

## ARTICLE IV.

HISTORICAL STUDIES IN COLLEGE,  
THEIR DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE, AND THE BEST WAY OF CON-  
DUCTING THEM.<sup>1</sup>

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By history we understand a faithful record of the progress of society, or of the course of events affecting society, viewed in their relation to each other as causes and effects. Facts taken out of their relation to each other, and represented as so many units, are untrue to nature, and consequently are untrue to history. Chronicles merely furnish the materials of history. Descriptive history, though destitute of the philosophical element pertaining to this study, if it be a faithful narrative of events in their natural order, may give lessons of political wisdom, and be justly entitled to the dignity it claims; but it is not the most instructive form of history. Its object is entertainment rather than instruction; and it may be very useful to the young, by attracting them to the study, and preparing them for more solid productions when their minds shall become mature, or to the uneducated in general, by giving for their leisure hours a healthier recreation than is furnished by popular writers of fiction.

As has been already intimated, a nation that makes no progress has no history. When a barbarous people, like the ancient Germans, emerge from obscurity, and step into the rank of civilized nations, there is a history that can be recorded. They have permanent abodes. They begin the arts of life. Society is organized. There is a division of labor. The different orders of society enter into complex relations with each other, in which their interests are har-

<sup>1</sup> The outlines of this Article were read before the Association of College Officers at their meeting held in New Haven, Nov. 1 and 2 1864.

monized. In short, there is a state, and a national career of progress is begun. The ethnographer and the antiquary would fain pry into their primeval history, and learn their origin, their migrations, their customs, and their religion. But the statesman, the man of progress, would be little the wiser, if he had before him a complete account of their previous savage mode of life.

History is to society what experience is to the individual. The more advanced a nation is in civilization, the more valuable is the instruction to be derived from its history. Grecian history teaches us more than oriental history; English, more than Grecian; the history of the period of George III., more than that of the period of Richard III. Political science is the offspring of history. Without such a parentage it becomes an "Utopia," "a republic," like Plato's, or "a community," like Fourier's. Speculative philosophy alone cannot be trusted to form a social organization. Government is too practical a thing to be founded upon anything short of practice. Reflection may suggest improvements. Philosophy may reduce the facts to a theory. But the basis of the political system of any nation must be national improvements, extended and improved by the experience of other nations whose condition is analogous. The reason of this is, that, in the working of any new theory of government, there will be innumerable disturbing influences, which no mere theorist could foresee, and which nothing but experience or observation can teach.

In no nation is the need of historical information greater than in our own. Our government is professedly founded on the idea of progress. We took for our guidance the last results of British experiments for establishing liberty. In doing this, we took our lessons of political wisdom from British history. From that time forth we found no existing nation whose constitution and government are like our own. By necessity we have been limited in recent times to our own experience. And now, at last, we have entered upon a new and unexpected era. We may be forced to try

some new and bold experiments. If it should be possible to try it first on a small scale, and to take the necessary time to observe all its results, we might be secure against any great danger; but we may be called upon to decide without time to experiment in this manner, and to choose without delay one of the alternatives before us. In such a case, we shall need all the analogies which the history of the world can furnish us. And who can tell what great political questions may be opening continually before us, requiring the maturest wisdom, and the broadest historical induction for their proper solution.

Besides, ours is not a government administered and controlled by a few. Our frequent elections, our successive legislatures, bring fundamental questions almost continually before the people. We are a nation of politicians. The more the nation can be kept on the track of experience, both its own and that of other civilized and free states, the less danger will there be of its plunging unprepared, like France, again and again, into a new social condition. For this reason the historical elements in our system of education should be improved, so far as the condition of our schools and colleges shall allow.

But this brings us to the inquiry: What studies ought to gain admission into the collegiate course, already overcrowded? Not every useful study can claim this honor. Only those studies which conduce to the end contemplated in a plan of liberal education can be admitted. And what is that end? It is the development of the mind by the training of its faculties; the acquisition of that knowledge which is necessary for this purpose, and also of that which will place all other knowledge within the student's reach. In general, those studies which require a knowledge of the past, and those which do not, or, in other words, literature and its kindred branches on the one hand, and mathematics and their kindred branches on the other, are pretty equally balanced in our courses of study. To the former division belong history, criticism, art, political and mental philos-

ophy. Criticism must go back into the past as far as the time of Homer, and must draw much of its material from Grecian and Roman literature, and then descend to the present times. Art was born in Greece, and cannot now be well understood by one ignorant of the works of the ancient and mediaeval artists. Nothing but a knowledge of the various schools, both ancient and modern, will keep one from falling into mannerism. It is well known how much modern art has been improved by the historical studies of Winckelmann and his numerous followers. The dependence of political science on history has been already shown. Mental philosophy, though it can be commenced without a knowledge of history, cannot in any other way be so effectually kept from narrowness and one-sided tendencies as by a knowledge of the leading philosophical systems, from the days of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle to the present time. The subject of mind and its relation to matter, and the reference of both to a first cause, together with the thousand questions growing out of these, cannot be exhausted by any one age or school of philosophy. Here, even more than elsewhere, knowledge is slowly cumulative. Progress is made only by small additions and by reconstruction. The whole field can be laid open to the mind only by history. The want of such a knowledge was the great weakness not only of the scholastic writers, but of the shallow philosophers of the eighteenth century.

The importance of history in a system of academical education, will depend on two considerations: 1. Its necessary connection with other studies as a means of their successful prosecution. 2. Its effect in giving unity to our acquisitions, and thereby giving us a more perfect mastery over them. In respect to the subserviency of history to other studies, it is obvious to remark that this is pre-eminently true of all the studies pertaining to ancient literature. While the study and interpretation of those parts of the Greek and Roman historians which are usually read in college supply some of the historical information that is

needed, these selections themselves require introductions and illustrations drawn from general history. The epic and tragic poets require the same. The writings of Homer are an encyclopedia of traditional knowledge, demanding for their comprehension a great amount of historical and geographical information drawn from later sources. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides can be properly understood only by one who is at home in Grecian life and manners and traditional history. To the comprehension of the Greek orators, especially in their public orations, the whole body of contemporary Greek history is necessary as a preliminary. The orations of Aeschines and Demosthenes on the crown, for example, carry the student through a long period of political life and diplomacy, which nothing but the history of that period can clear up. Besides, the whole state organization of the Athenian republic, and the details of its public economy, form an essential part of the study of the orators. All the treasures of learning, bearing upon these points, brought out by Wachsmuth, Böckh, Hermann, Meyer, and Schömann belong to the department of history.

The same principle is only differently applied in the study of the philosophers. No considerable progress can be made in reading Plato or Aristotle till the history of all the preceding systems of philosophy is understood. In reading Cicero's philosophical works, we seem to be reviewing the history of philosophy, and are obliged to study the history of opinions in order to follow the author intelligently, and to form a proper judgment of the character of his criticisms. It is hardly necessary to remark what a roundness and completeness is given to all these subjects when they find a common centre in general history. It is well nigh absurd to undertake to study the ancient classics without the light shed on them by history.

In respect to modern culture, it is true that mathematics, physics, chemistry, and natural history, indeed all the studies relating to matter, can be successfully pursued without the aid of history. But all studies of a moral nature, all

that relate to the mind as their subject, except the merely formal science of logic, have in them more or less of a historical element. How impossible it is to understand the sciences that relate to the social nature of man without a historical view of what Christianity has done for society. One of the strongest arguments in favor of the study of modern history in colleges, is, that otherwise much of the light of Christianity is shut out from the study of the social sciences.

As to modern languages and literature, while they may be studied in their rudiments, no great progress can be intelligently made in them, without a knowledge of the nationalities and general history of the people to whom they belong. The language of a people is, in part, its history. Words not only record thoughts, but contain the history of a people, as petrefactions do that of extinct animal races. All these allusions to the former condition of a nation, contained in peculiar words and phrases, are elucidated by means of other facts recorded in history. Even the structure of the English language carries us back to Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, and Norman history, and the history of the language cannot be given apart from a history of the people.

The literature of a nation in respect to its subjects, leads us into the province of history as certainly as does its language. He who should study the monuments of the English literature, from Piers the Ploughman down to the present time, will need to be familiar with the condition of the English nation, the character of its government and of its successive rulers, and the causes of its successes or calamities. Langlande, Wiclif, and Chaucer are constantly referring to the mediaeval state of society in England; the literature of the period of the Stuarts is as strongly marked by the state of the nation; and the relations of the Royalists and Puritans to each other must be known to the reader of Hudibras, or the book is without meaning. And how little of the popular literature of England under Victoria can be

fully comprehended by one who is ignorant of the condition of the working people in England, and the struggle going on between them and a powerful landed aristocracy. The England of Dickens and Thackeray is very different from the England of Walter Scott.

It may be said that all these things, true in themselves, apply with less force to the undergraduate than to the man of letters. It is indeed so; but it is no less true that the studies of the undergraduate should educate him to be a man of letters. There are other studies, such as political economy, constitutional history, international law, the science of government, and the evidences of Christianity, which depend, in no small degree, on history for their materials. Some of these subjects may be treated speculatively; but such speculations can be little relied on in practice, unless they rest on a solid historical basis.

Enough has been said to show that, indirectly at least, many of the college studies would derive aid from history. The next point of inquiry is, whether it tends to consolidate these different branches of knowledge and give the mind more power over them by bringing them all under one view. It is a well settled principle in academic education that it is an evil to multiply disconnected and independent studies. Every study in the early part of a course should, as far as possible, be made preparatory to that which follows; and the later studies should require the student to make frequent use of his earlier acquisitions. The more perfectly this can be effected, the greater will be the unity of the system, and the thoroughness of the student's knowledge. As one part of the academical course finds its unity in mathematics, on which so many sciences depend, so the other part finds it in language and its kindred historical studies. The various historical introductions and explanations mentioned above, as being necessary to a complete view of the subjects discussed, will be quite fragmentary if they stand alone. Though each will be connected with its own subject, yet those parts pertaining to different subjects

will not be connected with each other. Let there be a systematic course of history in which each part, whether relating to the physical or moral and intellectual interests of society, shall have its proper place, and then all those scattered historical notices will, like the radii of a circle, have a common centre. The classical teacher will find his work, as historical interpreter, half accomplished; and what is superadded by him will be as special history when added to general history. These additions will find their appropriate place in the general arrangement of the subject, and will be laid away in the mind as classified knowledge ready to be called up at any time. The metaphysical teacher has only to carry out a little further the intellectual history of different periods, as it manifests itself in a few great thinkers, and he has before him the materials which his class needs, and to which he can apply his analysis and criticism. The teacher of modern literature, whether English or foreign, and the teachers of the other branches dependent on history, will have the same advantages. Or if any of them, by the arrangement of the studies, should precede the teacher of history, the latter would be able to gather up all the fragmentary knowledge of his subject imparted by others, furnish the connecting links, and put the whole into the form of a well-arranged system. In this way, it will be seen, knowledge gains in intensity and improves in quality no less than it gains in extension. It is well known that, in the multiplication of branches of instruction in the colleges, during the present century, not only has the number of studies become so disproportionate to the time that can be given to them, as to lead necessarily to superficiality; but that they are often so heterogeneous in their character as to present a disjointed medley instead of a well-compacted system. It is hardly enough to say that no new study can be admitted; it should rather be said that, of those already introduced, only such should be retained as are closely connected with other studies. If there are exceptions, it must be for special reasons, or on account of peculiar circum-

stances which need not be noticed in a general view of the subject.

To some it may appear that history is only a part of general reading, and may therefore be properly referred to the student's private industry. This is true of the intelligent but uneducated part of the community, and must be true of the details of history with those who are liberally educated. But besides this miscellaneous reading, and even besides reading the great historians in course, there must be, if history is to be rationally and profoundly studied, a severe method, which shall task, not only the memory, but the reflective and critical powers, of the student. Reading books in course, without sifting evidence and comparing authorities, will indeed give one general intelligence, but will never make him a historian, or a safe historical reasoner. History, in order to be a safe, practical guide in managing public affairs, must be accurately studied and thoroughly comprehended. The student of history must, within a limited range, possess the means and form the habit of independent judgment. He must be instructed in respect to the laws of criticism, and carefully trained to apply them. Just as the philological critic is formed by the precepts and the example of a great master, and by a careful and methodical training under his eye, so the young student of history should learn his art of one who knows how to teach it. Such a course of study is highly disciplinary, and thereby justifies, in part, its claim to a place in a system of liberal education.

To all this, and much more of the same kind, it may be said, in reply, that the question before us is not so much what is highly desirable, as what is practicable, in our colleges. The consideration of this point brings us to the second division of our subject:

"The best way of conducting historical studies in colleges."

Here we encounter, at the very outset, the chief difficulty of the subject. There is such a disproportion between

the work to be accomplished and the time that can be set apart for it, that it might seem an almost hopeless undertaking. The domain of history is so wide, that even the historian by profession must limit himself to certain portions of it, if he would accomplish anything of importance. A critical knowledge of universal history is impossible. A clear outline of what is known to be well-authenticated history is, indeed, within the reach of every scholar; but this is rather the indispensable condition for the study of any particular age or country than the study itself. The *ordinary* student of history, no less than the professed historian, must have both a general and a particular knowledge of his subject, the one giving its connection with other periods, the other giving a special insight into the portion selected. The only difference is, that his standard of accuracy and thoroughness is not so high as that of the historian by profession. In both cases, special history is to be seen in the light of general history. While one's knowledge of general history should, in respect to civilized nations, be as nearly universal as possible, the study of special history must, for the sake of thoroughness, be limited in its range. A thorough knowledge of the history of any great nation, which has completed its career, and gone through nearly all the stages of civilization and refinement, and exhibited nearly all the phases of human society, will leave us in ignorance of but little that history ever teaches. Either the history of the Roman commonwealth, or of the British empire will illustrate all the leading principles taught by the experience of any great practical nation. The former will have the advantage of completeness, its career being ended; the latter, that of a higher civilization, having Christianity for its basis. The history of Greece or of France will give a fair specimen, though under different forms, of the good and ill fortunes of more brilliant and volatile nations. The same questions of freedom, of the relative strength and security of different forms of government, of harmonizing the interests of the many and of the few, of labor and capi-

tal, of alliances and balancing of power, of patriotic virtue and political corruption and venality, present themselves for consideration in these four nations; and the study of any one of them does but little more than confirm, to the philosophic mind, the lessons, both political and moral, taught by the study of the others. He who understands the history of any one of them well, and has digested his knowledge, and connected it with the study of the social nature of man as learned by observation, is a safer reasoner and statesman than he who has a superficial historical knowledge of them all.

The Germans, who teach history better than any other nation, and who have written some excellent works on the best methods of teaching it, are pretty generally agreed that, even in the *gymnasia*, before the student enters the university, where historical instruction is given in its highest and most perfect form, there should be three successive courses, each of them having a peculiar character adapted to corresponding differences in the age of the pupils. In their courses of history, particularly their juvenile courses, the German teachers rely much less on text-books, and more on oral instruction, than we are accustomed to do.

The first course is adapted to the tastes as well as the capacities of the youngest pupils. As to the matter of instruction, only those things are selected at this period, which are adapted to strike the imagination and excite the curiosity of the young learner: biographical pictures of important characters, leaving out the difficult or intricate parts; interesting personal narratives; descriptions of remarkable events: in short, the attractive and romantic side of history is what is presented in this first stage of instruction. There is no attempt at connected history. A few starting-points are fixed in the imagination. By this means the veil that covers all the past is lifted a little here and there; and the mind is left to enjoy the novel and strange things brought to its notice from a world hitherto unknown.

But soon the materials thus accumulated will need to be arranged, in order to prevent confusion. A second course will be called for, in which the intervals of the first shall be filled up by giving a more continuous narrative. The imagination is still the chief faculty employed. The teacher seeks to give employment to attention alone during the hour of instruction, leaving the memory to be exercised afterwards by reproducing what the teacher has said. The teacher draws his materials, not from dry text-books, but from such writers as Herodotus, Plutarch, and Froissart. He gives vivid pictures and glowing accounts of what is adapted to interest and instruct his class. A few important dates and localities are selected and fixed permanently in the memory. The object of this second course is partly to create a love of the study, and partly to store the mind with a variety of interesting details, which shall prevent the necessity of over-tasking the memory in a later stage of the study. Before the understanding is much developed, or a taste for abstract principles is formed, the imagination and memory are both vigorous, and, if properly appealed to, will act spontaneously. The multitude of particulars necessary to a good knowledge of general history will not often be possessed by one who did not begin the study when the love of the marvellous furnished the chief inspiration. When the young have been led skilfully into this, by a teacher who understands the nature of the juvenile mind, there will be formed a sort of background of history, which will be of material service when their matured faculties shall have prepared them for attending to the more important questions of history.

The third course, for the higher classes in the *gymnasia*, enters upon history proper, to which the other two are introductory. Now the flow of events from the beginning of a nation's history, in the natural order—developing the tendencies of things, showing the relation of the parts to the whole, and the dependence of effects upon their causes, so far as they are obvious, and can be comprehended by

the young—must give a new form, a certain relative completeness, to the plan of instruction.

But as we have only four years in our colleges, instead of the eight or ten at the command of the teachers in the German *gymnasia*, it is out of the question for us to lay out three, or even two, courses of instruction in history. If an outline of Grecian and Roman history were to be required as a term of admission to college, select parts of two courses might then be given, the one for a younger, the other for a more advanced class. In that case, the course begun in the preparatory school would be continued in the freshman class, in connection with the study of the ancient languages. Afterwards, in the junior or senior year, instruction of a higher character would be given by the professor of history. Even then, both courses would necessarily be incomplete.

Taking the colleges as they are, and conforming ourselves to one course of history as given by the professor in that department of instruction, we shall be compelled to admit the necessity of selecting certain important periods for exact study, and concentrating attention upon them. Nay, more; the teacher may find it expedient, after a general outline by way of introduction, to limit himself, not only to one period, but to a single country in that period, and even to certain topics of its history. Much will depend on the judiciousness of the selection, and on the reasonableness of the amount of work undertaken. Too wide a range will lead to superficiality; too narrow limits will prevent our seeing the full operation of those causes which require time to bring out their results. We do not say that the selection or the amount should always be the same. Teachers of different capacities, talents, acquisitions, habits, and tastes will do best in their own way. The same teacher will often find cause for varying his course and method. One of the most difficult questions to be settled at the outset, is that of the relative claims of ancient and modern history, or rather of Grecian and Roman, and modern European, history.

The arguments on both sides are so strong, that the teacher is reluctant to surrender either the one period or the other. First, the history of the Greeks and Romans is so closely connected with the study of ancient literature, that it seems absurd to drop it. No period of history is so nearly identified with the fundamental studies embraced in a course of liberal education. Secondly, ancient history is simpler than modern history, and therefore is better adapted to introduce the young student to this difficult science than the more complicated history of modern nations. Without exaggerating the differences between ancient and modern times, it may be said that there was an openness, a simplicity, in ancient life and manners, not to be found in modern society; and, with all the cunning of the Greek and statesmanship of the Roman, there was nothing in them like the impenetrable secrecy of modern diplomacy, the intricacies of which no historian has been able to disentangle. There were then no such systems of states as the modern European system; no life-long training to state-craft, as with the Burleighs, Talleyrands, and Metternichs of England, France, and Austria. Three centuries have not been sufficient to remove the mysterious veil that hangs over some parts of the policy of queen Elizabeth of England, and Charles V. of Germany. And as to the history of the Stuarts and of Cromwell, the testimony is so contradictory, that he is a nice critic that can strike the balance between them so evenly as to get at the truth at last. Ancient history has its obscurities from defect of testimony; but it has no such unfathomable abysses as those in which modern statesmen and diplomats conceal their policy. The student of modern history must penetrate into the secrets of many courts before he can get a clue to the foreign policy of the particular government whose history he is investigating. It is too much to expect of young men, wholly unpractised in this study, to find their way through the most difficult period of all history at the very outset. Thirdly, the Greeks and Romans stand before us, not in the midst of their career, but

with a complete and finished history. The student can trace their fortunes through all the centuries of their political existence, and observe not merely the tendencies of their government, laws, and institutions, but the actual results, to the very close. The lessons which history teaches are, therefore, set more distinctly and completely before his eyes in the case of these nations than in that of those whose end is yet far distant. Fourthly, what has descended to us from antiquity is the source of much of modern history. Christian Rome inherited not a few things from pagan Rome. The Christian emperors regarded themselves as the successors of the old Roman emperors; and Rome in the Middle Ages was the civilizer of Europe. To these great traditions was added the revival of ancient learning, the influence of which has been felt ever since in every civilized nation of Europe. It follows, that modern history cannot be traced to its true sources without going back to the classic nations of antiquity, as well as to the beginning of the Christian era. A knowledge of ancient history is therefore the best introduction to modern history.

If ancient Grecian and Roman history alone were to be studied in college the teacher would have time to perform his task with some degree of satisfaction to himself. Arrangements could be made for instruction to be given, either by himself or by the teachers of the ancient languages, to the freshman class so far as it is required in order to understand the classics. If the time were to be taken from that which belongs to the department of languages, it would be no encroachment upon that study; for what would be taken away from the latter in one form would be replaced in another. The historical information thus gained would, indeed, be unsystematic and partial; but this would be no evil in the end. It would furnish materials for future use, and these would all find their place in the systematic arrangement of the second and principal course. The latter would appropriately belong to the junior or senior year, when the mind shall have reached some degree of maturity

in age, discipline, and knowledge. At this time a regular, connected, and comparatively thorough course of instruction might be given. If the ground to be passed over should seem to be too extended to admit of thoroughness, certain important periods might be selected for chief attention, and the rest be disposed of by way of introducing the subject or of supplying connecting links. There ought to be a certain completeness in the view taken, developing the leading events in their natural order, so as to exhibit clearly antecedent and consequent, cause and effect. Such a method would be demanded the more from the circumstance that all the historical information previously acquired is wanting in arrangement and order. This summing up and rounding of the knowledge of the whole period under review, while it necessarily leaves much for future reading, should embrace that range of topics, and that comprehension of them, which is compatible with the age and intellectual condition of undergraduates. The amount to be undertaken cannot well be particularly indicated in a general discussion like the present. It is a practical matter, and must be settled by actual trial and experience. If the instruction be skilfully and successfully given, such a beginning in historical studies may be made, and such an interest in historical investigations awakened, that, even were the instruction to stop here, the history of other ages and countries might be left, with tolerable safety, to private study in later years, on the presumption that historical reading will, with all who have a taste for it, be a part of their life-work. Though the most important period of history would hereby be postponed, that which is most elementary, which is best adapted to the student's capacities, and most closely connected with his other studies, would be embraced in the college course, and receive that degree of attention which excludes superficiality. We confess that in a course of liberal education these things weigh more with us than general utility. Utility, indeed, ought not to be, cannot be, disregarded; but it comes, in

its proper place, afterwards. A liberal education aims at completeness in mental discipline only, and in the mere instruments of knowledge. In relation to practical knowledge, even the most necessary, it is exceedingly incomplete.

It would be well if the amount of time given by the colleges to the study of history could be so increased that the course might embrace modern Europe as well as ancient Greece and Rome. Until that shall be done,—and it is not easy to see what study shall give place to this,—a choice must be made between ancient and modern history. They cannot both be well taught in so short a time as is now generally allotted to the study. Indeed, there is hardly time for either. If, as we apprehend, the preference of most teachers shall be for modern history, then classical studies and general reading must be relied on to give the student some little knowledge of antiquity. The grounds of such a preference as is here supposed have already been intimated in part. The first is, that as history is studied for the lessons which it gives in respect to the laws of social progress, it is important to draw those lessons from the experience of Christian states, the only ones in which progress is, or can be, perpetual. Until this is done, there is a conviction that history, in its highest philosophical sense, has not been studied at all. All other history teaches how empires rise and fall, and civilization and barbarism alternate. This teaches how states, founded on a principle that supports Christian morality, and battles with effeminacy, luxury, and corruption, or provides for a renovation of society when it sinks into profligacy and crime, may not only rise and prosper, but continue, with some alternations and revolutions, to maintain indefinitely their civilization. A second reason is, that a class starting with the general knowledge of antiquity, which all advanced undergraduates must be supposed to have, may easily follow a teacher who shall begin with the overthrow of the Roman Empire, pass lightly over the Middle Ages, and then enter upon modern history, and bring it down nearly to our own times. By this means, it

will be said, the student may have a thread of history to which he may easily attach all his future reading in this department of study.

It will be seen that modern history, so construed, spreads out before the student an immense field, stretching through more than thirteen centuries, and embracing many nations. The history of the mediaeval church, of Mohammedanism, of the crusades, of Judaism, of the old German empire, of the Italian republics, of the municipal government of the Free Cities, of the Hanseatic League, of the kingdoms, duchies, electorates, and petty principalities of that time, of the universities, of scholasticism, of the revival of learning, of the voyages of discovery, and of the Reformation, to say nothing of the arts, — these subjects, of themselves, are enough to overwhelm the mind with details, and fill it with confusion. And still the student is as yet only on the threshold of modern history. And from this dividing line of mediaeval and modern history onward, what an amount of study is required for each of the following subjects: the German empire, and the states embraced in it from the time of Charles V. to that of Napoleon; the French monarchy from Francis I. to the Revolution; Spain, from Philip II. to the independence of the South American republics; Italy, from Leo X. to Victor Immanuel; England, from Henry VIII. to George III. We will suppose that Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Turkey, Greece, and even America, are entirely omitted. Does not this enumeration show that the professor of modern history will have no easy task to lay out his course? If it be said that a mere survey of general history is all that can be reasonably undertaken, the ready reply is, that general history neither creates a love for the study, nor initiates the student into it as a science. If that is all that is to be done, the time might as well be given to another study, and manuals of history be read in private at the student's convenience.

Two things are here indispensable: the one is, to limit

the amount; the other, to make a proper selection of what is to be studied. As the temptation will all be on the side of making the amount too large, there is little danger of making it too small. It is impossible, on the one hand, to understand modern history without mediaeval history, and equally impossible, on the other, to give, in a single year, a complete course in both. One of them must be made subordinate to the other; and we do not hesitate to say that the former must be subordinated to the latter. But even then there will not be sufficient time for universal modern history, on account of the great number of states embraced in it. The historical view of the Middle Ages may be general, because the states of Europe were not then so distinct from each other as they are now. They hardly admit of a separate treatment in that period. The course in modern history must be more select and special, being limited mostly to one state and its connection with others. This limitation will be absolutely necessary to any degree of thoroughness. Of course, only a beginning can be made in modern history, the remainder being left for future study. But it is better that it should be so, and be somewhat exhaustive as it respects the means at the student's command, than that it should be without accurate and critical investigation on his part. Neither studying a general compend, nor hearing a course of lectures, however important both may be in their place, will give one a true insight into history. The student must have the time and the means of doing something more.

If the view here given should be adopted, it might still be a question, which of the three states, England, France, or Germany, should be selected for study. In Germany we should find a great empire, strong and tolerably compact at the beginning, the component parts of which, however, gradually rise in power and sovereignty, till Austria overshadows the empire, and both she and other German states become quite independent, and the empire is at length dissolved. The history is complicated, and yet very instruc-

tive. In France we should observe the opposite process of an assemblage of petty states gradually consolidated into a great monarchy. While liberty declines, and religion, leading to bloody persecutions, is made more and more a tool of the state, the government rises in splendor and power, and the court becomes the most influential in Europe. England, while, by its insular position, it is more disconnected than France or Germany with the rest of Europe, is easier to understand, is more progressive in its government, more tolerant in religion, and more closely connected with our own country and its institutions. It would therefore undoubtedly be chosen by most American teachers as the European state to receive chief attention in a course of modern history.

For the purpose of illustrating our general principle, we will adopt this view, and see by what means a plan, like the one above indicated, could be carried into execution. Other methods than that which we shall describe might, no doubt, be made to answer the same purpose, or another as good.

The course in modern history, brought within the narrow limits already specified, naturally divides itself into two parts; the former embracing a general survey of European history from the fall of the Roman empire to the overthrow by the mediæval system and the division of Europe by the Protestant Reformation. We say "general survey," first, because in that period the leading states of Europe must be viewed collectively, as the position of no one, if separated from the system to which it belonged, would be intelligible; secondly, because this period is important, not so much for what it is in itself, as because it introduces and explains that which follows. To pass suddenly from ancient history to that of the last three centuries would be a violent transition. Both the Christian element of society, which constitutes the radical difference between ancient and modern history, and the barbarous element, which was introduced by the new population of central and southern Europe, and which was to be over-

come by Christianity and by the revival of learning, must be seen in their action and reaction upon each other and in their long conflict, or the state of society in the sixteenth century will be a perfect enigma. Only so much of this intermediate period as is a key to the following is indispensable. The spirit of the Middle Ages must be given; the rise, supremacy, and decay of its gigantic system, both in church and state; its grand ideas, and failures in attempting to realize them; its lawlessness and universal reliance on brute force; its peculiar political and social organizations arising from the violence of the few and the helplessness and misery of the many,—these, together with the great events in which they find their best illustrations, must all be presented in a connected narrative. There is here no room for special history, except so far as it throws light on general history. It would indeed be appropriate, if time would allow it, to give special prominence to the most brilliant period of the Middle Ages, the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries,—the period of the crusades; of the Franconian emperors and the Hohenstaufens; of Gregory VII., Innocent III., and Boniface VIII., the greatest popes; of Abelard and St. Bernard; of the reigns of Philip Augustus and Philip the Fair of France. The two periods of disorder and weakness, the one preceding and the other following the three centuries of vigor and strength named above, might be disposed of in a more summary way.

The second half of the course in modern history would, according to our plan, be devoted to the special history of England, with so much of the history of other states as is necessary to a clear understanding of its foreign relations. Here again, on account of the vast extent of the subject, we must resort to the method of selection. Some periods, those nearest our own times, undoubtedly, must be omitted altogether. Others, those of its mediæval history, must be greatly abridged; and only a limited period—that which embraces the foundations of the present British monarchy

— can receive the attention necessary to furnish a true specimen of thorough historical treatment. The whole history of England cannot, in any satisfactory manner, be given in so short a time. The attempt to shorten the course, by adopting Hallam's Constitutional History of England, whatever omissions we may make in it, will prove a failure, partly because we cannot understand constitutional history without a previous knowledge of civil history, and partly because the constitutional history of England does not begin with Henry VII., where Hallam's work begins, but goes back as far as the Norman Conquest, and even further.

If English history is to be seen in its organic relations, there must be, after an introductory notice of the Saxons and Normans before the Conquest, at least a sketch of the period from William the Conqueror to Henry VII., and then a pretty full narrative of the age of the Tudors, from Henry VII. to Elizabeth. This is the least that should be undertaken, and, we are obliged to add, the most that can be accomplished. Were it possible, it would be desirable, not to say necessary, to extend the period to the Revolution; for at that time the English government received its modern popular form, and the grand features of the constitution were all settled.

In the outline of the mediaeval period two epochs will need to be treated with considerable fulness of detail,—that of the Conqueror, and that of Edward III., in the last of which the whole strength of the English character, in the arts of war, in government, and in literature, was brought to view. Of the reigns between the times of those two great monarchs, as well as those which cover the period from Edward III. to Henry VII., a briefer narrative will be sufficient; for both these periods are semi-barbarous, and consequently only half historical, with few signal events to characterize them. The factions and quarrels of the barons are important chiefly on account of the elevation of the people by means of their downfall. Henceforth the two great parties in English history are not the king and the

great barons, but the king and the people. The power of the former, on the overthrow of the ancient nobility, and before the people had learned to use their strength, rose steadily from the reign of Henry VII. to the Revolution; that of the latter, after they had learned their strength, and the constitutional way to exert it, has, with here and there an exception, been constantly rising from the Revolution to the present day. Of these two important periods of English history, the former, being fundamental, and serving as a key to the latter, must be studied first. To invert the order, or to omit the former and study the latter, would be absurd. Indeed, it may be laid down as a method to be followed by all classes, be their time longer or shorter, to begin with the details of English history as early as the reign of Henry VII., and proceed so far, and only so far, as with thorough study they are able to do. This will be the only part of the whole course of instruction in history, in which the historic art can be fully illustrated. On this account we deem it advisable in what we say further to descend more to particulars. If we lay out more work than can be actually accomplished, it will be for the sake of being more explicit than we could otherwise be in our statements.

We will suppose the student to be provided with one or two of the best Manuals, such as White's Landmarks of English History, or his later and somewhat fuller History of England, and the Student's Hume, together with chronological tables and a historical atlas, like Spruner's smaller Atlas. The place of the latter might be supplied by furnishing the lecture-room with Bretschneider's Mural Maps.

The text-books will need to be studied, whether they are made the subject of class-examination or not; lectures to be heard; and a considerable amount of other reading to be performed. It is hardly necessary to remark that the professor will guide the whole course, and in such a way as to secure, by these different means, a complete view of the period under examination. His own lectures, instead of giving the whole narrative, should undoubtedly be, for the

most part, either introductory, or supplementary to the reading performed by the class. One object of the lectures will be to present to his class the last results of historical research. The books studied or consulted by the class are generally far behind the state of historical criticism. The lectures should place the student nearly in the same condition in which he would be if he had before him new and thoroughly revised editions of all the works which he has occasion to consult. This will give freshness and value to the lecturer's instruction. The class will not feel that they might as well read history by themselves at home. Every class-exercise, whether it relate to the lecture, the text-book, or other books, will involve historical criticism, and will foster a taste for it. The student will by degrees learn to estimate the character and weigh the authority of every writer he examines by a standard of his own, which will become more and more perfect as he advances. The lecturer will aim to put a true construction upon history; to enable his class to see it from right points of view, and to judge of men and measures, not according to the prejudiced opinions of authors, nowhere more manifest than in English history, but according to just canons of historical criticism.

The lecturer may choose to be very brief on those topics which are well presented in the manual used, or to omit them altogether, and point out the passages to be read, and require them to be incorporated with the lecture in the recitation of the next day. In this way the teacher will be relieved of much useless labor, and the student will have enough to occupy his attention, whereas lectures alone leave too little for him to do. The objection which might rise in the minds of some, that such a method would produce disorder and confusion in the student's thoughts, is its chief recommendation. The daily practice of analyzing and arranging for one's self the materials of history is one of the best historical exercises which can be required of a student. If everything be studied and arranged for him, his judgment

and invention will lie dormant, and his memory only be exercised. All historical studies, if they are to discipline the student, and to initiate him into his art, must constantly require the exercise of his power of combination and arrangement. In the mental process here proposed, the materials to be arranged are very simple, and will easily find their place, if the omissions are indicated in the lecture at the points where they occur.

Those periods of the early political history of England, which, according to our plan, are abridged on account of their minor relative importance, may still be presented in a less formal way, in many of their details, by means of essays on interesting collateral topics, such as manners, customs, popular amusements, chivalric adventures, celebrated places, families, domestic life, the lives and characters of distinguished men in church and state, in philosophy, literature, and art. In many instances the biographies of the early queens of England are both more interesting and more instructive than either the biographies or the reigns of the kings. We would instance the empress Matilda, who, being the daughter of one king Henry, and mother of another, besides being widow of a third Henry (the emperor of Germany), acted as regent for her son; also Matilda of Boulogne, consort of Stephen, whose fortunes were so sadly interwoven with those of the empress, her rival; Eleanor of Aquitaine, who brought to her husband Henry II. large possessions in the West of France, and whose public life as queen of France, and then as queen of England, and whose domestic relations are so full of strange adventure; Isabella, consort of Edward II., "the she-wolf of France," who kept England and France busy enough, during her remarkable and most eventful life; the good queen Philippa, wife of Edward III., England's greatest monarch; and Margaret of Anjou, who was the exciting cause of the War of the Roses, and was as badly eminent as her spouse, Henry VI., was weak.

On these and other topics of similar interest essays might

be assigned to the class, being so distributed that each should have a different subject. On these the students should task themselves severely, summoning all their strength and industry to present, both as it respects research and elaboration, a model essay. One such performance, undertaken and executed in the right spirit, will have an influence upon the writer's mind that will long be felt. It is often the beginning of a new method of study. It will be needful for the professor to point out particularly the sources of information on each subject, together with the order in which they should be read, and to allow ample time for the preparation, which will, of course, vary with the extent and difficulty of the subject. The reading of these various essays before the class will bring together the information contributed by them severally. If a given number relate to parts of the same general subject, or are in any way nearly related to each other, they might be read in connection, and the subject of them be made the lesson of the class for that day. In this manner, the whole class would be led to take a special interest in the criticisms made upon the several essays.

The object of requiring essays is partly to secure a suitable amount of private reading on the part of the student, and partly to train him to read by subjects, using different authors, rather than to read single authors through in course. When the mind is interested in a subject, that is the time to investigate it. Many questions will arise which can be settled only by resorting to other books. If we read the account given by one writer only, we have no proper means of judging whether he is right or wrong. If we leave the matter to be decided at another time, and proceed to new topics with the author we have in hand, the subject will pass out of our mind, and by the time we come to read on the same subject in another writer, we shall have forgotten so much that we found in the first as to be unable to compare the two accounts and to form any critical judgment of their relative accuracy. Two or more authors can be com-

pared best when read in connection with each other. After two or three of the best authorities, on a given subject, have been critically studied, others can be perused rapidly, while the whole subject is fresh in mind; the good and the bad in each are easily separated; what is new can be appropriated, and what is old and familiar passed over; and more be accomplished in a few hours when the mind is heated on the subject, and better done besides, than in as many days at another time. Not only can the whole subject be placed before the mind at once, in all its aspects, so that one part, if need be, may be corrected by another; but the respective merits of all the writers can be seen in a clear light, and a sound critical judgment passed upon them. We would lay special stress upon the observation, that *this is the true way to train students to habits of critical investigation*. The subject of inquiry may be limited; but the critical spirit, and the enthusiasm awakened by it in susceptible minds will be far-reaching.

In this or in some similar way all collateral, as well as subordinate topics, or any portion of them, might be disposed of by the teacher who does not wish to encumber his lectures with them. It will thus be the office of the instructor to guide and stimulate his class; lay out the work to be performed; perform a part of it himself, namely, the part which the manual or text-book does not, and which the class cannot, perform, and require the class to perform for themselves what they have the means and the power to do. The course of instruction, thus pursued, will not be an easy one, either for the teacher or for the class; but will be inspiring and advantageous to both. Nothing can be more injurious in its effects, as it regards future study, than the dull and plodding way in which, unfortunately, history is sometimes taught. It not only renders the present study of it nearly useless, but, what is far worse, it well nigh destroys the natural taste for it which one may have. Any expedient which shall aid in averting such a calamity from a young man is entitled to consideration.

But we return from this digression to our course in English history. Thus far it has been merely introductory. We shall now dismiss the Middle Ages, and contemplate a class as taking up English history at the end of that period with as much fulness as the time allotted them will allow.

With Henry VII. begins the modern history of England. It is no longer the history of contending factions without any result, but the history of a nation under a settled and consolidated government. The events of his reign, all that is known of them, are easily told. The ordinary manuals give the most important of them. But it is not so easy to form a correct estimate of his policy and of the character of his government. It would not be amiss to seize upon the opportunity offered to give a somewhat elaborate criticism of the two opposite views taken of the subject by different historians; the one class being represented by the Pictorial History of England, the other by Turner's History. The subject is not so extensive as to be beyond the reach of the comprehension of students near the end of their collegiate course. A field of inquiry thus circumscribed, and not very intricate, is most favorable for trying the skill and exercising the judgment of a class in history. The teacher, by presenting the evidence on both sides, may initiate his class by easy gradations into the practice of weighing historical evidence with impartiality. The facts of history are studied with greatest interest, and are best comprehended, when they are examined in connection with some great historical problem. Studying the character of this reign with such an end in view, the more ambitious members of the class would be sure to read Lord Bacon's account of Henry VII.; an admirable work for teaching a student how to form his judgments with nice discrimination.

To present the history of Henry VIII., will test both the powers of the professor and the industry of the student. Still this reign furnishes one of the finest opportunities for studying and practising the historic art. A knowledge of many groups of details, a keen insight into the policy of

crafty and cunning men, both at home and abroad, and large views and nicely-drawn generalizations, are here quite indispensable. The events of his reign : his tragical domestic history ; his rivalry with Francis I. ; his quarrels and truces with Charles V. ; Woolsey's grand projects ; the sinuous policy and duplicity of the papal court ; the severance of the English church from Rome ; the great achievements of the reforming parliament ; the suppression of the monasteries ; and, finally, the idiosyncrasies of that able, jovial, vain, cruel monarch, are all to pass under review and be scrutinized, both separately and in their connection with each other. How is all this to be accomplished with a class ? Difficult as the task may be, it must be undertaken, because an understanding of the character of this monarch's reign, peculiar on very many accounts, and opening for the nation a new career of independence, is a key to the comprehension of the history of the whole Tudor dynasty. In addition to the professor's instruction, there will be demanded imperatively no inconsiderable amount of reading. In order to bring this great mass of complicated materials, in some form, before the whole class, it will be necessary to distribute the work among all its members. One might prepare an essay on the legal and moral rights of Catharine of Arragon, together with an examination of the grounds on which the partisans of Henry justified his course. The character and history of each of his queens might form the subject of so many essays. The lives and characters of Woolsey, Cranmer, Gardner, and More would throw no less light upon this reign. One member of the class might present so much of the character and reign of Francis I. as is connected with the history of England ; another might do the same in respect to Charles V. ; a third, the same in respect to Luther and his English adherents. Other essays, less biographical in their character, might be assigned on some specific point in the several topics named at the beginning of this paragraph. Both the professor and the students must enter upon the work with an energy that stops at no difficulties.

or the whole subject will not be grasped. The substance of Froude's apologetic view might well be presented by the former, partly on account of its new and important facts, and partly for the purpose of correcting its false judgments; as also the results of Ranke's masterly exposition of the foreign policy of England.

Mere examinations of a class from a text-book, on such a subject as this, would be stupid and almost absurd. Such a feeble, humdrum course would be an unpardonable surrender of a capital opportunity to kindle young and ardent minds into a perfect blaze of enthusiasm. One such effort, though it should be limited to the reign of a single monarch, will do more for a student, by way of making him a lover of history, and, in the end, an adept in it, than a whole text-book committed to memory, and duly recited to the professor. The mention, from time to time, of such writers as Turner, Froude, Knight, and Vaughn, with a spirited criticism of their views, will make the class eager to read such parts of their writings as relate to the subjects which they are investigating. The student loves to feel the influence of his own century, as it appears in recent or living writers. He is thereby made to breathe a fresh, instead of a dusty, pent-up atmosphere, and to hear the ripple of a living, rushing stream, instead of contemplating a stagnant pool.

It is unnecessary to extend these illustrations. The spirit in which we would have history taught—the only thing in this whole discussion to which we attach special importance—may be easily understood from what has already been said. The particular manner of instruction to be adopted must be invented by each teacher for himself. Indeed the manner of the same teacher must vary from time to time, according to the nature of the period he is considering. With the two next reigns, those of Edward and Mary, both of which are periods of transition, the plan and mode of instruction must be different from that marked out for the reign of Henry. Elizabeth did not establish her policy, which led to the political greatness of England, in

any degree after the model of her immediate predecessor; nor did she return exactly to that of Edward. In her estimation, while, in the matter of religion, Mary went to a ruinous extreme in the direction of Romanism, Edward, or the protector in his name, went to the other, less perilous, extreme of Geneva Protestantism. The last catholic reign in England was like the last pagan reign, that of Julian, in the Roman Empire. In both instances the old and decayed religion proved to be inadequate to the exigencies of the times. The *religious* reformation which took root in England under Edward — that introduced by Henry was purely political, and that restored by Elizabeth was more in the spirit of her father than in that of her brother — perpetuated itself only in the Puritan party. Elizabeth's power was built up, therefore, mainly on the foundations laid by Henry; the influence of Edward upon the superstructure being rather modifying than controlling. The strictly progressive movement in the policy of the state was from Henry to Elizabeth, leaping over the two intervening reigns. In a *moral* point of view, the reign of Edward was very important. Tragical as the end of the two protectors was, whose careers filled the period of this reign, and dark and gloomy as were the events which characterized Mary's government, they rather require of the historian a graphic representation and glowing dramatic description than a development of great political ideas and principles. At least, it must be said that the great political undertakings of both reigns proved entire failures. The interest, therefore, of the historian, arising from unfolding the growing power of the state, will receive considerable abatement during this period of disasters and public calamities, but will rise to a still higher pitch in the reign of Elizabeth. These facts cannot but have their effect in giving a new shape to a skilful teacher's plan of instruction. Perhaps in one respect they will be favorable in their influence, to wit, in breaking up the monotony of a uniform method, and to give to the course the charm of variety. But we must break off here,

as we fear the teacher of history will be obliged to break off long before finishing the period of the Tudors.

Before closing, we must say one word in respect to the method of teaching introduced by Guizot. He is undoubtedly one of the best French historians. His writings are highly valuable, and deserve to be studied by every student of history. But they do not so much teach us history as furnish us aids in the study of it. If any one is ambitious to resemble him as a historian, he will find it necessary not only to read his writings, but, what is vastly more important, to study what he studied. We do not call in question the truth of his principles, or the soundness of his method of stating them. He is not chargeable with the fault into which so many speculative writers are betrayed, of theorizing without facts; nor even with that, which is still more common, of building up a system which rests upon too slender an historical basis. He investigates his subjects thoroughly, and draws his conclusions by a method strictly inductive. He then analyzes his conclusions, resolves them into general principles, and, descending again from them, reconstructs the framework of history with the same facility that a Hegelian constructs or creates it.

But the great objection to teaching a class of students history in this way is, that it presents nothing but the results of investigation, leaving the student entirely ignorant of the processes by which they were reached. These results may in themselves be very valuable. They may be useful for the truth which they contain, for storing the mind with ideas, and for arousing reflection. But whatever worth they may have in themselves, or whatever general influence they may exert upon the mind, they do not educate one to the science of history. The method is too much like that of teaching arithmetic by rules. The rules may be convenient. The principles on which they rest may be very familiar to him who formed them; but not so to the learner; he takes them upon trust. It is as true in the study of history as it is in that of mathematics, that the conclusions of others are

valuable to us only as we make them our own. The general views given by Guizot are conclusions to which his own mind has arrived, of the accuracy of which the student has no means of forming a judgment. The several propositions which he lays down are to the student, who is ignorant of the processes by which they were established, a series of conclusions without premises. Now we maintain that the processes are infinitely more important to the student than the conclusions. Without them he has learned nothing of the historic art; nor does he even know, by any perception of his own, whether what he maintains is true or not. He is like the mathematician who has committed to memory answers to problems which he has never worked out. We do not deny that he may learn much that is valuable from the study of such books; but we maintain that he does not learn history. He can be nothing more than a retailer of another man's opinions. Connected with the study of history proper, these opinions may be of great service to him.

Neither conclusions alone, nor the facts alone which lead to them, constitute history. History includes both, and presents the latter as growing out of the former. It is just as preposterous to pretend to understand history without a knowledge of its facts, as it is to profess a knowledge of ancient literature through translations, without an acquaintance with the ancient languages. Guizot himself stood between the old chronicles which he studied and the books which he produced, and could lay his hands on both. In him they were both united, and through him they stand in correlation to each other. It may not be necessary for every one to be a Guizot, or to study the sources of history as he studied them; but without a knowledge of the facts of history from which to draw conclusions, one is no more a historian, than one is of royal blood because he has seen a king. History itself lies between facts and principles; these are its two poles. The want of either destroys the system. It is useless to say that there is not time to study the facts of history. The student of mechanics might just

as well say that he has not time to study mathematics. The philologist might just as well say that he has not time to study the facts of language, and therefore must content himself with the philosophy of language. The facts of history are permanent; opinions founded on them are variable and often transient. With a knowledge of facts, one may constantly improve his theory. A theory without facts can neither be safely used nor mended. There should, at least, be one period of history, longer or shorter, general or special, in which the student is so far at home that he can see with his own eyes and think his own thoughts. That spot will be a bright light to him, and will aid him essentially in understanding other things.

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## ARTICLE V.

### THE SCRIPTURAL PHILOSOPHY OF CONGREGATIONALISM AND OF COUNCILS.

[This Article, written by Rev. Dr. EDWARD BEECHER, is the Twelfth in the Series of Articles representing the views of different ecclesiastical denominations.]

WHEN any system is itself a part of a higher and more comprehensive system, the development of its philosophy is equivalent to an exposition of its end, and of the relations of that end to the higher system of which it is a part.

The higher system of which Congregationalism is a part, is known in the sacred scriptures as *the Kingdom of God*. To this higher and more comprehensive system Congregationalism sustains vital relations. It is our present purpose to set forth its end, and the relations of that end to the higher system of which it is a part. As this exposition cannot be made by the light of reason alone, but depends on the testimony of God in the sacred scriptures, it may properly be called the scriptural philosophy of Congregationalism.