ADDRESS

TO THE

Royal Historical Society,

FEBRUARY 18th, 1892,

BY

THE RIGHT HONBLE.

SIR MOUNTSTUART E. GRANT DUFF, G.C.S.I.,

PRESIDENT.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES :

Printed by W. Drewett, 37, Market Place, and Ceres Road.

Gentlemen,

When you were good enough to elect me last year to the post which gives me the privilege of addressing you on this occasion, the honour came rather unexpectedly, and I thought I did not know enough about the circumstances, prospects, and possibilities of the Society to make it wise for me to speak to you at any length before I had had a year's experience of its working. I have now had this, and that is the reason why I have ventured to ask you to meet me this afternoon.

The Royal Historical Society had the advantage of commencing its work under the nominal guidance of two very eminent Presidents: Mr. Grote was a great historian, while Lord Russell was a not inconsiderable maker of history. When, however, they became connected with us they were both very old men, their work was done; and it would not have been reasonable to expect from them much more than the sanction of their great names. It was not till the days of their successor—Lord Aberdare—that the President took an active part in the direction of our affairs. When he came to the rescue, he was not young, and might fairly have considered that he had earned repose; but no man among his contemporaries has been less sparing of himself or more zealous in the discharge of every duty which he could with any sort of reason be asked to undertake. A poet, who spoke with full knowledge, said of him some time ago—

> What shall be written to the man
> Who through life's mingled hopes and fears
> Attains to-day our little span
> Of seventy years?
>
> What else but this? Brave heart be strong,
> Be of good hope—life holds no fears,
> Nor death, for him who strives with wrong
> For seventy years.
>
> Live, labour, spread that sacred light
> Of knowledge which thy soul reveres,
> Fight still the old victorious fight
> Of seventy years.

Many *lustra* spent in high and varied office and in both branches of the legislature had left, as they leave him, full of interest in those great subjects which are the very eyes of

politics—Geography, and its sister History, which brings us together in this hall. He would, I am sure, agree with me in thinking that the writer of the preface to the *English Historical Review* did not at all overstate his case when he said that he believed that history, " in an even greater degree " than its votaries had generally recognized, is the central study " among human studies capable of illuminating and enriching " all the rest."

If this be true, it becomes a matter of first rate importance to consider what ought to be its place in education, and this Society can be hardly better occupied for an hour than in attempting to arrive at an answer to that question. In order to give to it anything like a satisfactory answer, we must first know precisely what we mean by History, and what by Education.

I understand by History, in the sense in which I am at present using that term, the record of those events which have been chiefly instrumental in creating the state of affairs with which we are now dealing on this planet, in so far as they have been brought about by human agency; together with the record of such other facts as, although their consequences may not be traceable in the state of affairs into which we have been born, are nevertheless such as wise men will be unwilling not to know.

The first of these records has to do with History chiefly in its scientific, the second chiefly in its literary aspect. Having regard to this distinction, we may say that our first object in teaching History should be to explain the present, and to put the learner in possession of facts which may guide him in forming his opinions as to the changes which changing circumstances may require in a world where nothing continueth in one stay; while our second object should be to store his mind with images, sayings, and examples which may be full-welling fountain-heads of right sympathies, of pure affections, and of all nobleness.

By Education again, in the sense in which I am at present using the term, I understand the process by which we endeavour to enable men or women to make the most of the faculties that have been given them, due regard being had to the positions which they occupy in the social scale, or are reasonably likely to attain to. It follows from this definition of education that there must be a great many varieties of it, and that the amount of History which it may be desirable for the educator to impart to different individuals may be expected to vary not a little. To prevent confusion, however, I shall

speak almost exclusively of the amount and kind of History which it is desirable to teach to the average man who proposes to carry on his education up to the age at which it is usual to take the degree of Bachelor of Arts in an English University, and who aims at occupying with credit a good place in Society. I do not mean to speak of persons who desire to devote themselves to History, either as writers, lecturers or professed students, nor shall I say anything of those who are training especially for statesmanship or diplomacy, though it was for them that the first Modern History School at Oxford was founded in the days of George the First. I know no reason why the historical training given to women who wish to be well educated should differ in any respect from that given to men of the same age.

We all know that the faculties which first develope are usually the observing faculties, and that the only reasonable systems of education are those which take advantage of that law of human nature, by gratifying and stimulating the curiosity of the pupil, until a very fair knowledge has been obtained of what, for want of a better name, are called "common things," a knowledge which involves the acquisition of no small number of scientific facts. Side by side with the desire to know about our immediate surroundings a taste for poetry is often awakened, and use should be made of both these tendencies in preparing the mind for historical studies. The second leads directly to History, though by a postern door; the first to her twin sister, Geography.

Surely one of the first things which any tolerably rational creature has got to do is to answer the question "Where am I?"

We might take a lesson from one of the commonest of our domestic animals. Bring a cat into a drawing-room, and what does she proceed to do? Why, to examine every article of furniture, and come to some conclusion or other, enlightened or unenlightened, about it. Carry some new article into a room with which she is acquainted, and she will not rest until she has examined and settled her views about it. So with tribes which have made but little progress in civilization. I have found myself among people who were still on the lowest steps of the ladder of learning, who could not count above twenty, but who had a minute acquaintance with the trees and shrubs and animals of their jungles. The hideous process which we describe as a good education too often kills that greatest intellectual possession—"la grande curiosité." Far from doing so, we should take advantage of the natural instinct

of curiosity, stimulate children to know all about their own neighbourhood, and then pass on from that to the county, the district, the country and so to Universal Geography. They would not, however, have gone very far in geographical studies before they began to ask questions which could only be answered by an appeal to History, and these two studies, throwing floods of light each upon the other, should be made the staple of all secondary education in this country, in so far as it is not directed chiefly towards Physics, Chemistry or Mathematics, which for obvious reasons it must often be.

Much ink has been expended on the controversy whether History should be looked upon as a branch of science or as a branch of literature. It is the old story of the shield with two sides: if we look at History from one point of view it appears as a succession of problems; if we look at it from another, it appears a pageant, a succession of pictures—sometimes sad, sometimes brilliant. It is, however, from the side on which it looks like a succession of pictures that general History is approached with most advantage.

To penetrate into that kingdom the child must usually take a great passport of poetry, although the History of his own country may be very well approached from the mechanism of the parish, the county, the town, or the electoral sub-division. However he may approach History, whether by the gate of poetry or geography, and with whatever portion of the realm which he enters he may chiefly occupy himself, is all one to us.

The Royal Historical Society claims for its domain every thing that men have done. No exposition of facts can be too picturesque for us, provided always the facts have occurred; that they are, in other words, pearls, not mock pearls of History. On the other hand no disquisitions on the philosophy or science of History can be too abstruse, provided always they have a real basis, and are not, as is far, far too often the case, airy nothings spun out of some busy brain. What can be more natural than that men who have seen the immense advance which the researches of Mr. Darwin have brought about in our knowledge of the material world should imagine that in the theory of Evolution they have a magic wand which, when they touch with it the accumulated facts of History, may enable them to turn that accumulation into a science? Perhaps it is so, but I am afraid we are still in the same difficulty which the German poet foresaw with reference to the Philosopher's Stone. Evolution may be the wand of the magician, but the magician is wanting to the wand. Before biology began to attract so

much attention, some writers borrowed for the use of the science of History a different set of phrases from other branches of human knowledge, and Mr. Mill wrote of Social Statics and Social Dynamics. All such phrases, however, although they have the authority of great names, seem to me only to darken counsel by leading students of History to expect a great deal more than they will obtain. Heaven knows, they will obtain enough without cherishing false hopes!

I say, then, weave into History as much philosophy as you please, and as much poetry as you please, provided always you do not torture facts to suit your immediate purpose. Wisely did my predecessor insist on the importance of keeping the work of this Society catholic. Not long ago one of our number proposed that we should make it our principal object to discuss what he described as "Historical Origins," rather than the details of comparatively minor historical events. I say let us have both. He desired, amongst other things, that we should discuss the origins of Egyptian, Chaldean, and Chinese civilization, besides ten other similar subjects. By all means! I suppose we should welcome with enthusiasm really good papers on all the subjects which he enumerated, including the pre-Aryan civilization of India, a most uncommonly hard nut to crack. I am sure I hope before the obituary notice of the Historical Society comes to be written that we shall have had papers on every one of Mr. Glennie's suggested subjects, and that we shall not be deterred from receiving them with respect by the natural criticism that our proper sphere is the historic not the pre-historic. Another high authority—Mr. Herbert Spencer—declares that the only kind of History which is of any use is Descriptive Sociology. This view appears to me not as inadequate as the one I have just been discussing, but extremely inadequate. Far be it from me to deny that historians have till recently given us too little of the information which Mr. Spencer chiefly affects, and that a great deal too much importance has been attached by readers of History to facts which, if not unimportant, are important almost exclusively to specialists, such as the strategy which led to victory or defeat in a particular campaign, or the tactics which won or lost for this or that commander a particular battle. Still, Descriptive Sociology would be but a chaos to those who did not acquire what I am insisting on, a knowledge, that is, of the broad facts of human history, the kind of knowledge which is necessary if the annals of our race are to be to us anything better than

A mighty maze and all without a plan.

The truth is, that everything which can throw new light on the biography of nations, or on the lives of individuals who have been directly or indirectly potent in influencing the fate of nations, belongs to our sphere of action, though it is indisputable that some facts are immensely more important than others, and that some departments of History—all that relates to Industrial and Economic change for example—have been unduly neglected. The first merit of the historian, as of the statesman, is aptness to be right, and that is the most useful history which brings the most important things into the boldest relief and stamps them deepest on the memory.

To return, however, to the pupil who is approaching the study of History. We must presume that the inevitable preliminaries of all education have been got over, that he can really read, not according to the contemptible standard with which, in this age of chatter about popular education, people are too often satisfied, but that he can read aloud sufficiently well to be listened to by an educated person without disgust; that he can write, slowly of course at first, a hand which will become a clear one; that he knows those few and simple rules of Arithmetic which he is likely to have to employ under the ordinary circumstances of life; and that he has that sort of glimpse into the sciences of observation, or some of them, which must inevitably result from an intelligent acquaintance with the objects which immediately surround him.

It would be desirable that to these supremely necessary acquirements should be added some acquaintance with one or more foreign languages, gained not only through the eye but through the ear, but the possibility of giving that must naturally depend on circumstances.

This foundation having been laid, and previous acquisitions being perpetually revised, the next few years should be given by those who can carry on their education to one or two and twenty, chiefly, but by no means exclusively, to Geography and History. Mr. John Stuart Mill, in his famous inaugural address at St. Andrew's, puts forward a very different view. He says :—

"Who ever really learnt History and Geography except by "private reading? And what an utter failure a system of "education must be if it has not given the pupil a sufficient "taste for reading to seek for himself those most attractive "and easily intelligible of all kinds of knowledge ?"

And again :—

"But of the mere facts of History, as commonly accepted, "what educated youth of any mental activity does not learn "as much as is necessary, if he is simply turned loose into an "historical library?"

The answer to this is, that unhappily we do not, at least in Great Britain, meet one educated youth in five hundred who is even tolerably acquainted with the mere facts of History as commonly accepted. Mr. Mill, as was too often the case, was generalizing hastily from his own idiosyncrasy, which, in spite of his splendid intellect, constantly led him wrong when, stepping out of the realm of abstractions, he found himself dealing with things concrete, and more especially with that very curious animal—man. It was this peculiarity which made him so odd, and even pathetic a figure in the House of Commons, although he had done so much to teach the teachers and had been one of the seminal minds of his own generation, as he himself said that Coleridge and Bentham had been of theirs. Mr. Mill fancied that History was a much easier study than most people find it. Others make the opposite mistake of over-rating its difficulty. They say, "What! are you going to plunge children into the labyrinth of ten thousand controversies?" Not at all!

Comte, quoted by his disciple Mr. Cotter Morrison, says very truly "That the most important facts of History are the "least dependent on being minutely verified for their true "appreciation." It is these facts, and these only, which I desire to get in the first instance into the brains of youth. I want boys, and girls too for that matter—in the happy phrase of a German professor, quoted in an admirable paper read to us by our friend Mr. Browning, to which I shall have to refer again—"to know their centuries;" to know, that is, the great epoch-making facts of General History, and have a somewhat fuller, but still very outline, knowledge of the history of their own country. This should certainly be accomplished by the age of 14.

There is no difficulty in finding sufficiently good books for the English part of the business, indeed there are so many that I will not attempt to choose amongst them; but there is great difficulty in pointing to any brief and simple work on the general history of the world to be got up thoroughly before 14. It seems to me, indeed, that our Society might do a good deal worse than offer a prize for such a book. As things now are, the English teacher who desired that his pupils should "know their centuries," would have to base his teaching upon works

intended for a later age. But it may be asked, "How is room "to be found to enable us to devote the lion's share of school or "school-room time to History and Geography?" Simply, I answer, by considering what knowledge is most worth, by postponing the less important to the more important, and by taking things in their natural order. Up to 14 no difficulty should arise. All I should demand of any fairly clever boy or girl at that age (I am speaking, of course, neither of geniuses nor of idiots) would be:—

(1) That he or she should read English aloud clearly and agreeably.

(2) Should write a large distinct round-hand.

(3) Should be thoroughly expert in the most ordinary rules of Arithmetic, especially compound addition.

(4) Should be trained from earliest infancy to use his or her powers of observation.

(5) Should have gathered some little acquaintance with what is most valuable in such portions of the English Classics as are suitable to early life—a very small fraction of them I need hardly say; but the sooner the habit of reading the best books can be formed, the better.

(6) Should be able to translate, *ad aperturam libri*, from a simple French or German book. When circumstances are favourable I should like young people at 14 also to speak, at least, French fluently.

(7) Should know enough of drawing for purely practical, not artistic, purposes, and enough if possible of music to increase their enjoyment of it.

(8) Should have a sufficient knowledge of English Composition to be able to write a decently clear and grammatical account of anything they may have seen.

Every one of these accomplishments can be acquired by the age of 14, without making it in the slightest degree difficult to give the lion's share of time for the last three or four years to laying the foundation of a knowledge of History and Geography, that is to say, of the theatre in which man has acted and of the drama which he has performed.

It would be idle, and indeed absurd, to ask for any large knowledge of either History or Geography—at this time of life. If some good school Geography, say Chisholm's junior one, or any other, some good skeleton History of the World, and some small History of England, had been thoroughly mastered, it

would be quite enough. I consider that under no circumstances whatever should any attempt be made to commence either Latin or Greek until 14, though wherever English is decently taught, that is wherever all derivations are carefully mastered, a great number of Latin and Greek words will have been learned incidentally before the age of 14. Mathematics, too, should be utterly banished from education before that age, unless in those exceptional cases where great mathematical ability can be divined, as it often can early. The possession of special and extraordinary gifts takes their possessors quite out of the category of those about whom I am speaking.

At 14 I think that boys who wish to have every educational advantage should, unless they have a pronounced turn for Science and no strong turn for Literature, begin the ancient languages, and should continue to study them until they have read whatever is supremely best both in Greek and Latin. In order, however, that they may do this without sacrificing even more important things, care must be taken first to banish from classical teaching, where the object is to make men of the world and not specialists, everything that is not absolutely necessary; secondly, to teach the ancient languages in the closest connection with their history.

In order to comply with the first of these conditions, all attempts to write in the ancient languages must be peremptorily discarded, but Greek should be taught as what it is, a spoken language. Nothing must be read in the originals but what is not only admirable but so admirable that no one can be said to be educated, up to the highest standard of his time, who has not read it. By a man educated up to the highest standard of his time I mean one who has a general notion, correct as far as it goes, of the material and moral world by which he is surrounded, who knows more or less how it came to be what it is, and who is acquainted with the very best things that man has said or sung.

It is only, however, a minority of young people before whom it is reasonable to put so high a standard as this. A great many have no turn for Literature at all; then why, in the name of folly, torture them with Latin or Greek, or with any other language which is not likely to be actually and directly useful to them in their passage through life? It seems to me that the learning of Latin

and Greek is a luxury which should be kept for those who materially and mentally are able to afford luxuries.

The idea that there is any special discipline for the mind to be got out of the study of the Classics is mere nonsense, a cleverism invented by some *esprit faux*, and then circulated by puzzle-headed or interested persons to give a false air of utility to a system which can be explained and fully excused as a legacy from the past, but which, like some other legacies from the past, has only historical right on its side—not right reason. There are two all-sufficient reasons for teaching the Classics, without pressing bad ones into the service. In the first place they enshrine a good deal of the best which man has said or sung; in the second place, without a considerable acquaintance with them a great deal of the moral world surrounding us is very imperfectly intelligible.

I used a few minutes ago the phrase "supremely best." There is a good deal of superstition, and of what a divine once called "belief in believing," in the common estimate of the Classics. It is high time that some great scholar, who has a wide knowledge of modern Literature and is also a man of the world, should take the trouble to tell our youth what they must read in the original, what they may read in translations, and what they need not read at all, due account being taken of the ever increasing amount of good literature and the wise words of Armstrong :—

> Faith I am not clear,
> For all the smooth round type of Elzevir,
> That every work which lasts in prose or song
> Two thousand years deserves to last so long.

Bifurcation should take place at 14, when those who show a strong literary turn and are able to afford a long education, should, as I have said, begin the two ancient languages, while others who propose to go into the Army, or any of the innumerable callings for which Mathematics are indispensable, should give to them and other cognate sciences exactly the same amount of time which the others give to Greek and Latin; but in both divisions of our schools, from 14 to 18 a considerable amount of attention should be given to History and Geography. For the citizens of a world-wide empire like this, it is simply ridiculous that they should not be equipped with a kind of knowledge which, while it is educative in the highest degree, supplies instruction without which it is impossible, as things now are, to order wisely either our public or our private affairs.

The old-fashioned Geography, which consisted of little more than lists of places and names, is, if not dead, yet certainly dying. The newer manuals of Geography are becoming manuals of earth-knowledge, closely connected with Physical Science on the one hand and with History on the other, worthy in fact of the impetus given by Carl Ritter to this branch of knowledge. No school intended for the upper or middle classes should be without one or more teachers of Geography, and one or more teachers of History, according to the number of their scholars. In neither subject can we afford to do without the services of a thoroughly competent living teacher, but care should be taken not to demand too much. As to Geography, I should be perfectly satisfied, if, on leaving school, say between 18 and 19, the average of young people had followed a good course of lectures and could pass a reasonably stiff examination on a well compiled book of Physical and another of General Geography. I will mention two which seem to me very good and sufficient, though there may, for all I know, be others better. The first is an American book, "Eclectic Physical Geography," by Mr. Russell Hinman, published by Sampson Low and Co.; the second is Chisholm's School Geography, published by Messrs. Longman. Both are beautifully illustrated and neither extends to 400 pages.

I should like too to say just one word for Topography—so potent an aid to the remembering of great events. That leads me to History. As to the manner in which it should be taught in schools there is really nothing to add to the excellent paper, already referred to, which our distinguished colleague Mr. Browning read before the Society in 1887, and which is published in the Fourth Volume of our New Series. Mr. Browning dwells especially upon the great importance of lectures, of English essays written by the pupils on the subjects of the lectures, and on an ascending series of books to be placed in the pupil's hands—first, a skeleton book, secondly a text-book, thirdly a hand-book. A good many of his remarks apply to those who show some special interest in or aptitude for history, rather than to those about whom I am chiefly thinking, in whose ranks, as I have said, are included all those who mean to carry on their education to the usual end of the University course, with the exception of persons who have absolutely no turn for history at all, and such there no doubt are: boys who have the same utter abhorrence of the subject as the late Dean of Westminster, a born historical student, if ever there was one, had of Mathematics. There is no more

foolish waste of time than to go on teaching, when you have once found out that the individual with whom you have to deal has not the faintest glimmer of interest in the subject which you attempt to teach him. And yet how constantly it is done!

The next question which arises is, to what History must the four or five years after the age of 14 be chiefly given? First, of course, there must be the general History of the world, read in a somewhat fuller compendium than that which will suffice for the wants of children under 14. To find such Histories in Germany would present no difficulty, but to find such a History in England is a very different affair.

I really know of none published in this country; but there is an American book which may conceivably have been suggested by Mr. Freeman's excellent "Sketch" and is quite sufficient for all practical purposes, by Dr. Fisher, a professor at Yale College, called "Outlines of Universal History," and published by Ivison & Co. Dr. Fisher says at the commencement of his preface:—

"In writing this volume I have aimed to provide a text-"book suited to more advanced pupils. My idea of such a "work was, that it should present the essential facts of history "in due order and in conformity to the best and latest re-"searches; that it should point out clearly the connexion of "events and of successive eras with one another; that through "the interest awakened by the natural, unforced view gained "of this unity of History, and by such illustrative incidents as "the brevity of the narrative would allow to be wrought into "it, the dryness of a mere summary should be as far as "possible relieved; and that, finally, being a book intended for "pupils and readers of all classes, it should be free from "sectarian partiality, and should limit itself to well-established "judgments and conclusions on all matters subject to party "contention. Respecting one of the points just referred to, I "can say that, in composing this work, I have been myself "more than ever impressed with the unity of History, and "affected by this great and deeply moving drama that is still "advancing into a future that is hidden from view. I cannot "but hope that this feeling, spontaneous and vivid in my "own mind, may communicate itself to the reader in his "progress through these pages."

This is a high aim, and in justice to Dr. Fisher I must say he has worked up to it. It is very curious and very far from creditable that we in England should be obliged to cross

the Atlantic to find a proper book to be used as a Manual of Universal History in our higher schools and colleges; but the very idea of History being one long drama seems to be dead in this country. It will be a good piece of work done if this Society can recall it to life.

At this stage of their training, students should have their attention very carefully directed to Biography, and, above all, to the lives of those great men who have been chiefly instrumental in forwarding the onward march of humanity. I cannot point to any work which precisely meets all the requirements of the case. It must be short; it must contain ample references to fuller accounts of the persons enumerated in it; it must not be arranged alphabetically, but according to the sequence of time and of the various phases of civilization dealt with; and it must be as neutral in tint as possible. All these conditions, save the last, are very fairly fulfilled by the New Calendar of Great Men lately edited by Mr. Frederic Harrison. This is a capital book, which ought to be in the hands of all educated people who can make due allowance for wrong omissions and wrong admissions, but it is, in the nature of things, permeated by Comtist ideas, and its use in schools would naturally give rise to numerous complaints. A judicious master could and would, however, make use of it. It is not every boy who is inspired at 16 to read the *Biographie Universelle* through, and to finish his task in a few weeks (a thing which once happened within my own knowledge), but a taste for Biography is apt to be early developed, and advantage of that circumstance should be freely taken to give increased life and colour to purely historical study.

After the History of the world, and in some, though only in some, respects more important for English students, is the History of their own country. I suppose the best authorities would tell us that up to the end of the reign of Henry VII., it had better be read by young people over 14 in the History of Mr. York Powell, and that after that period there are Dr. Bright's and other works to choose from; any one of which might be sufficient for the purpose, Mr. Green's short History being read after the other two.

Next to English History must come for all Western Europeans who wish to be thoroughly educated, the History of the three great races to which we owe our civilization, viz., the Greeks, the Israelites, and the Romans. From the first came Art, Science, Philosophy and Literature; from the second, Religion in all its higher forms, together with a great

deal of poetry; from the third, a very large share of the influences which we sum up in the words—Law and Administration.

The teaching of these three great Histories should be in the hands of competent living teachers, whose duty, in dealing with boys on the Classical side, should be to work them in with that portion of Classical teaching which consists in the acquisition of the power to read Greek and Latin easily and rapidly. For the attainment of this end no pains should be spared, and every sort of help and appliance given, just as much, and only as much, grammar being acquired as is indispensable, care being taken that the easiest writers should be attacked first, but at the same time that no line should be read which it would not be desirable for the pupil to remember to his life's end. No inferior writer should ever be studied simply because he is easy, and the use of translations should not only be encouraged but enforced until they can be easily dispensed with. Greek should be treated as a language changing slowly and gradually from the Homeric period to our own, but still existing. The later Greek History and Literature, however, should, except in the merest outline, be kept for the University. The Histories to which I suppose a good teacher of Greek in this country would chiefly direct the attention of his pupils would probably be Grote and Curtius, but it would be a great deal too much to expect boys on leaving school to pass an examination in either of these works. Enough would be done if they retained a good recollection of their teacher's lectures, and could pass a fair examination in some short Greek History, say Smith's Student's Greece. Mr. Oman's is, I suppose, the one most up to the latest lights, and it is to be hoped that its able author will soon add a second volume, taking care in the concluding chapters, however briefly, to bring down the history of Greece to our own days. A great deal is gained if we can once make young readers understand that the history of Greece is continuous, and it is quite possible to do this without indulging in any silly phil-Hellenic enthusiasm, or, on the other hand, speaking, as some one did, of a people which has a great many merits, as composed "of the same *canaille* as in the days of Themistocles." One cannot read the last page of Mr. Oman's book without seeing that he feels that the period of Greek History which begins with Alexander the Great is in many respects its most interesting portion.

Very significant is the anecdote which he tells of that most remarkable man saying, when he heard of some five thousand people having been killed in the Peloponnese : "While we have been conquering the Great King, there has "been, it seems, some battle of mice in Arcadia."

The teaching of Jewish History would present some obvious difficulties; but great progress has been made, and probably the time is not far off when it may be taught intelligently without fear of giving too much offence. A teacher who knew his business would have in his hands no lack of excellent guides in French, German, and even English, but I know not what text-book or hand-book to recommend. The Old Testament part of the excellent work called "The Bible for Young People" is very lengthy, and is written as much for edification as for information; while Mr. Robertson Smith's masterly paper on Israel, in the Encyclopædia Britannica, is too short and too closely packed. By the time that it has become a truism that the laws governing all History are precisely the same, and that the methods which lead to truth in examining the annals of one ancient nation are likely to lead to it in examining those of another, the defect will no doubt have been supplied.

In dealing with Roman History, the teacher who has to keep close to facts will have an easier task. No one, I believe, now thinks it necessary to die in the last ditch for Remus, Romulus and the she-wolf. Here, I suppose, the teacher would encourage his pupils to read many parts of Mommsen, Merivale and Gibbon, while the text-book might perhaps be the General Roman History of the second of these authors. It is high time, however, that the results of recent researches in this field should be incorporated in a single volume. To find time for this moderate amount of Historical and Geographical study ere the eighteenth birthday is reached, while keeping up what I have already insisted on as necessary to be learned before fourteen, obtaining some notions of the laws of health, acquiring a good deal of any one Natural Science, and enough of several sciences to excite an interest in them, would be simple enough. Just think of the time that would be saved if the whole irrational system of Greek and Latin composition, and the hardly less irrational habit of learning reams of verse by heart, with the object of improving that same precious composition, were thrown behind the fire. Some portion of the time now wasted over rules of Arithmetic, which the people of whom I am thinking are never likely to have to

use in the whole course of their lives, might advantageously be given to acquiring a sufficient knowledge of book-keeping to enable them to understand the accounts submitted to them. Now-a-days, for all they learn at school, some of our large proprietors are in the position of a gentleman whom I knew in India. He had a nice compact little estate about the size of the county of Surrey, he spoke a language of Aryan origin, but his accounts were kept in a language of Dravidian origin, with which he had no acquaintance whatsoever.

I have provided already for the case of those who have a strong turn for Mathematics and little turn for Literature. In the case of the others it will be quite enough that they should learn just enough Mathematics to know what mathematical reasoning means. For the ordinary purposes of life some simple treatise on Logic, say that of Jevons, would be much more useful. Greek and Latin cannot properly be learnt without endless translating from those languages into English, nor could History be seriously studied without the writing of a great many essays. English composition is thus provided for, and I really do not see what additional study need be insisted upon before the examination on leaving school, which ought to replace Matriculation. It should embrace all the subjects I have mentioned, and need, I think, embrace no others, but I should never dream of closing the University to persons who wished to go there to devote themselves to any particular study, merely because they could not pass their leaving examination. All that would be reasonable for the University to do would be to require that such persons had a sufficient preliminary acquaintance with the subject they had selected to make the teaching they would receive within its walls likely to be valuable to them. It is impossible to give too much encouragement, in the final stage of education, to varieties of aptitude.

I pass now to History and Geography at the University. I do not know that the knowledge of actual facts to be required at the end of the course need be much greater, but both subjects should be studied in a larger and more philosophical way than is possible at school. Great authors, hitherto only known by extracts, should be sometimes wholly, sometimes only partially, but always more largely read ; more attention should be given to the history of human thought on philosophical and economical subjects, and every endeavour made to bring within the pupil's view the best that has been written on the subject under treatment. Exactly the same course should be taken with Greek and Latin.

At school much would be read in these tongues which is read now, though much would be omitted and some things added; but at the University everything that is of first rate interest in either of them should be read—some attention being given even to the Latin of the Church, and the study of Greek continued right down to our own days, by the help of such a book as Mr. Geldart's and in connection with Finlay's Histories. So it should be, *mutatis mutandis*, with French and German, and with every study which was not left behind amongst childish and school-day things. Everywhere History, General History, History considered as one great continuous broadening river, should be present and appealed to.

Filled with this idea I turned to the Statute governing the Honour School of Modern History at Oxford, to see how far that great University upheld the principle for which I am contending. The first thing which occurred to me was that it seemed very unphilosophical, as well as practically inconvenient, to have a separate Honour School of Modern History at all. Why should Modern History be separated from Ancient History? Is it possible to understand the first without an adequate knowledge of the other; and what guarantee is taken before a man enters the Modern History School that he has an adequate knowledge of Ancient History? Next I see that the examination in the School of Modern History is always to include:—

(1) The continuous History of England.

(2) General History during some period selected by the candidate from periods to be named from time to time by the Board of the Faculty.

(3) A special portion of History or a special historical subject, carefully studied with reference to original authorities.

Further, every candidate is required to have a knowledge of Political Economy, of Constitutional Law, and of Political and Descriptive Geography.

When I turn to the regulations of the Board, I find that the examination in the History of England is to be on continuous Constitutional History, continuous Political History to the beginning of the reign of the Queen, and on the History of any one of seven periods to be studied in detail. All that seems very good for those who are making a special subject of History, but it does not in the least meet the particular wants of those for whom I am pleading, that is to say, the great army of people who aspire to be well-educated before they scatter to

their work in life. Nor is the case in the least mended by the arrangements with regard to the teaching of General History. These involve the study of any one of seven periods of History, viz.: from A.D. 476 to 1085, or from 936 to 1272, or from 1272 to 1519, or from 1414 to 1610, or from 1610 to 1715, or from 1715 to 1815, or from 1763 to 1852; each period being studied in connection with a period of English History pretty nearly corresponding to it, and also to be studied in detail. All that is again very well, but it is too much to expect that the people of whom I am thinking should give themselves to this kind of study; and if they did, it would not be half so useful to them as a much less detailed knowledge of General History.

I know, of course, that the answer which the Board would give is, that they wish to discourage superficial knowledge. In this they do rightly, but no person in his senses advocates superficial knowledge. What is wanted is a knowledge of the great landmarks of History from the beginning of time to our own day, perfectly accurate as far as it goes. When once this has been obtained, literature, travel, contemporary politics, the exigencies of public, commercial or other business, of Law and of the Church, indeed of every profession or calling, will be perpetually stimulating those who have a good outline knowledge of History to study more minutely various portions of it. That historical students, properly so called, should carefully study special subjects with reference to the original authorities is the most natural thing in the world; that they should eventually devote themselves to particular periods is also as it should be. But ought they not, before they do this, to have an outline knowledge of all History? And if not, why not? One result of this splitting of History into periods at the University is that the same course is adopted at schools, and we may any day hear a boy or girl in reply to some very simple question say, "Oh! that is not in my period." Surely a system which encourages such absurdities is, if not a bad, at least an imperfect system.

It is to be presumed that the Board of the Faculty of History at Oxford had some good reason for arranging their programme of studies as they have arranged it; but admitting that it is so, ere a young man is permitted to present himself for Honours in the Modern History School would it not be desirable that he should pass an examination in the outlines of General History, and might not this examination be made subservient to the wants of those whose interests I am advocating?

I do not know whether there are any tutors or lecturers now in Oxford who devote themselves to General History as a whole. If there are, I suppose their teaching must largely consist of calling the attention of their pupils to the parts of various writers which it seems most important to them should be read, and of taking care to find out by oral or written examinations, and by prescribing the writing of essays, that their recommendations are duly attended to. For those who have not the inestimable advantage of a living teacher, the book I have already mentioned—Fisher's "Outlines"—would be very useful on account of its Bibliography; so during the University period, though hardly sooner, would be another American book called "Institutes of History," by Dr. Andrews, of the Cornell University. It is written in Telegraphese, and a strange sort of Telegraphese, but it contains an excellent Bibliography and is full of pithy remarks. To be able to use it, the student should have an adequate knowledge of French and German, but his possession of that is pre-supposed and would be tested by his examination on leaving school. If once attention could be directed to the enormous importance of acquiring a general knowledge of History, we should soon have books of our own; but I am afraid that the detestable habit of splitting up History into periods—detestable I mean in relation to the wants of the ordinary educated gentleman—will last long. The more's the pity! for the best chance we have of building up a National future which shall not shame our past, is that the large increasing, and from the nature of things, immensely important class for whom I am speaking, should be thoroughly acquainted with all that they ought to know in their capacity of citizens. Democratic institutions cannot by any possibility be long worked with safety unless there is a large and thoroughly instructed class to help in their working.

"*Ex nihilo nihil fit!*" "*Dix mille ignorances ne font pas un savoir!*" Nine-tenths of the nonsense that is talked and written up and down the land would never be heard of if an adequate knowledge of the History of the World were one of the ordinary accomplishments expected in an English gentleman. I have shown, I think, that it could be quite easily obtained without trespassing upon the time required for any other studies which should form part of general, as distinguished from special, education; upon the time required for Literature and Natural Science, amongst others. I have shown further, that where special aptitudes for other studies were

present, I should be far from exacting in favour of the system of education which seems to me *cæteris paribus* the best. Nothing could be further from my wish than that any one of the schools into which young men now go at Oxford or elsewhere should lose their pupils, least of all should I wish this to happen to the Modern History School. All I desire is that the peculiar needs of the body of persons whom I have kept in view throughout should be carefully remembered.

It seems to me that a Society so closely connected as is ours, alike with the Universities and with the scholastic profession throughout the country, could do a great deal to effect this, and that is why I have ventured, at I fear too great length, to place my views before you and to submit the same to your better judgment.