of new countries to the hardier races.

I will refer to these arguments in the order they are quoted.

(1) It is unfair to pass sentence on British surrenders in South Africa without careful examination of all the circumstances connected with them. This is not the place to consider that matter. It must be borne in mind, however, that in these days a commanding officer has to make up his mind rapidly whether those committed to his charge can possibly retain a post under the fierce fire of machine guns and magazine rifles; whether he should allow them to be wiped out in the hopeless attempt or save them from utter destruction. That alternative in modern warfare is presented to every commandant who for strategic reasons may be forced into a desperate position not of his own choosing. It is wounding to our susceptibilities to think even of loss of honour and betrayal of traditions; but we must recognise the changed conditions, and not condemn men for lack of valour who exercise military discretion in avoiding wholesale slaughter which the science of war to-day makes inevitable if heroism is not tempered with reason.

(2) Lord Meath, in making his comparison between British and Germans, describes pluck and quick-wittedness as invaluable national assets which cannot be maintained without frequent daily

use. Yet surely those attributes are more likely to be developed in the sporting man than in the mere bookworm.

(3) At no time probably has emigration been more clamoured for or more vigorously pushed and carried out than now. What numerous agencies from almost all the self-governing Colonies and from many emigration societies are promoting it freely! the only striking change of conditions being that the Colonies will no longer permit paupers, lunatics and criminals to land on their shores. And, modern emigrants are beyond doubt adapting themselves admirably to their new life.

In seeking explanation for the inclination of our rural population to settle in towns instead of remaining in the country for agricultural pursuits, we have to look not so much to a change of national temperament as to other causes. The primary cause is the class of education now given at State-aided schools. It was the sturdy old fisherman in the North Sea trade who lamented, alluding to 'the School Board kids,' 'They an't got the heart, they an't got the guts.' No doubt he was right. Those youngsters who are to take up occupations of danger and hardship such as sea-fishing and the like need not only to be trained but to be bred to them. Yet their education unfits them for it, in that, instead of cultivating a taste for work on the land or for honest trades demanding long apprenticeship, muscle and endurance, they become seized of a craze for clerkships and sedentary employment under the fallacy that a little learning makes it dishonouring to labour in the sense formerly understood.

In the education of the masses according to the existing programme the whole point seems to be missed. They do not need to be fitted up with knowledge required for the passing of examinations. That is necessary for the classes but useless as a rule for the masses, whose time is wasted as they muddle along through many books, instead of laying up that kind of information suitable to the technical occupations which the bulk will find open to them. The policy might with more advantage be to teach and develop the children according to their different types of mind, not classifying them all in one mould, nor assuming that the aims and characteristics of one class of the community are bound to be in keeping with the standard of others. Handicrafts, manufactures, and agriculture must all have their votaries if the country is to hold its own in worldwide competition. The common judgment of the nation is in favour of universal education of the masses so long as it is not carried to an unpractical length. While, therefore, allowing every scope for genius, no matter in what social layer it is found, our educational system may usefully be to familiarise the minds of the multitude with the idea that there are various kinds of employment of a healthy and paying character

which the many may go for, and that mere clerical work is neither much in request nor so lucrative or independent as some of the occupations, despised as they appear to be, requiring manual labour.

If, then, our boys and girls are, to the minds of some people, not of the grit they used to be, the cause is not to be attributed to any spontaneous degeneration of physique, but to a system of education which favours the production of penmen rather than workmen—a passing phase, let us hope. But it is not too late to stay the rot before permanent mischief is done. We have abundant evidence that there is still plenty of stamina in the country. The personnel of our navy is the finest in the world. The late war in South Africa proved beyond question, in spite of regrettable incidents, what stuff our young soldiers and colonial cousins were made of. No other nation has yet shown itself capable of such an effort as we then made. Even our Territorials, recruited largely from classes engaged in sedentary work, few as they unfortunately are, have shown what a reserve of vigour they possess during prolonged field operations.

But if, as I think, there is reason to believe the British are still 'gritty,' it is due, in respect of the masses as well as the classes, more to national pastimes than to books or learning, or to the grinding 'German' study which is held up as a pattern. Our soldiers and sailors revel in games; every Board school has an ample playground, every institution its athletic club, and every street (except the likes of Oxford Street and the Strand) its swarms of players. It is urged by some that there is now a visible defect in the lack of keenness to follow manly pursuits as of old. May not that, however, be ascribed more than anything else to the many diversions, healthy enough attractions in their way, which win attendance the cricket field used to claim in our village life? The facts we have to guide us in a comparative study of national mettle are that Victoria Crosses are as well and frequently earned as formerly, and there is no dearth of heroic men, ever ready to face death in releasing entombed miners, in saving life at sea or rescuing from fire in desperate cases.

It is well to know the opinion of others. In that entertaining book by Price Collier, *England and the English*, from an American point of view, the author says, in reference to the successful breeding of human beings:

Nature beats Socialism hollow at her own game. The English common-sense comes to the fore again in an attempt to solve this problem. She is old enough to know from experience that the world is still ruled by men and in all probability will be for a long time to come. She breeds men, therefore, as strong and simple as she can. In these islands sport is not a dissipation for idlers, it is a philosophy of life. They believe in it as a bulwark against effeminacy and decay.

But if sporting instincts are answerable for much that goes to make robust men, there are many other things at our great public schools that contribute to the formation and enrichment of character. The masters know well how keenly alive their boys are to the tradition that the Anglo-Saxon people prefer to conduct, or at any rate to share in, the management of their own affairs. Can anyone acquainted with the system doubt the salutary effect of appointing and recognising young men of 'good report' as prefects, heads of houses, and leaders of thought? These positions are not won or maintained by muscular prowess, but by a combination of qualities making for general fitness as regards capacity and integrity. They are held by those who, after trial, have proved themselves good citizens, who have gained the confidence of the authorities and are found worthy to be endowed with responsibility for assisting in the maintenance of order and the direction of activities in the corporate life of the school. What a power for good in the government of a school this partnership in responsibility can become!

One invaluable course of discipline which most of them pass through is that of the rifle corps. If not necessary to cultivate a martial spirit in our boys, it is of the highest importance, in these days when the position of Great Britain is challenged, to train the able-bodied sufficiently in drill and the use of arms, so that each may be competent to stand as an effective in the ranks for defence of his country in case of need. Apart from that, the physical exercise sets them up and makes them, as they should be, proud of wearing the King's uniform. Would that the entire manhood of this country were compelled to go through their course before they could claim the full right of citizenship. Were that so we might hear less of German bogies and foreign invasion.

There are many practical questions which cannot here be dealt with; but one in particular demands attention, viz. that which relates to the duty of bringing up boys with a definite aim, and not allowing them to drift along in a purposeless manner to the end of an academic career. In these thrusting days, when the struggle for existence is getting so acute, we cannot ignore the fact that the great majority go to school with the certain prospect of having eventually to earn their own living. The timely choice of professions is therefore a matter of grave consequence. Many boys from want of enlightenment or experience are utterly incapable of choosing for themselves. It is no fault of theirs; it is simply their misfortune. Some round ones are fitted into square holes and fail; others succeed by force of character in spite of the misfit. But it is a lottery, and a great burden lies upon parents and guardians to diagnose not only the capacity but the temperament of their charges, before committing them

irrevocably to a business or profession which may be entirely out of harmony with their tastes and feelings. The diagnosis is admittedly difficult, and if when faulty it is obstinately adhered to the result may prove disastrous.

Towards the close of the last General Election, when the public had become nauseated with politics in the newspapers, the following story was wedged one evening into the columns of the *Globe* :

#### SELECTING A SON'S PROFESSION.

A farmer in the Western States had a son and did not know in what business to start him, so he put him up in a room in which there was nothing but a Bible, an apple, and a dollar. He decided that if after a short time he found the boy eating the apple he would make him a farmer; if reading the Bible he would train him for the Church; and if he had pocketed the money he would make him a stockbroker. Entering, he found the boy sitting on the Bible, and eating the apple, with the dollar in his pocket. He became a politician.

Whether the story is fictitious or not, there is more in it than meets the eye. If exaggerated, it illustrates the sort of method by which children are sometimes dedicated to professions. The moral is to show how well-laid designs may be frustrated. The father pooled his ideas and determined by a practical test to decide upon his son's career. He was completely beaten in the gamble, the boy solving the problem for himself. It was a mere accident that gave him the opportunity to show that his ideas were not in common with those of his parent. How often it may be that the instincts of boys and their guardians differ without the chance being afforded to discover the fact until too late; that is, when the parties are committed to a course which turns out to be unpractical if not unhappy.

In this article my desire has been to indicate in particular that the boys in our great public schools have set before them the example of strong leaders whose places they are animated and encouraged to fill, and whose motto is 'To be just is to be great.' These leaders, succeeding each other at intervals, have a great mission. They have to feel and impress upon others the truth that they are destined to take a prominent place in the national life, and to share in the burden of Imperial responsibility, for which they must prepare by study, not often made available at school, of the history, geography and politics of Empire. Their future success will depend largely upon force of character, which in human affairs achieves more than intellect or learning. Genius without common-sense seldom accomplishes great things. Men who possess it in great degree are often lost without the help of level heads to proportion their ideas.

And the natural question here arises as to whether our public schools are meeting present-day requirements and fulfilling their

proper functions. It may be that they are still working in grooves, though much less than formerly, and do not seek to develop boys according to their different types of mind ; perhaps it is found impossible to do so. Yet the system in vogue undoubtedly makes for the formation of character and for development of the best national qualities. The boys are nourished on the doctrine that they have to play the human game in a mannerly way with a straight bat and shun crookedness. They are given a high standard of duty to live up to at school, are taught to be jealous of maintaining it while there, and to carry it into any sphere of public work in after-life. If, as I believe, the great majority are turned out with a useful education and high-minded character, then we may feel that the public schools, which we regard as one of the treasures of England, are doing their work and doing it well.

In conclusion let me quote the following striking and appropriate lines from a short poem by Mr. Henry Newbolt, which appeared in the *Spectator* of September 10, 1898, entitled ' Clifton Chapel ' :

To set the Cause above renown,  
 To love the game beyond the prize,  
 To honour while you strike him down  
 The foe that comes with fearless eyes.  
 To count the life of battle good,  
 And dear the land that gave you birth,  
 And dearer yet the brotherhood  
 That binds the brave of all the earth.

Henceforth the School and you are one,  
 And what You are the race will be.

GODFREY LAGDEN.