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THE VALUE OF HISTORY

As Seen from the Standpoint of a Teacher—Geography Should Be Associated With History—Too Many Dates Should Not Be Memorized.

It is a well known fact, that in most of our schools we do not get as good results from our history teaching as from some other studies. Just why it is is hard to say. Some very noted authorities have reached the conclusion that we should leave out history entirely from our school course. They have come to this conclusion, no doubt, judging from the almost barren results. It is also very true that much is taught which is not real history and was never intended to be doled out to our pupils as history. We might also say that our methods of teaching have not been the best. Our educators, however, are now advocating more history and better ways of teaching it; and also of supplementing the course in history with a few months work in Civics. We shall all agree that history is not a mere narration of facts in their chronological order, but to know it, is to know events in their true causes and connection, to have our judgment exercised about the right and wrong of human actions as well as the sequence of events and to recognize some principles underlying the mere facts. History is a record of the doings and thoughts of the race in past ages—the evolution of man from a savage to a civilized being. It shows what men have been and thought in ages past. In teaching it, we should not give too much prominence to all the wars and crimes that have ever been committed by men, but more concerning his home life and every day affairs. I think our text books make a mistake when they leave out man as he is every day and picture him committing some crime or engaging in some bloody war. A child likes to study about a man. Loves to read of some noble man and his exalted deeds. He can appreciate more fully his actions and understands them better. History teaching for young children should be biographical rather than historical. Stories told about prominent men in history, of their early life and doings is of great interest to children, and will prepare the way for a more extended study later on.

Most of us must necessarily be dependent on a textbook, for we do not all have for reference the use of a library. We should not use our textbooks too closely and depend on one writer's opinion for all that is to be said on a subject. Our textbook should be read aloud, explained, amplified, commented on, and made vividly interesting before we require any of it to be learned as a lesson. Then by way of giving concentration and definiteness to what we have taught, it is reasonable to expect the bare facts as given in the text to be memorized, copied out, though not of course to be learned by heart in the precise words of the book.

We should teach some geography in connection with history, for these studies are very closely allied. It gives our pupils an idea of the surroundings of a people, and shows how they are effected by their environments. Map drawing is very good as it shows the pupils the places mentioned in the text, and this thus puts their imagination to

work. In geography we learn of man's physical surroundings and see him battling with nature and struggling for an existence.

Thus to be effective geography and history must go together. So many dates are given in history, that it is very hard to determine just which ones we must teach and the ones to leave out. Some of us, I think make a mistake in having our pupils learn too many dates. Some, however, we must learn. These should be few and well chosen, but have them learned thoroughly. Dates are fixed points in the memory around which other events should turn. The events and dates should go together and not learn one apart from the other. One danger from learning too many dates is, that the pupil's idea of history will be that it is nothing more than a mass of dates. The pupil will forget the important things if we put too much stress on memorizing dates. They will not take near all the facts about their history away with them from school, but if we have given them a taste and created a desire for historical reading, our labors will not be in vain. For if we once kindle that desire in the child for this historical reading, we need only to direct and they will eagerly do the rest.

The value of the teachings of history can hardly be estimated. It has an educational value that can be supplied by no other subject in the whole course of study. Its moral value is beyond computation. For who has not been stirred by its examples of moral heroism? The lessons taught in history have moved the deepest impulses of human nature and exerted a wide influence on the moral life of the race. We become more patriotic through its teachings. And our pupils are inspired with a love and admiration for our country and its institutions, not in a boastful spirit but a rational and affectionate regard for the country in which we have been born. It is also valuable in that it furnishes us a good basis of accurate and well arranged facts for future use. But we might say that its chief value is, that it humanizes us, makes more in touch and sympathy with our fellow beings. We might very judiciously narrow all history teaching down to a study of the lives of great men. For in every age of history such men are found and as Carlisle well says, it is these great men who are the heroes and they have shaped the course of history. What they have lived, done and thought in an age, has been the history of that age. Might we not say this truthfully of the times in which Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, Luther and Washington lived? We get more from biography and learn more real history than in any other way. So if we do start the lower grades with this kind of history teaching it should not be discontinued when we reach the higher classes.

We will be very much surprised when we study history, how that in all ages it has clustered and organized itself around great men's names.

If history is thus to be taught as the story of the lives of great men, it will very naturally suggest the best plan to be used. That is what is known as the "Topical Method." In this way the book is not followed

page by page, but a well selected topic is given for a lesson and every thing that can be found about this is learned. By this plan the pupil soon understands that every thing that is to be said on a subject is not found in a single book. They will find that some writers say one thing and some another. Thus their judgment will be exercised and they will learn to discriminate and think for themselves. The topics must be well selected and bear some relation. As we go from topic to topic it will not be hard for us to connect and weave them into a continuous narrative.

G. E. PETTY.

BURNED TO DEATH.

A Dwelling Catches On Fire at an Early Hour—Jennie Morgan Perishes in the Flames—Almost All of the Household Property Lost.

At the hour of 6:15 o'clock this (Monday) morning the alarm of fire was heard at No. 37, one of the houses a short distance behind the Odell mills, which dwelling was occupied by Mr. James F. Morgan and family.

One of the children, with the lamp in its hand, went into the closet to get something, and it is thought that some clothing in the closet caught from the lamp. This is where the first of the fire was seen.

Quickly the alarm was given out that the house was burning, but at that time the inner part of the house was well on fire.

Jennie, the 10-year-old daughter, was in her bed upstairs just over the closet. But she never realized the situation, as it is not likely that she even woke up.

An attempt was made to rescue her from the room, but the men were driven back by the burning fire.

The fire companies could not get there in time to render any assistance, neither would the hose from the Odell mills reach to the place. Assistance was rendered by all thereabout, but with only buckets the flames could not be checked.

The house burned to the ground. Scarcely any furniture or household goods were saved, it being almost a total loss to Mr. Morgan. The dwelling, which belonged to the Odell Manufacturing Co., was insured in the Southern Stock Mutual, of Greensboro.

Horrible was the scene witnessed when the body of the girl, Jennie Morgan, was taken from the ashes. Her body was merely a form of charred matter.

The funeral will be conducted Tuesday afternoon at 1 o'clock by her pastor, Rev. J. D. Arnold, after which the remains will be laid in the city cemetery.

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They are made on the newest lasts.

Drop in and see them.

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We had ten thousand dollars worth of Furniture more or less damaged on the night of the 16th. If you need anything in our line NOW is the time.

In the next 60 days we will make hundreds of people happy.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BUY YOU HAD BETTER STAY AWAY.

When you hear our PRICES you can't help buying.

COME RUNNING.

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