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THE LEARNING OF HISTORY

THE LEARNING OF HISTORY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

BY

CATHERINE B. FIRTH, M.A., D.Lit.

*Lecturer in History, Fuzesdown
Training College, London; formerly
Director of Studies in History,
Newnham College, Cambridge.*

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PREFACE

This book is meant to be practical.

That is why it begins with theory. He is a foolish man who attempts to build without both elevation and ground plan.

Secondly, that is why the learning of history is considered in relation with existing elementary schools. There is a place for discussion of possibilities in different conditions, for the conception of new ideals and the making of new plans, but the business of this book is with the children now in their classrooms, and its underlying belief is that for them the heritage of the past may be made available.

Thirdly, the practical purpose of the book explains the foot-notes. They are intended not as scholarly references to authorities, but as guides to teachers who want to know where material may be found. Further information about books may be obtained from the *Handbook for History Teachers* (Methuen) edited by Miss D. Dymond.

Lastly, the class divisions referred to have been chosen for practical reasons. At a time when classification on an age basis is largely discredited and re-organisation is everywhere taking place, it has seemed best to adopt old-fashioned nomenclature, leaving teachers to make such adjustments as are

needed in individual schools. The Infants' School here means that for children under eight, and is taken to include Standard I; the "upper school" means standards II to VII inclusive, each standard corresponding with a year in a child's life from eight to fourteen; the "junior school" means Standards II to IV, and the "senior school" Standards V to VII.

It remains only to express my thanks to the many people who have helped in the preparation of the book. No one but myself is responsible for its opinions¹ and its mistakes, but for such merits as it may have, much gratitude is due to other minds.

First, to the History Section of the Training College Association, especially the Southern Branch, for their generous encouragement and criticism during the last two years.

Secondly, to the head masters and mistresses and staffs in many London schools, without whose friendly co-operation it would have been impossible to learn the children's needs and the difficulties under which teachers work.

Thirdly, to the colleagues and friends to whose patient listening and timely suggestions I owe more than they are aware.

Lastly, to all my teachers, living and dead.

C. B. F.

¹ In particular, the London County Council "accepts no responsibility for the author's opinions or conclusions." (Standing Order of the Council No 410).

THE LEARNING OF HISTORY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

CHAPTER I

THE NEED OF CHILDREN FOR HISTORY

HISTORY and children. The struggles, the failures, the achievements of the milleniums ; and fifty wriggling creatures in desks, their thoughts busy in the immediate past or the immediate future, and mayhap with the patch of chalk on their teacher's sleeve. The past—fifty centuries ; and the present—forty minutes followed by " break." Can anything be done to bridge the gulf ? More important, should anything be attempted ? Are there any needs of children to-day which will be met by the learning of history ?

It is, of course, a primary need of every child to adapt himself to his environment. He begins life as an individual and his process of development is the process of becoming a citizen. He finds himself in a complex environment, physical, mental, spiritual ; he is a bundle of possibilities of response to his environment ; in the degree in which he succeeds in establishing true relations with his environment, in that degree will his destiny be fulfilled.

The end of education, then, may be said to be the helping of a child in the establishment of true relations between himself and his environment, relations which, of course, if only because he is alive, can never be static. It is in the interplay between his environment and himself, in his discovery sometimes of his weakness and sometimes of his power, that his potential citizenship in greater or less degree becomes actual. As on the one hand he becomes increasingly capable of responding to an environment which is ever enlarging, and on the other hand increasingly capable of refusal of response in accordance with an unconscious or with a chosen end, so will his individuality grow. Yet, since the growth of his individuality is by the development of capacity for relations with his environment, and since for every human child a most important part of his environment is always other individuals, he will continually "lose his life to save it." By entering into relations with other individuals, learning that their interests are often more important than his own, and accepting as a guide for conduct the principle of service rather than of self-development, he will find that true individuality which can never be realized in isolation. He will gradually advance towards the stature of a full-grown person, of a continually developing "individual-in-society"; his individuality will be ever finding its fulfilment in personality. If a person is an "individual-in-society", that is, a citizen, then we may express the end of education by saying either that it is to help a child in his power of selective response to environment; or that it is to help in the develop-

ment of persons ; or, yet again, that it is to prepare a child for citizenship.

But the world in which a child finds himself is not only personal. It is, he discovers, impersonal too, and he has not the freedom of it until he has learnt, intelligently or not, to obey its laws. And again, the world into which he is born is not only an environment which has an actual and immediate importance for him, an intrinsic value of its own as his world for the moment ; it is also an inheritance which the past has made for him and of which he is only a tenant for a small, uncertain number of years. His inheritance includes the ideals which have so largely determined, and are still determining, the purposes of society ; includes the great impersonal forces of tradition which, coming up from behind the present, pass, as it were, over its head and lead it forward ; includes the accumulated experience of men and all that they have caught and handed on of beauty and of truth. The world into which he is born is not only a seen but an unseen world. Every child in an English elementary school is actually a member of a family and of an educational group ; he will presently enter a profession or a trade ; he will become an elector, at least, for local councils and the Mother of Parliaments ; he is, also, and quite as surely, a potential inheritor of kingdoms mental and spiritual ; he must prepare for the citizenship, not only of London, but of Athens and of Jerusalem.

Now the educator who looks round at his little groups of embryo citizens and out at the cities into which, as their necessity or their privilege, they will

enter, will surely be neglecting an obvious means for their development if he does not make available for them the story of the past. If it is true that history is "the story of the never-ending attempt of men and women at the adventure of living,"¹ then surely it has importance for those who are in their turn setting out upon the adventure. For each the adventure, in a sense, is all his own, but it is surely of value for each to learn that others have passed that way before.

It is in history that a child may begin to see that for other people, as well as for himself, the adventure is also a quest. He may begin to recognize human purposes, and so may find worthy objects for his own struggle; he may see how men have fought and failed and fought again. Identifying himself with those who have achieved as he would fain achieve, he becomes an active citizen of cities of the past; trying his strength with the crusaders, sharing the excitements of Columbus and Cortez, finding out how a drawbridge worked, he develops his own powers, and not only "learns to set his needle for a great voyage of discovery"² but gains also some of that practical power which comes from the recognition of the relation of means to ends.

But the envisaging and the pursuit of purpose carry with them the need for the choice of ends. In history the child may begin to discern the line which separates true from false whether in the sphere of morals or of mind; he may begin to learn also that

¹ Shailer Mathews, *The Spiritual Interpretation of History*.

² F. L. Bowman, Article in *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy*. Vol. 5, No. 3.

subtler power of discrimination between "the things that matter and the things that matter most." He is encouraged to perceive differences and to discover relations. Persistently through the centuries the law of cause and effect is at work. It is clear in the actions of those people who attract attention because they are so different from ourselves, whether the men of the Stone Age or the Greeks; it can be seen in the boldly drawn outlines of the stories of Joseph or of Troy; it can be traced on another scale in the Punic or the Seven Years' War, in the struggle of Joan of Arc or the far-reaching French Revolution. If history gives a child opportunity to perceive differences, to discover relations, to form judgments, and all this in relation to such matters of human action and human motive as are perpetually recurrent in human life, then, surely, even were these its only benefits, it would not be too much to claim that its study will help the child in his preparation for citizenship. If one of the first lessons of history is that other people were different from ourselves, it is no less true that a later lesson is how little human nature has changed: a child who can learn about people who are in a sense remote from him, and who will at least stand still to be looked at, will surely gain something in knowledge of the mobile people of his own environment. Of these he can hardly think disinterestedly, but the men and women of history can be looked at apart from his consciousness that his attitude towards other people will determine their response to himself.

Hence a child's attitude to the people of the past

can be at once disinterested and sympathetic. He needs to learn to recognize, tolerate, and profit by opinions different from his own; the development of his personality, the multiplication of his relations with other individuals, will be helped by his ability to put himself in other people's shoes and to look on the world, himself included, through their spectacles.¹ In learning history the readiness with which he identifies himself with the people of whom he hears will help him to find out that the shoes of other people, even though he has jumped into them, are actually of different shape and colour from his own. So the child to whom history is shown may be prepared by the practice of looking back for the process of looking round. In other words, his sympathies are widened and his powers of imagination are developed through use.

But these are not the only points at which the quickness and strength of a child's emotional response to history may help him. His sheer delight in stories, and in the stories which are true, would seem in itself to suggest his need for history. There are few more serious indictments of our failure to give boys and girls what they can use in their history lessons, than the fact that so many pass out of the elementary schools with a positive distaste for the story of the past. The natural child delights in history, but he has asked for bread, and we have given him stones. He is going out to the drabness of

¹ Cf. the question asked by a child at the end of a lesson which a woman teacher had begun with the sentence, "As I was walking down the road towards the monastery, I saw . . .": "What happened to the little boy who was walking down the road?"

modern industrial life, and we have lost one great opportunity of showing him beauty.

The power to see and to appreciate beauty, in whatever form, is a power the lack or presence of which is of vital importance for a child whose environment is ugly. When the power is developed, he will be able both to recognize the debased and sordid for what they are and to find beauty in ordinary surroundings; he will learn that the ordinary is not, as such, the ugly, nor the exotic the beautiful. Craftsmen in the past worked in the materials within their reach, fashioning vessels adapted to their needs, laying stone on stone in buildings which should express their ideals and serve their practical uses. The child who sees these facts in history will in turn be encouraged to make, and learning from looking back to look around, he will open his eyes and see and do. In history, too, he will learn the stories in which men sang of their quest for the ideal, and he may learn to join them in the search for an object perpetually captured and perpetually elusive.

In short, in history a child sees human life as a whole, so far as anyone yet may see it, and all the powers of his mind are called out in response. To achieve purpose, to discern truth, to appreciate beauty: these are among the capacities and so among the ends of the human mind; the development of them is among the needs of the ordinary girl and boy. History in the elementary schools gives opportunity not so much for the cultivation of specific aptitudes, as for the development and integration of personality. It teaches not in philosophical language but in pic-

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tures plain to see ; not in abstractions but in concrete examples ; not in an unknown tongue but in terms of human life familiar, by virtue of his sharing in a common humanity, to the ordinary boy in school. The undeveloped personality of the child, brought into contact with the developed personalities of the past, has opportunity for growth as a whole. " The proper study of mankind is man."

CHAPTER II

THE METHOD OF HISTORY

It is a far cry from an elementary school to the Bodleian. The note-books of Standard IV would have little interest in the eyes of the Keeper of Public Records. It is hardly safe to think what would have happened if the Regius Professor to whom history was "a science, no less and no more" had been asked to recognise a student's kinship with the children who drew the Friars Minor in bowler hats. Yet to learn the story of the past is the business of child and historian alike, and to consider the methods of the historian may throw light on methods for the child. Each is studying history, and there are certain principles of study involved in the nature of the subject itself which may show a link between the work, say, of Maitland and of Tommy Brown. There is a method proper to history, and to analyse it may help to show how the child may best teach himself, how the teacher shall present material, and how children in studying it may learn not only history but historical method, and so forge for themselves an instrument which their minds will continue to use when school is behind them.

But the method of history must not be looked for along a single line. If history is the story of the "attempt of men and women at the adventure of

living", it is clear that so complex and vital a content cannot be apprehended by way of a single approach. If the subject matter of history is no narrower than the activities of men and women, so its method is fundamentally complex. The study of history must mean the attempt to find out what happened, that is to discover the truth about the past, and history partakes of the nature of science. But there is an artistic as well as a scientific mode of apprehending reality, and Clio is still a muse. Moreover, the study of history means not only the discovery of what happened, but also the appreciation of the past. It is the study of men and women, and we who study are men and women too ; we cannot, if we would, escape an emotional reaction on our part towards our ancestors. Systems, institutions, the operation of economic laws may be isolated for purposes of study, but in the end they cannot, for the historian, remain unrelated with people. Moreover, the generations of human beings have followed one upon the other through the centuries : whatever the ultimate meaning of time, the unfolding of history has taken place within it. Historical method, then, cannot be less than scientific, artistic, personal and chronological.

The method of history is first of all scientific. The historian's first business is to find out the truth about the past, and he must begin by treating the material with which he has to deal as far as possible as the scientist would treat it. The search for evidence, the framing of hypotheses, their testing, their verification, modification or rejection, and the search again : this is in actual fact the process followed not only

by the student in the Public Record Office, but by every teacher who works out a fresh lesson for a class, and by every child who writes his own answer to a "thinking question".

It is true that for historian, teacher, and child alike, there is also a place for the acceptance of the work of other people; but while there is no student of history who does not at some point rely upon authority, neither is there any student of history who must not at some point and in some degree adopt the methods of science. The relative place for authority and for research will vary, of course, with the stage of the learner; but anyone who has reached the point of development at which he can ask the question "Is it true?" and has never asked it in relation to history, or followed it up by "How do we know?" has not been studying history by sound historical method. Historian, teacher, and child alike, at their different stages, if they would learn the truth about the past, must search patiently for the facts and "sit down before them".

It is true, of course, that the student of history is precluded from the use of experiment. We cannot isolate a factor in the French Revolution and watch its growth in a test tube, nor can we, in laboratory conditions, inoculate Bolshevik Russia with a serum obtained from the views of Burke and observe the results. We are handicapped, as scientists, by the impossibility of experimental testing of our hypotheses, whether they are concerned with what happened or with the meaning of events. We are handicapped again by the fact that our subject matter is

human material and that at every point human motive and human choice are colouring that at which we look. History can never be an exact science and so it can never with certainty or in any detail be prophetic. But the handicaps against which the historian struggles make it more and not less necessary that he should come to his work with the scientist's disinterestedness, with his recognition of the need for accuracy, and with his freedom from preconceived ideas. Neither teacher nor child in an elementary school will normally discover new facts or propose new theories, but he still must bring to the study of history some of the qualities of the scientific mind.

The historical material which a child must learn to approach scientifically is material which will mainly, though not entirely, be presented by the teacher. Upon him heavy responsibility rests. Not only is it his business to encourage the double question, "Is it true?" and "How do we know?" and to be ready with the answers, but he must remember that even where the questions do not arise in the mind of the child, the material on which the child is working must, to the best of the teacher's knowledge and ability, be sound. It is absurd to suppose that a teacher can verify each statement in a text-book, but he can take care that the text-books used both by himself and by the children are reasonably good.¹

¹ Certificated teachers can always get advice from their old colleges; the uncertificated are seldom without some certificated friend; for all, critical bibliographies exist, e.g. Power, *Bibliography for Teachers of History* (good, but not revised since 1921). See also the *Handbook for History Teachers* edited by D. Dymond, full and up-to-date. The bibliographies published by the Historical Association (22 Russell Square, W.C. 1) are valuable.

The difficulty lies, often, less in the inaccessibility of information than in the curiously common idea that so long as children are "interested", the accuracy of what they are told is of little importance. But history is a true story. It has no meaning otherwise. To present a child with "fancy" pictures, with untruly coloured incidents, with rhetorical rhapsodizings, with generalizations apart from evidence, or statements slovenly and confused, is to make the learning of history impossible for him and to give him something of much less value than a fairy tale. Remove history from the region of the actual and you leave it hanging between two worlds, a bridge which rests on neither bank, a place where no sure foothold may be gained. The teacher of history who does not "mind" about historical accuracy had far better leave the child alone and let him pursue without hindrance his own desire to find out what happened.

But, as has been said, there is more than one way of apprehending reality, and the method of history is akin not only to the method of the scientist but to that of the artist too. The material with which the historian deals is human material, the events which he is watching are events which are the direct outcome or the intimate accompaniments of human passions and hopes and fears. In a dry scientific light he has tried to see facts as they are; yet he will never truly so see them, he will never understand their meaning and grasp their relations with each other, so long as he looks at them in a scientific light alone. He must let his own emotions play freely round them, if he would see their human significance or if he would

hand on such vision of the past as he has gained. " If he would avoid giving a false impression of reality, he [the historian] *must* interpret, by his imaginative insight into personality and its workings, the detailed facts he has collected, tested and arranged by the methods of science. The task is difficult . . . But the historian who declines to risk [such] failure has already failed".¹ And once more, what is true for the historian is true also in their degree for the teacher and for the children.

A child, of course, has never any doubt on the matter. He brings to history capacity for romance, eagerness for movement and colour, and a keen dramatic sense. He looks on historical landscapes in the light of a midday sun ; the outlines are hard and bold, the shadows are dark, there are no half-tones or softly blurred edges. He will learn history with an artist's enthusiasm and an artist's disregard of what is irrelevant for his picture. And the teacher will be following not only true psychological but true historical method if he recognizes and meets the artist's needs. He will know the value of symbolism, and will let one vividly drawn incident represent a group of events. It is often the failure to take advantage of the artist's privilege of selection that makes the teacher overcrowd his history syllabus. He had far better use time for the vivid detail that makes one typical story live, than " mention " (word dear to the heart of the harassed student !) some half dozen names for the sake of a false completeness. Let a boy sail with Drake along the coast of Chile and welcome the

¹ B. H. Streeter, *Reality*. pp. 107, 108.

news of "the great Spanish ship, laden, from the kingdom of Peru," and board her, and lay about him, and cry to a Spaniard, "'Abaxo Perro,' that is in English, 'Goe downe dogge'," and stow him and his companions under the hatches, "all save one who suddenly and desperately leapt overboard into the sea"¹—let a boy sail the Southern Seas with Drake, and he will know much more about Elizabethan seamanship than if he is given half a dozen names with a few brief sentences on each. Too long children have failed to learn history and have left school in the confused state of mind revealed in the Board of Education's Report on history teaching in London,² and one of the causes is that teachers, in all conscientiousness, have failed to exercise the artist's right of selection from available material.

It is not possible to cover the ground of the conventional history syllabus which exists in many an elementary school, except in so inartistic a fashion that the children do not learn. The teachers speak truly who say; "But if I give details it takes so long, and then the class ask questions and it takes longer still, and I cannot cover the ground". The use of the artist's methods in history does take time, but the only way of preparing to meet the problem is to begin by answering frankly the question: "What is the value to children of material which they never feel any pleasure towards and do not really learn at all?" The teacher must exercise the artist's right of

¹ Hakluyt, *English Voyages*. Vol. 8, in the edition in Everyman's Library.

² *General Report on Teaching of History in London Elementary Schools, 1927.*

selection ; he must, further, give thought to the arrangement of his material, standing back from his plans for a lesson and looking at it as a whole, considering the light and shade, remembering that colour is not absolute but will be perceived in one object according to its juxtaposition with other objects ; he must know what parts he intends shall stand out most clearly and how his main theme shall be sustained ; he must study proportion ; he must observe the contours of the whole ; he must prepare for his climax step by step, and decide what he will do after it has been reached. For the method of history is essentially artistic as well as scientific, and if teaching can encourage the use of a method that is proper to the subject, then the student, whatever his age or stage, will learn. If the teacher of history considers the method of any one of the arts he will find in it something of practical value for his own study and for his teaching. He will learn from music, painting, and the plastic arts : most of all, perhaps, he will learn from drama.

For drama is the art which is concerned essentially with men and women. It represents in a particular setting of time and space one or another aspect of their " never-ending attempt at the adventure of living, " portraying in a particular example some part of the conflict in which we are all engaged. The dramatist, reflecting on life, chooses the puppets in whose action he can best express the truth that he has seen ; the historian, studying the actions of men and women through the centuries, is impelled towards the statement of generalizations if not about the mean-

ing at least about the characteristics of the past ; the teacher of history, studying these generalizations, makes them clear to other people by telling the story of the individuals whose actions are either typical of or have conspicuously influenced their age. Historian and dramatist alike, while each must be true to the laws of his own approach to the study of life, attempt to set out a story of individual lives which has more than individual significance. " All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." The fundamental concern of the historian, as of the dramatist, is with men and women. The method of history is essentially personal.

Not, of course, that there is not such a thing as the study of constitutions and of the working of economic laws. In order that the historian may see life whole he must study it in parts. " Order and distribution and singling out of parts " is not only, as Bacon says, " the life of despatch," but the condition of accurate knowledge and so of sound judgment. But just as the would-be physician is aware that his study of anatomy is a means to a greater end, so the student of, say, economic history should know that he concerns himself with one aspect only of the past : the men and women who are the historian's business had more than an economic life ; they did not live by bread alone, or they were not men and women. It is ultimately with men and women that the historian is concerned ; institutions are the result of their attempts to conduct life in communities according to reason, economic laws are generalizations about matters that lead in practice to the wealth of one

man and the hunger of another, and even social conditions have no meaning unless we know what they meant to individuals.

If this is true of the work of the mature student, its truth is still more apparent in the elementary school. The method of history regarded as personal is in close correspondence with the needs of immature minds. Children do not analyse their conceptions, and their interest, intimately related with their own experience, is not aroused by generalizations but by the action of other children and of men and women who are comparable with the grown-up people they know. They will most readily learn not about a particular aspect of human life but about a particular man or woman or child, an individual who to be clearly seen must, of course, be seen in his environment. The material provided by the Greek and Roman Life Room at the British Museum¹ can of course be used in a lesson on social life, but the stylus and waxed frame have much more meaning if they are shown as the kind with which Virgil learned to write, and the great Julius himself becomes "more real" when children find out that, perhaps, when he was little, he played with a rag doll. The growth of the capitalist classes was an important economic movement in fifteenth century England, but as such it is remote from a modern child; tell the story of the Paycockes of Coggeshall and show pictures of their house, and the clothiers are no longer an abstraction but living men who found a way of getting rich and

¹ The excellent postcards published at the Museum make the material easily available for classroom use.

spent their money in building a beautiful home for themselves and their children.¹ Sir Philip Sidney, hero of Zutphen, lived in a Tudor house which some day you may go to see, and he wore the fashionable clothes of his time.² The constitutional struggles of the seventeenth century were carried on by men who wore doublets and armour like those in the London Museum; there is a statue of Charles I in Whitehall and of Cromwell outside the Houses of Parliament.³ The method of history is personal, and if children are introduced to the people of history as living men and women they will learn something about all those sides of the life of the past which the adult historian, perforce, must separate as he studies. They will learn them, too, with emphasis first on one, then on another, and the teacher, following, will discover in turn where his emphasis at any given stage should be laid.

The principle that historical method is personal may, then, be put into practice by presenting impersonal material as a background for the story or the picture of the actions of historical men and women. Similar though different application of the principle is seen when impersonal material is used as a background for imaginary people, particularly children. Both methods of presenting facts have disadvantages and are open to the charge of historical inaccuracy,

¹ Eileen Power, *The Paycockes of Coggeshall*.

² Penhurst is open to visitors at certain hours. Tudor dress is well illustrated in photographs of portraits obtainable as postcards at the National Portrait Gallery.

³ The statues are modern, but are based on contemporary portraits

though at different points. But history teaching is full of risks, and to refuse the personal handling of past events for children is, as has been said of refusing the dangers of the artistic method, to have failed already. Speaking generally, the use of fictitious characters is more applicable in younger classes where it is important to give material not only around persons, but, if possible, around children, while the painting of a background for historical figures is more useful in older classes, say Standards III to VII.

The recognition of historical method as personal will of course not only lead to the use of certain specific devices such as these, but will give general guidance in the choice both of material and of means of presentation. History is much more than a collection of stories about what people did, but the learning of it will always include the study of dramatic narrative.

Now the whole drama of history through the centuries is, as has been said, a process in time. It is essentially a sequence and can never repeat itself. The story shows continually that like results follow like causes, yet since every set of causes is also a set of results, two sets of causes can never be identical. The matter is complicated by the fact that the historian watches not one stream of events but many; the further he penetrates into the past, the more does he think that the streams are isolated and independent, but, on the other hand, the more does he realise how scanty is his knowledge of early civilizations and the primitive struggles of men, and the less will he dare to dogmatize on the absence of inter-dependence. To trace the stream of history towards its source is to

meet a hundred rivulets tumbling over the stones, but he would be a bold man who should declare that any one of them is entirely independent of all the others. They appear from the hillsides at different points and they carve out different channels, but those who say that the facts disprove all hidden connection are merely bold with the boldness of ignorance. And of the main stream it is clearly true that no man dips twice, at the same spot, into the same water. The historian knows that history cannot repeat itself because it is a process in time ; completely to understand to-day would be to understand all that has gone to make it, and even the partial understanding of any period depends on knowledge and understanding of what has gone before. The position of an event in time is not the result of chance : it is of the essence of historical method that it is chronological. The ordinary teacher is aware, painfully enough, that he is too ignorant to know the full reasons why everything which has happened could only have happened just when it did, but he can at least train himself and his class to recognize that position in sequence matters.

Historical method is scientific, artistic, personal, and chronological. History must be studied in all these ways if ever it is to lead men on in the search for a meaning for life. Perhaps there is a sense in which historical method is also philosophical, or at least in which a historian will inevitably become a philosopher ; be this as it may, philosophy is not the immediate concern of classes in an elementary school. The children there will be helped in their preparation for citizenship if, in all the ways that are proper to it, they learn history.

CHAPTER III

THE METHOD OF LEARNING

A STUDY of the learning of history involves a study of the essential method of history itself ; it involves also a study of those who learn. The gulf between the past as seen in history and the present as seen in the classrooms of elementary schools will not be bridged without a study of the children who work there.

These children, like the rest of us, will not learn unless in some sense or other they want to. Apart from desire, that free play of our consciousness round a subject¹ by which alone we make it our own cannot occur ; it cannot be given against our will, nor can it, on the other hand, be maintained by conscious effort. The older boy or girl who is advancing towards maturity will, it is true, set himself an end more or less clearly conceived, and wishes which would lead in other directions will be subordinated to those by which the end will be attained. Ambition for place in class or examination success, knowledge that work in school will affect position in the world, desire to win approbation of mother or teacher or of the idealized self which each of us cherishes : any or all of these as

¹ M. Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, Chapter V.

well as other motives may act as a spur in the learning of history, but neither adult nor adolescent will learn it in any living fashion unless the conscious effort by which he may begin his work is merged in that kind of activity which is stimulated by the subject itself. So long as learning is a task and not a pleasure, so long it is not vital learning at all; effort called out by some ulterior motive of duty or ambition must give place to the effort called out by the intrinsic character of the material with which the mind is engaged. And while the adult or the adolescent is capable of effort directed towards an end which is not immediate and so may begin or return to his work when he "doesn't want to," the child can neither conceive distant ends nor discipline his desires towards them. It would be amusing, were it not pathetic, as all futility is pathetic, to watch the complete neglect with which a class of young children ignore the exhortations of the inexperienced teacher to work because they ought. At most they respond with a series of spasmodic efforts, and these are of short duration unless the children discover when the effort has been made that the matter to which their notice is invited is worthy of their attention, that is, has interest for them. The adult and the adolescent in the last resort only learn when they are interested; the child unless he is interested does not learn at all.

And nobody is interested in any subject about which he knows nothing. No one can learn of any matter in which he can discover no points of contact with himself. It is only by means of what we know already that we can lay hold of what we do not know.

“ To him that hath to him shall be given ” is the statement of a profound spiritual law ; it is also the expression of an elementary psychological fact. But the fact is one which teachers of history are prone to forget, and such forgetfulness is among the chief reasons why history in elementary schools so often is not learnt. Children can learn only that which may be related with their own experience, and their experience is the whole which at any point has resulted from their direct response to environment. A school child has experience of eating his dinner and learning to write ; of being warm and hungry and happy and sad. By the time he begins to learn history he has a wide range of emotional experiences extending to imaginary worlds peopled by beings who, by likeness or contrast, can be compared with the men and women and children he knows ; his own few years have provided him with points of contact with the milleniums, for since history began human beings have had the same fundamental needs of body and mind, but his experience has not included problems, say, of government or of the relations of church and state. The story of Henry II and Becket may have a certain general human appeal because a brave man was murdered, but the meaning of the quarrel is entirely remote from the experience of elementary school children and no one under the age of at least eleven or twelve can be expected to understand it. It would be interesting to discover what proportion of the children who leave school familiar with the name of the great archbishop have any idea why Becket resisted the king.

Yet boys and girls between eight¹ and fourteen have been constantly gaining in experience as they have grown, and public opinion at any rate still appears to consider that at the latter age they are ready to face the world. Even at eight they were keenly aware of themselves and of their environment. The teacher who considers the experience of children in elementary schools will find in it plenty with which to relate the story of the past, and it is his business to study that experience and then to select those parts of the story which the children by means of their experience can learn. There is no lack of such parts. If history is "the story of the never-ending attempt of men and women at the adventure of living," the story of all human activities, then it cannot be true to say, as some people despairingly do, that all historical material is unsuitable for children. The teacher who studies both history and children will find plenty to teach; he will discover also that the problem of the over-crowded syllabus becomes less acute, though it is not solved, when he has decided to omit from it for every class material which is remote from the experience of children at that particular stage. Time will be saved by reserving material till the stage at which it is interesting and will therefore be quickly learned and easily remembered. A study of geographical discoveries, for example, will best be made when maps can be used and when the spirit of adventure is awake; or again, the reform bills and the social legislation of the nineteenth century are

¹ For the approach to history for children under eight, see Chapter XI.

matters of keen interest to children who will soon be facing for themselves the economic conditions of their own time, though at the age of ten questions concerning the franchise leave the student cold.

The world of children from eight to eleven, on the other hand, is largely a world of things, things which they can manipulate and of which they can discover the use. The Normans of old built castles of stone and defended them with a drawbridge and with a portcullis which would work.¹ Other men built monasteries with all the rooms necessary for community life and the great church in the centre where the monks went to say their prayers each day and even in the middle of the night; they washed their hands before they ate their dinner, and one brother read aloud to them, having had his own meal first.² King Edward I, the "hammer of the Scots," brought back from the north the stone which lies in Westminster Abbey³: you can see it under the chair in which King George was crowned, and you can see Edward's tombstone too; he and his son (whose armies were beaten) had hard work in the wars, for the Scots showed themselves "right hardy", "taking no purveyance of bread nor wine", but carrying each a metal plate and "behind the saddle . . . a little sack of oatmeal".⁴ Edward I is also famous in

¹ See *School Guardian*, September 17, 1925, C. B. Firth, *Teaching of History in Elementary Schools*.

² F. L. Bowman, *Britain in the Middle Ages* (for children). Teachers should refer to Hamilton Thompson's *English Monasteries*.

³ Postcards of the coronation chair can be obtained at the Abbey.
⁴ Froissart, *Chronicles*. Translation by Lord Berners (sixteenth century) in Globe Edition (Macmillan). There is a modern translation in *Everyman's Library*. A set of illustrations to the *Chronicles* can be obtained at the British Museum.

history, the teacher knows, for his legislation, but *Quo Warranto* and *Mortmain* are not easily related with the experience of children from eight to eleven, and may simply be omitted. The Statute of Winchester, on the other hand, with its regulations for the clearance from both sides of highways of underwood and bush "whereby a man may lurk to do hurt" will not be remote from any child who has "jumped out on" another on his way to school.

From eleven to thirteen the world is before all else a place of action, of adventure, of struggle and achievement. It is full of people who do great deeds and make great discoveries and win great victories in the field, whether material or not. The prize is to the courageous and the battle to the strong. "Jolly fine, them tales of discoverers and traders, I'm pertickly interested in them, because I'm going to sea—a fine life is a sailor's," and again, "Top-hole, history, for telling you things you want to know".¹ The importance of a struggle towards a goal can be recognized, a fight against odds can be appreciated, and the relation of means to an end considered and weighed. The question, "What am I going to be?" is becoming serious, and the stern limitations of circumstance are beginning to be felt. The experience of the boy or girl in Standards VI and VII is increasing his understanding of human motive and human failure.

That experience, too, is introducing the child to problems of government, whether in school or class or in his own home, and both for himself and for

¹ F. L. Bowman, *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy*, Vol. 5, no. 3.

others. Rule by the many or the one has a practical meaning, and the story of the defeat of the Persians by the Greeks can be seen to be more than a tale of heroic deeds ; the desire of the maturing boy for independence gives capacity for understanding the growth of self-government in the British Commonwealth ; the relations of prefects to master and to class pave the way for the study of relations between legislature and executive ; the part taken by parents in parliamentary and local elections makes real the question of democratic development ; the suffering or the gain resulting from strikes forces attention to the growth of trade unionism ; and the practical difficulty in the present of making two ends meet prepares for the study of the problem in the past. The new experiences of children who are a little older than those in school and have begun work in the world are eagerly shared by sympathetic imagination and widen the circle of interest which may be used in the learning of history.

Experience by sympathy and imagination must indeed be considered at every stage of historical work. A child of eight has experience not only of his physical environment but of new worlds built up by himself from the materials of his environment, worlds other than that in which his body moves. As his powers of sympathy and his knowledge widen he increasingly shares the experiences of those older than himself to whom he is bound by emotional ties. Often, too, he seems to know with keen directness of apprehension a world of spiritual truth. The learning of history will be based on a child's experi-

ence, but an adult must beware of considering that experience in too limited a way. The child who is a potential citizen of Jerusalem and Athens as well as of London may often begin to enter into his inheritance earlier than the teacher is aware. We must at any rate take care that we do not hinder him from preliminary exploration of land that cannot yet be fully possessed.

It is clear, then, that important suggestions for the learning of history follow from the obvious fact that the instrument with which we reach out to new knowledge is what we already know. There is another obvious fact about mental processes which is of primary importance for the study of the learning of history: all learning is active. A fact or a detail in environment towards which the mind does not, consciously or unconsciously, reach out, remains a fact or a detail which is not known. We only know anything as the result of activity towards it. To use a modern colloquialism, no fact can become our own unless our minds "do something about it". And the more active we are, consciously or unconsciously, towards any fact, the more surely shall we learn it. To encourage a child to learn history is to encourage his mental activity, his feeling or his thought, in relation to historical material. Yet still teachers of history rely on the giving of oral lessons, and many of them if asked what they think that a class will do are satisfied to answer, "Listen".

Not that listening is not in itself a form of mental activity; it may indeed be an intensely active process, as no one would deny who has ever awaited a doctor's

verdict of life or death, or even the results of a cricket match or a scholarship examination. But there is a kind of listening in which it seems that the powers at any rate of the conscious mind are only sluggishly active : witness the student in ill-health who, knowing herself incapable of following the thought of a lecture, yet attends it because she is aware that in her notebook her pen will accurately record what is said. Too often it is this kind of listening with which the teacher is content from her class, and the girls of Standard VI, sitting quietly through her discourse, may go away with nothing but a blurred notion of anything she has put before them. " Mere listening ", that is listening in which the minimum of mental activity is employed, is often of less use for the learning of history than not listening at all, for a vague sense of boredom throughout the lesson will tend to produce a distaste for history itself. Moreover, the child whose mind is active towards a subject irrelevant for the lesson may well be forming habits of thought less injurious than the child whose mind is allowed to remain as nearly passive as may be, for if learning is an active process then mental inertia is one of its foes. The learning of history will never be accomplished by a mind that is inactive towards it.

But minds are only consciously active towards material which is not wholly familiar. If it is true to say that we only learn a subject when we already know something about it, it is equally true to say that we do not learn when we already know (or think we know) everything. That which is wholly familiar has no power to stimulate conscious mental activity ;

it arouses neither curiosity nor interest. Even if there are indeed many facts about the Roman occupation of Britain of which Standard V is unaware, the minds of the boys will not be active towards Boadicea if her story has been told in every standard they have entered. There are students of university age who dislike the Tudor period "because we always did it", and "What did I tell you last week?" is a beginning for a lesson as uninspiring as it is usual.

This need for freshness in material for the calling out of mental activity has an obvious bearing on the use of the "concentric method" which, though it is seldom rigidly followed, is often found in a modified form in elementary schools. Teachers on whose syllabus the same period re-appears for work in consecutive standards usually uphold the plan by two arguments. First, they say, the material is treated in different years from different points of view, and secondly, children forget and there is need for repetition. It is true that many distinct approaches to a period are theoretically possible, but in practice the teacher is often too busy, and sometimes too ignorant, to make them; what he does is to go over last year's material again, adding details which have no fresh emotional appeal. The result is a greater or less degree of boredom; the children's minds are not consciously active, and history is not learned. It seems paradoxical, yet it is true, that with the story of four or five milleniums behind him and the overcrowded syllabus at his hand, the teacher often wearies his class with the material they were given

last year. And what is done in some schools with the theoretical sanction of the "concentric method" is done in others through lack of co-operation between the teachers of different classes. In schools where the historical work is done by each teacher with his own class there is need for a co-ordinating mind in the construction of a syllabus for the school, and the teacher who plans it must avoid the risk that the individuals carrying it out will merely repeat material from the conventional standpoint.

Yet repetition is necessary, and teachers who say that children forget are clearly speaking the truth. Plans by which the syllabuses may take account of the fact are suggested in another chapter. Here it need only be pointed out that if children's minds are consciously active towards historical facts, they will constantly be recalling what they already know as they think about new material. The teacher's lessons will be built on all that has gone before; the children will revise their picture of social life on a Norman manor not in answer to some revision questions at the beginning of a lesson, but when they think about what the Crusaders left behind at home and what new things they brought home to their wives if they ever came back. Again and again in a lesson or in a piece of suggested work the teacher, true to the principle that we learn only that about which we know something, will encourage the children to recall what they have learnt; at every point also he will use old material for a new purpose, and rouse mental activity towards the unexpected and the fresh. And he will find that when children's minds

have had before them historical material which is related with their experience and have "done something about it," the material has become their own, and there is less need for the fear that they will soon forget.

CHAPTER IV

THE ACTIVITY OF CHILDREN TOWARDS HISTORICAL MATERIAL

A PLAN is used in one of the London Training Colleges by which students are asked to make use of three columns when they write out notes for their history lessons in schools. In the first column a bare outline of material is required; the second is headed "Teacher's Work", and at the top of the third the words "Children's Work" are written. It is the student's business to state in Column II what she will do in order that the children may learn the material summarized in Column I, or in other words to show how she hopes to call out the activity of the class towards her subject matter; in Column III she records the kind of response she expects. Often when she begins to use the plan she finds that she has nothing to write in Column III but "Listen". And when to listen is the only work expected from children, "mere listening" is likely to result, if any listening at all. Thus the student is trained to think about and analyse the different kinds of mental activity which may be encouraged in the class, whether such activities remain for the moment of the mind alone, or whether they pass over at once into some action in the outer world. Children may draw or model

or write or dramatize or talk, and in each case the motor action is the expression of a mental activity which will in turn be stimulated by it ; or they may for the moment do none of these things and yet be mentally active.

The teacher who remembers that historical method is personal, will often encourage emotional activity. He will so present material that the class will sympathetically share the feelings of historical characters or will desire to emulate the brave deeds of the hero. At first there will be one hero or one outstanding character to whom this sympathy will be given, but when Standard III or IV is reached, and higher in the school, a child may begin to view events from different standpoints. His own side, English, or it may be Roman, has no monopoly of great men ; Joan of Arc was the leader of the enemy, and so was Hannibal. Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, sailed in the service of Spain ; Strafford died a loyal servant of the king, and Pym who sent him to his death was loyal to the laws. The mental activity of involuntary sympathy passes on, and the teacher can help it to pass on, to the conscious process by which the standpoint of other people is recognized. So their motives will be realized and their difficulties faced, and so history will be learned and the preparation for citizenship made.

Or again, the teacher may plan his work to stimulate in the children's minds an active process of imaginative construction. He may, for example, paint a picture with words familiar to the class so that they may visualize a scene, and with the eyes of their

minds watch the Gauls creeping single file up the hillside to the Capitol,¹ or St. Augustine and his companions coming in open air procession to Ethelbert, "bearing a silver cross for their banner";² or they may in imagination look at the bridge of Xerxes across the Hellespont with the boats secured by cables, sawn planks above, and trodden down earth and brushwood, and "a bulwark set up on either side . . . of such a height as to prevent . . . the horses from seeing over it and taking fright at the water".³ The teacher who deliberately plans to encourage children to form mental pictures will discover the need for vivid material detail and be stimulated to undertake the search. In the eager activity of his class he will find reward for his trouble.

Again, children may be encouraged to learn by the deliberate use of comparison. It is, of course, a natural power of the mind and one which is perpetually active, to compare the unknown with the known; we have all been first, if inaccurately, introduced to a certain animal as a horse with stripes, and every inland child has thought of the sea in terms of the nearest pond. All the time that the teacher is describing a street in Tudor London the class, consciously or not, are contrasting it with the streets they know. But often the teacher may stimulate activity by encouraging a deliberate use of this natural mental

¹ Tappan, *Story of the Roman People*. This book gives the Roman stories in useful form. Cf. *Story of the Greek People*, by the same author.

² Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*. A translation is published in the Temple Classics and also in Everyman's Library.

³ Herodotus, *History*. A translation is published in Everyman's Library.

power. Sometimes he will begin by asking the class to recall a familiar picture : if he wants to tell London children about the England of Alfred he will either ask them about their last country holiday and build by comparison, or he will take their thoughts to their own noisy homes and work by contrast. Sometimes, on the other hand, he will begin by describing the conditions of a past century ; he will tell of a journey from London to York in the eighteenth century and let the children pick out the main differences as compared with such a journey to-day.

The younger the children, the more often will it be difference rather than likeness which the teacher helps them to see. At the top of the infants' school and in the lower standards there is need to show that the people of the past did things in a different way from ours ; only when that point has been firmly established, has the time come for the complementary truth that the people who did things differently were after all of like passions with ourselves, and that human nature is very little changed. The use of contrast is prior to the use of comparison in the learning of history, but both are mental activities which the teacher may deliberately call out. With little children the contrast or comparison will be chiefly between the past and their own lives ; as historical knowledge grows, the teacher will more and more encourage comparison of one period with another. Only let him remember that in comparison between two things one must be thoroughly familiar ; to try to help children to learn by asking them to compare the unknown with the vague or the partially known is like

trying to describe a circle with the firm leg of the compasses unsteadily fixed. Let him remember, too, that comparison between more than two objects at once is usually too elaborate a mental process for elementary schools. The study of maps of Europe for the years 1815, 1914, and 1919 is an excellent way of learning certain facts of political history, but Standards VI and VII are likely to learn better if the differences between 1815 and 1914 are noted separately from the differences between the second two dates. If Napoleon is compared with Julius Caesar, he should not at the same moment be compared with Alexander the Great.

Another form of mental activity by which children "make use of" historical material is the process of inference. They may be given premises and asked to draw conclusions; or, more rarely, they may be given particulars and asked to make a generalization. The danger in both forms of demand on the children is the providing of insufficient data, so that their results should be called not conclusions but guesses. "The Romans", says the student, "did not use guns to fight with; what did they use?" Or again, "In 1800", he states, "people had no trains: how did they travel?" He is pained and surprised when the children, obligingly guessing, make answer, "With bows and arrows", and "By tram". The teacher must think out the necessary data beforehand and provide them for the class. "In 1800 people did not know how to use steam or electricity; make a list of the ways in which we can travel to-day; cross out all those ways which the people in 1800

could not have used." Or again, "In the thirteenth century the climate and soil of England were much the same as they are now, the poor people in villages lived chiefly on what they could grow themselves (though iron and salt and mill-stones came from outside); they did not know about potatoes; what did they live on and in what materials did they dress?"¹ Yet again, "I will read you what the parents of children who worked in the mines said about them in 1842;² then tell me improvements for which reformers had to work". So long as it is recognised that adequate data must be provided before sound inferences can be made, it will be found that children in Standard II can begin to exercise such activity towards historical material; to the eager minds of Standards III to V the work will be a keen pleasure, and at the top of the school problems of increasing difficulty may be set.

From Standard II upwards, children may also be encouraged in the mental process of selection. They may be taught to choose from a mass of material that which is relevant for a given end, and the exercise of such choice involves, of course, the rejection of what is irrelevant. The undifferentiated question, "What do you know about . . ." may sometimes serve a purpose in Standard II or even Standard III, but if it is allowed to be the only kind of question, an opportunity of encouraging a more highly organized form

¹ Useful details will be found in C. M. Water's *School Economic History of England*.

² Bland, Brown, and Tawney, *English Economic History: Select Documents*. This book is invaluable for providing teachers with extracts from contemporary sources.

of activity is lost, and in addition a foundation is laid for that pernicious habit by which a man gives all the information he has when he is asked a question on a single point. Standard II, for example, confronted with pictures of the Bayeaux tapestry,¹ may look first at the scenes as a whole, but then may tell you what armour and weapons the Normans used ; Standard VI, having heard and read of Napoleon's exploits, may try to think out why at last he failed. To learn by heart a list of causes of wars or results of policy may be a no more active, though perhaps it is a more useful, process than to learn lists of battles ; but to pick out for oneself from a mass of material what is relevant for the purpose in hand is a way of learning history.

Such selection, of course, valuable in itself, is also an integral part of the process of forming judgments. This process, like those already discussed, is carried on by every mind, whether consciously or not. It is a natural activity with which the teacher of history cannot but be concerned. But he must be cautious. The judgment based on purely individual preference may be evidence of lively interest, but it is not in itself of much historical value. The teacher's business may often be to encourage the suspending of judgment, an activity negative in its immediate results, but in the control it demands essentially a mental activity. " It takes time to have opinions ", and the teacher who prematurely asks for them from children who have neither knowledge nor capacity for impersonal judg-

¹ The Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, publishes a useful illustrated pamphlet on the Tapestry. Better reproductions can be obtained from Caen,

ment may hinder the power, because he ignores the cost of the right, to hold them. Yet if children are learning history they will inevitably form opinions, and the teacher who deals unsympathetically with crude ideas will defeat his own end ; here, as so often, he must steer his way between Scylla and Charybdis, avoiding the twin temptations to force and to check. Happily he has at least some help from the nature of the subject itself. Perhaps he need not fear too much to encourage even this activity, for the child who is learning history will find a corrective for cheap and hasty judgments.

It is clear that these different kinds of mental activity need not find an immediate expression in the outer world. Yet the desire to find such an expression is natural, and its effect, as has been said, is to stimulate further activity. Moreover, the younger the child the more quickly do emotion and thought pass over into action, and the greater is the relative value of action as stimulating thought. It follows that in the lower standards handwork is an effectual means in the learning of history.

Modelling in plasticene, cardboard or paper is obviously suitable for children between six and ten. Standard I may learn about pre-historic men by making the things which they made : stone implements are not difficult to model, nor are the simple pots of the Neolithic Age.¹ More highly-skilled teachers may with good results give children oppor-

¹ See Quennell, *Every-day Life in the Old Stone Age ; Every-day Life in the New Stone Age*. Postcards of Stone Age implements can be obtained at the British Museum. See also the relevant *British Museum Guides*.

tunities to practice "the elementary methods of spinning, weaving and other simple industrial processes",¹ and the historical enthusiast who is also a specialist in handwork may attempt such work as was carried on at the Fielden School, Manchester.² But even teachers who have not at their disposal any unusual skill, apparatus, or time, will find that if once they have understood the value of modelling they will be able by the exercise of a little ingenuity to provide many opportunities for this form of activity. If the timetable gives space for "handwork" the problem of time is simplified, but the teacher of children from six to eight who has no such help need not hesitate to use some part of the time allotted to history for simple modelling. Words have relatively little meaning at that age, and it is in and by their handwork that the class will learn.³

For children over eight a warning is needed. The teacher must remember that as teacher of history his aim is not that technical proficiency shall be attained but that history shall be learned. If the timetable allows "handwork" for Standards II and III, then some training in technique is possible and history, too, will gain, but where two short periods a week are given to history and none to handwork, the teacher must beware lest the means should obscure the end. He will do well to suggest such forms of modelling as will not require elaborate finish.

¹ Archer, Owen, and Chapman, *The Teaching of History*, p. 161. cf. Katharine Dopp, *The Place of Industries in Elementary Education*.

² See *Demonstration School Records*. No. I, 1908, No. II, 1913. Manchester University Press.

³ Cf. Chapter XI.

For example, a class may learn much by co-operatively making a large Norman castle, which, complete with keep, drawbridge and baileys, can stand on the classroom floor, and such an exercise, planned so that every child has some part to make, may suitably occupy a class for a fortnight or more. But, on the other hand, five or ten minutes at the end of a lesson may suffice for everyone to make a keep of paper : five folds on a half-sheet of notepaper, the cutting of battlements and of round-headed doorways and window-slits (that is how the Normans made them), and the thing is done. The addition of a drawbridge only needs care in cutting out the space for the main doorway so that a flap is left ; the line of the threshold forms a hinge, and pieces of cotton at one end fastened to the further side of the flap and passed through little holes by the doorway are the chains by which the bridge is lowered and raised. It will, of course, be worked from within the keep by gallant defenders.

Both types of handwork, the elaborate and the rapid, have their place ; their use must be determined by the teacher, first in view of his object of helping the class to learn history and secondly in view of the materials and time at his disposal. Those who have never tried it will be surprised to find how much can be done with the simplest materials and in the minimum of time.¹

A form of activity which presents fewer practical difficulties for the teacher is drawing, and this may

¹ See F. E. Parker, *History Handwork for Young Children*, for many practical suggestions. See also Enid Blyton, *Treasury for Teachers*, useful for hints on handwork, but dangerous in its treatment of pre-historic ages.

be used for different purposes in every class in the school. Drawing may be imaginative, that is, it may be the expression of the picture or idea which words read or heard have formed in the mind of the child ; or it may be the making of copies, either of objects or of pictures or photographs, or, again, it may be symbolic or diagrammatic.

The use of imaginative drawing in the learning of history is that it gives opportunity for the expression of ideas and inevitably leads to that search among and selection from mental content which is a valuable form of mental activity. It also increases the possibility of the correction of mistaken ideas, and, perhaps more important, it lessens the need for future mistakes, for it quickly, and mayhap painfully, reveals to the teacher the inadequacy of his narrative or description and leads him to mend his ways. If on the other hand the mistakes have been due less to himself than to the carelessness of the children, he may suggest correction by encouraging a boy to recall what he has been told and so to see where his own representation is faulty. But where mistakes follow from the inadequacy of the child's material they are often better left alone for the moment or perhaps, as regards the particular picture, for ever. She would have been an unimaginative teacher, for example, who immediately gave instructions on mediæval costume to the child who, on her own initiative, had drawn a thirteenth century fair and had stocked one stall with ready-made clothes, including pairs of trousers. Even the child who drew three men wearing top hats in the burning fiery furnace would probably have

learned less history if his teacher had checked his imaginative composition by a dissertation on eastern head-dress. And the child who surrounded a mediaeval castle with familiar railings from Garratt Lane had found a kind of reality for himself. It is the teacher's business, since history is a true story, to be as accurate as care and work can make him, but he need not be too much troubled when the children shew him that after all their views of the past might not have been recognised by the people who lived in it. We none of us know the whole truth ; teacher and child alike can only do their best with the material at their disposal. And that material is perforce inadequate at the stage at which children can make most use of imaginative drawing in their learning of history.

For at nine or ten there comes a point when the child doubts his own powers to draw the Romans landing in Britain or St. Francis preaching to the birds. He doubts them because he is beginning to discover that he lacks knowledge or technique or both. He may, sometimes, find the missing facts in his books, but the technical difficulties cannot be so readily overcome. Drawing is no longer the simplest method by which to express his ideas ; words have become a more easily wielded instrument of thought. In a Standard III it is often wise to suggest alternative methods of work ; those who like may draw, and others may write, though the subject suggested for the writers must of course be of smaller scope than that for the artists.

And when the desire for imaginative drawing has

passed, there are other kinds of drawing in which interest remains and indeed grows with the increase in powers of technique. Children may enjoy making copies of photographs in front of them; they are helped by such work not to use their imaginative gifts but to study closely the shape of a Roman vase or a Viking helmet or some article of household use or ornament in Stuart times. The pictures suitable for such copying will usually be photographs of things actually made in the past and still existing; material is cheaply and easily available in the post-cards published by the British Museum and the London Museum as well as by many local museums.¹ The children are helped to realize that the men of the past really lived and are introduced to the importance of archæological evidence when they are allowed to illustrate their note books by copying photographs of suitable museum exhibits. Sometimes it is possible to combine imaginative work with a close study of originals, as when the children in Standard III or IV are asked to ornament the initial letters of their own names after a study of postcards showing illuminated initials from mediaeval manuscripts. Such work helps to make clear the differences in appearance between the books people used before the invention of printing and the books we use to-day.

Always the way in which the drawing will help in the learning of history must be clearly kept in mind. It is easy for children to become so absorbed in the technique of their drawing that they forget its meaning. The teacher must see that the time spent in the history

¹ For details, see Chapter VII.

lesson is given to the learning of history, and the drawing which is a means must not be allowed to become an end. At the same time, drawing is a true means ; it is not a mere way of filling up time or a reward for good behaviour. Suggestions for copying must be carefully planned as an integral part of the lesson. There are always likely to be some children in a class who want to spend more time on illustrating their notebooks than the teacher judges is useful for everyone, and for them the offer of the loan of a post-card may lead to a happy employment of leisure. Copying from reproductions in text books will often be done by children in the upper standards on their own initiative, and while the historical value of this is not great enough for it to be usefully set as a class exercise, the cultivation of such a hobby in spare time is likely to encourage the learning of history in those who follow it ; the results may often usefully be shown to the class as a whole.

In all learning of history by drawing children should be taught to write a title or a sentence showing the historical importance of the picture, both because they are in this way reminded of the purpose of their work and because the expression in words as well as in form helps to strengthen the idea in their minds. The heading for each picture or group of pictures, from Standard II, should always include a date. Such headings may sometimes usefully be written even by little children for their imaginative drawings when the technique of writing has become easy, but it must be remembered that for them drawing takes the place of writing, and to insist on the use of words

even in a heading may be to cramp the child's imaginative expression.

But imaginative drawing and copying such as this do not exhaust the possibilities of a pencil's use in the learning of history. Symbolic and diagrammatic drawing will, it is true, be either imaginative or from copies, but while the division is not logical, the use of such drawing is sufficiently distinct to justify separate consideration here. Copies of objects or designs which are symbolic may greatly enhance the interest of a notebook: the trade mark of the East India Company¹ sums up the purpose of its foundation and may be added to a sentence or couple of sentences about its history; a Union Jack can enliven notes on the Acts of 1707 and 1800. Standard III will like to suggest suitable objects to draw to remind them of the lesson, and the inventive powers of Standards IV to VII are easily called out. A class at the top of a boys' school enjoyed the making of a symbolic drawing to illustrate a lesson on the electoral reform acts of the nineteenth century. A vertical line representing the years 1800 to 1928 was traced on the left side of the blackboard and marked off in equal spaces to represent decades. Opposite the point representing the year 1800, a horizontal line was drawn to stand for the number of people who had the right to vote in 1800. Opposite the point representing the year 1832, was drawn a longer line to stand for the electorate after the increase of that year; similarly, lines were drawn to stand for the enlarged electorates of 1867, 1884, and 1918. The class made

¹ See F. L. Bowman, *The Story of the Empire*.

their own diagrams upon paper. On the line representing the electorate in 1800, the teacher drew a row of little trees to indicate that the franchise was then connected with land holding, and the boys were asked to make symbolic drawings on the other horizontal lines to suggest the class of the population enfranchised by each reform act. Factory chimneys for 1832 and agricultural labourers' spades for 1884 quickly appeared, but it was the enfranchisement of women in 1918 that called out most ingenuity. On one boy's line was drawn a row of resplendent hats with waving feathers and conspicuous bows; another drew a shop window, in which again hats appeared; and yet a third expressed his idea of the eternal feminine by four or five neat little perambulators each pushed by a dot-and-line figure in a flowing skirt. The depicting of the new voters of 1928 will doubtless be the occasion for further skill.

Such drawings, it is clear, can be used in the learning of history by any class. A teacher needs only sufficient imagination to see in what kind of subject it may suitably be employed, and sufficient clearness of thought to suggest a general form or to criticize one which is offered; he may safely leave the details to the inventive power of the boys. A more elaborate use of diagrams is made by some teachers,¹ notably at a boys' school in Tooting, where history throughout the school was lately taught by diagrammatic methods under the direction of a most able and enthusiastic headmaster. The eagerness and interest of the boys and

¹ Cf. Robert Jones, *Historical Diagrams and Time Charts*, London Teachers' Association Pamphlets.

the zeal and energy with which they work in school time and outside it, were beyond question. The material given in class lessons was supplemented by diligent search in books, and the boys spent much of their leisure in devising an expression of their ideas of it in diagrams of their own which in turn were criticized by teacher and fellow-workers. It is, doubtless, only the teacher whose own mind easily expresses itself in symbolic representation who will thus obtain such results of delight in the learning of history as are seen in this school, and those who work there would be the first to say that the mechanical adoption of the method by teachers whose gifts lie in other directions would defeat its own ends. But while only the few will use diagrams so extensively, every teacher will find in symbolic and diagrammatic drawing one of the many ways by which the children may "make use of" historical material.

By an easy transition of thought the value of making diagrams leads to the value of making maps. The lack of historical atlases in certain London schools is justly commented upon in the Board of Education's Report on the Teaching of History (1927), and it is assuredly true that, since historical events have happened in space as well as in time, a study of maps is often essential to their understanding. Such a study gives an excellent opportunity for "doing" in connection with history, and one which even a teacher in an ill-equipped school may use. Not only will he, of course, make large outline maps for his own use with the children; he will also provide his class with "jellied" outlines to fill in from the material gained both from

his lessons or from books. Where historical atlases are available for the children, they may themselves quickly trace outlines and fill in afterwards with pencil shading or paint or chalk ; the thin paper sold on writing blocks is sufficiently transparent and carbons need not be used. It must, of course, always be remembered that the use of maps in a history lesson is for the learning of history, and time should not be spent on elaborate processes. But children of eleven may, on provided outlines, trace the sea routes in the age of discovery when men sailed south and east and north-west and north-east to find a new way to Cathay ; and Standard VI or VII will best learn the changes made in the map of Europe at Vienna and Versailles by themselves colouring in the European states as they were in 1815 and 1914 and as they are to-day.

The copying of maps may be useful for the close observation and for the help in memorizing that it means. Map work, like most kinds of drawing, may also be used as a test both of memory and of understanding. Memory tests may indeed be often best given in this way or in some form which minimises the amount of writing demanded from the child. Yet writing remains one form of activity by which children may learn, and a written exercise may be an excellent means in which a child may be encouraged to do something with historical material. The mere writing out of incidents is useful as an exercise in English, and the teacher of composition may welcome interesting and fresh material about which the children will like to say what they know, but as a means of

learning history something more is required. A child who is asked, "What do you know about a Norman castle?" may have pleasure in the telling, but he will not normally be as mentally active towards his subject matter as the child who is told, "Pretend you are a little boy shut up in a castle with your father, and say what preparations he is making to hold it against the enemy." An older girl may make a list of the clauses of the Declaration of Right, but she will learn more about it if she is asked to imagine herself living in 1689 and to write a letter to a friend of her own age who is staying in Holland (because her father has business in Amsterdam) in which she says what practical differences in English life she thinks that the coming of William III will mean. The connection between social and political history will be made apparent by such exercises, or rather, a child will learn to look on the past as a coloured and lively whole, and the boy or girl who has access to books will take endless trouble to make his details as true to life as he can.

Less useful for the learning of history on its social side but more useful for the understanding of political events may be the writing which is done in preparation for debates. Here the teacher must choose a subject with a clear-cut issue and must word the motion with as little qualification as possible. "That Elizabeth's treatment of Mary of Scotland cannot be justified"; "that the American colonists were right to take up arms in 1774". Occasionally a social change can be discussed: "that the coming of railways was a disaster for England." The members

of the class, having studied the subject for a fortnight or more, will know on which side they are, and everyone must spend a lesson period writing the arguments on his own side on one half of a piece of paper folded lengthways in the middle, and all those he can think of for the other side on the other half. Then there is likely to be no lack of speakers in the next lesson period when the debate is held, and those who do not speak, whether their silence is due to shyness or to lack of time, will still have gained something. Debates, like modelling and drawing and writing, are means to an end; they are a valuable means, but always the teacher must keep the end in view.

This warning is even more emphatically necessary when the use of dramatic activity is considered. Here, perhaps, more than in any other way of "doing something about" historical material there is danger lest the means should come to be regarded as an end. The danger is more apparent when whole plays are acted; it is less obvious when the dramatization is of scenes or ceremonies. By the dramatization of ceremonies is meant the acting of incidents which have many times been repeated. Often such acting may be rapid and unrehearsed; a teacher calls out a child to receive knighthood—she may find herself obliged to knight separately every member of Standard II, but by the time she has finished the class has certainly begun to learn history. The holding of a manor court or the making of enquiries for Domesday Book may be acted with or without preparation other than the actual lesson; the children who have worn labels showing whether they are bishops or knights or

burgesses and have come forward when summoned (or have only stood up if the room has not space for much movement) will remember the share of Edward I as a maker of Parliament.¹ Such simple acting of ceremonies may be carried on at appropriate points, with varying degrees of difficulty, from Standard II to VI, though it is most often useful for the younger children.

The older standards will enjoy the acting of historical scenes, silent or otherwise, with or without rehearsal. Luther before the Diet of Worms; Galileo renouncing yet clinging to his scientific faith; Cromwell entering the House of Commons to dismiss the Rump, his soldiers waiting outside: such scenes as these may be acted in silence if the class prefer it, or with speech either when the words are famous or when the children are able easily to supply dialogue. Sometimes at the end of the study of some particular historical period or subject a class may be divided into groups, each with its leader, and may prepare to present scenes chosen from the material studied; this will give a purpose for revision, and forty minutes spent in such acting, after eager private work, will be far more profitable than a "revision lesson" which contains nothing new as an incentive to interest. Costume, unless it consists of borrowed clothes from home, will usually be impossible for such acting, but neither is it necessary. "Properties," of course, will always be allowed, but a ruler becomes a sword as easily as a sceptre, and he is a foolish man who does

¹ Cf. the suggestions on "semi-dramatic procedure" in Archer Owen and Chapman, *The Teaching of History*, p. 107.

not know that King John's Chancellor is affixing the Great Seal to Magna Carta, however much it looks as though a piece of india-rubber were being pressed upon an exercise book.

The acting of plays, as distinct from scenes, is a more serious matter and requires more elaborate preparation. The value of such dramatic work in the learning of history will depend partly upon the authorship of the plays : it will differ according as they are written by the class itself, by the teacher, or by some famous playwright. It will depend partly also upon whether or no the play is performed for outside spectators : it is perhaps true to say that the historical value is apt to vary inversely with the size and importance of the audience. It will depend also on the admixture of powers in the teacher : he who is both historian and dramatist in a true though perhaps limited sense, will be able to guide his class in the learning of history through plays ; he who is without a strong feeling for historical accuracy and historical atmosphere is likely to be led by his sense of dramatic values from history to fiction ; and he who is without a strong sense of dramatic values is likely to be unable to give the stimulus and guidance which will be needed, directly or indirectly, if forty or fifty children are to find their way through the difficult paths of composition and production. The size of his class is a perpetual difficulty to the teacher who desires that each individual child may learn, and this alone may well deter any but those who know themselves to have special ability from introducing too much formal dramatic work into the time devoted

to history. The writing and production of historical plays is an excellent hobby for the few, and may well be encouraged where circumstances allow children time to follow their own pursuits. The preparation for a performance before parents, or even before other classes, demands a high standard of attainment and has an importance for various ends extraneous to the ends of the teacher of history as such ; he may be glad if the choice for a school performance falls upon a historical play and he will naturally make the most of the opportunities which childish dramatic enthusiasms give him, but the time for rehearsals and the innumerable details of production cannot be taken from the period given to history for the class on the time-table. The work must mainly be done in other periods, or, if colleagues, or the teacher himself in his other capacities, are unable to co-operate, it must be done out of school hours. The business of the teacher of history in class is to help in the learning of history.¹

¹ See Findlay-Johnstone, *Dramatic Work in Schools*. Cf. (for dramatic work in general), Caldwell Cook, *The Play-Way* and *Little-man's Plays*.

CHAPTER V

TALKING IN CLASS : THE PLACE OF QUESTIONS

OF all the motor activities by which the human mind expresses itself, speech is the most natural and the most important. More particularly it is a chief means by which people "get to know each other", and by which individuals are brought into touch with their fellow-citizens. Talking, then, is one way by which personality may be developed, and in learning history children will need opportunity to express themselves in speech. In the absence of any possibility of direct conversations with the people of the past, children will learn by talking about them, both with each other and with their teacher, that is with the man or woman who effects the introduction between them and St. Paul, or Charles the Great, or Lady Jane Grey. It is, too, in conversation that children will be able to find out the facts they want to know, and that the teacher will discover where their knowledge is incomplete. The importance of the oral lesson in history lies very largely in the opportunity which it gives for talk. Actual information can, to a great extent, be culled by children from books, but the interplay between the immature minds of the class and the relatively mature mind of the teacher encourages mental activity; and such activity finds

a natural expression in and is in turn quickened by the motor activity of speech.

But on physical grounds it is clear that fifty children cannot talk with a teacher at once, and during class lessons conversation, at least in so far as it is initiated by the teacher, will most usually take the form of question and answer. The old school convention of "hands up before a question is answered or asked" is a matter of practical convenience which is quickly recognised by children as a means to fairness, since so each who wishes can have his turn. There is, it is true, some loss of spontaneity, but as long as the children in elementary schools are grouped, at lowest, in forties, liberty for each individual must in some degree be sacrificed in order that a measure may be enjoyed by all. Those who insist that no answer can be naturally given when a hand has been raised first, cannot have had much experience of teaching classes with which relations are thoroughly friendly; they tend also to ignore the "naturalness" of that which is habitual. There is, however, another school custom which has less to be said in its favour. The practice of insisting that an answer shall be given in a complete sentence, or even in a sentence that is strictly grammatical, may be a serious hindrance to the value of questions in the teaching of history. It is the substituting of an exercise in English for free conversation, and the teacher who employs it will hinder historical thinking as badly as his own thought would be hindered were he forced to speak with punctilious accuracy in every friendly discussion. Let him see that his own English is

correct and the form of his questions clear, and let him not check the eagerness of children's answers because their sentences are elliptical and their grammar sometimes confused. Let him remember that the general aim of his questions is to encourage the learning of history by means of talk

The particular aim of the teacher in asking questions will vary from time to time. At some points his object will be to help children to relate the material he gives them with their own experience. By questions he will encourage the use of comparison ; or he may help children to recall some incident of their experience in preparation for the facts he is about to present to them, leading them to select from its undifferentiated mass those elements which will be of value for his purpose. This may often be most successfully done if the children are themselves unaware of the purpose, for as soon as they know it they will inevitably direct the process of selection themselves according to their own ideas of what the purpose involves. "What did you see when you went into the country for your holidays?" asked the teacher who knew that she could not build a mediæval village on a foundation of London streets. Silence. Then a hand shot up at the back of the room: "Please, teacher, forts." Enquiry revealed that Martello towers had most likely been seen by the child on the coast of Kent. The teacher was strange to the class, and they had courteously tried to decide what she wanted before they answered her question. The subject was history; clearly she couldn't wish to be told about real country things.

It took some minutes to find out that the question meant what it said, though the discovery once made, birds and rabbits and harvest fields came forth in abundance. The teacher sighed, first, that the children were accustomed not to think and to talk but to give conventional answers; secondly, that in their obliging search for what was expected of them in history, they omitted the matters of every-day life and felt satisfied with forts.

The conventional answer is a familiar menace to the learning of history by talk. In its simplest form it is encouraged by the teacher who asks questions capable of response merely by Yes or No. More often than not the inflection of his voice shows which answer is required, and even where the children, for all their suggestibility, have not been influenced in one direction or the other, the chances of winning approbation are fifty to fifty. Should "Yes" be inappropriate, it can, if the class is watching the teacher's face, be altered almost before it is uttered to "No". There is no more mental activity involved than there is in the Scripture lesson when the children reply with the name of God, irrespective of context, to any question which begins, "Who (or whom) do you think . . ." The point for the teacher to remember is that there may be no more value in the answer when it is "right" than when it is "wrong"; as a corrective to his own teaching, the latter perhaps is to be preferred. Too little heed is taken both of the strong suggestibility of children and of their natural desire to please. It is better, because fundamentally more honest, for the teacher

merely to give information than to ask questions which, conventionally answered, deceive both the class and himself. To quote a well-known example: that teacher had failed who produced the correct reply by whispering "It's Scripture," when his class was unable to answer the question of the Inspector in geography: "Where is Jerusalem?"

Yet questions used at the beginning of the lesson may stimulate mental activity which will be of value throughout. It is necessary to find a bridge idea between the content of the children's minds and the material which the teacher intends to present to them—some thought, so to speak, which has one end in their experience and the other in the story of the past. It is necessary also to provide a stimulus for activity which, aroused towards that which is known, will pass over without conscious effort to that which is unknown and perhaps difficult. It is true that knowledge of a desired end is an adult's encouragement on a journey: we cannot "travel hopefully" unless we know to what we may (or may not) arrive. It is also true that to set before a class the purpose of a lesson may make its end more likely of attainment than to attempt to lead the children on without knowledge of their goal. But the essential of a goal is that it is a desired end, and the arousing of desire will often be accomplished not by a statement of the end, but by a question about that which already is conceived as desirable. "To-day I am going to tell you about William Caxton" presents no goal to a class: there is no hint that they will have anything to do but listen, and there is nothing to call out desire

A question, followed by talk, about the time it would take the children to copy out one chapter from the Bible, or, if the experience of the class allows, about the working of toy printing sets or about a modern printing machine or a typewriter, will encourage mental activity towards methods of duplicating script, and this may lead to an intelligent appreciation of the earliest press at Westminster. The bringing to the forefront of consciousness of ideas which are relevant to his material is one great use to which a teacher may put questions, whether at the beginning or during the course of his lesson. By a skilful use of questions he may, indeed, stimulate most of those various forms of mental activity which have been discussed in the previous chapter.

It is clear that such questioning is no easy art. Again and again the teacher will find himself tempted to give too little material or too much. He will provide insufficient data so that the class is thrown back on guessing, or he will tell the children so much that there is nothing left for them to do but to voice an idea with which he has already provided them. "I want to see everyone's hand up", urges the inexperienced teacher, unaware that he has failed to stimulate mental activity worthy the name if forty or fifty minds are ready at once with an answer to his question. Again and again, too, he must remind himself of the peril of emotional insincerity and avoid such a type of question as will lead to an expression of admiration or disgust which the children do not feel. He must refrain from asking for opinions which can only be a reflection of or reaction from his own,

and he must beware of forcing his moral values on immature and largely a-moral minds. These dangers are more serious to the teacher who uses questions than to the man who works by the method of mere narration, in that there is an importance in what we say over and above the importance of that to which we merely listen. In greater or less degree what we say becomes our own ; either it reacts upon our mental content, or it becomes in a sense divorced therefrom ; either it develops our mental powers or it leads to a verbal insincerity which in turn may encourage the " lie in the soul ". And insincerity in ourselves, coupled with fear of it in our neighbours, is one of the chief hindrances to that sharing in citizenship for which the teacher of history works. His use of questions to stimulate mental activity, with their natural issue in talk, is at once among the most difficult and among the most important of the methods he will employ, for it has a close and immediate relation with his ultimate aim.

There is, however, an easier use of questions in the learning of history which is important. By means of them the teacher will encourage the recall of facts already learnt and use them as stones in the new building which he rears. So the class will share in the work of construction, so they will learn to select from their mental wealth what is relevant to a given end, and so they will not only revise familiar facts but gain a fuller understanding of them, and, as we say, learn them better. No fact can truly be known in isolation, for only its relation with other facts gives it meaning. It follows that the more sets of relations

in which we, adults and children, have learnt to recognize any fact, the better shall we know it, because the more full of meaning will it be for us. The child who, in answer to questions about Sir Thomas More, can say why he was imprisoned in the Tower will have an important contribution to make to a lesson on the English Reformation, and the boy who has puzzled with Cromwell over the failures of the Protectorate will be able to suggest some of the old institutions which were brought back when Charles II came home. Not by sets of formal revision questions, but by questions asked as the material which answers them is needed, will memory, as a rule, be best helped in its work. The chief warning necessary here is against a heresy similar in kind to that which is inculcated by the Bellman in *The Hunting of the Snark*. His doctrine, as every teacher remembers, was expressed in the pregnant sentence: "What I tell you three times is true." The teacher who uses questions as a help in the learning of history, must beware lest he acts as though he believed another dictum: "What I ask you three times, you know."

There is, of course, a place for the type of question of which the object is primarily to test memory. Accurate knowledge is the basis of all historical thinking, and there are facts which children must actually commit to memory and of the learning of which the teacher must make sure. Such learning is far from being devoid of pleasure, and if once the material has been enjoyed and understood, a summary from blackboard, textbook or notebook will present no special difficulty to the average child. A few minutes

spent on brisk questions on matters of fact, to which replies may be given orally, perhaps in single-word answers, will both stimulate a class and enable the teacher to discover those children who are failing to learn. Children in the upper standards may by a similar method be asked to write out quickly certain clauses of Magna Carta or of the Act of Union with Scotland. Talk about the conditions which lay behind the documents will have made them vivid ; the actual terms of agreement must be learnt without any vagueness, and there must be no leniency towards mistakes. King John did not make the ambiguous and dubious statement that " no one should be imprisoned without his own consent ", and the little girl who said so had to be told that her answer was wrong. Perhaps she had allowed her mind to wander while she was learning by heart, or perhaps she had in the first place taken no heed to the lesson and missed its point. In either case she had been content with that slipshod hold of facts which is inimical to all sound thinking. The teacher's question gave an opportunity for checking the making of a slothful mistake which, if allowed to become habitual, would in the end have vitiated the child's citizenship in many spheres.

The question designed to test memory will often, as appears from the example just given, test understanding too. The children will see what their progress has been ; the teacher will find out where he has failed to convey the idea he intended. It will be worth his while to consider carefully the mistakes that are made in answers, for so he will learn about

the mental processes both of the children and of himself. Two examples may be given from the early experiences of two teachers, each of whom discovered from the mistakes of a child that she had used a word in an abstract sense which for the child had a concrete meaning. "How did Elizabeth settle her religious difficulties?" asked one teacher. "Elizabeth," wrote the child, "built a big church to which all the people should come and so there should be peace." The second example appeared in connection with a similar subject. After a lesson on the reign of Henry VIII, the teacher asked the class to state what changes had been made in the Church in his time. The setting up of chained Bibles and the issue of an English litany were duly mentioned. "Why," asked the teacher, "did you say nothing about the Pope?" The class had been well trained, not, as might appear, in Protestantism, but to reject irrelevant matter. "Because," came the answer, "you asked us about changes in the church, and the Pope has nothing to do with the church." Here, as so often, the question led on to conversation and history was learned in talk. The memory question has a place of its own, though it must neither be used as inevitably forming an introduction to new material nor as a substitute for more difficult kinds; it may be of less value than the question which provides bricks for the building, or than that which stimulates thought. The test of its use must be, as for the use of every other method, whether it helps or hinders children in their training for citizenship through history. To this all idea of good examination results or of making a show of successful teaching

must be subordinated. Unless the asking of questions encourages a vital contact of children's minds with the past, then it is but the beating of sounding brass and the tinkling of cymbals.

"But," say the practical teachers, "to write thus is to forget the conditions of elementary schools. Too often, on hot afternoons, our classes refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, charm we never so wisely. The rooms are stuffy and the children are tired; again and again we have to give history lessons at the end of a school session. How can we make them a vital matter? The most we can do is to see that facts are learnt: only the memory question is possible for us." The first answer to such a plaint is, clearly, that these are occasions not for the oral lesson at all, but for some of those forms of motor activity and of "individual work" which are dealt with in other chapters. The second answer is that, if an oral lesson in such circumstances is made compulsory, it is exactly then that the teacher has most need to remember the fundamental principles of learning. And, as has been shown, the use of questions is one of the means by which he may both relate historical material with the children's experience and may encourage their mental activity.

For these reasons, there is a special value in the use of questions as a stimulus in times of fatigue. The children know that something is expected from them. The wandering attention of an individual may often best be brought back not by a comment on his behaviour or by a remark directed to (or at) him alone, but by a request for his particular contribution

in connection with a question addressed to the class. Or a question on some subject of importance to the children, which they do not know is relevant to the lesson, may arouse them by its surprise. The teacher will help them to carry over the interest thus awakened to the historical matter which it is his purpose to relate with their answers.

In every use of questions the teacher's ability to make use of answers will largely determine the value of the questions for the class. It is not enough that his questions shall be clear, unambiguous, and couched in terms comprehensible to the children. He must know how to take up the thought of a child and answer not only his words but his intention. The mere acceptance of an answer as correct, or its repudiation as wrong, does little to carry further the speaker's knowledge or thought. The impatient rejection of a mistake as stupid may not only check freedom of expression but hinder mental initiative, and a child whose sincere but ignorant effort has been snubbed will often refuse to expose himself to a rebuff again. Patiently and steadily the teacher who is helping children to learn history must train himself to follow their mental processes, to see what lines of thought led to the unexpected reply, and to check his own inclination to reject an answer merely because it is not the one of which he was himself thinking. Often he will find that it is not the answer but his own question which is inaccurate: he has worded it so that while from his own mental background it has one meaning, from that of the class it has another; or he has had one possible answer only in his mind,

while for the children's minds the question was susceptible of several. Sometimes he will be wise frankly to admit a badly-worded question and to put his query to the class in another form ; at other times he will do better to follow the lead of the child and to abandon the attempt to encourage the line of thought which was originally his. It may well be more important that he should take the class on from the point which they have reached than that he should force them to follow the line of his own adult reasoning.

For example, a teacher has arranged to give two lessons on monastic life in the twelfth century, the first on the buildings, the second on the occupations, of the monks. In the first lesson he intends to work out a plan on the board with the class. The cruciform church is taken as the most important part of the abbey, and the children are asked to say what rooms will be needed for community life. The refectory, the dormitory, the cloisters, the chapter house, are duly suggested (not, of course, by their technical names), and their likely position is shown on the board. The forty minutes allotted on the time-table to history will be filled, the teacher judges, by the necessary preliminary talk, by his drawing of the plan step by step as required, and by the children's copying of it when it is finished—they will, of course, add a "key" to show what the rooms were called. But it may be that when someone has suggested the need for a room for work, the teacher finds that the idea of the cloisters leads on to talk of monastic occupations. Or perhaps when he shows the place for the staircase by which the brothers went

down to the church in the night, the children want to know at once how many services they attended and how they fitted in their time for meals and for sleep. He may wisely abandon his attempt to finish a plan of buildings, and give to-day the material he had intended to give on Friday. When the next lesson comes, the class will be eager to revise what it learnt on Tuesday by making a plan. Or the teacher may discover that when the two lessons are over, he has built up an idea of monastic life for the children not by the set of details which he intended to give them, but by another which met their particular needs at the time of the lesson. He cannot teach everything. There are certain essential ideas which he must convey, but the choice of details, as well as their order, may sometimes be better directed by the children's minds than his own.

Such guidance may appear for the teacher not only in answers to questions asked by him, but in those put by the children on their own initiative. Where the general atmosphere is one of real interest, such conversational openings are common enough. For the teacher they offer a great opportunity. The moment at which a child asks a question is obviously the moment at which he desires the answer. It is, in a literal sense, the psychological moment for giving him information, for correcting a mistaken idea, or for leading his thought a step further along the path of investigation which he has chosen. Moreover, it often happens that a child unconsciously speaks not for himself only but for a number of his companions who, with their similar background, have reached the

same point of need for explanation or knowledge. Even when the question is more strictly individual it is likely to be on the level of general comprehension, and a class that is working well will usually listen not only from a sense of fairness but with interest and intelligence while a teacher gives his answer on a point raised by a child.

The teacher should, of course, make sure that an answer or a question is heard by everyone ; often he will himself pass it on to the class. A child who has spoken in an ordinary conversational tone will be less embarrassed if he hears the teacher say, " So and so has asked me . . . ", than if he is told to " speak up so that the others can hear." The repetition of the question, too, makes the matter one which concerns everybody. Sometimes the teacher may let another child volunteer an answer, and so encourage the interest and joint working of the class. But if he fully recognises the value of his opportunity, he will usually supplement the suggestions of the children by some remarks of his own. From the background of his knowledge he will be able to lead the class to a fuller understanding than they could reach by themselves, and while their minds are alert on a subject raised by one of their own number they will eagerly learn as much as the teacher has to give.

For him, indeed, the questions and answers of children are often a challenge. The challenge is, first, to his understanding of their minds, for their vocabulary and their skill in language may be far less than the eagerness of their thought. Most teachers have had the experience of seeing the light die out of

a child's face because the answer given him does not really meet the need of his mind, or have heard a patiently acquiescent, "Yes," in reply to their question "Do you understand?"—a "Yes" which says as plainly as any sentence, "I don't, but it's no good trying to explain what I mean." Most teachers, on the other hand, have seen the wriggle of satisfaction with which a boy goes back to the matter in hand when his mind has got what it wants. It is a wriggle worth working for, and the teacher who has seen it knows that the challenge to his power of understanding which a child's questions give is one which he dare not neglect.

There is, secondly, a challenge to his knowledge. It is likely that he may often have simply to say, "I do not know." No teacher of history is ever likely to be able to answer every question of detail which the curiosity of children prompts, and the fact need cause him no shame. History is as wide as life itself, and complete knowledge is unattainable. Some questions, indeed, are not worth answering, but it is seldom that even those which appear trivial to the adult can be safely dismissed on such grounds. If the question is prompted by a desire to know or to understand, then its answer is most likely of some value to the mind which asks it. At any rate, the search for an answer has value. Sometimes it may be suggested that the child should look for an answer in books, in the school or the public library. Sometimes the teacher himself may promise to try to find out, and it will behove him to act on his promise. Sometimes he will be able to give an answer at the expense

of a little thought, and a class will contentedly wait for several seconds in silence when a teacher has said "I must think about that," and the children see that he is doing as he has said. The teacher who does not give himself time to see the import of an answer or of a question is far less likely to help the children to be mentally active towards history than he who thinks with them, and lets them, as far as he can, share the process of his thought.

It is possible, of course, that the question of a child may be prompted by other motives than the desire to understand or to know. There is, for example, the idle question, designed to fill up time; the self-important question, intended to attract notice to the questioner; and the red-herring question which has for its purpose the drawing of the teacher away from his track. But in proportion to the real interest of the children in history these questions will grow fewer, and if they occur they will often be dealt with by public opinion in the class. The teacher, too, will sometimes find that they may be disposed of by being treated seriously. "Were there camels on the road?" asked Mary, in discussing what a traveller would see as he journeyed from London to Oxford in the fourteenth century. The class, of average age eleven, looked its horror. "You are getting confused," said the teacher, familiar with Mary's impudence, "of course there were no camels on the Oxford road; you are thinking of the caravans in the deserts of Asia, by which the goods the merchants were carrying to Oxford had come to the Mediterranean ports." The class, after a moment's look of friendly scorn, followed

the lead to trade-routes, and Mary's interruptions, that morning, were heard no more.

The danger of irrelevance is one which may make a teacher afraid to allow free questioning from his class. The remedy is in his own hands. If he really knows his subject, he can often use for a purpose unthought of by a child some question which at first sight might seem to be leading the class astray. It may well be that to give the children what they need when they need it, is of more importance than to give the precise material which the teacher has prepared. Sometimes the change will be not in the material of a lesson but in the order in which it is presented, and if that order is what the class require, it may be for them a better order than the logical or historical one which has been in the teacher's mind. It is true that children may have to be kept back from jumping to conclusions before they have seen premises, or from anticipating a climax which will be robbed of its force unless due preparation is made, but the teacher who knows clearly the purpose of his lesson is likely to be able to afford considerable latitude of arrangement and yet to reach his goal. His lesson, if well thought out, is like a circle which he describes from its centre, his main idea. Every point on the circumference is not only a point on the circle but also the starting point for a tangent. The child who asks an irrelevant question may be setting out on a line of thought which is comparable with the tangent and will lead him far away, but if his question arises out of the lesson, then its starting point has lain on the circumference of the circle, and the teacher can meet the child where he is

and carry his thought from the child's own point, not along the tangent but to the next point on the circle. The simile, of course, is suggestive only and cannot be pressed, but it may serve to emphasize the facts first, that the child's question, if it is asked in good faith, has for him a connection with the lesson; and, secondly, that it is the part of the teacher so to use his skill that the next point shall conduce to the learning of history.

To give a simple example. A teacher in a provincial town was describing the house of a wealthy man in the fourteenth century. She had planned to lead from the hall to the kitchen and to speak of the servants who worked there. It had been possible to compare the hall with the assembly hall of the school, an old building lately adapted for educational use. "Was there an organ in it, like when Mr. Simpson lived here?" asked a child. If the teacher had merely said, "No," and corrected the grammar, the question, she knew, would have been almost certainly followed by others. These would have been concerned either with organs and all their associations or with the doings of the late Mr. Simpson, and in a few minutes the thoughts of the class would have been far away from a fourteenth century dwelling. "In those days," she answered, "there was no organ in the hall, but there was a gallery in which musicians sat. They played the harp and the viol to the host and his wife as they sat with their guests having dinner." Thence the teacher passed easily back to the kitchen, and followed the plan of the lesson.

Talking in class, there is no doubt, means risk of

loss of time. But the teacher who fears to take the risk is either a pessimist concerning the growth of his skill, or has failed to grasp the importance for the learning of history of the mental activity engendered by talk.

CHAPTER VI

THE LEARNING OF CHRONOLOGY

HISTORY is a process in time ; the method of history is properly chronological. It therefore appears that the learning of chronology is essential in the learning of history. Yet numbers of people would say that any incipient love of history which they had as children had been checked by the attempt made in school to insist on the memorizing of dates. Doubtless the thought of this bugbear is partly responsible for that absence of knowledge of chronology in certain London schools which is justly complained of in the Board of Education's *Report*. The pendulum, after the manner of its kind, has swung from one extreme to the other. Fifty years ago, a writer for children drew a picture of the wearisome hammering in of dates as nails in the carpet of history,¹ and she was right in expecting that she would strike a sympathetic note in the experience of her young readers. Now, anyone seeking a metaphor for similar use would rather choose the screen of either a cinema or a magic lantern : on the one, events pass rapidly before the delighted eyes of an audience untroubled by the need for exactness or a sense of the slow movement of time ; on the other, pictures may be shown, each vivid enough in itself,

¹ A.L.O.E., *The Crown of Success*.

but without sequence or even connection. It is partly due to the various defects in modern teaching thus suggested that there is so little vital learning of history in schools to-day. If children are encouraged to think of the past as though it could be understood without chronology, whether the encouragement comes through the vagueness of a teacher's time references, or through his habit of telling isolated stories, they will gain little idea of the patient struggle of men and women with adverse surroundings through the centuries. They will see neither the greatness and the littleness of their ancestors, nor the possibilities and the limitations which exist for their own generation. They will be deprived of a preparation for citizenship in more senses than one.

The problem of learning chronology is a fundamental problem in the learning of history in schools, both because it is of the essence of history to be chronological and also because chronological ideas have an immediate and peculiar importance for the present day. It is a commonplace to say that we live in an era of change and that at no period in our national life have the mass of our people had at once so eager a desire and so great an opportunity for accelerating changes. It is equally a commonplace to assert that our institutions, our language, our material environment, are redolent of the past, and that no Englishman can wholly escape its influence; neither, at bottom, does he wish the fact otherwise or desire to abandon his heritage. Yet though these commonplaces would both win ready agreement, it is true that modern men and women again and again

tend to hinder the coming of the changes for which they work by their lack of a sense of time. In school we have spent two periods a week on history according to schedule, but as adults we lack both ability to relate the ideal with the actual, and the power of balancing hopes and fears by which our temperamental bias might be redressed. The natural conservative, looking at history, may learn to admit that there have been periods when change was rapid and far-reaching; the natural radical will have it impressed upon him that Rome was not built in a day. Whatever our temperaments, we tend to ignore the fact that both patience and impatience are essential for men whose actions take place in time. The learning of history is not a panacea for human mistakes, but history is, as has often been said, a storehouse of human experience, and the sense of time which its study gives is at least a steadying factor in human thought and conduct.

But can this sense be developed in an elementary school? Can chronology be so taught that its learning may give pleasure rather than pain? Can teachers avert the onset of the boredom associated in the popular mind with dates, and yet save children from an idea of the past so nebulous that history for them is not history at all?

The difficulty, of course, lies not only on the side of the subject matter but in the limited powers of children's minds. It seems to be true that before the age of ten or eleven a child is not able to find a meaning for words which denote periods of time¹ of which

¹Cf. M. Sturt, *The Psychology of Time*, Chapter IV.

the length is out of all proportion to his experience. The transition is slow from the mental stage of the child of three who will ask "Is it to-morrow now?" to that of the adult who will at least speak in terms of centuries and milleniums. It takes time for the concept of time to be formed; and it is well to remember not only the ignorance of the adult as to the ultimate meaning of time, but also the narrowness of the limits within which our own "time sense" works. We may go to the British Museum to see the treasures brought from Ur, and wonder at the delicacy of workmanship and beauty of design, but it is hard to say what actual meaning the words have for us when we exclaim, "That little electrum donkey, with the long ears and the flowing tail, was modelled nearly six thousand years ago, and here are the bones of one of the oxen killed at a funeral in the early fourth millenium B.C." The adult use of certain words to denote long periods of time is a convention we all accept, and partly, at least, by a process of comparison between periods we can conceive and those of which the span seems impossibly long, we give some kind of vague content to such a word as millenium. But our limitations, it seems, do not essentially differ in kind from those of a child. He is ignorant of the conventions, and the shortness and narrowness of his experience make them meaningless for him even if the words are taught. His powers of conceptual thinking are not developed, and the idea of time is as remote from his mind as other general ideas. If we are to help children to learn chronology, we must remember both the limitations of our own mental processes

and the undeveloped stage of the children's minds. So we shall be saved from under estimating their difficulties, and we shall refrain from attempting to force on them the conception of time at a stage when abstractions are meaningless.

Yet to say this is not to imply that no help in the learning of chronology can be given before the stage when adolescence is heralded. Before a child can begin to find a meaning for words denoting long periods of time, or, to put the same thought in popular phrase, before his time sense begins to develop, he has an idea of sequence. The stage of childhood strictly so called, the stage that is between five or six and eleven or twelve, is one in which the words "before" and "after" have a meaning which increases as experience widens. From a child of five or six a young teacher may still be horrified by the question, "Were you alive then?" following on some story of her great-grandmother's girlhood, but her answer, "No, that was before I was born," will not be completely meaningless for the questioner; the question itself, indeed, has shown that an idea of sequence is present. From seven or eight onwards, that is, when the infants' school has been left behind, the meaning of "before" and "after" widens; the idea of sequence is established; and through this the teacher may prepare for the learning of chronology: to use popular phraseology again, he may use the sense of sequence which lies behind the sense of time.

And even behind the sense of sequence there lies a power in which the foundations of chronology may be laid. The power of association is a fundamental

power of the mind without which all sane human life in child or adult is impossible ; it is prior to the power to associate in a time series which we have called the sense of sequence ; it is not only in a general sense the foundation of all thinking, but also in a particular sense the foundation on which all learning of history is based. The teacher who recognizes both the necessity and the difficulty of chronological ideas may take comfort from the fact that his teaching may be related with mental powers that are common to all. The "sense of time" may develop late, but before it has developed and while it is developing, he can work on the "sense of sequence" ; the "sense of sequence" may be weak in an infants' school, but before it develops, and while it is developing, he can work on the power of association. The power of association is increased, not lost, as the sense of sequence develops ; the power of association and the sense of sequence are both there still to be used when the sense of time has emerged. There will be special methods appropriate to each stage of mental development, but at each stage the methods appropriate to the earlier stage will be not so much superseded as added to and enlarged.

The teacher of young children who remembers the value of powers of association will hesitate to introduce a child to history by telling stories which have no connection with each other. A later chapter will suggest ways in which the principle of grouped stories may be used in planning a syllabus for children in Standard I ; here it will be enough to emphasize the weakness of those lists of isolated stories which

still appear in the syllabuses of some schools and on the title pages of some text books for children from eight to eleven. A child has no opportunity of laying sound chronological foundations by using his associative powers if in consecutive lessons he is told the stories of the Black Prince, the death of Edward V, and the Fire of London. This is one of the reasons why the method of making history a matter of mere stories from Standards II to IV is so greatly to be deprecated. There are few periods of history in which there are enough suitable stories for children to build up from them a picture of life in any one age. The teacher is obliged to move rapidly from century to century, and the separate slides which he throws on his magic lantern screen, however vivid the colours of each, will do little to encourage the learning of history. If, on the contrary, he plans his lessons in groups, he will be using the children's powers of association to form connections between those facts which are chronologically connected. As one result he will find that the percentage of "howlers" in examination papers will be decreased. Many of the mistakes which are amusing to adults resolve themselves into anachronisms, and anachronistic mistakes are due to faulty associations.

The power of association can be used for chronological purposes not only by the presentation of material in what may be called chronological "chunks", but also by the association of actual dates with events. As soon as a child is accustomed to write the day of the month and the year in his books and to see it put on the blackboard, he may begin to attach dates to the

outstanding events in history about which he learns. "This year is 1928; the year in which William the Conqueror came to England was 1066": that is all the explanation which is required. The date is treated as though it were the name of a year, and the appropriate year-name is attached to the name of the person or the event. There is no need to confuse the child by the use of the term year-name; the date can be treated as such, put on the board, written in his book, and it is likely that a permanent association will be made between date and event. No fuss need be made about the matter; it is not more difficult to learn that William the Conqueror came to England in 1066 than that William the Conqueror came to England. The date, having little meaning, may be forgotten, but a child's powers of verbal association are strong, and so long as no distasteful emotional associations are connected with it, there is considerable likelihood that it will be remembered. The method, of course, must not be abused. If a child were constantly expected to remember words which had neither meaning nor appeal of rhythm or sound, distaste would be aroused and the object frustrated. The use of the plan is for the acquirement of a few outstanding dates. There is no need, even, at an early stage, say in Standards I and II, to test the child's memory for the dates as such; he need not be asked if he knows them. Rather by constant reference to them in connection with the events will the teacher ensure that they are learnt.

Such reference will not only ensure the learning of a few essential dates; it will also be an important way

of using the children's sense of sequence. A group of lessons may be given round a single fixed date. Before William the Conqueror came to England in 1066, Harold had been king; when the battle of Hastings was fought, bows and arrows were used (the Bayeux tapestry, worked soon after, shows Harold hit in the eye); the Norman barons who came with William built castles to prevent the English from rising (you can make a drawbridge, and here is a picture of a keep which I have seen); Hereward tried to resist and held out in the Fens; the king wanted money and decided to find out how rich the great men were, so he sent to ask them how many ploughs they had for their land, and pasture for how many sheep—only in the north, where he had burnt the cattle and crops, the messengers had to write down, "the land is waste." There is not the slightest need for Standard III to know the exact date of Domesday Book or of Hereward the Wake, but the children can easily be helped to become quite sure that what was done by William I in England was done soon after 1066. At the beginning of each lesson on early Norman history in England, his name and the date can be written at the top of the blackboard, and any sketches or names or summary which the teacher may put beneath will be associated with the key date of the period. For each group of lessons such a date may be chosen, and thus, by the use both of the children's power of association and of their sense of sequence, the foundations of sound chronology can be laid.

It is clear that such a use of the sense of sequence

is valuable both at early and later stages. The professional historian himself employs it ; the number of actual dates he knows is different from the number known by the members of Standard II, but much of his historical thinking is done on precisely the same chronological principle ; it is not his object to memorize dates but to study sequence ; he uses dates to help him to understand sequence, and he uses sequence when it is his business actually to determine dates. Because this happened in this year, then that, which was its consequence, could not have happened before the next. This kind of reasoning is essential to the learning of history at any age or stage. Children can be accustomed to it in its simplest form by the use of "before" and "after" in Standards I and II ; in Standards III and IV they may increase by deliberate memorizing the number of key or "peg" dates which will be available to them for reference.

Between the ages of nine and eleven, children find the memorizing of words not only easy but pleasurable, especially if the syllables are rhythmically arranged. A list of important events with the dates attached can be learnt without difficulty so long as the arrangement is rhythmical and the work treated as something which of course it is fun to do. The old practice of learning the dates of the kings of England from 1066 by heart has much to commend it. The teacher of socialist leanings to-day says truly that there are more important events in English history than the accession of kings, but it is nevertheless a fact that until the twentieth century a change in ruler had often an im-

portant bearing on the general course of events. Moreover, a king comes to the throne and dies in a definite year and only once ; a process in social history, say the break-up of the manor, is spread over a period of years, and an attempt to assign it to a fixed date is actually unhistorical. Again, the habit of dating by kings is deeply rooted among English people, and it is important that children should know the chronological conventions of their country. Finally, the dates of the accession of the English rulers from the Conquest onwards are easily pressed into a roughly rhythmical mould. They are for English history the most convenient set of "pegs" available, and the learning of them presents no difficulty to the average child of ten.

The names of the kings with the dates of their accession may be written on the blackboard by the teacher, in two or more groups ; read aloud rhythmically by him two or three times ; copied by the children and learnt, some five or six minutes being set apart in every history lesson, or better, every day, until the group is mastered. Rapid practice will then be given to the class in much the same way as practice is given in multiplication tables or "mental" arithmetic. All the usual plans of "dodging", team competition, and the like, may be employed, and there are few teachers of Standard III who will not agree that such brisk memory work is enjoyable and effective. Let the teacher clear his mind of the idea that the learning of dates is dull, and he will find that it need never enter the heads of the children. They should go on to the work of the senior school with a set of

“ pegs ” so firmly established that the history subsequently learned may be hung upon them. Occasional practice in repetition will be needed, and if that is given the dates of the kings of England will become a possession for life. Events not only of English but also of European history may be related with them, and even matters of ancient history have been known to be remembered by the device of comparing the date B.C. with the parallel date A.D. in the list of English kings. A list of important dates for any period or country could, of course, be compiled by a teacher for similar treatment, though he may possibly find that where the special advantages of the time-honoured list are absent, other methods may be more effective than that of rhythmical memorizing, at any rate if the learning of more than a small number of dates is required.

Chief among such methods is the use of charts and, as a preliminary to more elaborate work, of the simple time line. The method is often employed in modern schools. Some have a room where a permanent chart is hung, and the children are encouraged to refer to it as need arises ; elsewhere it is customary for the teacher in each classroom to keep in view of the class a chart made by one of its predecessors, which will be renewed only when dust and fading have diminished its power of attraction. Something indeed may be learnt by such means, but the main value of charts undoubtedly lies in the making.¹ The pasting of

¹ This is one of the reasons why the setting apart of a special history room is not, on the whole, a desirable practice. Apart from the essential books and atlases which will be found in a school or class library, little permanent apparatus is required.

pictures on paper divided into spaces which represent periods of time may be a suitable occupation for Standard I or II, especially if the sheets can be joined to form a "frieze" for the classroom wall, for by such means sequence is emphasized. The use of the time line, however, is best postponed until the class is becoming familiar with the idea of drawing to scale and can understand that periods of time may be represented by lines. Standard IV is normally ready for such work, and the power to understand and to make simple time lines should be part of the equipment with which a child passes into the senior school. The making of more elaborate charts is one of the fascinating ways of learning history which will await him there.

The most useful form of the simple time line seems to be a horizontal line stretching on each side of a Latin cross, this being a convenient symbol for the point in history from which Christendom marks its dating.¹ The suitable unit is decided upon, and on the right of the cross the required number of centuries or milleniums is marked off to represent the period A.D. ; similarly, to the left of the cross are marked the milleniums B.C. Beyond the furthest point of which history tells us the line is continued with dots, for time stretches far away into the remote past, and we cannot say when civilization began. To take the unit of length as representing a thousand years is probably the most valuable and simple plan for the first time

¹ The omission of diagrams to illustrate this chapter is deliberate. The emphasis here is on principles, not on particular examples. Moreover, it is not only for children that "the value . . . lies in the making."

line : nothing shows better how modern is the earliest English history, or how short a time has elapsed since the birth of Christ compared with the period which went before. Fundamental historical ideas can be learnt from such a time line, and several weeks may be usefully spent upon them when once the "time sense" of the class has emerged.

But the work with children in Standard IV, though enjoyable, will not be easy. The foundations must be carefully laid. A great deal of the time spent in some schools upon charts is wasted because the children do mechanically what they are told, and have never grasped the principles upon which they are working. An experienced teacher, of course, will choose his own way of introducing these principles. One method which has been found satisfactory may here be suggested.

The class were given sheets of squared paper of the usual kind, where the upper sides of ten small squares form the side of one larger square. The children were told to divide the paper lengthwise into two parts, and then to divide one half again, this time along the shorter side. Each child thus had three pieces of paper, on two of which only three complete large squares were printed. The class were then told to mark a certain point at the corner of the top right-hand square on one of the small pieces of paper, and to take it as representing the present year, 1928 ; one side of each little square was to represent one year ; it was thus obvious that ten years would be represented by one side of each large square. The children were told to draw lines to the left of the point

marking 1928, along the side of the large square, to represent the number of years that each of them had lived. To prevent confusion later, it was explained that each child was to take his age on his birthday in 1928, whether he had yet reached it or not. As soon as he had drawn the line to represent his own age, he could go on and put other lines below it, starting from a point vertically under the original point, to represent the ages of his brothers and sisters and friends, the initial letter of the child whose age was indicated being put at the right of the line. Some children, of course, saw what was wanted and rapidly drew lines representing the ages of several friends; their employment in that way gave time for slow children laboriously to count the little squares needed for the line representing their own age. Sometimes a question arose: "Please, teacher, my little brother is only six months: can I put him in?" The teacher threw the problem back to the class, and found always that someone could solve it. She then produced one of her own. Some children knew the ages of their parents, others did not. After talking about certain real ages which were known, she asked everyone to pretend that his father was forty and his mother thirty-five, and to draw lines in the same way as before which would represent their ages. The class bent eagerly over its work; then one after another face was raised in bewilderment, and hands shot up from different parts of the class: "Please, teacher, there isn't room." So the need of changing the scale was thrown to the class as a problem, and usually, again, it was solved by someone who would suggest, "Take

one side of a little square to represent two years.' The teacher explained that, while the right principle had been found, it would be convenient to take one side of a little square to represent ten years ("how many years will the side of a big square then represent?"), and the class took the second small piece of paper and drew lines to represent the ages of their parents and of grown-up friends of the teacher on the new scale. By a similar process it was discovered that the time since events which had happened more than three centuries ago could not be represented on the same papers, using the same scale; it could be shown if we took one side of a little square to represent a hundred years. Incidentally, the words decade, century and millenium were learnt, and the relation between them put up on the board in the form of a "table". The next step was to enquire from what point the dates we use for the years are counted, and then on the long strip of paper not yet touched, the simple time line described above could be made, with the letters B.C. and A.D. written clearly over the parts of the line to left and right of the cross.

From such a line the use of ordinal numbers as applied to milleniums and to centuries can easily be learned; it is demonstrably clear, for you can count, that dates beginning "one hundred" are in the second century. The use of the ordinals is probably best deferred until such demonstration can be given. At an earlier stage they are merely confusing to children, and at best they are vague. Before the emergence of the "time sense", the use of exact dates for memorizing and the employment of "before"

and "after" such dates to emphasize sequence give a preparation for chronology which is, as has been shown, in accordance with mental development. Not until Standard IV has been reached is it usually possible to carry the work to a different stage, and to introduce to children the more elaborate chronological conventions of adult life in such a way that they can be understood. The task of the teacher in helping children to learn chronology is clearly much easier when he can employ the conventional terms with the knowledge that they are for his class familiar mental implements; he will defeat his own ends if he uses them when they are only a source of bewilderment. There is value, as has been shown, in accustoming children under ten to the use of exact dates as "names" for the years, and the convention is familiar in ordinary experience; there seems to be no value in attempting to accustom them also to a usage which, before they can understand it, must merely appear contradictory: why should a date that begins "ten hundred" be in the eleventh century?

The difficulty of chronological ideas, as has already been said, is often forgotten by teachers. The understanding of time lines, even when they are introduced in some such way as has been described, will not be achieved in one or two lessons. Much practice is required at every step, just as it is required in the steps of a new mathematical process. There is need for the definite setting apart of a group of lessons for such chronological work, and if this is done time will in the end be saved, not lost, in the learning of history. The half-hours spent over time lines will

be repaid for the child whose mind begins to move freely in the centuries.

When once the principle has been understood by which periods of time are represented by lines drawn to scale, there is opportunity for enjoyment in the making of a great variety of charts. The simple process of turning the original piece of paper at right angles to the position in which it was held at first will have shown that the line may be drawn vertically or horizontally, and that it may be read from top to bottom or bottom to top. Most children, following the convention of reading, will probably wish to begin the line at the top and put the end representing the latest age, the present day, at the bottom of the page, but anyone whose visual imagery suggests that time comes *up* from the past should, of course, be allowed to construct his chart in the way he prefers. It quickly becomes obvious that when once the symbols B.C. and A.D. are fully understood it is not necessary to put in the cross and to draw the whole of the line representing historical time on every occasion; we can make a chart to represent just those centuries or decades which we are studying, and we shall choose the scale to suit the size of the paper and the number of details required. We can, too, dispense with the help of squared paper; at first rulers will be used for measuring, but as the children become accustomed to judge space by eye alone, a reasonable degree of accuracy may be obtained without them. It would not be profitable for boys and girls in Standards VI and VII to spend too long on the mechanical preparation of the framework of their charts: once again,

the purpose is to learn history, not to produce a chart in which the divisions shall be mathematically accurate. Children must be shown, of course, that chart work will not only help them to understand the relation of events to each other in time, but will also help their memories by a clear arrangement which can be easily visualized. The appearance of the chart when it is finished is of importance: the value for visualization is lost if it is over-crowded or if it is untidy or badly spaced. Care and accuracy are required and must be encouraged, but boys and girls between twelve and fourteen delight in the making of charts which are pleasant to the eye, and if they understand what they are doing, the teacher's help is more likely to be needed for the avoidance of meticulous attention to detail than for the prevention of slipshod work.

Over-elaboration is, indeed, one of the chief dangers in the use of charts. The simplest chart which will serve any given purpose is usually the best, and the maker of charts must study the art of omission. Chart work is a valuable way in which children may learn to select material in relation to an end, and to reject what is irrelevant. It gives scope, too, for initiative and choice, whether in the working out of a form suggested by the teacher, in the choice between alternative suggested forms, or in the search that a child may make for a form of his own.

Charts may be vertical, as in the simple form of "comparative chart", in which parallel columns are used by the side of a graded time line, and events are noted in the columns under headings which may

be the names of different countries or of different aspects of the history studied. For example, a chart may be made for European history in the nineteenth century, with columns headed France, Germany, Italy, England, and Eastern Europe ; or if the history of England for the same period is the subject of study, the headings may be Social Reforms, Scientific Inventions, Parliamentary Development, and European Events.

Charts, again, may be horizontal, as in various forms of the " temperature chart ", where time divisions are marked by points along a horizontal line, vertical lines dropped from them, and the rise and fall of some one or more countries or movements shown by lines after the fashion of graphs ; if more than one movement is to be represented on a single chart, a different colour for each may be used. To give a simple example : a temperature chart may indicate the course of the Reformation in England. A horizontal line is taken to represent the years 1450 to 1600 and the half centuries are marked along it ; below, a parallel line is drawn on which, in relation to the first line, the dates of the Tudor reigns are noted ; from the points representing these years, vertical lines are dropped to the bottom of the paper. A point is then chosen, near the bottom, on the vertical line representing the year 1485, and from it a horizontal line is drawn to about the middle of the column which marks the reign of Henry VIII ; this line represents the normal condition of ecclesiastical affairs before the Reformation. The line must then branch into two ; one branch will represent deviations from the old customs

in matters of church government, the other will stand for changes in connection with religious services ; each line must rise towards the top of the paper or drop towards the pre-Reformation position according to the movements of which history tells. Here, it is obvious, the chart has become a diagram,¹ as indeed it often does.

Suggestions for different kinds of charts may be found in various recent publications, particularly in Miss H. M. Madeley's pamphlet on *Time Charts*, published by the Historical Association, and in text books by Dr. Robert Jones. There is ample scope for the ingenuity of both teacher and class in such work, though here, as with every other particular method of learning history, the value is lost unless the means is always subordinate to the end. Not the making of charts but the learning of history, and more specifically the learning of chronology, is the aim for his class which the teacher must keep in mind.

It is clear that in the teaching of chronology by means of charts the co-operation of the class will be won. The children will be using historical material ; they will be thinking about people and events in relation to time ; and their activity, mental and motor, will be pleasurable. Here, as in the rhythmical memorizing of dates and in the whole process of seeing that sequence has meaning, there is nothing by which chronology need become distasteful to a class. A teacher who has himself understood both the importance of sequence in time and the chief stages in the development of the children's minds, will be able

¹ Cf. p. 48 ff.

to give sound chronological training without ever arousing the antipathy to dates which developed with out-worn methods. In every lesson, there will, as a matter of course, be some time reference : a single date on the board ; the relating of new material to an event or person whose place in time is already known ; the suggestion that here is another point for a chart. The children, too, will be trained to understand that in their own work time references must be given. In Standards II and III as a matter of habit, from Standard IV onwards as a matter of intelligence, exercises, notes, diagrams, will in some way suggest the place of the material in a time series. In the senior school the class will enjoy a direct consideration of time. Standards VI and VII may be encouraged to find metaphors in the poems they read ; they may invent their own symbols, and draw pictures of time, in new guise or old, at the beginning of their history notebooks.

The actual number of dates known by a boy who is leaving an elementary school will be small, but that is of little importance ; the learning of chronology includes but is greater than the memorizing of dates. He should take with him when he leaves some understanding of a time line which shows the length of the known story of civilization ; some idea of a few outstanding characteristics of ancient, mediæval and modern history in their order ; some knowledge of the " colour " and place of the more important centuries in the story of England ; the dates of the kings of England with some twenty or thirty other " peg " dates ; and, most important of all, a recognition of the fact that sequence and the time series matter.

CHAPTER VII

PICTURES AND THEIR USE

IN *Little Arthur's History of England* (with which the writer's learning of history began) there are just six illustrations. King Alfred's mother, wearing a coronet, teaches her boy to read. Harold lies on his face, an arrow piercing his back below the left shoulder blade, his crown on the ground, a faithful thane standing over the body in an attempt to defend it from a Norman knight and the alarming hoofs of his horse. Hubert presses his hand to his forehead in agony at the sight of the ruffian about to attack his young charge with a great pair of pincers. The bodies of Edward V and his brother are being carried "to a little back staircase near their room in the Tower, and buried in a great hole under the stairs", under the superintendence of a stooping villain whose general appearance is that of a London fireman. Lady Jane Grey refuses the crown, and, finally, King Charles parts from his children.

Perhaps there is no point in the learning of history on which the opinions of our Victorian grandmothers differed more completely from our own than on the importance of pictures. Teachers of to-day may disagree on almost every other subject connected with

history, but with one voice they say, "Give plenty of illustrations."

Children learn through their eyes as well as their ears. Minds can be approached by sight as well as by hearing. For some children in every class sight is probably a "preferred" sense; some, that is, in every class will learn more easily by looking than by listening; more activity will be aroused in their minds by pictures than by speech. To every member of a class the general statement applies that words have less meaning for children than for adults. Their vocabulary is of necessity small since, as for all of us, it depends chiefly upon the extent and variety of experience. It is often, for the same reason, different from the teacher's, and he must remember that terms which were familiar to himself as a boy from tales of romance may be strange to the practical child of the slums. Lastly, and again for the same reason, teacher and child may use the same word with a widely different content. It is here that the particular danger and difficulty lie for the learning of history.

Vocabulary, of course, can be enlarged, sometimes by deliberate explanation of a word put on the board; better, often, by its introduction into a sentence where the context makes clear the meaning. Where this can be done with comparative ease, the teacher of history has no special difficulty; he is merely using for historical purposes a method which is common to all his oral work. But sometimes he finds that he cannot make clear to the class the meaning of an unfamiliar word. If the idea conveyed by it is abstract, the difficulty may serve to show that the historical

material chosen is unsuited to the needs of the class. A great deal of the confusion in the minds of children arises from the persistent attempt to teach them words when the ideas conveyed are beyond their understanding, and once the habit is formed of loose and inaccurate employment of words, it will not be abandoned even when an age of possible understanding is reached. On the contrary, it will be carried into adult life, and will prove fatal not only to accurate speech but to clear thinking. The teacher of history is more responsible than he is always aware for the vague and shallow thought of to-day. Too often he uses terms of social and political significance which have no real meaning for his class, and is then content with the parrot-like repetition of them which fails to show him what the children are thinking. "Democracy", "socialism", even "parliament" and "minister", can be used by Standard VII with apparent correctness, and yet stand in their minds for no clear ideas whatsoever. At every point a teacher must challenge his own use of technical terms and words which convey unfamiliar ideas; if he cannot translate them into the speech of the class, the subject matter is better postponed. Ignorance is often a less perilous state of mind than confusion. The learning of history will not be accomplished by phrases which have no content related with life.

But there will be other words which the teacher finds it hard to explain, not because the ideas they convey are difficult, but because his own descriptive powers are weak or because he has neither time nor desire for verbal elaboration. Words which denote

material things are often most quickly and effectively taught by pictures. Cloisters, long bow, battering-ram, standard, wimple, spinning-jenny : to give more examples is needless. The picture may be prepared beforehand and pinned up in front of the class, or if the teacher is skilled it may be rapidly drawn on the board ; or the children may find it at the appropriate moment on page 39 in their books. To struggle to convey in words what a picture will show in a minute is a curiously futile process. At best it is slow ; usually it is inadequate ; at worst it is misleading.

For, as has been said, the history teacher's main difficulty lies not in the absence of words from the children's vocabulary, but in the difference of connotation which words may have for the class and for himself. The teacher of mathematics or of science uses terms which are recognized as technical, and their difficulty is manifest. The teacher of history often employs words in everyday use which the children will think they know but to which they give a meaning either so vague that it cannot be used for clear thought, or so limited that the new picture they build with it is absurd. The word "government" may be an example of the first class, the word "match" of the second. Boys and girls not only below but over fourteen would often, if they were honest, confess that "the Government" for them has only the vaguest sense of "the powers that be". On the other hand, Standard IV will visualize an entirely anachronistic box marked Bryant and Mays' if they are told that the soldiers of Cromwell carried

match for the firing of guns.¹ Standard II may wonder how the man in the Gospels picked up a brass bedstead and walked ; most of us have believed that the captain of St. Paul's ship brought a mariner's compass from Syracuse.

A misunderstanding concerned with material things may often be entirely avoided by pictures. Their language is not ambiguous, and, partly because they have more meaning, they are often far more attractive to children than words. Again because their meaning is fuller, the impression they make is deeper and more lasting. The pictures shown to illustrate a historical point may often be the part of the lesson from which a child learns more than from all the rest. Pictures are indeed among a teacher's most serious tools. They are not extras to be presented as a reward for good conduct, or stimulants to be kept for use in moments of fatigue. To discover the point at which they can be of most help in the learning of history is a necessary part in a teacher's preparation. And first he must look for and choose them. He may be sure that the children will learn from pictures ; he must also be sure that it is history which they will learn.

Now history is a true story, and if pictures are often more full of meaning for children than words, then clearly we must be as careful of the accuracy of what we show as of what we say. " The children like it " is a no more adequate reason for the showing of a picture we know to be fanciful than for the telling as history of a story we know to be myth. Fanciful picture and myth both have their place, for there are truths

¹ See pictures in C. H. Firth's *Cromwell's Army*.

that can best be conveyed by symbol, but always, if we are teaching history, it is with the conveying of truth in some sense or other that we are concerned. No adult can know the whole truth about any event, and no child can know even as much as an adult: the best picture of the past that the child can gain will have little resemblance to the original. But the limitations within which he works make it more and not less important that the teacher of history, as far as he can, shall teach what is true. It is not the inaccuracies which make a picture attractive; the reasons for their appreciation lie deeper, in psychological law. There will be no lack of liking on a child's part because what he is shown is in correspondence, as close as may be, with the facts. Moreover, he will inevitably use a picture as evidence; "seeing is believing" for the immature mind; what a picture says, for a child, is true. It is the teacher's business to see that the trust of the children is not misplaced.

The difficulty of obtaining pictures which may be used with a historically good conscience is not as great as at first sight appears.¹ First, there are reproductions of pictures contemporary with the period studied. The Bayeux tapestry² has, of course, much detail which is purely imaginative, but needlework which most scholars assign to a date within a few years of the death of William I has a "reality" different in kind from that of the illustrations in "Little Arthur". We may learn about life on a mediæval manor from pictures with which people

¹ See *A List of Illustrations*, compiled by the Historical Association.

² See p. 40.

in the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries illustrated their calendars, just as you paint calendars of a different kind to give as presents at Christmas ; reproductions can be obtained on post cards at the British Museum. Monks made pictures in prayer-books of stories from the Bible and the Lives of the Saints, putting in the furniture and dress of their own time to make them seem more real ; the same device was employed by the great artists of the Renaissance. Reproductions, again, can be bought at museums and picture galleries. In ancient Egypt, the priests drew birds to represent the souls of men, and other strange figures, too, on papyrus rolls which they put in the tombs of the dead ; these, also, post-cards will show. The people who made the pictures in this or that century did not draw in the same way as we do ; the children will find that their work is different from ours. But with some such warning they will be able, from Standard III upwards, to use even difficult reproductions, and they will gain fresh assurance that the men of the past really lived through seeing that they too loved pictures. Often, indeed, the lack of perspective and proportion is less troubling to children than to adults, for they draw that way themselves.

Another class of illustration easily bought is pictures of things that were actually used in the past. These will be chiefly photographs of museum exhibits, published in guides and catalogues and post cards both in London and in the provinces. Roman pots and pans ;¹ a Danish helmet ;² King Alfred's " jewel "

¹ British Museum.

² *ib.*

with the inscription " Alfred had me made " ;¹ fourteenth century pilgrims' signs ;² Tudor furniture and musical instruments ;³ the buff coat of a Cromwellian soldier and a dress of the time of Queen Anne :⁴ the list is continuous from the earliest history of England, and the stream grows wider and wider as modern times are reached. These illustrations are as plentiful as they are cheap and easy of access, and to the children who study them and make copies of their own, history is no longer remote from life.

Such pictures will be used not only or chiefly to illustrate what is called " social history ", but to build up a general background for men and events. To be able to visualize the Black Prince⁵ or Sir Philip Sidney we must know what he wore. Not the dress in itself, but the dress as clothing real people is what children need. Moreover, when they know that poor men in the Middle Ages wore wool, they may be helped to discover the reason why. Similarly, they will learn that the muslin and silk so freely used by the rich in the eighteenth century were brought by the East India Company (the voyage took six months). The clumsy contrivances by which fire was put out in the seventeenth century go far to explain the need for a new St. Paul's : they are there to be sketched

¹ Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

² British Museum, Guide to Mediæval Rooms.

³ Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington.

⁴ London Museum postcards.

⁵ His armour is in Canterbury Cathedral. Postcards of mediæval armour may be obtained at the Tower of London. Rubbings from monumental brasses (made with cobblers' heel-ball on thin cartridge paper) are useful for military, ecclesiastical, and civil dress. See J. M. S. Ward, *Brasses*. Cf. also (in libraries) Herbert Druitt, *Costume on Brasses*.

in the London Museum. Spinning wheels and hand looms make evident one of the reasons why before the use of water-power and of steam, England had no huge factories.¹ Bacon was a great philosopher, and he wore a ruff; Shakespeare learned his letters, perhaps, from the very horn-book of which this is a picture. The story of the past must never be confined to material things, for it is always the tale of "attempts . . . at the adventure of living"; but always the lives of men and women are set in material surroundings, and often the actual things they made are symbols of their thoughts and their achievements. These are brought home to the children in photographs of museum exhibits.

But not all things made in historical times are shut up in museums. The life of buildings is longer than that of the men who build. You may see such things for yourselves; they have stood upon English soil for hundreds of years, two or four or seven, or perhaps from the time of the Romans. Here are photographs I took in the holidays, and postcards sent by a friend. These abbeys, you see, are in ruins: I will tell you how the monks were turned out and the lead stripped from the roof and the glass in the beautiful windows broken. You remember the old round arch in the church close by: here are pictures of others in Norfolk, in Oxford, in Winchester; you can see the stone patterns loved by the Normans and copy them in your books.² Here is a photograph

¹ See also *Illustrations of the Industrial Revolution*, published by the British Institute of Adult Education, 39 Bedford Square, W.C.1.

² Architectural slides may sometimes be obtained for lantern lectures given by the teacher or an expert. Their occasional use for illustrative purposes is valuable, especially for older children.

of the chapter-house in Westminster Abbey where in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Commons used to meet, and here is the room, not a hundred years old, where they meet to-day. This is the cathedral where pilgrims worshipped at Becket's shrine ; these are the tombs of some of the Templars—they built the round church which the photograph shows and one like it at Cambridge. Here are cottages lived in in Tudor times ; this is Milton's house ; here is Hampton Court with its sixteenth century chimneys, all pattereded ; here, of course, is the water gate of the Tower.¹

Modern buildings and statuary, too, can be used.² We have no portrait of Alfred the Great, but when the people of Winchester put up a statue of him a thousand years after his death, this is how it was made. It stands in his capital city to-day : it does not show what he really was like, but how the people who lived there now chose to think of him. Charles I, riding down his own Whitehall ; and Cromwell, who caused his death, outside the Houses of Parliament ; Nelson, high above Trafalgar Square ; Florence Nightingale, lamp in hand ; Gladstone, with the symbols of his work around him : in all these statues, contemporary or not, there is an element both of portraiture and of symbolism, and the photographs will make real to children not merely the individuals, but the causes in which they worked.

Reproductions of portraits are another class of

¹ Postcards are on sale at the Tower, the Temple, and Hampton Court.

² Such postcards are usually best obtained locally.

illustration which can be used in an elementary school.¹ Photographs of contemporary portraits, whether the statue portraits of Egypt, the bust portraits of Rome, the great paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or portraits of modern times, help to make it clear that the men and women of the past were people who really and truly lived. They are useful, too, for showing the dress and ornaments of particular periods, and these, as has been explained, may be used for matters of greater importance than as examples of bygone fashions. Postcards of pictures in the National Gallery, for instance, can be bought, and children may learn from the dress of the beautiful Countess of Pembroke though her features mean nothing to them. For portraits, as such, it must be remembered, have little interest for children. They do not usually appreciate human beauty, except in particular cases of people they know, and they cannot trace character in faces nor attempt to relate the appearance of men with their actions. The children of Charles I have interest because they are children and because of the dog in the middle of the group, but the sensitive face of Sir Thomas More has no meaning for Standard III; Standard VI will find little to stimulate thought in the gentleness of Judge Jeffreys' appearance. For a child under fourteen the London Museum holds more of interest than the National Portrait Gallery. Not character, but action; not the deep-furrowed face of Cromwell, but the weapons he used and the death warrant he

¹ Shops near the British Museum stock large numbers of postcards giving reproductions from various galleries.

signed are the pictures that will make real the tale of the Civil War.

The teacher who can obtain reproductions of contemporary pictures and photographs of things made and used in the past, will have no need to resort to fancy pictures to illustrate his lessons. And no teacher in England need be without such illustrations. The coming of photography, of the postcard, and of the cheap illustrated paper, has brought historical pictures within the reach of anyone who cares to collect them. Publishers' book notices; the pamphlets of the British Broadcasting Company; museum catalogues, may be made to contribute: there is no important period of English history for which in a few months illustrations may not be found. Thanks to the British Museum, the same statement is true of ancient history. European history is less easily provided for, but teachers who spend their holidays abroad, or who watch the *Illustrated London News*, will find pictures also for that. Views of a country may be turned to good account: the Alps have not changed their appearance since Hannibal crossed them; the Arabian desert is not less sandy than in the time of Mohammed; the Rhine and the Danube, the Elbe and the yellow Tiber, flow on as in past centuries, and photographs of them will help in historical visualization, even if a teacher finds difficulty in obtaining pictures of the castles and city walls in which they are rich. Railway posters¹ of Welsh mountains form an excellent introduction to the

¹ Posters may be obtained, free or at a small charge, from the Publicity Departments of the railway companies.

story of the campaign of Edward I against Llewellyn or of Henry IV against Glendower. Such illustrations are true to fact.

Is there then no place for the imaginary picture? Must we only show children the setting of events, and never attempt to portray a historical incident? It seems that, at least when the infant school is outgrown, the dangers of imaginary pictures are, generally speaking, greater than the gains. The danger of inaccuracy is obvious. Probably most adults are still obliged to correct by conscious effort certain strange ideas about incidents in the past derived from the fanciful pictures of childhood. Some of the illustrations in text-books still used in schools are no less remote from historical truth. Again, there is danger sometimes in checking a child's own use of imagination: give him the material background from photographs of actual things, and the story of an heroic deed, and he will need no more. His mental picture will perhaps be further from fact than that of the professional illustrator, but it is the result of his own activity. He will often learn more from the attempt to transfer his own picture to paper than from looking at someone else's attempt to portray the same event. The illustrator's picture, at best, is taken from the same kind of verbal evidence as the teacher has given the child; his adult understanding of it will have saved him from certain childish mistakes, but the idea as presented to the child in his picture will be one degree further removed from actuality than that which the child's own imaginative use of the material has produced. And the child will

inevitably use the picture as evidence, whereas his own drawing will be simply illustration both for himself and also for the rest of the class, when the more successful efforts are passed round for discussion and admiration.

Yet to the hard rule of rejecting imaginary pictures for children over eight some exceptions may be allowed. There are pictures by artists of recognized standing which may be shown to a child as the portrayal of a modern man's thought. Such pictures show truth in some form or another ; they are often faithful in detail, and if they are not, they set forth a historical thought in beautiful form. The picture of the boyhood of Raleigh is fanciful in conception, yet in its main idea it is true. Standards III and IV may well be told that this is how an artist has imagined the scene, and they too will share in the love of romance and desire for adventure which, it is safe to say, stirred the hearts of the two Devon boys. For some grown-up people the horrors of St. Bartholomew's Eve have been for ever made real by Sir John Millais' picture. Sympathy with the little Royalist asked, " When did you last see your father ? " has been awakened in the mind of many a modern child. The pictures are imaginary ; they show the artist's idea. Let a child, too, share the idea ; he need be in no mental confusion as to the fact.

Such pictures as these are often found on school-room walls or in the teacher's home. The reproductions are commonly of a size suitable for use with a class. They will be arranged on an easel and enjoyed

in the lesson by everyone ; afterwards, they will be studied by individuals at their leisure. Some reproductions are too small for the whole class to see at once, and yet too big for children to pass from hand to hand. There are several ways of arranging for these. Either they will be left in the class-room, after the teacher has talked with the children about them, and looked at in any spare time ; or the children may see them in groups. This method may also be used if the teacher can only obtain the pictures in books which it is awkward to handle and dangerous to leave unprotected. Standards VI and VII, and sometimes Standard V, will work well if divided into groups, each with its leader. The members of a group, some seven or eight children, will sit or stand informally round the leader, and he will be responsible for showing his group the pictures entrusted to him. The teacher will go from group to group, ready to answer questions and ready also to move books and pictures from one group to another as the time is reached for exchange. If the teacher has too few illustrations to occupy several groups, he can, of course, set the class to work by themselves and call out a small number of children at a time to see the books at his table. The disadvantage here is that, on the one hand, the children who look at the pictures are less independent while, on the other, the teacher's attention is too exclusively taken up with a few. Moreover, the knowledge that they may soon be called away from their own work, hinders concentration by the rest of the class upon what they are doing.

Where the picture is one of some simple weapon or

tool, the teacher can, of course, make an enlarged copy either before the lesson or at the time on the blackboard. If he prepares his pictures, he should for each object use a different sheet of paper. Plates are often given in books which reproduce photographs of a number of objects, for reasons no doubt of economy; to copy such a group as it stands is so greatly to lessen the effect of each object that the work is hardly worth doing. Useful enlarging may sometimes be done from Quennell's *Everyday Things in England*; here the illustrations are chiefly the work of the artist rather than of the photographer, but they are drawn after such careful study of evidence that they may safely be used.¹ Enlargements may also be made by drawing, or with the aid of the microscope, from many of the postcards published by museums. The effectiveness of colour wherever possible should be remembered. Such large pictures give the teacher the opportunity of teaching from them in his oral lesson. He must, of course, make sure that the whole class can see without strain; he will put up the picture at the point at which he needs it, and make it the subject of exposition and talk. When its immediate use is over, it will be left in view of the class, and the impression it has made on their minds will be deepened. In this connection it is worth while to observe that the teacher who values the powers of sight in the learning of history, will see that his blackboard is clearly arranged and that

¹ See also *Everyday Things in the Viking and Anglo-Saxon Age* and *Everyday Things in Roman Britain*. In these, and in the two volumes on *Everyday Life in the Stone Ages*, imagination is more freely used and the teacher must proceed with caution.

remnants of other lessons are not allowed a place there or elsewhere within view of the class.

While large illustrations are important in oral teaching, especially for Standards II and III and, of course, in the infants' school, much work will be done, even by these standards, and a greater amount in the senior school, from small pictures which the children can handle. Close study can be given, independence is developed, and the number of pictures seen by each child can be greatly increased. It is true that postcards may be mounted on a large sheet of paper and left in the class-room for observation, but unless they form part of a definite scheme of "individual work", it is usually more satisfactory to ensure that they are studied by every child as he sits in his place. For such use each postcard must be separately mounted, to ensure ease of handling, for preservation of what forms an important part of the teacher's stock-in-trade, and also because a plain background, say of brown paper, makes a picture much more effective than the desk or exercise book on which it is otherwise laid at haphazard. There should never be fewer pictures than one for every two children. The method of passing on the cards must be thought out beforehand and explained to the class, and usually, if the numbers are large, there must be some sacrifice of freedom to order, and the children must be told to pass on the cards only when the word is given; a certain amount of latitude can easily be allowed, but unless some general rule is observed confusion arises. If the teacher has collected enough pictures for each child to have one,

it will still be best for the class to work in couples : two cards to two children leads to more learning of history than one each. Everyone wants to discuss a picture that interests him, and each couple will naturally talk about the card or cards in their hands. In this way there will be more genuine discussion and less risk of undue noise than if individuals promiscuously chatter over the picture that each has been given.

It is evidence of the mental activity stimulated by pictures that talk on the historical subjects they represent arises spontaneously, and the teacher, moving about among the children, will find that some of his most effective teaching can be given as they ask him for explanations of what they see. If he knows the background of his subject, he can add to the facts he has planned to give in the lesson at the moment when a child's mind is eager for knowledge ; to the slow child he can repeat in a new form what he has already said, and he can lead the quick child further on and deeper than the class could go. He will have opportunity for much informal teaching of individuals or groups while the rest of the class look at pictures, talk quietly about them, and make drawings in their notebooks. The child who cannot talk without disturbing the others must forfeit the privilege. Every drawing, of course, must be named and in some way dated. Sometimes, instead of mere copying, the work asked for will be selective. Sometimes the results will be expressed in words : questions may be put on the board to be answered from a study of

pictures. For Standard III: from postcards¹ of agricultural life, "Draw and name the tools used by men on a manor in the time the pictures show." For Standard V: from postcards from the South Kensington Museum, "Show the most important differences between furniture in Elizabeth's time and to-day." For Standard VII: from photographs of cathedrals and churches, "What were the differences between the styles of architecture used in the time of Henry I and in the time of Henry VI?" or, "What were the characteristics of buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren?"²

In such ways, and in others which will occur to the mind of every experienced teacher, use may be made of pictures. They render vivid what might be meaningless and vital what might seem dead. They are a form of evidence, and they provide illustration. They call out mental activity in forms which are keenly enjoyed. The use of pictures, then, is a more precious means for the learning of history than the author of *Little Arthur* dreamed.

¹ Two sets of illustrations from English calendars, one of the eleventh, the other of the fourteenth century, can be obtained at the British Museum.

² Photographs of buildings by Wren can be obtained locally (e.g. at Hampton Court and in Cambridge).

CHAPTER VIII

THE USE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORITIES

FOR the development of his personality, that is for his growth as an "individual-in-society", a child needs the idea and the practice of truth. Whether he lives in Manchester or in Little Snoring, he must learn to distinguish between what belongs to him and what does not, and to relate his own claims with the claims of other people. It is not enough that he should keep his hands from picking and stealing and his tongue from lying and slandering. He must learn to be true and just in all his dealings, and his action cannot be just unless his thought is true. Every child, too, is a potential citizen of Athens; but he cannot realize the kinship with great minds and the freedom from imprisonment in his surroundings which are his mental birthright, unless he can distinguish the ugly from the beautiful and the false from the true. Every child is heir also to spiritual kingdoms whose gates are barred against the insincere.

The learning of history is one means by which a child may become familiar with the idea and the practice of truth. For history is a true story, and the child who does not know that that is what differentiates it from other stories, is either still in the mental stage of infancy, or has been kept back, probably by bad teaching, from the rudiments of historical

study. The primary question which every student of history must ask is the question, Is it true ?

The sense of actuality may be fostered, even in Standard II, by reference to the sources of history. The story of Bede is told with the tales of the early missionaries. He wanted other people to know how the English learnt about Christ, and he wrote a book with all the stories in it ; he wrote it in Latin, for that is the language in which books were usually written then, but it has been put into English, and here is a copy of it.¹ I will read you what Bede says about Augustine and his monks, or Paulinus with the dark eyes and the hooked nose ; about Oswald and the horse King Aidan gave him, or Cuthbert and the otters who kept him warm when he stood in the water. Alfred, who loved to hear stories from other lands, thought that the West Saxons who were children ought to know their own history when they grew up, and other children, too ; so in his time a record of important things that happened every year was begun, called the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.² You can tell me some of the things that might be written down. Now I will read to you some entries from the Chronicle ; you will see how frightened men used to be about the Danish raids. We know what kind of ships the Danes came in over the North Sea, because the remains of several boats have been found : here is a picture of one ;³ and we know what the Danes and their

¹ *Ecclesiastical History*. See p. 36, footnote 2.

² A translation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is published in Everyman's Library. See also Asser's *Life of Alfred*, published in the King's Classics (Chatto and Windus).

³ A photograph of the Gokstadt boat is given in Traill's *Social England*, Vol I.

cousins the other Northmen thought about the sea,¹ for some of their poems on the "whale-way" have been saved in books written soon after Alfred's time, and I will read lines to you from one of them.

By such means children of Standard II may be accustomed to the idea that when we tell them a history story there is foundation for what we say, and may be encouraged to ask the necessary second question: "Is it true? Then how do you know?" We know partly from archæological evidence and partly from books, and numberless examples of the kind of evidence on which the historian works are available for use in elementary schools. A child cannot reconstruct his history from original materials, but he can be given enough examples to show the kind of material used, and, more important still, he can be accustomed to the idea that evidence is necessary. First, from the general attitude of his teacher; then from his interest both in literary sources and in pictures which will bring archæological evidence to the class-room, a boy may learn that historical statements are based on evidence. Sometimes it is possible to show to the children an actual historical relic: a flint implement, a Roman coin, a mediæval prayer-book, a sampler worked by the teacher's great-grandmother in the days of the French Revolution. No one who has watched the delight and awe with which a class gazes on such a treasure, will doubt the response of children's minds to "the real thing" when they see

¹ See *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer* in Stopford Brooke's *English Literature from the Beginnings to the Norman Conquest*.

it. The replacing of a desire for what is first-hand by a dull acceptance of text-book generalities is one of the injuries too often inflicted by well-intentioned teachers in school. Give a child access to evidence, and his love of the genuine will grow in the learning of history.

It is at a later stage that the next necessary historical question must be encouraged. "Is it true? How do you know? What is the value of the evidence?" The child who even in the infants' school was passing beyond the stage of acceptance of facts merely on the word of an adult, and in Standards II to IV has been trained to look for evidence, must learn in the senior school that what is written must not be accepted merely because someone has put it down. "A man who lived soon after the time tells how Pope Urban preached a crusade at Clermont: I will read you what he said":¹ that is sufficient for Standard III. But Standards VI and VII can be introduced to the elements of historical criticism. The accounts of two chroniclers differ: why? Was the knowledge of one or both writers inaccurate? Was the narrator carried away by emotion? Perhaps he exaggerated unconsciously, or was he trying to increase the fame of his hero, or did he deliberately "fake"? Did he write from hearsay, or, if he was present himself when this or that happened, can we trust his account? You remember how this morning two of you disagreed on the details of the street accident which you saw. And the manuscript in which

¹ J. H. Robinson, *Readings in European History*, Vol 1.

the story is written : how do we know that it is what it purports to be ? How was it preserved ? Where is it kept now ?

Such questions, it is clear, will not be asked at every point in the work, nor could they always be answered. Much that is taught and learnt must be accepted on sheer authority. There is little opportunity in an elementary school for a comparison of sources on the lines suggested for secondary schools by Dr. Keatinge in his *Studies in the Teaching of History*. The minds of the children of Standard VII are still immature, and the keenest literary intellects have already passed on to the secondary school. In practice, too, the supply of books is usually inadequate, and the duplication of long passages for large classes makes too great a demand on the teacher's time. But no child should pass out of an elementary school without being aware that the problems of historical criticism exist. At some point or another, he may be introduced to them. He believes a statement because it is found in a book, but sometimes books, even books used in school, disagree : he is fortunate if he discovers the fact when a teacher is there to direct his further search. An inaccurate statement in a textbook may be a golden opportunity ; it can be used for the learning of history in that vital sense which will increase the appreciation of truth.

But a training in the value of evidence is not the only advantage of the use of original sources in school. A child may often be helped to obtain historical material for himself from the originals. The stories of Elizabethan explorers may be read to him straight

from the pages of Hakluyt¹ and the vivid details of the present taken by merchants to the "great Sophy of Persia" will give far more idea of Shakespeare's England than second-hand generalizations from textbook or teacher. Parts of the story of Sir Thomas More may be read from the *Life* by his son-in-law Roper.² Froissart's tale of the battle of Sluys will hold a class spellbound: the enemy ships were so many that "their masts seemed to be like a great wood", and the English, "the better to come together . . . had great hooks and grappers of iron".³ The diaries of Mungo Park and Captain Cook⁴ will carry the children away with the writers to Africa and Australia. Such readings give training in the use of originals, and they also give narrative drawn by the vivid pens of those who had seen what they described. Again, children may hear clauses of legal and constitutional documents in the original phrases. If a class has understood the troubles which led to the Petition of Right, they will like to be told what it actually said, and when they have discussed how the remedies fitted the wrongs, they will wait anxiously with the Commons till the royal answer is received, "*Soit droit fait comme est désiré.*" When they have seen the many pages of modern print which the Grand Remonstrance covers, and have suggested some of the points which it must have contained, and have had read to

¹ Hakluyt's *Voyages of the English Nation* is published in eight volumes in *Everyman's Library*. Vols 2 and 8 are the most useful for school purposes. See also J. Jones' *Geography by Discovery* (Teachers' Edition) for well-chosen narrative extracts.

² Published in the King's Classics (Chatto and Windus).

³ See footnote p. 26.

⁴ Both are available in *Everyman's Library*.

them the actual clauses which show that their suggestions were good, they will watch the candles brought in as the short November daylight dies and the long discussion drags on, they will put their hands to the hilts of their swords as the voices grow loud and angry, they will wait breathless while the votes are counted, and sigh in relief or despair when the result is declared, and, by a majority of eleven, the House has decided to send forward those clauses to the King. A text-book, perforce, gives a summary of the main points, and later the class will refresh their memory from it or from the short notes which they have taken. The summary is then a summary proper : it stands for the actual words which the Commons approved and the children understood ; it is like a formula of mathematics or chemistry, a convenient way of putting down the results of a process which has been followed. Without knowledge of the original form behind the short sentences, and its meaning, the summary may be only dead words and is often intolerably boring.

Sometimes the history learnt by a class from originals will be by way of induction. The teacher will read to the class a number of particular examples, and ask it to make a general statement. "A royal commission (you have learnt what that means) was appointed in 1841 to investigate the conditions of labour in mines.¹ Witnesses were summoned. I will read you the question they were asked and their answers. Write down a list of the chief evils the commissioners found or (if a different wording is preferred), of the points with which reform measures

¹ Cf. p. 39.

would deal." The danger in this kind of work is that the teacher should think that his class is doing more than it is : the compiler of the source book from which he reads has already selected material, he selects again, and the class can only make an induction from the selection presented to it ; the children are not discovering history for themselves on what used to be called the heuristic method. But their mental activity has been aroused, and they are likely to remember their own generalizations ; they can, too, be shown through their mistakes that a generalization must cover all the examples and yet go no further than the evidence warrants ; and the exercise will give them practice in that sorting out and arrangement of material which is part of historical method and essential for all clear thinking.

Sometimes the teacher will use originals not chiefly for training to see the importance of evidence, nor for teaching a child to learn straight from the source, but for the purpose of illustration. He will make a generalization, and then give a particular example from a contemporary writer, or he will state a theory and show from an original its meaning in practice. The fifteenth century in England was a time of disorder, a time truly characterized by a writer of doggerel verse :

" Many laws and little right ;
 Many acts of Parliament,
 And fewe kept with good intent."

I will read you some of Margaret Paston's letters to her husband when he was away, and you will see the kind of thing of which the writer of those lines was

thinking.¹ The private correspondence of the Paston family gives a picture far more important and far more interesting to a child than a list of battles in the Wars of the Roses. Again, the quarrel between Henry I and Anselm was settled by a compromise ; what it might mean in practice that ecclesiastical elections should take place in the king's court is brilliantly clear in the *Chronicle* of Jocelyn of Brake-lond.² No one who has listened to the gossip of the monks, and watched their three representatives set off from Bury for Westminster ; or seen the anxious faces when it was made known whether the king allowed their nominations, or felt the momentous importance for the monastery of the choice of an abbot—no one who has shared the experiences of Jocelyn will again find ecclesiastical elections a matter remote from life. His story illustrates, too, the relations of an abbey to a town on its land, the value of trading privileges enjoyed by the men of London, the disputes that arose over such manorial rights as the possession of a mill at which tenants must grind their corn. Again and again Jocelyn gives the particular example which will turn a statement on England in the twelfth century from a dull generalization to a fact full of colour and movement. The textbook, of necessity, says, "These things used to happen ;" the original source says, "That happened there and then—and Abbot Sampson objected."

Cheap reprints of the works of early writers will

¹ The *Paston Letters* are published in *Everyman's Library*.

² A translation is published in the *King's Classics*.

often be of greater value to the teacher than "source books," because in them he is freer to choose the material that suits both his class and his individual interests and tastes. He cannot teach children all history; they will learn most if he chooses the examples which have appealed to himself and will, in his judgment, best meet their needs. He will, of course, remember a child's lack of adult humour, and refrain from that cheapening of historical material which results from the treatment as matter for joke of that which the child sees as serious. He will omit many details over which he chuckles himself because they reflect human experience in a way still strange to a child. On the other hand, he will not be perturbed if the children's sense of the comic surprises him with a laugh, and where he has found in the original source some fact which he knows will seem to them funny, he will spare a few minutes to share the joke. Laughter is among the best methods of learning, and often in the learning of history it is specially appropriate. The teacher and class who deal with the men and women and children of the past will not fail to meet human foibles, and spontaneous laughter is no bad preparation for citizenship.

Reprints of books full of human detail are not hard to obtain. Four half-crowns spent, say, on Einhard's *Charles the Great*,¹ Asser's *Alfred*, Jocelyn of Brake-lond's *Chronicle*, and a volume of the *Paston Letters*, may be of greater value for the library of teacher or of school than an *Outline of Mediæval History* published at half-a-guinea. Use will, of course, also be made

¹ King's Classics.

of "source books". Their scope is naturally wider than that of a book by one author, and help in the selection of material is welcome to the busy teacher. He will sometimes find that the books of extracts prepared for university students will better serve his purpose than those compiled directly for use in schools, for in the larger book he has both guidance and freedom to choose. But school source books, with material selected with the needs of children in view, are also of value,¹ and some of these will be suitable for upper standards to use in "individual work". An excellent bibliography of this class of book is given in the *Handbook for History Teachers*.

The extracts printed in source books are taken chiefly from the two great classes of historical documents, the literary and the official.² The official class includes the records of courts, state papers, legal deeds, and all such inventories and lists as were made for public or private official purposes; the literary class includes chronicles, biographies, memoirs, and other writings in which individuals put down a record of life and thought which would keep green the memory of the past and present for themselves and for posterity. There is yet another kind of literary document which may be used by the student of history, whether adult or child. The writings of story-teller and poet, while not strictly to be classed as historical documents, often abound in indirect evidence of both the thought and the material back-

¹ J. Turrall's *Illustrations British History* is particularly useful but is out of print.

² A clear short account of the chief classes of Document is given in L. F. Salzman's *Original Sources of English History*.

ground of the authors' times. The information gained from them must be checked from other sources ; allowance must be made for poets' licence ; a storyteller will heighten the colours and aim at effect rather than accuracy. But no writer can put himself wholly outside his own period, and the historian who is looking for records of popular thought and feeling will find them in songs and stories as well as in more self-conscious writings. The future historian of the Great War will learn something from " Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag " and from " Tipperary."

For teacher and children, contemporary literature is full of illustrations for the different periods of history. *Beowulf*¹ and the *Battle of Brunanburh*² are typical of Anglo-Saxon feeling ; in *Piers Plowman* the end of the fourteenth century is seen through the eyes of a reformer, and in the *Canterbury Tales*³ from a gay and different point of view ; nowhere can children catch better the Elizabethan pride of country and race than in certain great passages of Shakespeare, whether they are put into the lips of a Richard or a Henry. The Hill Difficulty and Giant Despair make real not only their creator but the Clarendon Code which sent him to prison. Sir Roger de Coverley is a better acquaintance than Harley or Bolingbroke for children who are working on the reign of Queen Anne. *Oliver Twist* shows the abuses of the poor

¹ For the story, see C. L. Thomson's *The Adventures of Beowulf*. For a poetical translation from which extracts may be read, see *The Tale of Beowulf* by William Morris and A. J. Wyatt.

² Tennyson's version is the most easily obtainable.

³ *Piers Plowman* and *The Canterbury Tales* are both published in *Everyman's Library*.

law in the nineteenth century, and *Shirley* one aspect of the early days of machinery. Every teacher could multiply examples as obvious as these, but it is not every teacher who recognizes their value for the learning of history. The bugbear of wasting time is before him, and he fails to understand that if he reaches the end of his syllabus by means of dictating notes, the class will have learnt less history than if he has omitted some of the conventional points and stopped to colour his pictures. It is waste of time to pick blackberries if the aim is to cover five miles before tea, but not if the aim is to make country walks a joy which the child will ask for again.

Literary illustrations can only be properly called "originals" when they are contemporary with the period studied. But it may not be out of place to notice here the value of poetry written later, whether there is intentional reference to the past or not. The teacher will not use such illustrations as evidence; he will tell the children whether the writer is working from documents or whether his accounts are imaginary, and if there is no confusion in his own mind about what he is doing and why he is doing it, there need be none in the minds of the class. There is a truth which can be caught by imagination as well as a truth which consists in exact correspondence with facts; the danger comes if a teacher confuses the two and looks to either for what it cannot give. The method of history is both scientific and artistic, but a teacher must not use the artist's imagination and say that he has gained his results on the scientist's principles. Henry V will be a truer historical figure if he has

been watched as he passes from group to group of his men before Agincourt, in the night ; the wealth of the new world will mean more to the child who has seen the

“ Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores.”¹

Sometimes a teacher will prepare the minds of a class for the facts that are coming by reading to them lines in the spirit of his subject. The interest of Standard VI or VII will be roused if their lesson on Elizabethan seamen is begun, without preliminary, by the reading of Masfield's

“ I will go down to the sea again,
To the lonely sea and the sky,”²

or of parts of a Hebrew poem, the hundred and seventh Psalm. The sense of wonder can be shared by children with Cortez (it was, of course, Balboa ; Keats was not writing history, as the class will understand)

“ . . . when with eager eyes
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.”

Standard IV or V can

“ . . . dream of London small and white and clean.”³

¹ Masfield, *Cargoes*. See also poems in *The Sea in English Literature, From Beowulf to Donne*, by Anne Treneer.

² Masfield, *Sea Fever*.

³ William Morris. Quoted in *The Town in Literature*, compiled by L. S. Wood and H. L. Burrows.

and they can watch the beacon fires spring into the dark from

“ . . . Hull to Plymouth Bay :

The time of slumber was as bright, as busy as the day.”¹

They can put themselves into the place of Drake when

“ . . . playing at Plymouth a rubber of bowls—
 . . . he stooped and finished the game.”²

Standard VII can try to think why Wordsworth called to Milton :

“ England hath need of thee : she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters.”

Why did he turn in thought to the great Puritan ? Was he accurate, three years before Trafalgar, in his estimate of his country's plight ? Any Standard in the senior school will be helped by Byron to feel the humiliation of Xerxes when, at Salamis, the Athenians destroyed his cherished ships :

“ He counted them at break of day,
 And when the sun set, where were they ? ”

Standard VII is young for the whole of *Phaedippides*, but Marathon will become more real if part of the story of the heroic runner is read to them as Browning tells it.

English poetry, of course, is the expression of English thought and feeling ; there are ideas which are common to modern poet and bygone century and, in undeveloped form, to English children at

¹ Macaulay, *The Armada*.

² Newbolt, *Admirals All*.

school. A boy will learn history if his imagination is set alight towards the past, and his love of rhythm and quick response to the beauty of words mean that poetry is a ready match for kindling the flame. Sometimes he will want to copy and learn the poem, and if he wants to, the teacher will let him. But the memorizing of it will not be imposed as a task; its work may have been done when the lines, perhaps only a few, have aroused an interest by means of which history will be learnt.

The use of literary illustrations both modern and historical leads naturally on to the place of legend in the learning of history. History is a true story: must we exclude from it what we cannot prove? Shall we shut out both myths, the stories in which men tried to explain the facts of the universe before the coming of science, and legends, the stories which a group of people has at some time believed to be true but which are rejected in whole or in part by historical critics?

First, it is worth while to notice that the boundary lines between myth and legend and history are not fixed but shifting. Stories which we now look on as myths, as tales, that is, which may express truth but express it symbolically and are not to be accepted in a literal sense, have at different times been regarded as legend, that is, as stories which have their roots in events believed to have happened, or even as history; incidentally it may be observed that the philosophical or moral truth of the myth and its historical importance may be more clearly recognized when the attempt is dropped to treat the

story as fact. Stories which a short time ago we looked on as legends which lacked historical basis, have in the twentieth century shown a remarkable power of claiming credence as history. The spade of the archæologist in Crete, in Egypt, in Babylonia, in Asia Minor, and elsewhere, is not only extending history further and further back, but is filling in the details of frameworks that before were sketchy, and is giving back to us as history much that the criticism of the nineteenth century forbade us to accept. Archæological work reveals not only archæological but literary evidence, and in the most literal sense we never know what will turn up. A generation that dare not scoff at the minotaur must not be too quick in the interests of truth to forbid legend to children.

A distinction must, of course, be made between the legends of periods about which we know little and those for which historical evidence, both literary and archæological, is abundant. It is one thing to refuse to dismiss the story of Perseus as entirely without foundation, and another to tell the stories of Robin Hood in the same tone of voice as those of the third Crusade. It is one thing to turn a deaf ear to the critic who would take from us the geese of the Capitol ; it is another to begin English history with the story of Arthur, a British King. The teacher may keep an open mind on matters about which the experts declare themselves ignorant or doubtful, and may lawfully refuse to abandon that which has not been proved false, but he must not tell as historical fact the stories which, as it is his business to know, have

been definitely rejected by a consensus of opinion among qualified historical judges.

Yet to say this is not to say that myths and legends have not an important place in the learning of history. Children love stories themselves and they easily understand that people in other times loved them too. In the stories told in one century or another we see its thoughts and its tastes ; a child will not consciously grasp the idea that the stories are typical, but by them he will be brought, perhaps, nearer than anyhow else to the thought and ideals of an age. The Anglo-Saxons who came to Britain and, later, the Danes, worshipped Thor in their homes. It is worth while to show that his name is enshrined in a commonplace word wherever English is spoken, and will be as long as our language endures : the imagination of Standard VI may be stirred by the thought. But for Standard II the connection between Thursday and a Scandinavian god is a matter, like other matters of interest, for cheerful and unwondering acceptance. His imagination will be stirred not by the thought of long continuity but by stories of Odin and Loki and Baldur ; the people who told and believed such tales were real people, and we want to know what they did.

The knights of King Arthur are the thoughts of the late Middle Ages, not only in England, but in France from Brittany to Provence ; they ride through Christendom to find the ideal, and Standard III will ride with them. The towns of the fourteenth century had no drains, and the townsmen seldom took baths ; the life of the peasant, ploughing the lord's land, was

incredibly hard ; men and women both worked out of doors, and the babies lay in a crumb-bowl beyond the end of a furrow.¹ Rich men's sons threw meat bones under the table at meals ;² their fathers quarrelled and fought, and sometimes the nuns, who had vowed to be poor, gave their time to their little pet dogs³ and canaries.⁴ But the men and women of the Middle Ages, whatever they did every day, never wholly forgot the ideal ; the tales of the Round Table will be for the children both stories of delight and means by which they will apprehend one side of those centuries of vivid contrasts. Perhaps through the pages of Malory they will also find out that the quest of the Holy Grail may yet be followed.

The stories of Robin Hood, too, will be told, and other tales which the men of the Middle Ages repeated to each other in ballads. Similarly, the legends of Greece and Rome are stories which Athenian and Roman mothers told to their children in days which we know about ; perhaps they were true, perhaps not, but the children liked to hear them, and they knew that when they grew up they must be brave like the men in the stories. Of the myths, many, both Greek and Roman, are unsuitable for children. Others may be told as stories apart from the study of history. Where myths are told in connection with history, they will, as has been suggested for the Scandinavian myths, be treated, like legends, as stories which were told at a certain period by the people about whom the children are learning.

¹ See Haward and Duncan, *Village Life in the Fifteenth Century*.

² *The Babees' Book*, republished by Chatto and Windus.

³ Chaucer's *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*.

⁴ Eileen Power, *Medieval Nunneries*.

There is another class of legend which has difficulties for the teacher of history. Stories which have always been told as stories can be treated as stories with children, but how shall we deal with legends which till lately have been treated as history? To quote a classic instance from English history: what shall we do with the story of Alfred and the Cakes? To that question a good British citizen can give but one answer: Tell it. No Briton with any historical sense can refuse to the rising generation the story on which the generations of the past have been nurtured. As a matter of fact, the teacher of history will usually find that there is no need to repeat it; it is a story which without any formal instruction the young Briton seems to imbibe. And it will do him no harm. As to the cakes, it is related with his experience; and as to Alfred, it is at least symbolically true. No further precaution need be taken by the most conscientious teacher than that of beginning, "There is a story. . . ." He will find in Standard II, and probably earlier, that there is competition among the class for the pleasure of telling the tale, and if he is challenged by "Is it true?" he need only say that it very well may be. The challenge is not, at that point, likely to come, since it is unusual at seven or eight to question what is familiar. A story which lies on the boundary line between legend and history should be told if it has symbolic value. It may be prefaced by some such remark as, "A story is told: perhaps it is true;" or the teacher may explain that it was not written down until long after it happened. For children who

are being trained to look for evidence, such explanations will be part of the training. A legendary story which does not convey a historical truth of use to the class is better omitted ; there seems no adequate reason, for example, to talk about Canute and the waves. It is a mistake to cumber a syllabus with merely conventional matter, for a teacher of history is always short of time, and apart from all other reasons, it is his first business to teach what is true.

The use of originals is, clearly, one of the best means by which a teacher may strengthen his own sense of the need for evidence, and may make it a vital part in the learning of history by children. There is one practical difficulty which he will meet. The English of originals is often unfamiliar to children. The teacher's first care must be in the detailed preparation of the passage to be read. It is strangely easy to decide on an extract because of its general tenor, and to discover with horror in front of a class that its phrases are involved, or its technical words obscure. Secondly, the length of the extract needs thought. Children will listen with pleasure for a few minutes to unusual diction ; even the long-windedness of legal phrases will be interesting and useful, because they are different from ours. But no one will keep his attention when the novelty is over, unless the meaning is clear. If more than a short extract is chosen, it must often be interrupted. At the end of a paragraph there may be a pause for discussion. Or the teacher may paraphrase in his own words, or break his reading by the quick explanation of a difficult phrase. He must watch the faces of the class, and edit his authority

less or more as they need. He must not forget that one purpose of his reading is that the children should hear the original words, and he will find that the interest aroused will often carry them on through difficult phrasing ; at the same time he must remember that mental activity cannot be stimulated by what is meaningless. It is useless to ask the class to discuss or summarize what they have not understood. The teacher must give enough explanation to help the slower children before he begins to ask questions, though he must beware lest by too much running commentary he should destroy the original flavour. The class use of originals has a technique of its own, not hard to acquire, but deserving of study.

A teacher who is aware of the pleasure which children take in "the real thing" will occasionally give them a phrase in a language other than English. "Deus vult," and "Ich dien," seem more impressive than their translations, and a line from the Domesday Survey in abbreviated Latin,¹ ("the *ands* look like sevens !") is a sure source of delight. Unusual forms are also of interest. People in the fifteenth century dated their letters in a way unlike ours, and the beginnings and endings were different ; they minded much less about spelling, too, before the printing press had taught uniformity. This is the letter written by Sir Thomas More with a coal ; if he had not been in prison, what kind of pen would he have used ? His phrasing is beautiful, but it is not like ours ; his writing materials too were different. So was the thought of people in his time : an Englishman

¹ Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, Vol 1.

is not beheaded now if he does not reverence the Pope. So again the class is carried from the unimportant and vivid detail to the important and difficult historical fact. Let children see what men and women did from what they wrote and what they made; give them access to the original source and the photograph of "the real thing," and let them "do something about it". Their mental integrity will be strengthened and the preparation for citizenship made.

CHAPTER IX

INDEPENDENT WORK

THE good citizen is a man of integrity. The development of personality means the increase of capacity to enter into relations with environment, but it means also the increase of power to refuse response in accordance with an end. The integrity of the individual can only be realized in society, but there will be no full development of personality unless that integrity is firm and strong. If the individual sacrifices his own wholeness, his own power to conceive and judge of and compass an end, then his response to environment will be given in weakness not strength. If he suffers himself to be blown about not only by every wind of doctrine but by every breeze of emotion, he will never be able to stand against a gale. Individuality finds its fulfilment in personality, but personality can never be completely developed where individuality is weak. Independence of mind and ability to stand alone are essential for men whose lives are social. Dependence and independence are the poles of the axis on which the interdependent life of citizens revolves. If it is to be training for citizenship in many cities, the learning of history must help children in the winning of independence.

The fostering of independence is one of the aims of what is known in modern school jargon as "individual

work". The term is most often applied to the work of the youngest children, but certain principles are implied by it which are of application all the way up the school. In "individual work" a child carries out, at his own pace, some piece of work which he has chosen; he will do it alone, or if he prefers, in co-operation with his equals, and it will not as a rule be completed in a single school "period". If a subject for a history drawing or composition is set for a class, the children will work each alone, but the element of choice is either lacking or closely limited; the work has to be completed by everyone within the same time, and that time is usually not longer than one or two "periods". Such exercises have value of their own; they give opportunity for the children to make use of historical material, and draw out their imagination and thought. Every teacher will rightly from time to time employ them. But since they are of necessity done in circumscribed conditions, they lack the special importance for independence of individual work.

In individual work the slow and the quick child each has his opportunity; so has the child who can draw and the child who can write. There is scope for differences, whether they are the outcome of natural aptitudes or of varied training. And again, the lessening of the number of oral lessons for the teacher makes possible the adequate preparation of those which he gives. He is not likely to be free during the "individual work" periods; the eager children will come to him with questions, and the lazy ones will need his encouragement. He will go

to them, not normally with a reprimand about conduct, but with some question about the work they have chosen or failed to choose. He will be able to help individuals to learn in the way they need, and if he looks on the "individual work" period as a time in which he can correct arithmetic books, he will be losing one of his best opportunities for the teaching of history. At the same time, it will be a necessary relief to his work to have a smaller number of oral lessons to prepare. He must, of course, organize his preparation. Sometimes a class will go on with their individual work through all the history periods for a fortnight or more, and then there may come a course of six or eight consecutive oral lessons; at other stages in the syllabus, one oral lesson and one period a week for individual work will be most useful to the children.

The teacher will plan the course for at least a term, varying the time given to different kinds of work according to the needs of the class and the character of the material. He will not keep to it rigidly, for in this most human of subjects no vital teaching can be done strictly to rule, but the thought he gave to the plan will help him to observe due proportion and balance. The children, too, will often work better if they know the ground to be covered. In any particular lesson an opening which takes the class by surprise may be more stimulating than a dull statement of the subject of the lesson. It is a less effective introduction to say "To-day I will tell you about the campaign of Blenheim", than to begin:

"It was a summer's evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,"

and to read on until the class is asking the question with little Peterkin. (At the end of the oral lesson they may try to write an answer to it less futile than Kaspar's.) But when children are beginning a piece of individual work, they should have a clear idea of its purpose, and often that can only be given if the place of the work in the scheme for the term is known. This, of course, is more applicable in the senior school than earlier, and although there are ways of helping children of nine and ten to work independently, it is in the senior school that individual work will be chiefly used in the learning of history.

For the raw material of the historical student, be he professor or school child, is chiefly to be found in books. When full recognition has been given to the work of the archæologist, it remains true that the history of the last five thousand years rests primarily upon written evidence. The results even of archæological work are, with certain exceptions, available only in books, and where museum exhibits and old buildings can be studied at first hand, books must be used to explain their significance. To learn to use books is proper to the learning of history. It is, moreover, essential for a child if his interest is not to begin to die at the moment of leaving school. He cannot learn history unless he can use the tools. In the senior school he should have opportunity, through individual work, to acquire skill in their use by practice.

The stage of a child's development too, points to the senior school as the special place for the encouragement of independence in the learning of history.

The adolescent is increasingly conscious of himself and his powers ; it is partly for this very reason that he must belong to a group. His growing sense of individuality is among his equals at once less painful because less conspicuous, and better able to express itself in increasing powers of response to environment. He will work with his class and know the strength of group loyalty, but he will also be inarticulately grateful for the opportunities given by individual work. The freedom for work at a child's own pace and according to his particular tastes, is specially valuable at a stage when the rate of development varies so greatly that a teacher who relies entirely on oral work cannot hope to meet individual needs.

The years between eight and twelve are less unstable. Much can be done during them by class work, and though here, too, independence must be trained, there is less need for individual work in the technical sense. There is also, in history, less opportunity. Books are tools whose use has not yet been completely mastered. Familiarity with the tool and the habit of using it, must come before great results can be expected from its use. From the time that the technical difficulties of reading have been conquered, a child must be trained in the power to read in the wider sense, that is, to use books as means to the ends of enjoyment and knowledge. In the lower school this may be often better done, in the learning of history, by the use of books in close connection with lessons than by individual work.

The book on which a child will at first spend his time is, of course, the class text-book. The material

in it should be not identical with but supplementary to what the teacher supplies. Sometimes the children will read a relevant chapter before a lesson is given, and the teacher, as he goes on, will pick up the material gained from it by questions, weaving the facts that the children have found for themselves into the wider web of his lesson. Sometimes the use of the book will follow the lesson, and the child will recapitulate by his reading what he has heard, seeing the same facts from a different angle, or supplementing the lesson by new matter on the same subject. Sometimes the book will be used in the middle of oral work: "Turn to page 56, and you will see what happened after the battle." Or again, "I have told you of Wolsey: find out from Chapter III what kind of house he lived in; you may draw it, if you have finished quickly before the rest; when you have all read the chapter, I will tell you about his death." Sometimes a whole lesson period may be given to silent reading instead of an oral lesson.

To ask children to read aloud has seldom good results in the learning of history. They devote their attention to technical matters and lose the sense, and even after eleven they have seldom adequate fluency or sufficient power of dramatic interpretation to convey the full meaning to others. A single illustrative paragraph may sometimes be read by a capable child at the teacher's request, but silent reading is more independent and more likely to lead to an understanding of matter. An object for reading should always be given; the book must be used by the child to find out something. If a whole period

is spent upon reading, a list of questions should be put on the board to which answers must be found in the text: "Everyone must find answers to the first three questions, and after that do as many as you can, in any order you like. Some of the questions cannot be answered until you have finished the chapter: you must pick out what you want from different pages." The answers may sometimes be written, and discussed in the last few minutes; sometimes the teacher must take them in to correct, so that he may be sure what work has been done by each child. Sometimes the answers may be given orally without writing. Sometimes, again, it is better to set no test. The child who will only take trouble because he knows that he will be caught if he idles, has not gone far in the learning of history or of the laws of true work. The sense of independence will be strengthened if sometimes the books are put away after simple questions on the number of answers attempted, and sometimes without any questions at all. In the next oral lesson, the teacher can introduce questions as the need for the matter arises, and discover, with no appearance of testing, whether the answers were found.

It is clear that this sort of work demands careful thought by the teacher; on the other hand, it will, like individual work, decrease the number of oral lessons for which preparation is necessary. He must be ready during the time of silent reading to give help where it is needed, but while he must always know what goes on in the room, he will encourage the feeling of independence if he sits at his table and

leaves the class to their work. If anyone wants him, or if he sees that his help is needed, he will get up and go to a child ; to call out an exhortation or even the answer to a question across the class, is to risk interrupting forty-nine students of history because attention is needed by one. It is unreasonable to expect children to gain habits of close attention to books in conditions in which few adults could read.

There are still some schools in which the " history reader " appears, but these the teacher who cares that the children learn history will seldom, if ever, allow. The use of such books does not carry out the principles of historical teaching, and the familiarity which children gain with stories so read will rather destroy their freshness than help in the learning of history. The teacher of history will plead with the teacher of reading, himself or a colleague, to let technical skill be acquired on material which is not required for different ends. To use " history readers " is to cut up good silk for dress-making patterns.

There is, however, another school custom which the teacher of history may hail as an ally. Children are sometimes allowed to keep books for " private reading " which they may enjoy either at times announced on the time-table, or at the odd moments happily bound to occur in the most carefully regulated school. Among the books available for such use, historical stories may well find a place. Even where the general idea they give of some period is not strictly accurate, the interest they sometimes arouse in the past may be welcomed. Their very mistakes may provide the teacher with opportunity for show-

ing the difference between their exaggerated colours and the more sombre shades of the truth; their anachronisms may be used by him in his chronological teaching. He will not often quote them in lessons himself, but sometimes a vivid passage may be read to the class, and their appetite whetted. He will, of course, choose only such paragraphs as, to the best of his knowledge, are true in fact or in feeling, and he will not let the children think that Kipling, or Conan Doyle, or the great Sir Walter himself, is an "original authority".

The teacher's own skill in reading aloud may be utilized, too, in chosen passages of description or narrative from books by recognized historians. A paragraph from Macaulay or from Professor Trevelyan may be much more effective than a teacher's own words. So long as reading aloud is used to increase the power of an oral lesson and not as its substitute, it is a valuable help in the learning of history. The passages chosen should be outstanding for beauty or force. The reading aloud from an ordinary textbook of more than an occasional paragraph is not as a rule satisfactory. The relative lack of activity in the teacher's mind is reflected by mental stagnation in the class. A short, well-chosen, well-read passage, however, stimulates feeling and thought. Children learn from it to appreciate what books can give, though ease in their use must chiefly be gained through reading done by the class themselves. It will be gained through familiarity not only with textbooks and historical stories, but also with books of reference.

The distinction between a text-book and a book of reference is, for school purposes, easy to draw. By a text-book is meant a book of which each child has a copy, and the contents of which he will at the end of a certain time be expected to know. The chapters may not be studied consecutively, and some may be omitted at the teacher's discretion, but, generally speaking, the material in the book must be learnt. A reference book is one of which parts only will be used, and it need not be used by every child in a class. For Standard IV, proud in the possession of new modern text-books, some of the copies of last year's discarded book may serve as volumes of reference, or for a few children and a special purpose, some copies of the book in use as a text-book by another class may be borrowed; the stock cupboard can be made to disgorge some old-fashioned volume, too dull for regular childish reading; the school library and the public library will be called into action; the shelves of secondhand shops will be ransacked; the teacher will lend the class some of his own collection of books for a week or two. Quick children from nine to eleven will begin to choose books for themselves from the shelf or the row on the table, and to beg the teacher for loans. If he can arrange so that for three or four periods every term each child has on his desk one other volume as well as his text-book, Standards III and IV can, as a whole, begin to discover the use of books of reference. They will search them for pictures or facts for their independent work; they will learn that there is not one single "history book" in which all history is written; they will become

accustomed to the question, "Where did you find that out?"; that is, they will begin to become aware of the need to name and so to discriminate between authors; they will delight in the use of an index or table of contents, and they will pass on to the senior school prepared for individual work.

The material used by children for drawing and writing will be found not only in text-books and reference books, but also in their notes. Much of the material which the teacher gives will be taken from books to which the children have no access and from sources too difficult for them to study; much of the arrangement of facts in an oral lesson will be the teacher's own and not to be found in the text-books: the class need some record of lessons to which they may refer. And apart from its value for making a record, the taking of notes gives training in the art of selection, and the actual writing out of a summary may help in the memorizing of facts. Lastly, the making of notes is a useful form of independent work. Notebooks distinct from exercise books should be kept: the exercise book is destroyed when it is full; the notebook remains as a permanent and cherished possession.

The training in the taking of notes begins in Standard II. At the end of a lesson, the class are asked to suggest a sentence which they will like to write on its subject; if more than one is suggested, the merits of each are discussed, and should two be approximately equal in value, the class may decide between them by voting. The most popular sentence is then put on the board and the children will copy

it into their notebooks ; often it will be illustrated by an imaginary picture or a symbol,¹ or alternatively, the " note " itself may be primarily a picture and the sentence may take the form of a heading. Sometimes Standards II and III will enjoy making their own notebooks at the end of some short series of lessons. The actual book, made of two or three folded sheets of paper tied together with coloured thread, may be made in a handwork lesson ; perhaps the cover may be decorated with a coloured design in the time allotted to drawing. If such correlation with other subjects is possible, the book may be more elaborate than if all the work must be done in the history period, but even if the time must wholly be taken from history, the teacher will find that the interest aroused by their own book will help the children to learn. When the book has been made, the class will decide on the contents. Its purpose is, say, to tell about Anglo-Saxons or Normans. Sentences will be suggested and written ; illustrations, original or copied, will be added. Quick children will have time for more elaboration than others. The work will form a means of revising a group of lessons, and can be repeated for different groups, so that at the end of six months or a year in a class, a child will have his own little history of England, so far as he knows it, in several volumes. The work will be of the simplest kind ; each page will have only a sentence, or possibly two, in large pencil letters, but history will have been learned.

The class notebooks of Standards III to VIII

¹ See p. 48.

will be increasingly full, and the results of work which is more and more independent, but the principles on which they are made will not differ widely from those of the notebooks of Standard II. For Standard III the whole sentence should not be put on the board ; it will be suggested and agreed on by the class, and words needed for spelling will be put up, but the children will be more independent if they write rather than copy. Variation too, will be allowed : each of these sentences is good ; you may write which you like. In Standard IV three or four headings may be discussed by the class and put on the board, and the children may write their own sentences under each. In the senior school the form of setting down will be emphasized : these big headings must be numbered with Roman figures, and for the sub-headings you can use arabic figures or letters ; indent the sub-headings, and see that the spacing is clear. In every class the children will choose and arrange the material ; the teacher's work is to guide and not to dictate. Each child should have his own record of every group of lessons, sometimes in the form of verbal notes, sometimes in diagrams and maps and pictures. Even where verbal notes are chiefly used, illustrations will make the book more full of interest and value. The notes will be shorter than those which could be put down at dictation, but the difference in value to a child is that between someone else's work and his own. The teacher, moving among the class, will help and correct where necessary. Notebooks when finished become the child's private property ; those of the lower standards will probably

be discarded, but some children, at least, will leave school with a tangible reminder of history learned in the last two years.

More precious than the class notebook, because more distinctly his own, will be the private notebook kept at some time or another by each boy and girl from Standards V to VII. For this a special exercise book is provided. Each member of the class has one, but no two children will fill it in exactly the same way. The notebook is to be used for notes of those historical matters which specially interest each individual. The teacher will make suggestions, but he will leave the choice of matter and method to the child. Pages will be numbered, and a table of contents with page references built up at the beginning or end of the book. A time line across the first two pages will keep the time reference true. The entries will most likely be made on the period on which the class is at work, but if any enthusiast wants to take notes on a period to which a story or cigarette card has drawn his attention, he is free to do so ; the table of contents and time line will prevent confusion in his book or his mind. Material will be found in text-books and reference books, in class notebooks and in facts remembered from oral lessons ; suitable parts of poems learnt in literature lessons will be quoted ; pictures will be copied or pasted in, diagrams and maps will be drawn. Every picture must be named and dated, and, if possible, something must be written about it. The teacher, strict as to the accuracy of material given by himself to the class, will not despise what the children find for themselves, though it be a picture

of a certain cardinal, cut from an advertisement of winter underclothing. Older children will make expeditions on Saturday afternoons to historical places they have been told of, and will bring back drawings and perhaps an occasional post-card. Copies of exhibits in museums will eagerly be made. Much of the material will be collected out of school hours, though notebooks must not be taken home without special leave. Sometimes the teacher will allot a lesson period for work on private notebooks, and in this way he will ensure that something is done, even by children who have no special interest in history. The books will be collected at intervals of some length, say once, or possibly twice, in a term. Glaring errors will then be corrected, not in red ink but in pencil which may be copied and then erased, because these are the children's own books and even corrections would spoil them. General mistakes of judgment will be discussed with the individual in the next "private notebook" period, and minor inaccuracies may be left without comment.

This form of individual work is specially suited for the two highest standards. In Standard V, and sometimes before the senior school is reached, a few children will probably like to make their own "original history books". These will differ from the private notebooks, in that the work will be done (in response to a suggestion from the teacher) by a few children only, and entirely out of school hours. The suggestion will be given so that the few may have opportunity rather than that the whole class may be trained. In this way the work will differ from that done by

Standard II on its history notebooks. Children of eight will work in class with considerable help from the teacher; the enthusiasts of Standards IV and V will work alone and will be free to select material as they please and from any source.

There are other forms of individual work which the teacher may use, alternately, perhaps, with the private notebook. Children need variety; they will give their energy to different work in different terms and they must be trained in many directions; besides, a plan that is attractive to one child will fail to win good work from another, and each must be given his chance. Sometimes a scheme of work for a fortnight or more may be planned and "jellied", or copied by every child from the board, and then carried out independently. Reading may be suggested round subjects set, or in answer to definite questions. For Standards V and VI, page references must be given to text-books, and reference books suggested; Standard VII may perhaps work with less minute direction. The results of the reading may appear in a written essay, or be incorporated in an original diagram¹ or discussed in an oral lesson. Sometimes they may be given in a ten minutes "lecture" on different points by two or three children. Group work is often enjoyed. The class may be divided into four or five groups, each with its leader, who will work on different subjects, and each group will be responsible on certain fixed days in the term for giving to the rest of the class the results of its work by speaking, or reading, or the showing of pictures. In this way the inarticulate

¹ See p. 49 f.

child may take his share, for he may have collected material from books or museums, or have made copies of pictures. Such independent work must be planned in connection with oral lessons and text-book work, so that the scheme for the learning of history in any one class is a whole.

It is clear that little individual work can be done unless children have access to books. The difficulty is not, perhaps, actually so great as it seems. Local authorities and public libraries are often more generous than is recognized ; where they are not, it is the business of teachers to make their needs known, and to show that if books are provided, full use will be made of them. The re-organization of senior departments in schools may give a suitable chance for a plea for new books ; it is clear that in every senior school there should be some form of school library. As has been suggested, books condemned as text-books may sometimes be used for reference. Books suitable for reference may often be borrowed ; perhaps they will be all the more vigorously used when the time for which they are lent is known to be short. And teachers who recognize the need will continue to do as enthusiasts have always done : they will lend their own books, albeit with a sigh for the inevitable finger marks ; they will sometimes buy a book for the class ; they will persuade friends and visitors to give the children a volume. By some means or other, they will form a little class library with enough volumes for every child to be able to choose some book whenever the class settles down for a period of individual work. The teacher will arrange

the subjects he sets for the class in relation to the books he has collected. He may, for example, begin by collecting authorities, original and secondary, for the Tudor or Stuart period, and be content at first that the greater part of the individual work shall be done on that, even if thereby he restricts the use of the method, for a time, to a single class. If the books can be used for two classes, he will ask leave to take Standard VI for their history period in the room belonging to Standard VII, or if need be he will find willing helpers to carry the volumes for use in one room on Monday and another on Tuesday. In some way or other, the teacher must set himself to provide the children with books. Unless he is successful here, they will never learn independence in their learning of history.

CHAPTER X

THE TEACHING OF LOCAL HISTORY AND THE PREPARATION FOR POLITICAL CITIZENSHIP

MUCH has been written at different times on the teaching of local history.¹ Some teachers think that the past can best be reached through the present, that children will learn most history through the old buildings and street-names which they know ; and the deduction has been made that the approach to history in the lowest standards should be by way of the children's own locality.²

There is no room for doubt that the teacher who does not make use of local material is hiding a talent of gold in a napkin when it might be gaining a rich return in the enthusiasm of children. For the child who can relate the past with everyday surroundings, history has actuality. The unknown Normans are connected with your own experience through the arch you see in church, and a far more remote past becomes alive in the arrowhead picked up close to our garden gate ; there, on the hill, is the line of the British fortifications, and yesterday I saw a man who said

¹ Useful pamphlets and bibliographies are published by the Historical Association.

² Cf. *A Syllabus of School History* planned by the late Miss H. M. Davis, of Whiteland College.

he'd found a bit of Roman pottery when he was ploughing.

" See you our little mill that clacks
So busy by the brook ?
She has ground her corn and paid her tax
Ever since Domesday Book.

" See you the windy levels spread
About the gates of Rye ?
O that was where the Northmen fled
When Alfred's ships came by."¹

The heritage of the English child is not only one of institutions and ideas ; history for him is written everywhere, in the things his ancestors made, and in the land itself. Whether he lives in country or town, the past becomes actual for him when it is related with his own experience and when he learns about it not from abstractions and words with little content, but from the concrete and the particular. " Causes ", " influences ", " -isms ", have no interest for him, but stone, iron, wood, he can see and handle. His activity, mental and motor, is quickened and given scope as he studies the things of his own locality.²

All this is true. Yet the argument for the use of local history as the way of a child's first approach to the past is weak. For a child under eight, the old buildings he comes by on his way to school are

¹ Kipling. Puck's song in *Puck of Pook's Hill*. Reprinted in a shilling volume of *Poems* (Methuen), which contains several poems of use for the learning of history.

² See the stimulating pamphlet, *Village Survey-making: an Oxfordshire Experiment*, published by H. M. Stationery Office (1/- 1928).

less immediate to its experience than we think. A boy of seven will be more aware of " Plain Mr. York " on a hoarding than of stones which are dear to the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments. He will be more eager to explore the haunts of a cat than to pursue a search for flint implements. His mother, also, would most properly object if he were taken for a historical expedition at a distance. The study of local history means too much travelling for his small legs, and at the same time gives too little scope for the flight of his mind. He would rather hear of St. George and the Dragon than trace the line of a Roman wall, even though his own house lies on it. Again, except in a few spots where every phase of English history has left its mark, to teach from local history before a time sense has developed is likely to confuse the sense of sequence and to give false associations. The history of a locality may be both too concrete and too particular for a child's first approach in school to the story of the centuries.

The value of local history is not as a first introduction to the past, but for illustration at every stage. Children at the top of the infants' school who have been learning about the Old Stone men, may be shown an axe that one of them made ; Standard III need find neither Domesday Book nor Anselm remote if their school is near Tooting Bec Common ; Standard IV, living in Bolton or Lewes, will shudder at the destruction wrought by Henry VIII ; the child whose home is in Warwick, or at Castleacre in Norfolk, sees the Middle Ages incarnate in stone at his door.

In the senior school, the study of local history is

of great value in individual work. Children will ransack local libraries for the story of their own town, and a time line will help to avert chronological muddle. They will find material for private notebooks and for "lectures"; they will bring for the admiration of the class any old local treasure they can borrow. On holidays, enthusiasts will set off on journeys of exploration.

From time to time, the teacher will plan a class expedition to some local museum or place of historical fame. It will be arranged as a part of the history scheme. For weeks beforehand he will refer in his lessons to the wonderful things which will be seen, weaving the local treasures as illustrations into the general history course. When the time comes near, he may give a whole period to preparation, telling the class what to expect and giving them questions to which they will find the answers when they see the real things. He will suggest that pencils and paper shall be taken, and when he is in the museum he will be careful to give the children time to wander in different parts of one room at their will. In the following week, drawings and notes will be copied in private notebooks. Light on puzzling exhibits will be sought in books of reference. But the teacher who knows the risk of anti-climax and remembers the woes of his own inarticulate days, will not set as a composition subject: "What we saw in the museum last week". He will find other ways of letting the children use what they learn, and will not expect accurate verbal expression to order of the delight of a new experience. The class may include a ready

writer or two who will like to prepare an account for the children who did not go, and others may offer to show their sketches. Perhaps some who this time had taken no interest, will decide that after all such things are worth seeing. No child should be forced to join in an expedition. It is better to take the risk of encouraging indolence than to oblige children to come against their will. A growing girl of thirteen is sometimes really fatigued by standing, and her distaste for an expedition may without her knowledge be physical. But if she is forced to go with the class, she will say that she hates museums and, probably, history, and what she says now will be presently true. Let her stay with the half of the class to-day left at school, for the number in a standard is usually too large to be taken at once. If the class is a small one and there is no need of a plan for a part left behind, a child accustomed to individual work will be able to go on alone. When the joining in an expedition is made a voluntary matter, there are not likely to be many children who will think they would rather not go.

In towns where the museum is easy of access, the members of Standard VII may be encouraged to go to it out of school hours by themselves. Armed with a set of questions to answer or a list of exhibits to look for, and with paper and pencil, a child may teach himself more when he is left alone with concrete illustrations of history than when he is hurried from point to point by an over-solicitous teacher. We learn more from the things we want to look at than from what we are told that we ought to see. A child, too, has a love of detail which will weary the patience

of all but the most understanding of grown-up guides. Let him use it for the learning of history.

In towns other than London the bulk of museum exhibits is usually local and a visit to them will have some purpose connected with local history. It is clear that the same general principles hold, whatever the special aim of the expedition. Some aim it must certainly have, and the larger the collection the greater the need for defining. Children must not be taken or sent to "look at the museum"; they will be eager to go when they know they will see the particular things in which, through knowledge, their interest is already aroused. When they get there, they will find unexpected things about which in turn they must discover more when they come back to their class-room and their books. A visit to a local factory will stimulate interest in lessons or individual work on the industries of a child's own district and the way in which they have grown.

A special course on local history would, of course, be of value in connection with expeditions. Where the historical treasures of a locality are sufficiently rich and varied, such a course may well be given to Standard VI or VII. Ground covered in earlier standards and partly forgotten can be in this way revised with freshness during some three or four weeks. Where the district gives material for lessons on a short period only, or where a busy teacher has had no opportunity of learning the details of local history, the help of some local expert may be called in. A lantern lecture may provide new illustrative material for the teacher's lessons, and an important point is gained

when children learn both that people who are not connected with school give their leisure time to such hobbies, and that historical material may be found outside their ordinary books. The difficulty in connection with such lectures, which will often be attended also by adults, is that a local antiquarian does not always know how to arrange his facts for children, but if their interest has been awakened in school, they will be eager to see pictures which they will be able to discuss with their teacher afterwards. A few older children may sometimes be taken as a privilege to a meeting of the local branch of the Historical Association. The teacher who recognizes the importance of local history for illustrative purposes will be on the alert to make the most for his classes of any available expert knowledge ; it is often impracticable for him to become a specialist himself. But while he may hesitate to give local history courses, except in a locality long familiar or in one where material is exceptionally rich, it is his business to find out enough about the district in which the children live for him to illustrate ordinary lessons from their home surroundings at any stage of their work. Even when he has special local knowledge, he will normally use it for illustrative purposes in the lower standards, reserving the local history course for the stage at which it may, as a course, be an illustration of what the children have learned in earlier lessons, or are learning, perhaps by individual work.

With the theory that the original approach to history for children should be made through local material another may be compared. As some people

believe that that which is present in space, the local district, should be the gate to the past, so others hold that history should be approached by that which is present in time, that is, through the institutions and customs of the children's own period. The policeman and the parish pump should lead a child to the growth of parliament and of industry; let him study that which surrounds him, and he will want to know the story of its development.

The arguments which have been urged in this chapter against the use of local history as a way of approach are also applicable here. Romance is often nearer to a child than administration; the past is more full of colour than the present; not until he has reached the senior school will he begin to appreciate those abstractions with which lessons on the forms and problems of government fitly deal. As in the use of local history for illustrative purposes the teacher will at every stage refer to what is familiar in the child's home district, so he will at every appropriate point draw attention to his political and economic environment. When he tells of the hue and cry he will contrast it with the modern method of pursuing criminals; when he speaks of the mediæval craft guild he will both make clear that it is not the equivalent of a trade union, and help the imagination of the class to play round the differences between factory work and work as an apprentice—fed, taught, and chastised according to indenture, but looking forward to the day when he will become a master himself. Backwards and forwards, from past to present, the thought of teacher and child will

swing, and the preparation for citizenship by means of history makes necessary a constant reference to the children's own lives. Yet it is in the senior school, when the child knows that he must soon face the world for himself, that the opportunity for direct preparation for citizenship in the literal sense has come.

No teacher of history must teach party politics. It is never his business to press his own views ; he must even refrain from implying that these are certainly right. His respect for the opinions of the children's parents, and his reverence for the children's minds, will prevent him from taking unfair advantage of his position. Knowing their susceptibility to suggestion, he will avoid exploitation with scrupulous care ; he will guard their integrity while they cannot yet guard it themselves. It is his business to tell them what happened in the past and to relate the past with the present ; history, not opinions, is his subject. Not that at every point he will hide his own view and pretend to be neutral ; if he felt that this was his duty, his lessons, remote from his own emotions and thought, would be dry and cold like the pebbles the tide never reaches. The teacher of history is the human medium between the human past and children, and life is only passed on by the living. If the class do not think that the teacher cares, few of them will care either ; yet he must never impose his own emotions upon the children. His position might seem almost intolerable in its difficulty, were it not that, as a teacher of history, he has studied history himself. The sight of human

mistakes should have saved him from the spirit of dogmatism, the mutability of human affairs from abhorrence of change; he has seen that men held opposite views with an equal readiness to die for them, and that the battle-cries of one generation may be meaningless to the next; he has had opportunity to gain balance and a sense of proportion; at least he knows that for every subject there are many possible points of view. He will say to a class: "I think so myself, for this reason; but others think differently, for that". Sometimes he will explain that this authority, which he confesses he does or does not accept, officially holds this view. By definition, as a teacher of history, he values truth, both for its own sake and as a guide for young citizens, and in sincerity he will find a thread to guide him with regard to those weightier matters to which his class and his subject may lead him.

The teacher will also find that much of his teaching on modern matters is not controversial. He may strongly object to the Budget, but some facts concerning it are beyond dispute. He can safely teach, for example, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer brings it forward in the Commons, that it is not the concern of the Upper House, and that its author does not take his seat on the wool-sack. He may spend his off-time for a week in failing to fill up his income tax form correctly, but at least he can first bring the virgin form to show to the class. The boys and girls of Standard VII take an eager interest in the machinery of government of their day, local, central, and imperial. Their lessons on the Cabinet and its

relation to Parliament and to the electorate give opportunity for revision of earlier history, with a new emphasis on the constitutional side. They will find out from their fathers and mothers what is actually done at the poll, and they may be set to discover how the gas and the water in their homes are provided. The question, "Who pays for your school?" leads to discussion on the division of labour between local and central authorities and the composition of the Board of Education and the L.E.A., and the class delight in devising a diagram to illustrate their relations with each other. We did not hear of county councils in earlier history: who did their work? and was there less to be done? Again, from the administrative detail of the present, the swing is back into history, and the children begin to understand the slow advance towards democracy. They may see, too, both its limitations and the responsibility which it throws on all citizens of the British Commonwealth.

There is also a wider political citizenship for which English children must be prepared. It is true in a political sense as well as in others that "patriotism is not enough". Standard VII are rightly taught about county councils and government departments, about crown colonies and the Dominions and India; they must also learn of the experimental machinery which may yet prove itself the great contribution of the twentieth century towards international peace. The League of Nations, its aims and organisation and the work it has already accomplished, must be put before every boy and girl before he leaves school.

Without such lessons his idea of historical development will be incomplete. Whatever propaganda for the League of Nations Union may be done by agencies outside school or by school activities of which membership is voluntary, within his class-room the teacher of history, who never divorces the past from the present, is bound to speak of the League. A special course of four or more lessons with time, of course, for the making of maps and diagrams, may well be given in the last school year, the number of lesson periods devoted to it being partly determined by the number of other opportunities open to the class of learning about the League. Unless some attention is given to it in school, the children will not see it in relation to history, and their minds will be an easy prey to preachers, on the one hand, of discouragement, or, on the other, of the irrational and extravagant hope which is often but a prelude to despair. It is in a historical setting that the League is seen both as a great achievement and as a great ideal.

But the work of the history teacher in telling children about the League is not the only or even the chief means by which he furthers its ends. All his work is a training of citizens in no narrow sense. The teaching of history is a preparation for human fellowship. The self-regarding individual must become a person. He must learn to love his neighbour as himself. He must first find out that other people do things in ways different from his, and have a different point of view. At nine years old, it may be part of the preparation for peace when a boy learns that at Agincourt men fought with bows and arrows.

The history teacher cannot possibly omit the story of wars. Whatever he thinks about them, they happened. Men got many things by fighting and wars had long results. Other things happened too. War panoply itself means artizans in the background. The story of craft guilds, and of how pages were trained, is as true as the tale of Creçy. And when wars were going on, not every one was fighting. The crusaders, journeying East, wrote letters to their wives left at home,¹ and sent messages to the children; the ladies of Cromwell's time nursed wounded men of either side in their own homes;² monasteries are as typical of Norman days as castles. It is in such ways as this that the balance may be kept, rather than by a premature attempt to replace martial heroes by the heroes of peace, or by insistence upon the moral and physical horrors of war. Children care primarily about action; the activities of Joan of Arc and of Drake, the great free-booter, are real to them, more real than the mental struggles of Cranmer and Galileo. Of course the stories that rouse them will not be all of one type, but to shut out the great warriors is to go far towards emptying a child's Valhalla. No one can stand for a few minutes watching small boys at play without recognizing that to attempt to rob physical conflict of glory, is to ignore young human nature. Children's imagination, happily, cannot picture the horrors of battle as they have always been, nor conceive the refined tortures of war in the present day. The generation now growing up in the schools has

¹ J. H. Robinson, *Readings from European History*, Vol. 1.

² C. H. Firth, *Cromwell's Army*.

not known in experience what lies behind the Cenotaph. In adolescence the futility of war may be shown ; to children, we must be content to describe it as glorious action, though always as action that belongs to the past. Men used to fight ; we are learning better now : so much teaching may even in childhood be attempted, though the teacher must not be surprised if his implied judgment is swept aside as one of the foolish ideas peculiar to grown-up people.

Nor need he be perturbed. He might, indeed, be troubled for the future of humanity if children were growing up unable to take risks. There was never a more inappropriate motto for anyone young than the motto, "Safety first". Teach children not to play in the streets by all means, but do not teach them that the one thing that matters in life is to save their own skins.

"Then spake Sir Richard Grenville : ' I know you are no coward ;

You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left them, my
Lord Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.' "

It is better that pulses should quicken, as they will, when the teacher of history gives a whole lesson to reading and afterwards talking about the *Revenge*, than that children of school age should hear with approval the opening phrase of a recent pamphlet in support of the League of Nations : " Security ! that blessed word ! " There is a sense in which the old adage is true : " If you wish peace, prepare for

war"—not by the piling up of armaments, but by the encouragement of the spirit of adventure and the temper which will take risks. It is not the man or the nation that is unwilling to lose its life that saves it.

In the senior school, emphasis may be increasingly laid on the adventure of discovery, geographical and scientific; and the story of wars, though again in the interests of historical truth they cannot be omitted, may be clearly shown as one side only of the tale. The growth of the commonwealth came about partly by war, but partly, and earlier, through settlement and trade expansion. The rivalry between France and England in the eighteenth century is seen in a series of struggles which culminate in the campaign of Waterloo; certain famous incidents and certain great men stand out and cannot be ignored, but no child of elementary school age need be troubled with details about the campaigns of Marlborough or Frederick the Great or even Wellington. It is in the senior school much more than at earlier stages that the teacher must deliberately avoid over-emphasis on military history, keeping the balance true in his insistence on economic development, on the growth of science, on matters literary and artistic, and, at a later stage, on constitutional ideas. If he is determined to find room for the story of education and of literature and music, if he thinks that the children should become acquainted with Johnson and Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury, with Livingstone, Darwin and Marconi, then he must perforce jettison much time-honoured cargo from his syllabus. And when he

has to tell the tales of war, he will be able to suggest the other side of the story and to introduce the idea not only of suffering but of waste. He will let the children see the results of unbridled national competition, and, without lessening their pride in their own land and its heroes, he will show the greatness also of other lands and the need for international organization. In the special course in Standard VII, the League of Nations should not come as a new idea. The class, too, will have learned to compare modern heroes with men of old days ; they will have seen how in 1928 an Italian airman was sought for by Danes and Russians and rescued by Swedes. Their interest also will have been roused in international sport.

The need for co-operation in international affairs will be much more apparent to children who have learnt to value the principle in their own experience. There are perhaps few more serious hindrances to the growth of the co-operative spirit than the exaggerated emphasis on competition still sometimes to be found in schools. There is, of course, a natural inclination to rivalry, and between the ages of eight and eleven, when the conduct of children is largely a-moral, some use can be made of it. But the constant urging of children to outdo each other, either directly or more subtly by indirect means, such as the bestowing of praise on a child because he is " top ", often leads to the development of a competitive spirit which should surely, on the contrary, be outgrown. Even the " house system " used in some schools, one object of which is to transfer the spirit of rivalry from the individual to the group, may

by unwise use prepare the way not for citizenship but for "jingoism". In the senior school the teacher of history may further the cause of peace by the most careful avoidance of appeal to the competitive spirit, and by the encouragement of group work. Children may do individual work in groups, and the groups may contribute to the knowledge and enjoyment of the class. On the playground the spirit of friendly rivalry has a natural and harmless outlet ; in the class-room groups should be trained not to beat but to co-operate with one another.

So by his organization and his methods, as well as by his choice of material, the teacher of history may help forward a child's power to enter into relation with other people. His illustrations from local history and his teaching about the political institutions of the time will make use of a child's interest in his own surroundings and increase his knowledge of the present in space and time. They will also be a means by which he will learn history, and receive his preparation as a citizen of his country and of the world.

CHAPTER XI

HISTORY FOR THE VERY YOUNG

MORE thought and experiment than have yet been given are needed to determine the best way of introducing young children to Clio. Tentative suggestions only can be put forward in this chapter, and it will have fulfilled its purpose if it challenges disagreement. The problem for a teacher in an elementary school is widely different from that of any other teacher, for nowhere else are children under eight massed in such large numbers. Group teaching, as is now commonly recognized, is seldom the best means to employ in the infants' school, yet the materials necessary for "individual work" in history are not such as can be used by the very young. The principles of historical study inherent in the subject itself are, of course, the same at whatever point they must be applied; the difficulty lies in seeing how, if at all, they may be fitly applied for children who have only just emerged from the stage of infancy. There are two years before the upper school is reached in which history is usually taught. It appears on most timetables for Standard I, and also for Grade III, or whatever ranks as the highest class before the standards. That is, teachers are asked to teach history to children

in groups of forty or more from the ages of six to eight.

The obvious statement to make is that history should be told in the form of stories. But here more pitfalls await the unwary than are at first sight apparent. First, words have little meaning for small children ; their vocabulary is very limited and the words that are known are narrow in connotation. Even when well-disciplined children are relatively quiet and still while a teacher is talking, interest may be focussed not on any idea conveyed by her words but on some slight disarrangement in her dress ; there can be few teachers of young children who, when they have given an eager child the chance to ask, as they hoped, an intelligent question, have not been greeted with some such remark as, " Please teacher, there's a spot on your skirt ". And the difficulty is not wholly one of words ; the limitation lies primarily in experience. This is a far more acute problem with the children from poor homes and over-crowded districts than with the children of more affluent parents. In the upper school the quick-wittedness born of necessity, and the contact with the stark facts of life, may redress the balance of general experience as between children whose background is that of greater or less education. But children of six or seven whose homes are empty both of culture and comfort, are not yet old enough to have learnt much of life except in a material and too often sordid sense ; and the lack of attention given to them makes their vocabulary and their imaginative experience smaller than those of children of parallel age but different

environment ; the mothers have had no time to tell stories, even if they know childish stories to tell. It is useless for teachers to put a tale in the simplest words if the ideas behind them are entirely remote from the children's experience.

The difficulty can be met, to some extent only, by the use of pictures. Here the teacher is faced with the problem of accuracy : he must teach what is true, yet much that he says he can illustrate only by fanciful pictures. The principle of working from photographs of " real things " will help him, but he must remember that small children have little power of combining parts into wholes. It will not be enough to show the helmet and sword of a Roman soldier ; the class must first see the soldier arrayed in his armour, and then they may look at its parts. They will inevitably take what they see as evidence ; pictures for them tell the truth. It will often be better for a teacher roughly to draw a figure or scene in which he makes use of the details he knows, than to give the child either a British Museum post-card or the results of an " illustrator's " imaginings. Sometimes, of course, a picture untrue in detail will convey a vivid idea of action, but unless that idea corresponds in some degree with the facts, it is better not shown. It is not enough that a picture should " give the child an idea " ; the idea must be true to history, or as approximately true as his mind can conceive. There is room for the use in the infants' school of fanciful pictures which for the child have symbolic value. His idea is probably nearer to truth if he sees Alexander the Great on Bucephalus than if he sees no

picture at all, for at least his interest is roused in man or in horse, yet the teacher who uses a picture where the dress of the king has no relation to Greek probability is, it would seem, doing the child a historical wrong. Let him admit the symbolic principle and supplement words by pictures where he would refuse them for Standard II, but let him keep before him, even for little children, the need for correspondence between pictures and facts. It is said that children forget, but visual impressions, at least for some minds, are lasting. Memories are part of the material with which the adult consciousness works.

The teacher will often give ideas that are nearer to history, if not to beauty, if he makes his own enlarged copies of pictures than if he uses bought reproductions. They will have the further advantage of convenient size, and they will be coloured. For work with small children both points are important. The picture on which the teacher speaks must be easily seen by all ; it is an essential part of his teaching. The love of children for colour will mean that their interest is much more easily roused and held by pictures coloured with paint or chalk than drawn in black and white. The pictures they make themselves will also, of course, be in colour.

Imaginative drawing by the children is one of the ways in which they can be active in relation to history stories. Other forms of handwork take longer, and where they are used the method of teaching by stories as such has been superseded. Simple acting is possible and is enjoyed ; it will be used at this stage for history

in exactly the same way as for other stories. Talking must usually be kept for the end of a story ; there must not be too much checking of spontaneous remarks in its course, but conversation will probably mean interruption of the narrative thread. Yet the danger lest children should "merely listen" is one of those for which teachers of history by stories must always be on the alert.

Another obvious danger and difficulty is concerned with chronology. The stories given in syllabuses for infants' schools are usually quite disconnected. Hence faulty associations are formed, and little use can be made of the sense of sequence. It is not impossible that the chronological confusions so common later on are partly due to this unhistorical method of introducing history. The remedy seems to be in the grouping of stories, so that an idea of some one historical period may be slowly built up.

An example of such grouping for Standard I may be found in the stories of Athens. They are grouped round the life of an imaginary Greek boy, who was born about the year 435 B.C. The date is one for the teacher's convenience only and will not be told to the children. They will, of course, be given his name, Charicles or another. They will hear what he did as a little boy when he lived at home, and what toys his mother gave him to play with ; they will see pictures of his dress, and his house and the furniture in it, of his pet dog, and his swing, and the little wheel cart his father brought home one day as a great surprise. All these things are clearly shown on Greek vases, and the teacher who cannot go to the British

Museum herself will find them copied in books.¹ She will draw big reproductions for use with the class. Charicles' mother told him stories, too, and part of the immortal story of Troy will be repeated to Standard I. One day she said he might have a lump of clay to play with, and he modelled a little bird; Standard I may model in plasticene, and find out if they can do what he did. He tried also to model horses, but that was too hard, so his father said he should go for a walk and see the marble horses on the walls of the great temple lately built in Athene's honour. Charicles held tight to his father's hand as they went up the hill, and at the top they stopped to look at her statue—like this—and his father told him how sailors watched, as they rowed their ship home, for the glint of the sun on her spear. Before they had found the place on the wall where the horses, his father said, were being saddled, Charicles called out in delight, for over the porch of the temple he saw the head of a great big horse, as if someone were driving it upwards; here is its picture, and pictures too of the things that Charicles found on the frieze, which was placed at the top of the wall inside this row of marble pillars; he traced the long procession all the way round, and then he was tired, so his father took him back down the hill, and as they went down they passed on the left the little temple of Victory. It had been put up, as the war memorial is in the market place, to remind the Athenians of certain great battles. His father said he had fought in some of them, and another day he would tell the stories to Charicles.

¹ R. G. Tucker, *Life in Ancient Athens*.

Standard I, too, will hear them on different days : the tales of Marathon and of Salamis ; the tales of the wrath of Xerxes when a storm destroyed his fleet, and how another time he built a bridge of boats, and all the details ; the tales of the flight of Charicles' grandmother from her home and how she had watched from an island the enemy entering Athens ; the story of Leonidas with his three hundred Spartans at the pass of Thermopylae. The Spartans were enemies of Athens now, and Charicles longed to grow up so that he might defend his city. Later on his mother told him that as he was getting big he must go to school, but she said she couldn't send him yet because an illness was spreading in Athens and she didn't want him to catch it. At last, when the plague was over, he went one day, with a slave to take care of him, and here is a picture in which he is learning his lessons ; he is standing in front of the master, saying them by heart, and here is the slave in the background ; he learnt to sing and to play on the lyre, and he learnt the stories of Troy by heart, and he learnt to run and wrestle and jump and throw the discus and swim. He wanted, when he grew up, to win the wreath of wild olive as a prize in the games at Olympia. Once when he was bigger he went to the theatre with his father ; they took lunch with them, for the play would last all day, and a cushion because the stone seats would be hard. The theatre was arranged like this : you see that the people sat under the open sky, but in Athens it seldom rains in the summer. Charicles was presently trained as a soldier, and when he was a man he had his ambition and fought for his city.

There are stories about the war with the Spartans. At last the enemy won, and the long walls which ran down to the sea were destroyed.

In some such way as this Standard I can, through several months, build up a picture of Athens in the fifth century B.C. By a careful choice of dates, the stories both of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars can be grouped round a single life ; the Homeric tales can be introduced as stories told to the child, and in this detail as with the rest we know that we are true to history. Historians, poets, buildings, statues, vases ornamented with scenes from everyday life : from these modern scholars have learned facts that Standard I can appreciate, and they are not hard of access for the ordinary teacher. That the children should learn to know the life of Athens in her greatest age is worth while ; that they should be told a number of isolated stories, most likely is not.

The method of grouping cannot be applied to every period of history, but one does not need to cover all time in the infants' school. Following on the Greek group, preferably after the break of a holiday, an English group might be taken. Perhaps the most useful period to choose is that when the grandmother of the grandmother of the class was alive. Someone, perhaps, has an old shawl at home, or a mug ; or the teacher may show them a sampler. The little girl who lived then, called Sarah, had to drive in a coach when she went to the sea, and on the lonely road one evening, in the dusk, it was suddenly stopped by highwaymen. The picture of her life can be built up with all its strange contrasts to the life of her little

descendants. She lived in the days when mothers warned naughty children that " Boney " might come, and she used to be frightened at night until Nelson sank his ships at Trafalgar. Her grandfather had fought under General Wolfe, and she knew how they dipped the oars quietly into the river and climbed up the rocks to Quebec in the dark. Stories from earlier English history can be told to the class, should the teacher wish, as stories told by her father to Sarah, but it is probably better that those which are fact should be left until later standards. Historical tales should be grouped round the life of one child as incidents in which he or she, or some relative, had a part ; the treatment of stories as stories proper is best reserved for legend or myth. More harm is done by the promiscuous introduction of historical stories without sequence or context, or at the risk of confusion, than by postponement.

In the third term of the year, Standard I may hear Roman stories grouped round the life of a Roman child who was born some fifty years before Cæsar.¹ His grandfather had fought against Hannibal ; his own little boy took part as a man in the invasion of Britain. As with Athens, we know how the child was taught, and can learn of his lessons and toys ; we know how he was dressed and in what kind of house he lived. Stories were told him of long ago days, among them the tale of Horatius. The legends of early Rome are here introduced, as well as some of the great stories of the Republic. A group could alternatively be planned round a child of the time

¹ H. Stuart Jones, *Companion to Roman History*.

of the Empire, say one who was born a few years before the destruction of Pompeii. The earlier period is probably better because of the chronological link with the days of the Romans in Britain with which, in Standard II, real history will open.

Yet while for children in Standard I history is chiefly stories, it will be clear from what has been said that it will not be stories in the old-fashioned sense alone. The teacher who is content with "mere story-telling" is likely to gain from the class the response of "mere listening". From the beginning she will set her stories against a historical background, relating them with the children's experience through every-day life, and letting them gain actuality through handwork.

Perhaps she will do this first of all, in Grade III, from the tale of primitive man. The stories of Athens and England and Rome will win interest from Standard I, but most of them are too hard for children under seven. It is doubtful whether any historical stories of value have meaning for people of six, at any rate when they are told to classes of forty. Their telling is often much worse than waste of time, for a half-familiarity with what was not understood, and therefore disliked, is no good preparation for the learning of history. When the stories are told in proper place later on, they lack freshness, and cannot call out the eager interest which would greet them if they were new. Yet one fundamental historical truth every child of six is able to learn: that men in the past had different customs from ours. Here, perhaps, is another reason for beginning with primitive

man; the greater the difference, the clearer the fact that there is one. Again, the ideas of those early ages are simple. Some of the things which the men of the Stone Age invented to meet their needs the children may think of, too. The needs are the primary physical ones which the children share: they, too, must have food and shelter and clothes; and they, too, like pictures. No less important, the things which the Stone Age men found out how to make they also can make. A course on primitive man will be taken almost entirely through handwork, and this, in some senses at least, will be individual work. The transition from individual work to class work can be helped in some measure by the teacher of history: she will spend a few minutes in telling the children about the children of primitive times, but most of the period will be taken up by weaving and modelling, or sometimes by drawing. The details belong to the sphere of the teacher of handwork, but as teacher of history she must know where to turn for the facts.¹ Even at the earliest stage, history tales correspond with what happened, and the teacher must be on her guard against flights of imagination expressed, as they sometimes are, in popular books by picture or text.

The work will be slow, but this is no disadvantage. To hurry from Old Stone Age to New, and on to the coming of metal, is but to confuse the class; the time in which men learned these things is counted by thousands of years, and for children may well be counted in months. Each great stage, Palæolithic, Neolithic,

¹ Quennell, *Everyday Life in the Old Stone Age* and *Everyday Life in the New Stone Age*. Ault, *Life in Ancient Britain*. See p. 114, footnote.

Bronze, must be clearly marked, and such marking is only made for small children by the slow building up, through their own work, of the characteristics of each. The interest for them will lie first in what they are doing, but what they are doing was done by people who knew no other ways of doing it such as grown-up people know now. The interest in doing may be joined by the interest in stories, true stories about these children so different from us. Through the work of their hands, it may be, the twin interest will grow, until when they leave Grade III they are ready for groups of historical stories. Without such hand-work the story of primitive man will lack meaning. The slow child will simply be bored ; the quick child may say, with Phyllis, aged seven : " I know all about what they did when they hadn't the things we have now ; but we have them, so what does it matter ? "

Grade III, then, may study primitive man, and to Standard I the teacher may give groups of stories. First the Greek, for a boy whose life is widely different from theirs, in spite of the points of comparison. Then the English, for this is not likely to be confused with the Greek. Then the Roman. Chronology here has been sacrificed, but as the link for the English is made with the children's own lives, the fact that the Roman came earlier can be grasped through their sense of sequence ; the Roman tales, too, are in some ways more difficult than the English, and, lastly, the Romans will be needed by Standard II for the beginning of the history of Britain. Children who by half-yearly promotions and the skipping of grades miss one term's work or another, may yet gain something of

value, and those who plod steadily through will be saved the dullness of repetition. Revision, of course, by one means or another will come at the end of each stage.

The very young, then, pass into Standard II in the upper school with some preparation for history.¹ First, they will know that the ways of the past were different from ours ; secondly, certain great periods will have come to life for them ; thirdly, they will have a friendly feeling towards the past, for the pictures and stories were nice, and we did nice things about them. And the third is the most important of all for the learning of history.

¹ The suggestions made in this and the following chapter are worked out for Standards I to IV in *History* (Junior Course), published by Ginn & Co. (London). The series consists of a book for each Standard and two Teachers' Books. For details, see P. 222.

CHAPTER XII

THE PRINCIPLES OF SYLLABUS-MAKING

THE scape-goat for many of the evils recognized by teachers in elementary schools is the overcrowded syllabus. Teachers of history in particular feel themselves forced to be so busy teaching children that they have no time to help them to learn.¹ It is this which largely accounts for the lamentable ignorance and the still more lamentable apathy concerning history among children who leave elementary schools. Boys and girls who have not begun to learn history for themselves in school cannot continue to learn it afterwards ; only in rare cases, through some happy accident, will they later make the discovery of the past. It is the business of teachers during the years from eight to fourteen to help the children to open doors into regions teeming with interest and full of challenge to the adventurer ; in school the children may take the first steps into desirable unknown lands. If the doors remain shut, they may never even know that those " lands of far distances " exist.

But a syllabus which is to be a challenge to children must be thought out on definite principles ; it must

¹ Cf. *Report on Teaching of History, 1927*. " It is probably safe to say that the majority of the children in London Elementary Schools spend at least 75% of their time during the History periods as passive listeners . . . the predominant reason is the overcrowded syllabus."

not be merely copied from the chapter headings in a text book. The matter must be chosen in relation to their experience and their activities, and must not be too much in quantity for its thorough exploration at every step. Secondly, but secondly only because it is not possible to write two sentences at once in which two equally important ideas are expressed, the matter must be chosen with regard to its historical meaning. On these two principles hang all the laws of syllabus making. Both depend in turn on the answer to the question, Why is history taught in elementary schools at all?

To suggest possible answers to that fundamental question is one of the primary aims of this book. The present chapter is concerned with the subject of its own title.

In the light of the two principles laid down it will appear that much of the matter which overcrowds our syllabuses, if tried, will be found wanting. The first is, perhaps, most often disregarded in the senior school, the second for younger children. The Renaissance, for example, often appears on syllabuses for Standards V and VI. It was a movement of the greatest historical importance, but apart from the most careful handling, it is a subject which is beyond the comprehension of children. Let them learn about Vittorino's school in Mantua, called the "House of Joy",¹ or at least about Colet's St Paul's, where the children, he hoped, would raise little white hands in prayer for the founder.² Let them see picture post-

¹ Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanists*.

² Seebohm, *The Oxford Reformers*.

cards from which they may find out the subjects, though alas! not the beauty, of the work of great artists; let a few older children even go with the teacher to the National Gallery. Let the invention of printing and the discovery of new worlds show that the horizon of men and women was widening. But do not expect the Renaissance as such to be understood by children who, if they know the Middle Ages at all, know them, and rightly at eleven or twelve, as the days of the crusades and of chivalry. They should know them, too, as the days of the Peasants' Revolt, and often of lawless disorder, but of the mental darkness from which men awoke at the Renaissance, of the need for "rebirth" in the world of art, they know, and they can know, nothing. "The Renaissance" will not in effect be left out of the syllabus, but it will appear in a different guise.

To give one more example, this time from the infants' school. The story of Regulus often appears, perhaps next to that of Horatius. Now the tale has some value to illustrate Roman moral ideals, but the point is too subtle for children. It is useless to ask them at seven or eight to approve of a man who argued against what would save him, and his action, which chiefly consisted in talk, leaves them cold.

Much, on the other hand, is included in supposed deference to principle one which, if tested by principle two, may be wholly omitted. The murder of Edward V and his brother is singled out, as was said, by the author of *Little Arthur* for pictorial illustration, and the story appears, unconnected with anything else, on most history syllabuses; the reason

no doubt being that it is a story of children and so children like it. They certainly do (though the thought of being smothered in pillows is not reassuring), but its meaning for history is negligible. It is merely the tale of a wicked uncle, an idea, if desired, more fittingly given in the story of the "Babes in the Wood" where a comforting doubt may be cast on the story's veracity. The accession of Richard III, the historian knows, had some importance for England, but not of the kind or in the degree which matters at all for the school-child. The details of the Wars of the Roses, again, hold their place in the syllabus, it may be largely because of their name; the disorders of the fifteenth century have historical meaning, since they gave the Tudors their opportunity, but this aspect will not attract children and is seldom referred to by teachers. Let the condition of England be learnt from the *Paston Letters*: not the fighting but the disorder behind it matters, and it is shown there in vivid personal detail. It is puerile to burden the children with the names St. Albans and Wakefield and Towton, and the unintelligible rivalries of Lancaster and York, in order that they may hear the tale of romantic badges. If desired, they can learn of the Tudor rose in connection with the single battle of Bosworth. Or again, the story of the White Ship as usually told is without historical meaning. The death of the royal heir gave rise indeed to feudal disasters, but the story as told to children leads not to this, but to the bewildering statement that "the king never smiled again".

It would be easy to give more examples. Much of

what is included in history syllabuses may be simply thrown out. That which is not related with children's experience and activities we may give up attempting to teach ; it cannot be vitally learned in school ; if what may be is vitally learned there, the children may presently learn what now is too hard. That of which the historical importance is secondary, we cannot afford to teach. But still there remains so much material that the pen of the syllabus-maker is stayed in bewilderment. And there are other pressing practical questions which clamour : How much can we hope to do in the short school life ? How provide for the break at eleven plus ? How in the lower standards lay foundations on which different walls will be built by teachers in varying types of school ? How cope with the problem of six months' promotions and of the child who " skips " classes ? How can we choose material which is not only important in itself but an instrument for training in citizenship in the widest sense ? What ground should have been covered before, at fourteen, a boy or girl leaves an elementary school ?

The first necessity seems to be the learning of English history. It is this which will directly help a child to understand his own world, and here he can begin from what he knows. For this, too, original authorities and illustrative material, pictorial and literary, are abundant. But the England in which a modern child lives is no longer an island ; it is linked in the closest bonds, mental and physical, with the other independent members of the British Commonwealth, and it controls the destinies of millions of

coloured men in India, in crown colonies, in protectorates and mandated territories. Kipling's hackneyed question is even more pertinent to-day than when he wrote it, and it is relevant to the past as well as the present: "What do they know of England who only England know?" The history of England is always British history; the fortunes of that part of the Commonwealth in which we live can never be understood without understanding the growth of the Commonwealth as a whole.

But the members of the Commonwealth are members, too, of the League of Nations; we are linked, not only by the Covenant but in a hundred human ways with other states. True, the internationalism of to-day is a modern phenomenon, but how has it come about? How did states, emerging into national consciousness in the sixteenth century, first try to settle their relations one to the other? The attempt to make co-operation real to-day has many origins, and two of the most important are the growth of physical science, and the proved futility of the competitive principle shown in the two great wars which ended, nominally at least, the one in 1815, the other on November 11th, 1918. Internationalism as we know it is modern, but for centuries England has been affected by European matters; behind the era of great national states she found in France not only a political rival but a model for her civilization; the children in Standard III can tell you part of what she owes to Norman and Dane. What, indeed, is a true-born Briton but an historical mongrel? What, in a different sense from Kipling's, can we know of England

who only England know ? The English history taught in elementary schools must, if it is to be true history at all, be Anglo-European history. The story of England cannot be only the story of a " precious stone set in the silver sea " ; it is always the story of a land from which influences have crossed and re-crossed both the North Sea and the Channel, influences religious, political, economic, scientific, literary, musical, artistic. The English history syllabus can never be exclusively English if true proportion is observed. The Scandinavians sailed to Iceland, where their stories were later written down ; to Greenland, where some of the clothes they wore have been lately found, and, five hundred years before Columbus, to the eastern shores of the new world ; their long boats and swift raids troubled the realm of Charles the Great as well as of Alfred ; under Canute our island was but part of a Scandinavian Empire. The Normans who conquered Harold, conquered other countries too. The crusades were preached in France, and were truly written of by a mediæval chronicler as " The deeds of God performed by Frankish hands " ; Richard I, indeed, had the heart of a lion, but he was not the first nor the greatest crusader. The Friars who came to Oxford were the little brothers of a man who in Italy helped a wolf and taught the birds ; the children will not find it waste of time when the teacher stops to introduce them to the Little Poor Man of Assisi, an introduction he clearly would have wished. So the story goes on through the centuries. The English history which is fittingly the core of English children's knowledge can never be a narrow, insular tale.

But if children when they leave school have learned only Anglo-European history, they will not be able to carry the story back more than two thousand years. Their historical perspective will be false. Their time line shows a period of history before the birth of Christ almost twice as long as that which follows, and stretches back behind Sumerian civilization as we are beginning to discern it into a past of unmeasured remoteness. Are they to know nothing of the great days of Egypt and Crete, of Babylonia and the Hittites? nothing, even, except in the infants' school, of Greek civilization?

Lastly, to swing from antiquity to the immediate future, must not every child who leaves school at fourteen have at least a rudimentary idea of those public rights and duties which are the flowering of the past in the present and at the end of a few more years will claim his contribution?

It is possible to suggest the framework of a syllabus which will be based on Anglo-European history and yet will take account of these various difficulties and needs. The outline which follows is intended as an example only of one of several ways in which, no doubt, the principles, once accepted, can be put into practice. It is sketched on a yearly basis for Standards II to VII, for children, therefore, whose ages vary from eight to fourteen. It may be preceded by two years' work in the infants' school as sketched in the foregoing chapter. The topics proposed within each period are given as illustrations only. No teacher is likely to deal with them all, and, on the other hand, they are not intended to be complete.

Standard II will take from Roman Britain to the eve of the Norman Conquest. Their chronological starting point will be the birth of Our Lord. "It came to pass; in the days of Cæsar Augustus, that there went out a decree that all the world should be enrolled." From the western outpost of this great Empire, a few years before the Christmas story was enacted in the East, Julius Cæsar braved the dangers of the Channel and landed on an unknown shore. If Roman stories have been learnt by Standard I, it is easy to bring the Roman soldiers to fog-shrouded, white-cliffed Britain. If they have not, some lessons must be spent on Rome, so that her heavy-armed legions may not drop, as too often they do, from some ethereal place presumably in the sky. The ships (the remains of one found in the Thames you can see any day in the London Museum), the helmets, the swords, can be drawn; the picture of Roman civilization in Britain can be built up largely by handwork.¹ There is no lack of food for imagination; the children can hear the tramp of the legions over the roads, and pace with the sentries along the Wall. These men were presently called away to defend their own city, which fell, in the year 410, to enemies from the north; but they left marks on the land they had guarded so long, and the fact can be seen in one way or another by the children themselves in almost any part of England to-day. The helplessness of the Britons can be understood when the fair-haired Saxons came. The story here will not dwell long on the English

¹ See Quennell, *Everyday Life in Roman Britain*. Haverfield, *The Romanisation of Roman Britain*.

conquest, for material is scarce, but the religion of the time can be shown in the Norse myths, and thence the tale passes to the coming of Christian missionaries, with stories of Augustine and Aidan and Oswald ; of Cuthbert, friend of animals ; of Wilfred, teaching the Sussex men to fish and to pray. The English loved brooches, which you can draw ; they built wattle huts ; you may model a village in plasticine and put in the great man's hall, made of paper. One night, perhaps, a little boy in a hut was suddenly waked by his mother ; she wrapped a cloak round him and hurried him out to the woods ; startled and sleepy, he hung on her hand, and as he looked back he caught the gleam of flames rising up in the darkness ; a hut at the far end of the village was blazing ; in its light he could see the tall form of a man and two curved horns (like this) on his helmet. " This year the heathen army ravaged all Kent to the eastward."¹ Where had they come from ? From a land whence hunger had driven them and their brothers, who will sail, for several lessons, to east and to west. This early period is full of suitable material for children of eight and nine ; handwork is easily arranged ; illustrations, pictorial and literary, are not hard to obtain ; original sources abound.²

Standard III begin with the Normans, and may spend a whole year entranced by the Middle Ages. The men of the time, like themselves, loved the concrete : they expressed their ideas in carved stone ;

¹ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.*

² Some teachers will prefer to include the coming of the Normans in the syllabus for Standard II, thus giving more time to Standard III for work on the centuries 1200-1500.

they built castles and monasteries; they rode to crusades or, fervent and foolish, they started on foot without preparation and perished of hunger in south-eastern Europe or the un-mapped mountains of Asia Minor. Merchants met, from all countries, at fairs and rich goods were sold which had come across Asia on camels. Boys served as pages and squires and won their spurs; fighters found long bows better than short bows, and presently gunpowder better than both. The great lords struggled against King John and forced him to say he would keep his promises. Later, when Magna Carta was not observed by his son, English lords called on the King of France to give judgment between them. The monks painted beautiful prayer-books; the minstrels in France and England sang songs, and Chaucer told stories.

We know about country life on the manors¹ and, later, about the guilds in the towns. We know how the peasants suffered, yet, while the old system lasted, had no fear of being out of work; we know how Wat Tyler was met by Richard II. Wars with Wales and Scotland; struggles with France for old jealousies' sake and because of the wool and the wine trade; roads, where the ladies' carriages sank deep in ruts and the men, scholars, Lollards, merchants, bear-wards, travelled by foot or on horseback; plays performed in the courtyards of inns and processions in honour of Corpus Christi—the life of the Middle Ages stands out in vivid detail for Standard III, and

¹ The manor may be taken with Standard II or Standard III. It is here suggested for Standard III as a "plan" can then be better understood; our evidence, too, is chiefly post-conquest.

there is plenty to do about it. They may follow the story through till the end of the French wars, and the breakdown of order in the fifteenth century.¹

The work for Standard IV will be from the beginning of the age of discovery to the end of the Tudor period. The material is full of interest for children who long for adventure and, in their energy and enthusiasms, have much in common with men of the sixteenth century. The class can use maps and follow the voyages of Columbus and Vasco da Gama and Magellan; a group of lessons will be given on these, and later in the year the tale will be taken up in the doings of English seamen. The invention of printing (not by an Englishman); the founding of schools (the Westminster boys had to sweep the dust from under their beds into heaps which the monitors cleared);² the Reformation, as seen not in doctrine but in its effect upon More and Ridley and Latimer, in the change in the appearance of churches and in the dissolution of monasteries, chantries and guilds; the activity of the Star Chamber;³ the work and amusements of Elizabeth's time, attendance at theatres included; enclosures, and the complaints that sheep had eaten up towns and villages;⁴ the increase in the number of beggars (the hookers hooked things out of the windows while men were asleep);⁵

¹ F. L. Bowman's *Britain in the Middle Ages*, and E. E. Power's volume (Vol. I) in the *New World History Series* (Collins), both for children, will help the teacher.

² A. F. Leach, *Educational Charters*.

³ For vivid details, see A. F. Pollard's *The Reign of Henry VII*.

⁴ Ernie, *English Farming, Past and Present*.

⁵ J. Dover Wilson, *Life in Shakespeare's England*.

the provision of workhouses and hospitals;¹ the efforts, simply described, of Luther and Loyola; the tragedies of Lady Jane Grey and Mary of Scotland: all this gives ample material, though the period covered is shorter than those allotted to earlier standards. There will be no room, indeed, for all the detail required, as well as for lessons on time lines, unless much material commonly taught is omitted. The financial scheming of Henry VII; the foreign designs of Wolsey; the later marriages of Henry VIII: these and much else must go, but Standard IV will learn history.²

The children will now have reached the stage of the "break". Those who go on to different types of school will take with them an outline of Anglo-European history to the end of the sixteenth century, an acquaintance with time lines, and a desire to know more. At each stage of their work they will have enjoyed appropriate activity; pictorial and literary illustrations will have been freely used and original sources quoted. It will be found that material can be obtained for each period named which is suitable for the standard suggested. It would greatly simplify the work of syllabus-making in central and secondary schools if the teachers there could assume that children would come to them with these elements of historical knowledge and training.

In the senior school, the syllabus will be arranged less by chronology, more by subject. Standard V

¹ Leonard, *Early History of Poor Relief*.

² F. L. Bowman, *The Changing Order*, and Book III in *Marten and Carter's Histories*, both for children, will help the teacher.

may spend its first term on the next chronological period, that of the struggle for religious and constitutional freedom. The interest is shifting: the concrete detail still matters—the weapons of the New Model army are drawn, and pictures studied of London before and after the Fire; yet a conflict of ideas has some meaning. Hampden and Pym fought for a principle; Strafford was loyal to the King and the King to the Queen; Cromwell signed the death warrant (this is his signature) and believed he did right, and Charles was accounted a martyr—on such a matter the children can hold a debate. The story must be carried through to the coming of William of Orange, but much that used to fill textbooks will be omitted. Foreign policy, except as a cause of dispute before 1629, may be left for the present; the constitutional experiments of Cromwell's time are too hard; the views of Clarendon and the beginning of political parties may all be left out. The persecution of nonconformists at the Restoration must be taken as carrying on the religious struggle and will be made real by *Pilgrim's Progress*; the story will end, for the moment, with the Toleration Act. This work will take about a term and a half. As at every stage in the senior school, much use will be made of a timeline.

In the second term and a half the class will give its attention to overseas matters.¹ Picking up the work done in Standard IV, we remember the Spanish colonies; the Dutch, and later the French, were rivals

¹ F. L. Bowman's *Story of the Empire* gives much vivid detail and sets the English story against a wider background.

of England : here is the side of foreign policy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which can be understood. The story of the East India Company will be taken through to the end, and on into India as governed to-day. The colonies along the east coast of North America will be seen at their birth,¹ and when Wolfe won Quebec from the French to defend them. It may be possible also, omitting the War of Independence except for a statement of its results, to carry the story of development overseas through the stages of England's great "second chance" in the nineteenth century. Maps will be freely used and modern pictures of different parts of the Commonwealth. The story abounds in the lives of great men, often told in their letters and diaries. There is movement, romance, and colour in exploration and adventure ; in the " trek " to the Transvaal, and the relief of Lucknow (" while ever upon the top-most roof the banner of England blew ") ; in the fight with famine and cholera in India and with malaria and mosquitos in Africa ; in the courage of the early settlers in Australia and the Far West ; in the making of railways in distant lands, as the Romans made roads in Britain. There are tales, too, of the exploitation of coloured peoples and of the arrogance of a conquering race. All the time the story will be related with the children's experience : their parents have emigrant friends ; letters reach their homes from the Dominions ; the tea they drank at breakfast and their meat at dinner, the raw material for their

¹ Bacon's *Essay on Plantations* will suggest to a class the mistakes the early colonists made.

frocks and shirts has come from overseas, and it may well be from the lands where Englishmen have settled; Livingstone lies buried in Westminster Abbey, and Gordon's monument is in St. Paul's. This is suitable work for children of eleven and twelve or for a higher class.¹

Standard VI may learn of three great movements which belong to the end of the eighteenth century. In the first half of the first term, the War of Independence and its result in the growth of the wealthiest power in the world to-day; it may be possible also to take here the later growth of the British Commonwealth, if it was omitted in Standard V. In the second half of the first term, the French Revolution, too hard for study in detail, and the struggle with Napoleon in its most dramatic episodes only; then a map of Europe in 1815 and again in 1914 and as it was drawn at Versailles. The second term will be chiefly spent on scientific development with its results in two branches of life, economic and social: the Industrial Revolution with its far-reaching effects, first on the organisation of industry and commerce, and then in the shrinkage in the size of the world by railways, steam ships, telephones, motor-cars, aircraft and wireless. In the third term a number of subjects may be taken through the whole length of Anglo-European history. In this way periods covered in the earlier Standards will be revised for specific purposes; points which have been omitted in the

¹ *Martin and Carter's Histories, Book IV*, will be useful. See also *Book List*. Much of the material for the Commonwealth section must be obtained from the teacher's general reading.

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries may be included, and emphasis is put on the link between present and past. The subjects will vary with the tastes of teacher and class: for example, "Methods of travel through the centuries"; "Great stages in the growth of English architecture"; "The work of famous archbishops". Here a short course of work on local history may be introduced. Some teachers will prefer to amalgamate the work suggested for the last two terms, leaving the "subject" revision mainly for individual work, and giving oral lessons on the great names and events in scientific and economic history through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Others again will feel impelled to substitute for some of this work an account of national movements in Europe, say the unification of Italy.

In Standard VII there will be two main subjects of study; they may be dealt with side by side or better, perhaps, in consecutive terms. First, the class must have at least one term's work on existing methods of government which, as explained before, will be historically treated, so that some early history will be revised from a constitutional standpoint. Secondly, the children may study the history of two ancient peoples, say, Egyptians and Greeks.

The postponement of ancient history till the top of the school will not be approved by all teachers. It has become the custom in some places to take it with children of nine and ten, and several good textbooks have lately been published.¹ The desire to widen interests in school is easily understood, and the

¹ Note especially Vol. I in Marten and Carter's *Histories*.

report of teachers who take the course is usually, "The children love it". But there are many arguments in favour of postponement. Great chronological confusion often results when an attempt is made to deal with ancient civilizations before the development of a "time sense". The passing from one civilization to another is too rapid to allow the class to build up a vital idea of any one in particular. Reference to the children's immediate surroundings is precluded. Original sources which can be obtained in a form suitable for quotation to them are few. Pictorial illustrations may be found, but at the cost of considerable expenditure of time on the part of the teacher. Lastly, the question is one of relative values. Granted that a child cannot learn everything before the age of eleven plus, is it not more important that he should know something of his own history than that he should have been taught stories of remote peoples whom he cannot place clearly either in geography or in time? Such knowledge even in the junior school need not, as has been shown, be narrow, but Danes who went to other countries came to England too, and Romans who ruled the land where Christ was born have left their altars and glass and hairpins here. The connection between Egyptian and British civilization is far more remote. Standard VII, but hardly Standard III, will like to know whence our calendar came and the theories about the alphabet. With Standard VII it is possible to pass up and down the time-line and to refer to civilizations which the class for lack of time cannot study in school. With Standards II to IV to refer to unknown matter is

useless. Their interest will be eager when they know the vivid detail, and it is likely to be as eager over English as over Egyptian history. The report of teachers that Standard IV "love" ancient history seems to be due to the freshness which it has both for teacher and taught; too often where English syllabuses have not been planned as a whole, the "gilt is off the gingerbread" by the time that a boy is ten; too often, also, English history has been treated as political matter remote from the children's experience and taught from dull books. Ancient history, since the text-books are new, is presented in more attractive fashion. If the subject is properly handled, it seems that for Standard II to IV the main principles of syllabus-making can be carried out better through the story of England than through any other.

There is more to be said for the introduction of ancient history to Standards V and VI. Against this, the special arguments are two, besides those which are alike applicable here and in the junior school. First, there is a break in continuity; and secondly, familiarity with a time-line and ability to move freely in thought up and down it, should be much greater after the work here suggested for the first two years in the senior school. Ancient history should be separately studied at the moment when the maximum use of it can be made.

It will, of course, have been introduced at a much earlier stage by the teacher of Scripture. With whatever part of the Old or New Testament he is dealing, he will heighten the interest of stories by putting them into their historical setting; by such means he

will make religious and secular history real. Far from belittling, he will enhance the value of both ; he will show that in one sense, and that a profound one, to make a distinction between them is false. No teacher of Scripture can surely object to its teaching as history when he studies the text of the Bible itself. Never had people a keener historical sense than the Jews ; never was religion more firmly rooted in history than that of the Christian Church.

The teacher of history will, of course, be always aware that his subject is closely related with others. Formal correlation is not often satisfactory, since the essential methods of, for example, geography and history are different. Geography, literature, history, are approached from different angles and with different immediate aims ; to force one to follow the mode of the other is to risk ignoring the fundamentals of each. Yet since history is the story of men and women in all their activities, it can least of all subjects be kept in a private compartment. The teachers of history, geography, and English will constantly refer to each other's work. Sometimes the congestion of syllabuses may be relieved by a deliberate plan. The history teacher may leave to a colleague, or to himself in his geographical capacity, the story of explorations. All that children need know of the eighteenth century, apart from industrial and Commonwealth history and the French Revolution, may be learnt in literature lessons. The use of historical material in compositions is a relief alike to the teacher of history, pressed for time, and to the teacher of English puzzled to find enough subjects about which children know something

and will be eager to write. A purpose may be given for lessons in handwork and sometimes in drawing if the teacher co-operates with the teacher of history, and there are several periods, notably the Elizabethan, in which history and music may help each other. The help must be mutual; the teachers will work together for the development of the personality of each child. It is not a matter of one teacher's undertaking part of the work of another, but of the co-operation of all in pursuit of an end.

It is clear that no definite rules for such work can be formulated. It will differ in every school according to the gifts and tastes of the teachers. Every teacher of history, indeed, must be free to a great extent to follow his special tastes: he cannot teach everything; he will teach best those parts of history which interest him most. Within certain limits, in the lower school mainly chronological, in the upper mainly according to subject, he should be free to choose the material in which he himself judges he can best carry out the principles of syllabus-making. His detailed syllabus might well be shown to the headmaster or mistress not at the beginning but at the end of a term, or of a particular section of work. He will find, if he keeps a careful record, that he can improve on his plans year by year. It is clear that central control is to some extent necessary in all elementary schools. Apart from the general principle that a head-teacher must know what goes on, no history scheme can be good which is not, in broad outline, planned as a whole. Yet while the class-teacher of Standard IV may be expected to cover

the Tudor period, within it he should be free to help the children to learn as they need and as he is best able to teach.

If no detailed syllabus can be rightly laid down for any one class, still less is it possible to draft an ideal history scheme for every school. This chapter suggests that in view of the change into different schools at eleven plus, it would be well could some scheme be agreed on for work in the lower standards, but such a scheme should be of the most general nature; any attempt to lay down what exactly teachers should give within it, will defeat its own object—the better learning of history. It will, in any case, be a minimum scheme and in some schools more might be done. What is possible differs in different localities, partly for external reasons, partly for such literally internal reasons as the kind of food the children were given as babies. The amount of local historical material to be used as illustration, and the intellectual capacity of classes, will vary from place to place. The powers of the teachers vary. There are more ways than one of carrying out general principles. Some illustrations given in this book have intentionally not been in accordance with the scheme here suggested; it is only one among others. Some schools give more attention to history, some less; some allot long periods to its study, some short. It is to be hoped that everywhere teachers of history will ask for not less than forty minutes for every lesson, except sometimes in the infants' school. The use of originals and illustrations needs time, still more does the giving of opportunity for the activity of the class. Where half-hour periods are

used there is always a tendency that children will be employed in "mere listening" or the mechanical copying down of notes. Even where the scheme here suggested is followed, great variety must be allowed in working it out in every standard. Not quantity but quality matters where learning is concerned. Many teachers will have to select even from the topics suggested here; time may not allow for the adequate handling of more than a few of them. Even revision, as has been suggested, should not be done by mechanical methods. A half-hour revision lesson may often be a half-hour of boredom for children.

Not that systematic revision is not from time to time needed. It will be sometimes required, even by the class where the teacher has learnt to weave old material with new, and by teaching in chronological "chunks" to lessen the chance of forgetting. Such revision may sometimes be taken in conjunction with a written test, occasionally by way of preparation for it; more often, with little children, by discussion of the questions afterwards. Such a test should be given from time to time, "written" being taken to include drawn and expressed in map or diagram. Oral tests should seldom be used in history, for they give children no chance of making use of material. Questions must be so formulated that the answers will show if the facts have meaning; it is not possible to make use of facts without having got them, but it is often easy to memorize facts and to be no wiser for their possession. It is for this reason that Dr. Ballard's "Attainment Tests" do not satisfy teachers of history. In any history test a few questions may

be included which can be answered from memory only, but the majority should be framed so that teachers can judge if the children's minds have been active towards the material. The more independent work is encouraged by different methods in junior and senior schools, the less frequent need be the use of the formal test. The progress of the children in the learning of history will be seen in their notebooks and compositions, in their diagrams and debates. The planning of syllabuses must leave ample time for these activities, as well as allowing space for an occasional revision lesson and test.

Yet another reason for elasticity of syllabus is found in the need to allow for half-yearly promotions and the possible "skipping" of classes. The general scheme here proposed is drafted on a yearly basis. In the senior school the plan of teaching by subject in great degree meets the difficulty; a class "skipped" means a subject lost, but it does not mean inability to go on with the next class where they are. The gap may perhaps be filled by specially planned individual work. In the infants' school also, if the work is arranged in terminal "chunks" the omission of one, while regrettable, will not render useless the scheme. The difficulty is most acute in the junior school, where the sense of sequence is perhaps of greatest importance. The plan adopted in some schools of a six months' syllabus twice repeated seems deadening alike to teacher and class. The very bad teacher may have need to repeat his material, the very good teacher may make it alive with new detail every time: the ordinary teacher will find that the children are bored.

The only solution seems to lie in the selection of different material for each six months within one historical period ; the going back in time which this must occasionally involve will be less serious, probably, than the omission of, say, the last two hundred years of the Middle Ages by the child who " skips " the second half of his year in Standard III. There is a certain unity in each of the periods proposed for the work of a year in the lower school ; it would be better to take life in a monastery in connection with the twelfth century than later, since those were the greatest days of monasticism, but there is no real incongruity if castles are dealt with early in the first six months, and monasteries left to the second. Some material, it is true, will be lost by one group or the other ; it is a pity if a child knows the exploits of Edward I in Scotland and not those of Henry V in France, but if he cares really for one or the other he has learned more history than if the teacher has hurriedly rushed him through both ; while the child who has steadily worked through the junior school will have his sense of sequence less confused than if, for the sake of newcomers, he had had to go back to people he learnt of last term. A teacher who knows his subject can so choose material within a period that some of its main characteristics may be given in each six months, though he must leave certain facts unknown to the children whose progress is rapid ; they, after all, are the ones most likely to fill the gaps for themselves. At bottom what matters is not what they know, but what they care about.

The principles of syllabus-making are clear. The

making of a syllabus is extremely difficult. To say that no rigid scheme can be given is to throw a heavy burden on the shoulders of teachers, whether heads or assistants. The teacher who is not a specialist may, and must if his class is to learn, read round the subjects he teaches ; he must decide for himself on the details. But the syllabus must be framed for the school as a whole, and no one can frame it unless he knows what historical matter exists as well as the needs of the children. The work of drafting a syllabus and submitting it for the head-teacher's approval belongs to the specialist on any school staff, but in many places he is not to be found. The head-teacher, expected to prepare syllabuses in every subject, may well be perplexed. It would surely be right that specialist help should be offered him. He may know the needs of his school as no one else knows them, but he cannot, unless he happens himself to have specialist knowledge, be aware of the resources of history available to meet those needs ; he cannot even, unless he has superhuman powers, keep abreast with the flow of books from the press or discriminate between them. *The Report on the Teaching of History in London Elementary Schools* speaks of help that inspectors would doubtless be willing to give ; this would surely be also true in other places than London. Lecturers in training colleges would gladly write or speak from their specialist knowledge if they were approached. University lecturers, too, would advise, and head-teachers aware of the needs of their schools would know how to adapt the suggestions. Specialists in secondary schools, and local experts, would help.

It is usually true, and it certainly should be, that lovers of history are not unapproachable persons. The enthusiast in any subject is often more willing than others suspect to give them the help of his knowledge. It is surely time that the co-operation for which we work in public affairs should be more freely practised in ordinary life. Without it, the children of elementary schools will receive little help in the learning of history.

For, while the learning is their part, responsibility rests in the last resort with the teacher. They will not learn if he does not know. He needs, and if he likes he can get, the help of the specialist. In books, in lectures, in summer schools, more often far than he thinks in conversation and letters, the teacher will find, if he looks, that knowledge is at his disposal. He will get it when once he has seen how greatly the children need what they gain in the learning of history.

The teacher will know the facts ; the children will gain a temper of mind.

BOOK LIST

This list is in no sense exhaustive or representative. It merely gives the names of some books which in practice have been found useful.

* *Books useful for other sections as well as that in which the names appear.*

I. History Before Writing.

- AULT, N., *Life in Ancient Britain* (Longmans), 3/6.
BURKITT, M. C., *Pre-History*, (C.U.P.), 35/-.
QUENNELL, M., AND C. H. B., *Everyday Life in the Old Stone Age* (Batsford), 5/-.
QUENNELL, M., AND C. H. B., *Everyday Life in the New Stone, Bronze and Early Iron Ages* (Batsford), 5/-.
BRITISH MUSEUM, **Guides*, various prices.

II. History Before the Birth of Christ.

- BREASTED, J. H., *Ancient Times* (Ginn), 10/6.
BURY, J. B., *History of Greece* (Macmillan), 10/-.
FOWLER, W. WARDE, *Rome*, (Williams and Norgate), 2/-.
FROUDE, C. DARYLE, *Ancient Mariners—the story of Ships and Sea Routes* (Gerald Howe), 2/6.
JONES, H. STUART, *Companion to Roman History* (Clarendon Press), 17/6.
NORWOOD, G., AND WIGHT DUFF, *The Writers of Greece and Rome* (Clarendon Press), 7/6.
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TUCKER, T. G., *Life in Ancient Athens* (Macmillan), 6/6.

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- MARTEN AND CARTER, *Histories, Book I.* (Blackwell), 2/-.
TAPPAN, E. M., *Story of the Greek People* (Harrap), 2/6.
TAPPAN, E. M., *Story of the Roman People* (Harrap), 2/6.

III. From Roman Emperors to Tudor Kings.

- ARCHER AND KINGSFORD, *The Crusades* (Fisher Unwin), 7/6.
 BALLARD, A., *The Domesday Inquest* (Methuen), 10/6.
 BENNETT, H., *The Pastons and their England* (C.U.P.), 15/-.
 DAVIS, H. W. C., *England under the Normans and Angevins* (Methuen), 12/6.
 DAVIS, H. W. C. (Editor), *Medieval England* (O.U.P.), 21/-.
 DAVIS, M. O., **The Story of England* (O.U.P.), 3/6.
 ERNLE, LORD, **English Farming Past and Present*, Longmans, 12/6.
 EVANS, J., *Medieval France*, O.U.P., 15/-.
 HAVERFIELD, F., *Romanisation of Roman Britain* (O.U.P.), 7/6.
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 LEACH, A. F., *Schools of Medieval England* (Methuen), 10/6.
 LIPSON, E., *Economic History of England* (Black), 15/-.
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 POWER, E. E., *Medieval People* (Methuen), 6/-.
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 — *History of Everyday Things in England, Vol. I.* (Batsford), 8/6.
 RAIT, R. S., *Life in the Medieval University* (C.U.P.), 4/-.
 SALZMAN, L. F., *English Industries of the Middle Ages* (O.U.P.), 10/-.
 SPALDING, E. H. (Editor), *Piers Plowman, Social and Economic Histories, Books 1 and 2*, (Philip), each 3/-; *Book 3*, 2/6.
 THORNDIKE, LYNN, *Medieval Europe* (Harrap), 8/6.
 TICKNER, F. W., **Social and Industrial History of England* (Arnold), 7/6.
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MARTEN AND CARTER, *Histories, Book III.* (Blackwell), 2/9.
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