

Dresden.

Oct. 27. 1859.

My dear Papa

Yours of 23<sup>d</sup> came last night.

I do at all like the idea of spending any more time on the continent after 1<sup>st</sup> January, for it seems to me such an utter waste of time; nor do I think it fair that everything should be sacrificed to French and German, for studying properly is certainly out of the question when one is abroad. If you do wish me to spend any more time on the continent it must be at Harldruhe or some other large polytechnic school, where classics will be entirely thrown overboard, and nothing but engineering and its adjuncts be learned. It seems to me that I ought to have entered T. C. D. this October, and trusted to completing my French and German during the vacations. This year has been almost entirely lost except for French and German, the former first of which I could almost as well have learned at home.

Every day I see more and more the truth of what Mr. Cassell said to me when he heard that I was going, ~~viz.~~ that the life in Germany is a very pleasant, and very idle life, (i.e. for Englishmen) and that I could make more progress in everything at home than abroad, except in speaking the language and seeing the world.

I feel certain that living abroad even for a year, throws a person greatly back in what we call education, i.e. of the brain, not ~~matters~~ manners; in the latter point it may be <sup>of</sup> some advantage. You have no idea how much we are ahead of the continentals in ~~their~~ good sound knowledge; you find many of them who know a great deal superficially, but only a few who are what we would call well up in anything. It is for this reason that I

am so anxious to get home, for I do not like the idea of fellows going ahead at home while I am going backwards here. I know I cannot study for an English college abroad and if I do stay to study here it must be for some foreign one; but I am very anxious to be once more at the old steady routine which is what sends us ahead of the continentals. If I am to make any progress I must go to some place where I shall not only have something to work for, but also something to keep me working.

I have often asked my German master if he thought there was any danger of my forgetting the German when I returned, but he says he cannot imagine my ever forgetting it now that I have got so far <sup>in it</sup>.

As to the French it seems to me that two months in this country would give me a tolerable facility of speaking, but just now, when the time is of more value than at perhaps, any other period it is a pity to give it to that which can easily be acquired any time during the next few years. I should very much wish to enter T. C. D. next Trinity, and afterwards - should it be thought advisable - I could drop a term. I think ~~the~~ the calling of the Cunard steamers will be a great lift for Cork, and I look upon the Galway line as done for - at least for some time to come; from what I have heard from Americans I fancy that nine tenths of the Americans will land there. <sup>(at Cork)</sup> Is Mr Gully member for Cork

Cork now? It seems to me that Mr Fenwick has done the best thing he could for his son, but I hope he won't leave him long there. I have not yet seen a young Englishman or American who had lived more than a year on the continent and not suffered from it in some respect. I am afraid that uncle Jeffrey is greatly prejudiced in favour of the continent but every now and then he says something which lets one see that it not conviction. There is one good thing about the German education which is that they keep their children at home until their education is completed, which as a general rule seems to me a very good one.

I have given mamma all the news I can about uncle Joe. He is coming to see my room tomorrow morning (Sunday) and then I shall take him

about the town till one o'clock, when  
he lunches and I take my 1<sup>st</sup> dinner  
to be followed by another at 5.30 p.m.  
in Carola Strasse.

This letter is written in rather an  
unconnected way, but I am quite  
put out by the ~~the~~ idea of losing  
any more time on the Continent.

I should have no <sup>great</sup> objection to  
entering any of the great continental  
engineering schools, say Karlsruhe or  
Paris, and give up T. E. D. More  
time spent on the Continent in any  
other way would be lost, but I am sure  
that the best way ~~if~~ <sup>was</sup> employing  
the time is to return at Christmas.

Francis E. Prendergast.