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THE PEDAGOGY OF HISTORY.¹

By G. STANLEY HALL.

If we interpret history as including all that has happened in time from the beginning down to the present moment it is, of course, the largest of all topics and includes most others. In the yet broader horizon of evolution it embraces nature as well as man, and voluminous as are its documents, is most of it yet to be written. For our far narrower purpose, it is the experience of the human race stored in books and memory. In ancient Judea, Greece and Rome, it was the simple genetic story of one race and that only in certain very limited aspects. Now history is not one, but many, for besides modern nations the story of ancient ones is unearthed and enlarged so that the field of written history now stretches far beyond the ken of the most learned individual, while modern critical methods show that Herodotus and Thucydides, Tacitus, and Livy, precious as they are, yet knew little and understood less of the true history of their land and times. To-day every department of human interest has its history, books and authorities, great and small; each language or literature, philosophy, religion, science and industry, and there is military, financial, commercial, political history, histories of dynasties, heroes of the common daily life of the people, education, dress, fashion, parties, and every social institution, each with sub-divisions in which a man may work a lifetime and know a little of the rest. The school of Freeman, Stubbs, and Gardner, have little respect for Hume, Gibbon, Macaulay, Hallam, Lecky, Buckle, and the disciples of the former were scandalized at Froude's appointment to Freeman's chair because he tried to be interesting even at the expense of accuracy. They demand that each should choose a limited field of English history, keep to it and off the domain of others, cling to facts, and be very wary of all generalization and explanation, till we wonder if Schopenhauer was right in urging that history really has no meaning, and whether, as Schleicher said of language, history can be defined only by the phrase "Es ist was es wird."

¹Address at the Annual Meeting of The New England History Teachers' Association, May, 1905.

At many points in this paper I have been indebted to data collected by Horace L. Brittain, a graduate student at Clark University.

In this confoundingly vast and complex field, what can the pedagogue now do? Shall he go on teaching the old matter by old methods served in new attractive manuals, as the Sunday School goes on teaching the Testaments, for edification only, ignoring the new bible revealed by higher criticism? If this were best we could not do it because in history the college expert and his higher view dominates and prescribes, while in religion conversely the church view dominates the professor and teaches him reticence and reserve. Hence it comes that in the one field, the high school youth is protected from methods and results of advanced scholarship while in the other they are often prematurely forced upon him.

To my thinking it seems now time to go back and move the previous and all dominant question why we teach history at all; what should it do for the young; why should it have a large and growing place in our ever more crowded curriculum? What is its value, and what can and should it do for the young?

I. Should it, as one group say, primarily teach by scientific methods, show the working of the law of cause and effect in human affairs, develop where possible on the basis of physical geography, introduce statistics to show average uniformities, or responses to physical conditions, even in the domain of individual freedom? This has been advocated even for upper grammar grades, but I believe the very nature of high school youth needs to develop from history a growing consciousness of freedom, to the sense of which, according to Hegel, is the only measure of advance. The very idea of law in human affairs comes late, and while we should ignore no standpoint this should surely be subordinate until the university period.

II. Is it, again, to teach to think historically, to acquire the habit of seeing all things in temporal perspective, as products of growth and development, to learn where to find authorities and sources, and to implant the habit of turning to these as Kendall's book and your committee of 1902 recommend? This is somewhat connected with the method of intensive study in a restricted field introduced into some English schools and occasionally here. This is surely a precious addition to the teacher's repertory and should not be excluded; but is it not prematurely academic? It is surely not our prime purpose to make historical investigators, and the complexities of Droysen's *Historique* would be precocity in the high school.

III. Again, assuming that good citizenship and patriotism are the religion of the public school, should it not be our prime object to make intelligent citizen voters, and lay the first stress upon duties to the State and society? This view is greatly emphasized by the modern interest in sociology and the need of amelioration and reform, and seems to me a yet higher aim,

immensely re-enforced by the needs of modern, political, social life. It is vastly broader than the effete watchword of the Blunchli school that was painted on the walls of the historical department of my late colleague, H. P. Adams, "History is past politics and politics is past history." But here, as in weighing each of the other standpoints, we must not forget the ever growing preponderance of girls in our high schools whose practical demands and interests all admit are not quite identical with those of boys. Girls do not like history as well as boys. Even the latter in the teens have not quite reached the age and maturity when civic interests, which are of slow growth, are very deep or strong.

IV. Again, is it culture history or to give a background and skeleton for literature, science, or to develop memory, language and imagination, to enlarge the naturally very narrow personal horizon of the young, to make them citizens of all times, spectators of all events, to assimilate the history of the race, to be the telescope and the microscope of man's self-knowledge, make the young feel the rich ancestral heritage of the past and worship their ancestors and their great deeds? This is perhaps the most broadly humanistic and liberal aim of all, but also perhaps the hardest, most comprehensive and least satisfactory, and culture history is yet in its infancy.

These, as ideals, are all not only helpful but noble. While they have much in common they are also diverse. Thus I believe that there must be one dominant aim to which all the others, while not liminated, should be subordinated, and I have accepted your invitation not, of course, as in any sense or degree an expert in history, but to plead that the high school teacher, while not ignoring these academic ideals or college prescriptions or even the very helpful report of the Committee of Seven, turn in thought to-night from these to another aim and take his cue from the nature and needs of youth, the highest criterion of all educational value, striving first to be a teacher and minister to these and abandon for himself the methods of original research. If you do this I am persuaded that a fifth aim, namely the moral one, will be found fittest to be made supreme. This conclusion is not based chiefly on the fact that in every land the percentage of juvenile crime is both increasing and becoming more precocious, significant as this indication is of the general need, but on the fact that ethical purposes by their very nature can best include and harmonize while they also overtop all others. Modern text books and theories of morals even do not suggest the richness, scope or efficiency of this point of view, to plead for which is my errand here to-night.

It was just because history was not thought able to moralize, but to be, as Gibbon later defined it, a record of crime, folly

and calamity, and to be often immoral, that it found almost no place in the trivium quadrivium which held sway for a thousand years, that the pedagogues of the Renaissance, the humanists including Erasmus and Melanchthon, and the philanthropines, either excluded it except for the education of princes, or confined it to carefully edited compends of antiquity or sometimes limited it to Judea alone. But for Luther, as for Salzmann, it was a thesaurus of inspiring ethical examples to show how all got their deserts in the end. For Schmidt it was to illustrate God's ways in the world. For Thomas Arnold it demonstrated the power working for righteousness, and was to give a practical philosophy of life. Even for Droysen its values are chiefly ethical or, as he puts it, it is the self-consciousness, the ethical "know thyself" of humanity, inculcating patience, uprooting prejudice, showing how virtue must be militant before it can be triumphant. It warns by showing the blindness, temptation and folly of men and inspires them by contagion to the emulation of the greatest deeds of the greatest and best men of the past.

Now moral education does not consist in teaching to avoid all swear or dirty words, disobedience, pilfering, truancy from school or church, rowdiness, cigarettes, quarrels, laziness, inattention, obstinacy, selfishness or disorder. These are not central. Juvenile immorality is not all comprised even in the nine hundred and fourteen German words for faults which Koezle lists from the writings of thirty pedagogues, nor in the fifteen large classes of faults to which he reduces them in his contribution to the growing science of paidological pathology, or to those errors to which the three thousand terms in the scolding vocabulary of old Haubererle refer. Many faults that interfere with the teacher's mere convenience or even ideals are only virtues unblossomed and yet in their homely bud. There is something the matter with the high school boy or girl that the teacher truly calls a perfect gentleman or lady. The very good youth is usually abnormal. A child may conform to these standards and be morally neutral, imbecile or even rotten. Truthfulness, *e. g.*, may be so inculcated as to kill the imagination, obstinacy so treated as to destroy the will, and so on through the list. Some, if not all, such faults are in some degree inevitable in the teens, and to magnify the guilt of them is to divert the moral sense from the larger essentials of virtue. Thus in pleading that history should be taught chiefly for moral ends it would be only priggish if we meant that it should be chiefly so used as to correct such faults. Whoever rubs in the fact that Washington could not tell a lie, or rubs out the fact that he swore, has neither historical nor moral common sense, or tact. Perhaps women teachers are more liable to

such errors of perspective and more prone to identify virtue with conventional conduct than men.

The real case is this. The one fact that towers above all others in the teens is that nature then suddenly endows youth with about all of her most precious gifts and gives us our psychic capital of heredity for life. This donation comes like a spring freshet that, if its floods are stored, irrigates every crop the soul can bear and brings all to harvest, but, if not, speedily passes away leaving only gullies, cañons, and desert wastes behind, so that later life is arid, desiccated and not fertilized. What is this bequest? It is hard to characterize. We may call it imagination which supplements facts, which represents the best of all history, namely, that which is not yet written because it has not yet occurred. Perhaps feeling or sentiment is a better term, or idealization which is often truer to the heart than to outer fact. The religionist calls it faith, the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, which is the special forte of youth, or the enthusiasm of humanity which who can define? The moralist says it is a pure sense of oughtness or of duty not yet formulated, or given its clear objective aims, or again, it may be the sentiment of honor, the strongest of all motives, even overtopping the sanction, love of life itself, in young men and women, but often also the most perverted. It has been called the unminted bullion of humanism. At any rate, it is the nisis or push upward of evolution in the soul which has impelled man's every upward step in his development, the promise and potency of the superman that is to be. The psychologist can no more define it than the biologist can define protoplasm, or the physicist, ether. But it is the raw material of human life out of which everything that is best in it is made. It is plastic to the teacher to preform and mould. It is for the shaping of this moral life stuff that the historical even more perhaps than any other, unless it be the religious teacher, is responsible. It is the moral nature before it is developed into character or is expressed in conduct or habit. Genetically, it is a felted mass of all the dim ancestral experience of the race reverberating in the individual soul. It is love before it has found an object, interest before it is vented in the cultures. If this is wasted we are old at twenty-five, and if conserved we are young at eighty. Myth, poetry, legend is its placenta, and truth to it is higher than conformity to facts which, unvitalized by it, are dross, slag, the mere tailings of a mine. It often gives a brief scintillating moment of genius even to dullards. Better in youth, the gushiest, mushiest morass of sentimentality than the early aridity toward which our old civilization, our precocious devotion to utility, our inclination to the early loss of even the sense of, and sympathy with,

youth unprecedented in all history, which tends to make our school system, while the biggest, most costly, and materially magnificent ever seen, the least morally effective of any on earth.

Now what kind of historical teaching best develops this nondescript mother lye of the higher moral life? The age for the romance of history has not yet passed, but is at its prime in the middle teens. Herbart said twelve was the age when the subject matter of Homer sank deepest and did most good, but later studies indicate that this is a little early. At any rate, the taste for pure old legends like those of St. George, Arthur, the Round Table and the Grail, if well told in good Anglo-Saxon, according to Freeman's ideal, has not weakened at sixteen, and even if they are known before, now have new meanings. Youth is most at home near the dawn of things. Properly edited historic matter from the Old Testament, Herodotus, Thucydides, Tacitus, Froissart, and a long list of others, are psychologically nearer to this age than is the last election. Wherever the world is young youth is at home, and some of the oldest writers of history, properly edited, contain more for them than do the latest and most scientific. Dante, "the voice of ten silent centuries," needs only pedagogic editing to be one of the noblest links between literature and history. Now it is because the matter of the best of these old histories was long in the unwritten stage of oral tradition, plastic to the historic muse, that it has been worked over and distilled into an almost purely moral content. Much that the modern historian rejects because it happened nowhere is precious because it might have happened anywhere. Such history is the very essence of education at a certain stage and best of all calculated to bring out all innatenesses above described to embody them in incident and give their mazy indefiniteness form and shape. The faint inherited traces of ancestral experience find here their complement in the life of the race. Some tell us that the best of this most precious culture material is lost, but if so we must treasure all the more what is left if the practical science of evolving man is not itself to be lost, and we have a grave responsibility to improve and enrich our curricula by new inventories and constructions of this most condensed culture matter. For school purposes, as for Carlyle, history should be to teach the infinite difference between good and bad, to set forth, even if in loud colors, the law of right and wrong, justice and injustice. Just at that point when the cause of æsthetics and ethics are not yet quite differentiated, youth enjoys nothing like an unpointed moral, a cycle of events grouped about a great ethical problem. With this stimulus his memory, judgment and reason work best.

The very gallery of the theatre applauds most the apparitions of moral law where the hero and the villain richly get their deserts. Anything that shows righteousness rewarded and vice punished arouses interest as does nothing else. The Bible has been thought supreme and even divine and taught where no other history was, because it made for virtue and conduct which is three-fourths of life. Let scholars investigate and colligate the facts; the great teacher has the yet higher task of Biblifying them in this sense so that we can guide life by them, economize its forces, and get most out of it. Our problem is not, I ween, primarily to teach what has been, but to save moral powers from going to waste. In a crude metaphor we must first store the waters of life if we would later use them for power or draw them off into a thousand channels for fertilizing life. The dwellers in man-soul have learned to warm their moral life by wood fires from forests, both new and primeval, but the old traditions and uncouth myths which the modern historian rejects as common earth we are just learning to use like the coal measures laid down when vegetation was far richer and ranker than now and which are full of possibilities of power and warmth that we have not realized. These are already coming to be centres of great genetic interest to the psychologist and will have no less value to the teacher of history when we know all their meaning and how best to use them.

May I propose for your consideration a new definition of man as the only creature with an irresistible impulse to destroy his own pedigree? Primitive man contended long with the higher mammals for the dominion of this globe and won. He has always been the great exterminator. Every decade some species he hunts for sport or profit becomes extinct, and the list is a long one. Every century adds to the list of primitive people like the Boethuks and Tasmanians that perish from the weapons or disease of civilization and whose blood cries from the earth. Other ethnic stocks are likely to perish to the last man during the new century. The so-called missing link between man and the higher anthropoids has been destroyed by this ruthless instinct. Man covered his tracks and destroyed the ladder by which he arose. So in the world of culture we are fast losing all feeling for the naïve, the natural in thought, feeling and conduct, for the rural in our urbanized life, for childhood and youth which evicted from its paradise now cannot wait to become adult. Science is often practical, un- and anti-humanistic, our chairs of literature teach philology, our historians are pragmatic, disparage early writers as inaccurate, eliminate as useless the records of beginnings and golden dawns in the story of ancient nations because of an admixture of myth

which they have not yet learned to interpret. But Tyler, Frazer, Grimm, Wellhausen, and even Wagner, are historians, too, who have made this dim past glow with a new light, restorers of a lost stage of development and therefore also restorers of youth to its own, supplying the phylogenetic key to what was well nigh lost in the individual. Was it not a reproach to Grote, who swept away everything in Greece before the Doric invention, that it was left to the spade to find a new interpretation of Greek history in the earlier Mycenæan, Cretean and even Ægean period, that extends the story of Hellenic man from 700 back to perhaps 2000 B. C.? In short, wherever we look we now find indications that when psychogenesis and pedagogy come to their rightful kingdom the stones which the historians reject may yet become chief stones of the corner and that the maxim, "History for history's sake," like that of "Art for art's sake," while both have their place for adults, should be subordinate both in history and art, as should perhaps everything else for youth, to morals. Granted that history should give a growing self-knowledge in the present living progressive age, can we truly fit for this except by living through all the important stages of the past and repeating each significant step by which the present was reached? Does not youth suffer because history is still unhistoric and too exclusively devoted to advanced scientific methods? Indeed, is fitting for life in any present the best way of fitting for life in the ever larger future, and if educational ideals ever attain their proper place, will not the most advanced university graduate feel that in teaching history in secondary schools he faces as new and as important a field of original research as anywhere?

Finally, while pleading to-night merely for a new and greater emphasis here, other aims, methods and fields should, of course, not be ignored. For the teacher in no other department perhaps is it quite so necessary or quite so hard to use every method and yet keep each subordinate, to maintain just perspective and escape everything doctrinaire and faddish. While pleading for more and better oral narrative teaching we should surely always have a good text-book to anchor to, and here I am told and inclined to think from cursory inspection that our English co-workers are now better off than we, rapid as has been our improvement of late. The individualistic theory of history as the essence of countless biographies cannot interfere with any scientific or even necessitarian view in a mind with room in it. Some use of sources is now possible in the high school and gives a new sense for origins and documents. Note taking with some dictation, if careful and judicious, is a grateful variant for the pupil and gives the teacher by simple inspection perhaps the best of all tests for promotion. The li-

brary, collateral reading, with co-operative methods and efforts, learning to work together and work for the common good, suggests also a much larger collection of books and a comparative use of them in every school, and this may mark a new epoch in the habits of study. Too many maps, even large ones from the government, too incessant reference to geography, and especially too many pictures, lantern slides, perhaps games with history cards, it seems to me, some authorities to the contrary notwithstanding, we can hardly have. Colored chronological charts of both universal history and that of special countries, genealogical schemes of dynasties and reigning families, statistical diagrams from the census, curves of financial, industrial, vital data, the cycle or spiral method with a general survey later repeated and amplified always assuming that every review should be broader instead of a new period each grade, seem to me too little favored by the Committee of Seven, and is not both the unit block and the intensive method involving any high degree of accuracy and detail too academic, and should the high school teacher have to think much of satisfying college entrance examinations? Is that teacher not a poor devil, in the printer's sense at least, who brings into much prominence the collecting of and class work upon old entrance examination papers, stimulating in certain very limited ways as this may perhaps be to a few under present unfortunate conditions? So, too, mock town meetings and congresses may have a place, but is not the American way of evoking opinion and discussing questions, about which the wisest differ, overdone? May it not breed conceit and a sense of attainment, and are not the Germans right in their insistence upon inculcation, leaving reason and independent judgment and weighing evidence and original investigation to come later when powers are more mature and facts better known, while utilizing to the utmost the golden hour of memory? While in general we should follow the stream of continuity, temporal and causal, that does not mean that we should never work backward from the present or from effect to cause. Knowledge of the common life of the people in past periods is, of course important, and in some places, like Milwaukee, students from not only the high school, but the upper grades, go in classes to an American museum, and not only see, but sometimes attempt for themselves the processes of spinning hemp and wool, making fire with flint, weaving on looms and otherwise seeing the ways of life of our colonial forbears; but we cannot study the past without sympathy with, and in many periods attention to, monarchs and courts. Between the minstrel and the monograph, in which history begins and ends respectively, there is an immense interval, and there is room for every method known and

yet to be developed, and, therefore, need for great freedom for the individual teacher to work best where and how he is strongest, for each school to utilize every local opportunity and incentive. Is a uniform curriculum in such a vast field sacred, possible, or desirable? Is not a historic unity to a great extent an artifact, and should not the teacher here scatter all possible hints and suggestions, opening apperçus, favor browsing, begin many things that he does not finish, often attempt to be so extensive as to seem superficial, because youth, in a sense, covers more surface than depth? Should he not sow a great deal of seed upon the waters which he never expects to see again in recitation or examination, and trust something to the intuitive apperceptive powers of the young? Does not the examination type of memory often tend to keep things near the surface and in the merely cognitive stage that should sink deeper and at once affect conduct and character, and for what is history but the study of the moral character of men and races?

There are two dangers in teaching history in this unhistoric land, with no dim mythic background and with our intense absorption in the present. One is that we shall lapse to lesson setting and hearing. Just in proportion as a teacher is poorly equipped with knowledge he tends to become a mere exactor of work and takes time telling pupils what to do and testing to see if they have done it. But this is not teaching, but a device of ignorance, laziness, or physical weakness, or all combined. The teacher teaches and reduces recitation to a minimum. Whoever has visited the best continental schools or studied comparatively such national educational expositions as those at St. Louis must have been acutely impressed with the fact that we exhibit what the pupil does, Europe what the teacher does. Here he says, "Go, do this, and prove to me that you have done it." There he says, "Come, let us study together; I know and will inform, interest and inspire you to go on." A little more pedagogic insight would make us ashamed of our wretched devices to conceal, excuse or dignify our ignorance or save ourselves work. We say let the pupil find the facts for himself and then he will remember and prize them and incidentally learn to investigate. No, we should have investigated and learned to impart. The teacher should teach. We allow and even encourage callow classes to debate and discuss and weigh evidence and think we are developing judgment, and they find it far easier to discuss than to learn and are also flattered by the subtle suggestion that they can form opinions that merit the name, instead of exercising power by their crude thoughtlets, *bombinantes in vacuo*, they are inclined to the delusion that their mental emptiness is filled and so grow complacent with their ignorance, are opinionated where experts

differ, and with more power to achieve than to receive suffer like those who work hard on an empty stomach. Some teachers have come to fear that the pupil in the high school is actually in danger of accumulating a mass of undigested, unsystematized knowledge, and perhaps to fancy that this peril is awful and ever impending. But have any of us ever seen a dangerous mass of knowledge in any youthful mind, unless in the memory freak, and even then are we so oblivious to the laws of mental work and growth as to think that such a mass of erudition could exist in the mind without being assimilated in the child's manner, or that even if it were a vast floating plankton our petty artificial devices of correlating, associating, linking, can have any other possible effect than to prevent it from sinking deep into the soul and keeping it on the surface against the day of examination? "Oh, teacher," said a high school girl to a history teacher strong in methods but weak in knowledge, "I could understand all so well if you only would n't explain it." In these days of hypermethodic pedagogy it is fitting to recall that by the laws of his guild in the middle ages, the barber's apprentice became a master workman when he could whip up two ounces of soap into two barrels of lather. I look with some dismay upon the rank new formal methods in history, but let us not forget in this richest of all culture fields that the teacher's business is to teach and that of the pupil to learn, and that all stated recitations and examinations can never be much better than a necessary evil.

The other danger and the last is materialism. History is not primarily to teach business, tariff, economics, finance, or any utilitarian form of self-interest. There are things even in a republic yet higher than constitutions, legislature, government, machinery, politics, civics, how to vote aright, important as these things are even for girls. Does not history for all, and must it not especially for the young, suggest as its supreme lesson the power in man and nature that makes for righteousness, and is it not this that the progress of events from age to age reveals ever more clearly? Bunsen called it God in history. Some deem it the nisus of evolution that makes the best survive and the worst perish. Should we not here and there, both at great epochs and in taking a long-ranged view of the whole panorama of events, each teacher in the way he himself can feel deepest, seek to touch the religious instinct and at least occasionally try to rise to the height of the great argument that justifies the ways of heaven to man?